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GUITAR LEARNING, PEDAGOGY, AND TECHNOLOGY: A HISTORICAL OUTLINE

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Abstract

This article offers a bird's-eye view of the evolution of guitar learning and pedagogy in the XX and XXI centuries, supported, and often propelled by emerging popular musical styles and new technologies. Specifically, the article discusses how learning to play guitar has evolved from formal teacher-student lessons in private and academic settings, to informal and self-guided forms of learning through books, magazines, and DVDs. Starting in the late 1990s, technological advancements and the diffusion of high-speed internet brought about technologies and social spaces that contributed to innovating guitar pedagogies and disrupting traditional approaches to teaching and learning the guitar. These technologies include, but are not limited to online archives and communities, social media, apps and software, subscription-based services, augmented reality, virtual worlds, and digital games. Several of these technologies are still in their infancy and their potential for impacting guitar learning and teaching may still to be fully harnessed and explored.

Keywords

Guitar teaching, learning, and pedagogy; guitar history; guitar technology.

Evolution of the Guitar

The earliest ancestors of the guitar are the Arabic oud and the Elizabethan lute, which have bowled bodies with an un-fretted fingerboard stringed in courses, which are two strings placed closely together, usually tuned in unison or octave pairs (Rossing & Caldersmith, 2010).

The Renaissance (c.1420 – c.1600) and Baroque (c.1600 – c.1750) periods saw the introduction of the Spanish vihuela, the four-course guitar, and the evolution of the Baroque guitar from five to six courses (French, 2014; Guy, 2013; Turnbull, 1991; Tyler, 1980; Wade, 2010).

The Romantic era (c.1800 – c.1850), which partially overlaps with the Classical period (c.1750 – c.1825), saw new developments in the design of the guitar in regards to its construction, appearance, and musical features (French, 2014; Guy, 2013; Tyler, 1980). By mid XIX century, Antonio de Torres Jurado brought all of the features together to form the classical guitar as we know it today (Alves, 2015; French, 2014).

In 1833, C. F. Martin & Co. developed the dreadnought acoustic guitar, while Orville Gibson started building steel string arch top hollow body guitars in the early 1900s (Guy, 2013). In the first decades of the XX century, the Rickenbacker "Frying Pan" (made for Hawaiian music) was the first guitar to use an electromagnetic transducer, later adopted by jazz musician Charlie Christian, who attached a pick-up to his Gibson ES150 in 1936 (French, 2014; Guy, 2013; Smith 1987). In 1949, Leo Fender introduced the Broadcaster, which later became the Telecaster, with the Stratocaster following soon after in 1954 (French, 2014; Millard, 2004). Around that same time, the Gibson Guitar Company started a fruitful collaboration with guitarist and inventor Les Paul, which led to the Gibson Les Paul model, first introduced in 1952 (French, 2014). Most of these electric guitar models, with minor or major variations, are still in production today and have become icons in music and popular culture.

Guitar Learning and Pedagogy Before the XX Century

In the XIX century, guitar teachers such as Dionisio Aguado (1784-1849) and Fernando Sor (1778-1839) composed etudes to teach right and left-hand techniques needed to play classical guitar pieces. At the time, these compositions served as the foundation for learning to play the guitar for children and adults from wealthy families who were studying with private teachers in churches or music conservatories (Alves, 2015; Glise, 2014). Learning to play the classical guitar was a formal process that required players to study and know how to read and perform music using proper right and left-hand techniques (Alves, 2015; Glise, 2014).

Soon after Torres refined the classical guitar into its modern form (ca. 1860), instructing guitar learners to properly sit and hold the instrument complemented etudes in forming the basis of classical guitar pedagogy (Glise, 2014). A fixed position was established with the classical guitar lining up the 12th fret toward the center of the body with the left foot propped up with a footstool (Alves, 2015; Glise, 2014). Many music compositions for the classical guitar, which was considered a solo instrument, were adapted and transposed from popular classical pieces originally written for other instruments (Alves, 2015; Glise, 2014). An example is J.S. Bach's first cello suite, which was originally written in the key of G and was then transposed to the key of D to accommodate the range of the classical guitar. Although music pieces for the classical guitar would evolve, the method of playing etudes while sitting and holding the classical guitar would carry over virtually unchanged into XX century formal classical guitar education (Alves, 2015; Glise, 2014).

Guitar Innovations and Pedagogies in the XX Century

Guitar Learning and Pedagogy Between 1900 and 1950

The introduction of steel strings around 1900 inspired new ways of playing and learning the acoustic guitar. Up until that point in history, the acoustic guitar was tied with folk music brought to the United States by immigrants and was often played alongside the banjo and mandolin. Learning folk music on the acoustic guitar was mostly an informal process that was undocumented, learned by memory, and passed down by oral tradition (GBCbrad, 2011; Noonan, 2008). As the emerging ragtime and blues movements developing across the Mississippi Delta adopted the acoustic guitar, similar ways for learning the instrument were practiced (Bennett & Dawe, 2001; Obrecht, 2015). Guitarists from the Delta, such as Robert Johnson, were often poor and did not have access to formal music training (Obrecht, 2015).

Unlike the formal pedagogy of the classical guitar, which was solely based on written out music, ragtime and blues players of the period often learned to play the guitar informally through peer interaction with other musicians, learning by ear from records, or by self-taught methods that differed from guitarist to guitarist (Bennett & Dawe, 2001). Similar to the playing style of traditional folk guitarists, ragtime and blues guitarists used a combination of strumming and finger picking techniques. In these genres, most chord sequences relied on the circle of fifths "VI-II-V-I" progression. This allowed players to improvise, which would eventually influence jazz and rock guitar styles and pedagogies (Bennett & Dawe, 2001; Noonan, 2008). Contributing to the evolution of the acoustic guitar sound, the steel bar slide was first introduced in Hawaiian music and then adopted by early blues, country/hillbilly, and jazz players to produce that unique guitar sounds still heard and taught today throughout different playing styles (Ingram, 2010; Troutman 2013).

Beginning in the 1920s, radio broadcasting introduced jazz ensembles, early country music, and the blues to a large audience across the United States, becoming the primary popular source for music entertainment well into the early 1950s (Douglas, 1999). Becoming prominent in popularity through radio exposure, jazz ensembles began to move away from the banjo to the newly invented jazz hollow body guitars during the early 1930s (Dunscomb & Hill, 2002). With this new design also came a new approach to playing the jazz guitar, which gave rise to new ways of practicing and learning the instrument (Dunscomb & Hill, 2002; Sallis, 1996). The jazz guitar, unlike the blues guitar, did require the player to know chord progressions and read sheet music in order to perform with jazz ensembles (Dunscomb & Hill, 2002; Noonan, 2008; Sallis, 1996). To accommodate these jazz guitarists, in 1933 the Crescendo (a banjo, mandolin, and guitar – or "BMG" – magazine publication) began publishing solos and "VI-II-V-I" chord progressions for the guitar (Noonan, 2008). However, it is largely unknown in what ways early jazz guitarists acquired their musical skills, if instructed by music teachers, through informal practices with the aid of books and magazines, or a combination of the two (Noonan, 2008).

Since the jazz guitar primarily began as a rhythm section instrument, its early pedagogy consisted of strumming simple chords and progressions (Dunscomb & Hill, 2002; Sallis, 1996). However, this began to change when jazz guitarist Eddie Lang developed the single string solo technique for jazz guitar, which was considered to be ahead of its time, expanding the guitar's role beyond the rhythm section (Sallis, 1996). This would be one of the most significant contributions to jazz guitar style, until Charlie Christian amplified his Gibson ES150 in 1936 (Sallis, 1996). This is when the jazz guitar style evolved from simply strumming chords to complex melodies, chord progressions, and improvised solos. Elaborating on the single string solo technique developed by Lang, jazz guitarists of the period transformed the jazz guitar into a solo instrument, which influenced guitar styles and music genres for decades (Dunscomb & Hill, 2002; Sallis, 1996).

Guitar Learning and Pedagogy Between 1950 and 1991

Guitar models introduced in the 1950s would change the instrument, its pedagogy, and its role in music and popular culture. The Gibson Les Paul (1952), the Fender Telecaster (1952), and the Fender Stratocaster (1954) would all contribute to the birth and popularization of rock 'n' roll music (Ingram, 2010). In the 1950s, TV sets were becoming common in homes, which contributed to exposing millions of viewers to rock 'n' roll music and the electric guitar (Douglas, 1999; French, 2014; Ingram, 2010; R. A. Schwartz, 2006; Weinstein, 2013). From 1953 to 1960, guitarist and songwriter Les Paul and his duo with Mary Ford were aired on television five days a week, further contributing to the popularity of the electric guitar (JJAAHH, 2012). At the same time, radio was broadcasting rock 'n' roll, the blues, jazz, country, and many other genres, exposing a wide audience to different sounds and styles of playing the electric guitar (Brookes, 2005; French, 2014). Both radio and television would play a primary role in popularizing the guitar as a musical instrument and instilling in young generations a desire to learn how to play it (Brookes, 2005; French, 2014; JJAAHH, 2012).

Stylistically, riff and single string solo techniques, developed by Lang and expanded by Christian, were adopted by blues players such as T-Bone Walker to create new musical progressions and guitar sounds (JJAAHH, 2012; Millard, 2004; Waksman, 2001). Rock 'n' roll guitarists like Chuck Berry, Buddy Holly, and others developed their own styles by integrating features and techniques of blues, ragtime, country, and folk music (Ingram, 2010; JJAAHH, 2012; Millard, 2004; Waksman, 2001; Weinstein, 2013). The west coast surf sounds headed by Dick Dale and his Fender Stratocaster gave birth to the fast-picking right hand and tremolo techniques that carried through the XX century. These techniques would later become the flagship of modern-day speed, thrash, black, and death metal genres that would emerge in the late 1980s (Ingram, 2010; Millard, 2004; Waksman, 2001).

As mentioned in the BBC series *Imagine: The Story of the Guitar* (fifteesrebel, 2011), learning to play the electric guitar in this era was revolutionized by Burt Weedon's (1957) book "Play in a Day: Guide to Modern Guitar Playing." Weedon's book quickly gained popularity and became the best-selling guitar instruction book of all time. Guitar players such as Eric Clapton (Cream), Paul McCartney and John Lennon (The Beatles), Brian May (Queen), and many others first learned how to play the guitar through Weedon's book (fifteesrebel, 2011). Weedon's techniques served as the foundation for these artists' songwriting, melodies, and chord progressions that influenced, and continue to influence, pop and rock guitar playing (Bennett & Dawe, 2001; Millard, 2004; Waksman, 2001).

The late 1960s would continue to foster the evolution of the electric guitar in the hands of rock guitarists such as Jimi Hendrix, Jimmy Page, Richie Blackmore, Robert Townshend, and Eric Clapton (Weinstein, 2013). These artists explored new ways of playing and approaching the instrument, thus contributing to the development of new styles and techniques that are still part of rock guitar learning and playing. For example, U.S. based *Guitar Player Magazine* (1967) began to print lessons with songs and playing techniques from these artists in their issues (Weinstein 2013). In 1964, *The Ed Sullivan Show* first premiered the Beatles, which would result in what was called "the British Invasion," catapulting them (as well as their guitar sound and playing style) to almost instant success in the United States (Bennett & Dawe, 2001; Ingram, 2010; Weinstein, 2013).

The punk rock movement of the 1970s introduced the concept of the three-chord songwriting technique, which would form the basis of almost every Sex Pistols and Ramones song. This style would also influence the British new wave, alternative rock, and 1990s Seattle grunge (Bennett, 2007; Easley, 2015). These evolved playing techniques spurred new kinds of enhancements to the guitar's playing versatility. For example, guitar virtuosos of the 1970s and 1980s such as Steve Vai (who developed new tremolo and whammy bar techniques), Eddie Van Halen (who adopted an innovative fingerboard tapping technique), Yngwie Malmsteen (who fused classical music with hard rock through a new approach to the electric guitar), Paul Gilbert (who developed a string skipped arpeggio technique and seamlessly combined fast and melodic playing), and Joe Satriani (who implemented complex chord progressions and stretches), would further evolve rock guitar playing and the need for new learning tools and pedagogies (Edwards, 2009; Ingram, 2010; Millard, 2004; Waksman, 2001; Weinstein, 2013).

Learning to play electric guitar during the latter half of the XX century shifted past the formal pedagogical approaches of classical and jazz guitar that was practiced in many university music programs and conservatories (Carfoot, 2006). This was due to new methods for informal guitar learning that would include new media and technologies (Carfoot, 2006). Moreover, new electric guitar makers emerged resulting in "mom and pop" music shops offering private lessons for the classical, acoustic, and electric guitar (Guest-Scott, 2008). Though private lessons at local music shops were quite popular, formal lessons did not accommodate every novice who wanted to play the guitar for various reasons, including lack of economic resources or geographical location.

Major music publishers such as Mel-Bay and Hal Leonard published a variety of books that taught how to play the guitar by using standard music notation or tablature (fifteesrebel, 2011). Learning through guitar tablature was often favored by many non-traditional and novice players because it was simpler to understand. Unlike standard music notation, guitar tablature is laid out with six lines representing each string with the lower register (low E string) at the bottom and the higher register (high E string) at the top. Tracing its roots to the early European lute tablature of the Renaissance, tablatures are written out in sequence with the fret number repeated as many times as it is picked (Dalitz & Pranzas, 2009). As opposed to traditional music notation, combining guitar tablature with listening to the recording decreased the learning time and allowed a larger number of aspiring guitarists to learn their favorite songs (J. Schwartz, 1993).

In addition to published "how to" guides and "songbooks," an expanding outlet for informal guitar learning were guitar magazines (Theberge, 1991). Guitar magazines had a dynamic distribution across the United States and in Europe, to be found at most periodical stands, groceries, or convenience stores (Theberge, 1991). In 1967, *Guitar Player Magazine* made its debut focusing on popular music styles of the time such as the blues, jazz, and rock. Known for its versatility regarding artist interviews, each issue contained information that would set the foundation for guitar magazines that followed. To accommodate players with both formal and informal music backgrounds, every lesson within each issue was presented in both traditional music notation and tablature. In the 1980s, an age of guitar virtuosos, hard rock, and heavy metal popularized by Music Television (MTV), *Guitar World Magazine* (1980), *Guitar for the Practicing Musician Magazine* (1982), and *Guitarist Magazine* (1984) were founded, and all of them contained instructional materials similar to those published in *Guitar Player* (Coelho, 2003; J. Schwartz, 1993; Tandt, 2004; Theberge, 1991).

Guitar World and *Guitarist* featured more than just standard artist interviews and included reviews of the latest guitar technologies. As the videocassette recorder (VCR) became widespread in the 1980s, *Guitarist Magazine* began to release VHS tapes containing instructional guitar videos mixed with product reviews (J. Schwartz, 1993; Tandt, 2004; Theberge, 1991). This was around the same time that REH Video, Hot Licks, Homespun, and other music media publishers were releasing instructional videos of well-known guitarists of the era (J. Schwartz, 1993). In the 1990s, the emergence of the Internet would soon take these learning resources online, while *Guitar World* magazine would continue to include instructional videos as DVDs with their printed issues (J. Schwartz, 1993; Tandt, 2004; Theberge, 1991).

In his book titled "The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991," British historian Hobsbawm (1996) makes the augment that the XX century ended in 1991 with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, which incidentally coincides with the year that the World Wide Web was introduced to the public in the United States. This momentous innovation would symbolically mark the end of the XX century bringing about the XXI century and a new era for technology-mediated guitar learning, as discussed in the following section.

XXI Century Technology-Mediated Guitar Learning

The World Wide Web

Starting in 1991, the World Wide Web became a new outlet for guitar learning for a broad audience of traditional and non-traditional learners. Nevertheless, formal music programs and informal learning through guitar magazines, books, and DVDs carried over. With advancements in broadband connectivity and the introduction of new services and technologies, guitarists would find new resources for learning and playing the instrument in online archives and communities (e.g., *OLGA*), social media (e.g., *YouTube*), apps, software, and subscription-based services (e.g., *Pocket* Guitar, *GarageBand*, and *Yousician*), augmented reality (e.g., *Fretlight*), virtual worlds (e.g., *SecondLife*), and digital games (e.g., *Guitar Hero*).

Online Archives and Communities

The term "online community" can be associated with any group of users interacting online on discussion forums, chat rooms, listservs, bulletin boards, or through instant messaging (Preece, Maloney-Krichmar, & Abras, 2003). By the mid-1990s, the Internet became a hotspot for musicians to buy, sell, and trade instruments, learn more about their favorite artists, find guitar tablatures for songs they wanted to learn, as well as join guitar-related online communities (Sprei, 1995). The Internet gave these musicians the tools to engage with other people who shared similar interests in ways that would not be possible off-line (Crozier, 1997; Hargreaves, Marshall, & North, 2003; Ruthmann & Hebert, 2012; Salavuo, 2006). Moreover, online music communities provided musicians with an outlet to discuss music-related topics, distribute original music, exchange learning techniques, and foster social interaction in online communities (Salavuo, 2006).

In his article published in *Guitar Player* magazine, Sprei (1995) discussed the impact that the Internet had on popular music through online guitar communities. During the early years of the World Wide Web, many well-known guitarists such as Allan Holdsworth created Web pages that contained guitar tunings, FAQs, biographical information, and even audio and video recordings available for download (Sprei, 1995). The personal computer (PC) and the Internet became a meeting and learning place for musicians, changing the way they socialized and learned from each other. In 1992, James Bender established the "Online Guitar Archive" (OLGA) that would later become Harmony Central (Bessen & Maskin, 1997). Originally hosted by the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, OLGA was a very popular archive averaging around 200,000 guitar tab downloads per week. Considered as the first online guitar community on the web, OLGA provided guitar players lessons and access to an archive of over 15,000 guitar tablatures submitted by users (Bessen & Maskin, 1997).

In 1996, Eugeney Naidenov, an economics major at the University of Kaliningrad, compiled a collection of guitar tablatures creating "Zapp's Guitar Archive" (Music Trades, 2011). Naidenov accumulated and made available on the Internet hundreds of songs that were hard to find as printed sheet music or guitar tablatures in Russia. Due to online guitar communities like OLGA (United States) and later "Zapp's Guitar Archive" (Russia), guitarists were able to obtain tablatures and information about the guitar and guitar playing from anywhere in the world (Bessen, & Maskin, 1997). Moving forward, in 2002, Naidenov registered the "Ultimate-Guitar.com" domain name to expand "Zapp's Guitar Archive" by securing rights to a broad range of guitar tablatures from Alfred Publishing, EMI Publishing, Sony Music, and others (Music Trades, 2011). The "Ultimate-Guitar.com" website, which started as a depot for guitar tablatures, evolved into one of the largest online guitar communities with forums and chat rooms for players and enthusiasts. The expansion of this platform would continue due in part to the development of the "Ultimate-Guitar.com" app in 2010 which allowed users to access the site's content directly on smartphones and tablets (Music Trades, 2011).

Salavuo's (2006) and Waldron's (2009) studies show that online communities can be suitable spaces for socialization, learning, and sharing. Salavuo (2006) set out to investigate the reasons for member participation in an online music community. The findings of the study show that participants valued the social interactions and connections they made within the community. Nevertheless, participants had initially joined the community primarily for music-related reasons, rather than to socialize In another study, Waldron (2009) employed Wenger's (1998) framework to explore music learning in a virtual community of practice. The aim of Wenger's study was to gain deeper understandings of how teaching and learning take place within online music communities. The findings of the study suggest that meaningful music learning experiences occur through a variety of social interactions such as using and adapting the technology for individual music learning, sharing resources, seeking feedback, as well as asking and answering questions (Waldron, 2009).

Social Media

As online guitar communities continued to attract users worldwide, social networking and sharing spaces such as *MySpace* (2003), *Facebook* (2004), *Flickr* (2004), *YouTube* (2005), *Twitter* (2006), *Instagram* (2010), and *Snapchat* (2011) presented new opportunities for musicians to interact with one another (Albert, 2015; Salavuo, 2008). Currently, guitar magazines (e.g., *Guitar Player, Guitar World, Guitarist*), guitar manufactures (e.g., *B.C. Rich, ESP, Ibanez*), music retailers (e.g., *Guitar Center, Musician's Friend, Sam Ash Music*), and guitar enthusiast groups (e.g., *Guitar Tutorials*) have *Facebook* pages and *Twitter* accounts where musicians and guitarists can interact, pose and answer questions, and share resources and information. Although not originally intended as spaces for learning, these outlets can be used to learn about music (Albert, 2015). For example, social networking sites can make one's musicianship visible to others, which can form one's foundation for growth as a musician, encourage new collaborations, and foster lifelong learning (Salavuo, 2008). Furthermore, music educators can use social networking sites such as *Facebook Groups*, *Google Classroom*, or *Edmodo* to teach music (Albert, 2015) by posting audiovisual content to demonstrate musical concepts, interact with students, or create spaces for peer-to-peer interaction.

Launched in 2005, YouTube is a video sharing and social media website that revolutionized how people learn and teach guitar (Owings, 2016). This platform provides features that can facilitate guitar learning, such as the ability to pause, stop, rewind, and fast-forward to specific parts of a video (Hong et al., 2016; Kruse & Veblen, 2012). Furthermore, *YouTube* videos can be slowed-down, which can help learning fast or complex pieces of music.

The videos shared on *YouTube* can increase learners' interest (Rahmaturrizki & Sukmayadi, 2021), promote a participatory culture among music players and enthusiasts (Waldron, 2012), and even turn an amateur musician into a teacher-celebrity in a relatively short amount of time (Cayari, 2011). There are many musicians who started on *YouTube* and reached a teacher-celebrity status, and many of them are guitarists and guitar enthusiasts (Marone & Rodriguez, 2019). This is largely due to *YouTube*'s ability to provide these teacher-musicians with an outlet to a global audience and opportunities for instant feedback on their content (Cayari, 2011).

Kruse and Veblen (2012) consider *YouTube* as a suitable technology-mediated environment for learning to play the guitar. Their study examined videos from five traditional folk music websites, which not only included the guitar but also other traditional folk instruments such as the fiddle, banjo, and mandolin. The videos analyzed by these authors were primarily geared towards beginners and displayed various forms of technique-based instruction, psychological prompts, and aural support for the development of basic guitar skills. Similarly, focusing their investigation on the "Guitar Class of Uncle Ma" (a popular Taiwanese *YouTube* channel for learning the guitar), Hong et al. (2016)

explored the benefits of learning to play guitar while using videos found on *YouTube*. As reported by the authors, one of the main perceived benefits of the platform was the immediate availability of videos on-demand, which may be beneficial for all learners, and especially those who want to acquire basic guitar skills before committing to more extensive (and expensive) courses. Both studies show that *YouTube* can be an effective online environment for those who wish to learn the guitar (Hong et al., 2016; Kruse & Veblen 2012).

Apps, Software, and Subscription-Based Services

Guitarists' common tools such as the tuner and the metronome are important technologies for supporting guitar learning. However, there are other technologies that can help learn playing the instrument. Many of these technologies emerged in the last 30 years due in part to the Internet and the introduction and diffusion of mobile devices. In recent years, smartphones and tablets have become increasingly popular with thousands of dedicated apps for guitar players, guitar learners, and musicians. In this context, Gouzouasis and Bakan (2011, pp. 3-4) examined a selection of apps for guitarists. Some examples are *Pocket Guitar, Guitar Toolkit*, and *Tab Toolkit* that offer guitar-like fingerboards for finger placement, chord learning, and basic tools such as a guitar tuner and metronome. In addition, *Chordplay*, *Chordmaster*, *Guitar Lab*, and *iReal b* offer similar learning opportunities with extended access to chords, accompaniments, and sound libraries.

Besides these apps, the diffusion of free and low-cost Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs) like *GarageBand* allowed music students and musicians to record and share their performances through computers, smartphones, and tablets (Sabet, 2020). Some DAWs like *Ableton Live* feature algorithms that allow users to "stretch" (i.e., slow down or speed up) recordings, which can facilitate guitar practice and learning of intricate pieces.

In addition, music apps and software, as well as subscription-based online guitar learning apps and services, allow self-directed learners to find free or relatively inexpensive resources for learning to play the guitar. These services are scarcely discussed in academic literature and include *Fender Play* (www.fender.com/play), *Yousician* (www.yousician.com), and *MasterClass* (www.masterclass.com), the latter featuring popular guitarists like Carlos Santana and Tom Morello as instructors. These services offer varying levels of interactivity and topics, from game-like experiences that focus on practice and technique development (*Yousician*) to more traditional videos that embrace a holistic approach to understanding and learning the instrument (*MasterClass*). Another salient feature of these apps and services is their connection to popular music and culture. For example, the *Solfeg.io* (www.solfeg.io) app includes songs from popular artists like Dua Lipa, Justin Bieber, and The Weeknd, which can engage students by allowing them to practice their favorite songs and helping them discover how music works (Kazaka & Vilde, 2021).

Augmented Reality

Another technology-mediated approach to guitar teaching and learning is augmented reality (Martin-Gutierrez et al., 2020). An example of this approach is represented by the *Fretlight* (www.fretlight.com) guitar system (Optek Systems, Inc.), which utilizes an LED circuit board embedded underneath the guitar fretboard (Keebler, Wiltshire, Smith, & Fiore, 2013). The LEDs show learners where to place their fingers in sync with songs, riffs, chords, and scales. The system requires a specialized *Fretlight* guitar (www.fretlight.com) that connects to either computer software or a mobile app. The *Fretlight* is considered to be an "augmented reality" guitar system, which Keebler et al. (2013) defined as "the mixing of the physical world with digital information" (p. 172). In their study, Keebler et al. (2014) compared the accuracy of the *Fretlight* system to a traditional scale diagram guitar learning aid for learning the A minor pentatonic scale. Results from the study show that participants who were given the *Fretlight* instrument, compared to those who practiced with the traditional scale diagram, had a better retention of the scale (Keebler et al., 2014). A similar system to the *Fretlight* is the *Fret Zealot* (www.fretzealot.com), which uses the same LED concept through attachable LED strips that can be placed on any guitar.

Virtual Worlds

Virtual worlds such as *Second Life* (developed by Linden Labs in 2003) feature a large number of musicians engaged in virtual live performances, social interaction, and sharing of musical ideas (Sant, 2009). Unlike digital games, which usually have stock characters and settings, *Second Life* allows its users to create most of the virtual world, including avatars, islands, and events. An example of music learning in *Second Life* is the Music Academy (2007), whose mission is to offer music appreciation education and promotion for composers in *Second Life*. Within this space, users can chat with music educators and even take musical instrument lessons (Sant, 2009).

Digital Games

Digital games designed for learning can be traced back to the 1980s when computers started to become more common in homes and schools (Whitton, 2014). Digital games for learning have increasingly become more social as technology and the Internet have evolved, giving way to networked games that support collaborative activities (Whitton, 2014). In the context of music learning, digital games can increase student interest, as in the case of *Rhythm Heaven Fever* (released in 2012 for the Nintendo Wii game console), which teaches and assesses rhythm skills and concepts (Reyher, 2014). Music video games such as *Rhythm Heaven Fever,* although intended for entertainment, can serve a pedagogical purpose by teaching players important music skills that include syncopation, steady beat, tempo changes, rhythmic echoing, and the identification of different music styles and genres (Reyher, 2014). These games can be used by teachers in school and outside of school as interactive media that initiate or complement formal music instruction.

In their earliest form, guitar-oriented digital games offered players a limited experience, if compared to playing the traditional instrument (Biamonte, 2011). *Guitar Hero* was the first game in this genre, allowing users to simulate a guitar performance by playing popular songs through a dedicated controller (Arnseth, 2006; Biamonte, 2011). Players interact with the game by using a guitar-like controller that has a lever for right-hand strumming and a series of colored buttons on the neck that allow players to perform along with a song, trying to match the sequence at the right time, as displayed on screen (Biamonte, 2011; Ramler & Chapman, 2011).

Soon to follow, *Rock Band* was released by Harmonics in 2007 and broadened instrument choice by adding controllers inspired by bass guitar and drums, as well as a microphone (Arnseth, 2006; Biamonte, 2011). Since its introduction, the *Rock Band* series has had several releases with the latest being *Rock Band 4* in 2015 and *Rock Band VR* (developed for the Oculus VR virtual reality system) in 2017. A key feature to the *Rock Band* series is that it allows collaboration with other players as they perform songs together in a band-like experience (Miller, 2009; Tanenbaum & Bizzocchi, 2009).

Through an ethnographic approach, Miller (2009) examined both *Guitar Hero* and *Rock Band* as games that enable participatory and collaborative gameplay. The author analyzed media debates about the games' impact, how they relate to models of rock heroism, rock authenticity, genuine musicality, and gendered performance conventions. The findings of the study questioned whether both games actually perpetuate and accurately simulate real performance on the guitar, drums, vocals, and as a rock group. Considering that these games offer a new kind of musical experience, the participants in the study did not acknowledge if these experiences were compelling enough for them to become motivated to learn the corresponding traditional instruments. Despite these findings, both games offer playful opportunities for musical collaboration, as well as social, mental, and physical engagement (Miller, 2009).

Digital games like *Guitar Hero* and *Rock Band* were not originally intended to be educational tools, but they still present potential for music learning. For instance, both these games may assist players with learning musical concepts such as eye-hand coordination, listening skills, and rhythm (Criswell, 2009). Moreover, both of these playful platforms provide unique forms of interactive participation and learning about musical concepts in a social environment.

In 2011, the French gaming company Ubisoft introduced *Rocksmith*, which resulted in a generational leap in the genre, by replacing guitar-like plastic controllers with traditional electric guitars as input devices and controllers connected to the gaming console through a proprietary USB adapter (referred to as the "Hercules" cable) (Graham & Schofield, 2018).

Rocksmith (Ubisoft, 2011), *Rocksmith 2014 Edition* (Ubisoft, 2014), and its successor *Rocksmith 2014 Edition Remastered* (Ubisoft, 2016) are interactive digital games for the Sony PlayStation 4 (PS4) game console. The remastered version released in October 2016 contains new features, such as improved menus, customizable learning curves, stat tracking, expanded practice tools, bonus songs, and more. Ubisoft provided owners of the original edition the same updates included in the remastered version, with the exception of the bonus songs.

Rocksmith 2014 Edition Remastered offers three distinct paths for learning: (1) lead guitar, (2) rhythm guitar, and (3) bass guitar. One of the major enhancements of the *2014 Edition* over the original version is that it allows players the ability to set song difficulty, where in the original *Rocksmith*, all players started at the lowest difficulty level and had to work their way up. *Rocksmith 2014 Edition Remastered* includes a session mode, which enables more experienced players to play along with in-game musicians for virtual jam sessions. The game also features a master mode that assists with playing a particular song by memory and introduces minigames through a feature called "Guitarcade" that challenges and trains players in areas they want to improve. In addition, *Rocksmith 2014 Edition Remastered*, which has over eighty-five lessons that cover a variety of skills and techniques, also features a new mode that assists colorblind players (Graham & Schofield, 2018). Compared to *Guitar Hero* and *Rockband*, which are considered games for entertainment, the *Rocksmith* series was not intended by *Ubisoft* to be exclusively a game but also an educational tool for players seeking to learn how to play the guitar.

Graham and Schofield (2018) investigated the effectiveness of *Rocksmith* as a learning tool. Specifically, their focus was assessing whether people could actually learn to play the guitar by playing the game. They report that very few studies present empirical evidence to support the claims made by the gaming company (Ubisoft) regarding learning to play the guitar in 60 days. Two experiments over a one-year period were performed to collect data on: (1) *Rocksmith*'s effectiveness as a learning tool, (2) its learning mechanisms, and (3) player expectations of the game. The first experimental study focused on *Rocksmith* as a learning tool, while the second centered on how the game was utilized by players.

The participants in Graham and Schofield's first study felt they learned skills associated with playing the guitar, which focused on the game as a learning tool, rather than a game for entertainment. However, findings from the second study show that users tended to utilize *Rocksmith* predominantly as a video game, rather than a learning tool. Data collection for the second study took place over a longer period of time in comparison to the first study, which, according to the authors, allowed for more accurate observations. Overall, Graham and Schofield (2018) report that participants' perceptions of the game aligned with the idea that *Rocksmith* is a great practicing tool that "shouldn't replace the teacher" (p. 78). Despite these contrasting findings and participants who reported frustration due to technical glitches many felt that the game was beneficial, entertaining, and fun. These findings, compared to those from an earlier exploratory study conducted by Jenson, De Castell, Muehrer, & Droumeva (2016), seem to confirm *Rocksmith*'s potential as a learning tool, which is also reflected by users' multimodal interactions in online communities dedicated to the game (Rodriguez & Marone, 2020).

Conclusion

Learning to play the guitar has been traditionally associated with a mixture of both formal and non-formal pedagogical approaches. Across the centuries, access to formal guitar training was not available to all guitar learners. Furthermore, approaches to learning how to play the instrument varied depending on the type of guitar and the style of music.

As the guitar evolved, so did musical styles alongside with it, which, in turn, influenced the approaches taken to teaching and learning how to play the instrument. The acoustic guitar, highly favored by immigrants with no formal music training coming to the United States in the latter part of the nineteenth century, has been related to informal approaches to guitar learning. Similarly, players of the early grassroots and delta blues movements learned to play the guitar through either self-taught methods or from other players, due to lack of access to formal music education. The birth of the electric guitar and the evolution of print and digital media (e.g., guitar magazines, tablatures, instructional videotapes) contributed to the popularization of the instrument across different social groups and musical styles. The introduction and diffusion of the Internet further broadened players' opportunities to learn the guitar. The onset of online guitar communities provided spaces for guitarists from around the world to gather, share resources, collaborate, and learn from one another. Further, social media like *YouTube* provided guitarists with opportunities to learn to play the instrument for free and at their own pace. However, there is still a lack of research on how online and offline music communities integrate, converge, and overlap with one another (Waldron, 2012).The pedagogic potential of apps, software, subscription-based services, augmented reality, and virtual worlds has still to be fully explored.

Digital games such as *Guitar Hero* and *Rock Band* introduced players to guitar-like experiences through game controllers that allowed them to get familiar with basic musical concepts. These games created new modes of musicality that can foster personally and socially meaningful musical experiences for the players. *Rocksmith* expanded these possibilities by enabling players to use an electric guitar as an input device and controller, which has the potential to facilitate the transfer of guitar skills built by playing the game to playing the instrument in the real world. The continuing evolution of technology-mediated and playful approaches to learning how to play the guitar, and the related online communities, can support learners who do not have access to formal music education, or who prefer alternative, social, or self-directed forms of learning.

In conclusion, history teaches us that guitar learning, pedagogy, and technology evolve with and are influenced by emerging musical genres, playing styles, and techniques. These evolutionary cross-influences often originate from bottom-up, popular, and non-traditional sources, and they will likely continue to trace paths of innovation and disruption for years to come.

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EXAMINING LEARNER INDISCIPLINE IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOL IN ZAMBEZI REGION IN NAMIBIA: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article aimed at examining learner indiscipline in selected secondary schools in the Zambezi educational settings in Namibia. The study further explored how teachers perceive and manage discipline in their schools. The study used a qualitative research approach which was positioned in the interpretive paradigm. The research instruments consisted of individuals and focus group interviews, as well as document analysis. Purposive sampling was employed to select two secondary schools, two principals and ten teachers. The study was underpinned by a theoretical framework of William Glasser (2010) the choice theory. The findings of this study established various discipline problems such as absence from school, being rude to teachers, being inattentive, early engagement in sexual activities, failure to do schoolwork, noise-making, late-coming to school, and using abusive language. Moreover, the findings found that lack of parental support in lives of their children, family background, abuse of various substances and alcohol, balance between learning content and overcrowding classrooms, peer pressure were the huge cause of discipline problems. The findings established that teachers were using different methods to maintain learner's discipline such as disciplinary committee, learner counseling, detention, and parental participation.

Keywords: discipline; disciplinary measures; ill-behaviour; learner behavior; punishment

Introduction

Discipline in schools has always been recognized as important for the proper functioning of institutions. This was acknowledged in the Namibian

Education Act of 2001 (Namibia 2001). It is a fact that if there is no discipline, protection and a feeling of security, schools cannot function properly nor can learning takes place (Kapueja 2014). It is not easy, if not impossible, for learners to concentrate on learning when they have to deal with disrespect, bullying, sexual harassments, threats or violence (Motseke, 2020, Obadire & Sinthumule , 2021;). Kapueja (2014:18) went a step further in saying that an undisciplined class cannot be taught nor developed to its full potential. There is a global belief that discipline is necessary for learners to learn and teachers are expected to establish and maintain well-disciplined schools. Moreover, discipline has been viewed for many generations as a goal in itself, which is an essential goal in education. The government, community members, and school stakeholders historically have taken pride in maintaining well-disciplined schools. However, this has not consistently been the case in Namibia, as a number of studies and publications have pointed to the deteriorating environment of the school discipline (Amutenya 2016; Hiholiwe 2015; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2016). The major concerns are: late-coming of learners, teenage pregnancy, sexual promiscuity, cheating in examinations, and general violence (Hiholiwe 2015; Ndeleki 2016).

Related Literature Review

Dealing with discipline matters is one of the most challenging tasks of the teaching work. Each indiscipline, like every learner is individual, originating from a kind of conditions directly connected to the person resulting in problems. The term “indiscipline” refers to any behaviour that mirrors social rule violation or act against others (Wolhuter & Van der Walt 2020:1). According to Temitayo et al. (2013:9), the list of indiscipline among learners in schools include displaying negative attitudes, intentionally breaking rules, cheating on tests and assignments, refusing to do what a teacher instructs them to do, wandering out of their seats, alcohol use and smoking marijuana, involvement in promiscuous behavior and making threats. This kind of ill-discipline does have negative implications on the culture of teaching and learning (Ndou, 2021). In Namibia, learners are claimed to blatantly challenge and violate school rules, attack teachers, use alcohol and tobacco on the school premises, engage in sexual promiscuity, vandalise and pilfer school assets. To validate this point, various incidents of learner behavior has been related from the two regions (Okavango and Zambezi) through the media, for example, about 232 cases of learner pregnancies, and 45 girls raped which resulted in pregnancies, as well as school dropout in the few first months of 2018. It is a fact that views regarding the causes of indiscipline vary, but it is overall agreed that indiscipline behavior in secondary school learners is common than in primary schools. Harris (2017:1) noted the following as possible causes of discipline problems: the conditions at the child’s home, the influence of peers, perceptions of reality that learner and those around him or her might please, and also the community that might provide favourable conditions for indiscipline to grow. Learners with problems at home may have more forcing issues on their minds than schoolwork; on the surface, this shows a cause of problem. A further complicating matter was the overcrowding of classes which results in lack of textbooks in subjects and other materials, as learners might be compelled to sit around in big numbers. Nxumalo's (2013:29) found that big classes learners scream or talk loudly while learning content is being taught, throw things around, eat and move or run around randomly, disregarding teachers' instructions to re-establish control. In an attempt to maintain discipline schools have followed various strategies such as detention, disciplinary committee, learner counseling, involving parents, school rules and suspension. Nevertheless, Sarwar (2016:227) asserts that there is interesting role of parents in shaping the good behavior of children. For instance, the author indicated that home is the place where a normal and healthy development of any child begins and the family constitutes the spine of an individual. From this perspective, family is pondered to be a basic ecology in which behavior of children is manifested in their childhood by a way of negative or positive reinforcement. Furthermore, the study found that indiscipline had the following impact both on learners and teachers: loss of concentration; learners poor academic performance, teachers spend most of their time solving problems associated with indiscipline instead of focusing on effective teaching and learning, and poses threat to other school learners, teachers and managers.

Problem Statement

The problem of learner indiscipline in Namibian secondary schools had developed into a serious problem that stakeholders in education sector should find out means of achieving self-discipline. Ill-behaviour upsets the government directly or indirectly, the school management and the society. If permitted to prolong, it will severely damage educational settings and teaching itself. In this context, discipline sounds to be any upright for the accomplishment of a school in high academic standards and extracurricular activities. Education Act 16 of 2001 expands that when there is a lack of safety because of bad behavior and insecurity, educational settings cannot function smoothly. This implies that disorderly conduct, disruptive and unsafe environment causes teaching and learning unachievable. Managing discipline in schools is therefore of the outmost essential to permit teaching and learning.

Theoretical Framework

The choice theory relating to relationship-driven counseling and lead management style characteristics are used to explain the finding of the inquiry. Not only is this the Namibian, but also other African countries including South African (Khumalo, 2019). This study focused on the process of changing teachers' behavior away from the use force and authoritarian practices in promoting self-assessment and incorporating feedback from administrator and teachers. According to Glasser (2010), the choice theory ideology was developed because of its emphasis on improving current relationships. Choice theory assumes, therefore, that an individual who is permitted to choose his or her behavior to accomplish a wanted end-product can be creative, disciplined, flexible and self-confident, while an individual who has little choice may experience lower self-respect and negative emotions (Botha 2016). Choice theory supports Reality Therapy, the counseling method (Glasser 2010). This theory acknowledges the fact that learners should be counseled regarding more effective choices in order to accomplish want satisfaction, and therefore greater happiness. The assumption of choice theory is neither insight about underlying causes of problems nor resolution of unconscious conflict (Glasser 2010). It is about truthful assessment of current behaviours, the betterment of individual insight, and most of all assisting learners to take positive actions to maintain the relationships with the individuals they want in their lives. The relevance of this theory is justified when discussing the framework of the findings later in this inquiry. Therefore, theoretical framework will significantly strengthen this study as it enables the researcher to explore more aspects relating to learner discipline.

Research design and Methodology

In order to examine the nature learner indiscipline and how teachers in the selected secondary schools perceive and manage discipline, a qualitative approach which is analytical, descriptive and interpretive was applied. Qualitative research is mainly interested in how persons interacting with the social world build their own reality (McMillan & Schumacher 2010: 315). Maykut and Morehouse (2001:43) confirmed that qualitative approaches are beneficial when the researcher needs to have an understanding of a phenomenon and to determine the meaning given to events that participants experience. The qualitative approach comprises a naturalistic enquiry which focuses on understanding a phenomenon as it happens in a natural manner (Mouton 2016:130). The study also involved a case study approach, which individuals and sittings were explored in depth and described in detail in the final report. The case was two principals and ten teachers and it was a case of learner behavior in the Katima Mulilo and Chichimani circuit.

Purposive sampling was used to choose participants in terms of their relevance to inquiry questions, and specific characteristics which made them bearers of information wanted for the investigation. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2015:319), purposive sampling is a method of making a choice from the population (an existing list of the elements in the population) so as to identify the individuals to be incorporated in the research. Principals and teachers were recruited according to the following characteristics: having in-depth knowledge about discipline police and as the ones mostly directly involved in the dealings of disciplinary problems in schools. The target population comprised of 10 teachers (five in each focus group interviews) and the principals (for individual interviews) one from each of the two selected settings. The sample comprised of 12 participants, including seven male and five teachers and their ages ranged between 28 and 57 years old.

Research instruments employed in this study comprised of three qualitative evidence gathering techniques such as individual interviews, focus group interviews and document analysis. Information was mainly gathered through interviews using an interview schedule to guide the process. It was also necessary to embark on document analysis in two selected secondary schools. Documents such as policies of schools, school code of conduct and books where minutes of disciplinary meetings were reviewed. The research recorded the audio discussions and documented them using transcriptions, subsequently using an inductive approach to analyse the data. I followed McMillan and Schumacher (2010) method of data analysis, which entails identifying, coding and categorizing the primary patterns in the data. The sub-themes were then integrated into the main themes. These themes were interpreted in line with the available literature on discipline in schools to highlight results and indicate knowledge gaps for future research. Credibility and trustworthiness were ensured by use of member checks and triangulation of data (Baxter & Jack 2008:555). With regard to ethical issues, the researcher applied the following ethical considerations: confidentiality and anonymity was carefully maintained at all stages including prior, during and after the data collection, thus protecting and safeguarding the participants in this study.

Findings and discussions

The results of the study based on established themes are displayed as follows: conceptualizing discipline, types of discipline problems experienced, possible causes of learner behavior, how disciplinary measures are administered and impact of discipline. Participants were coded as follows: P1 and P2 were used to represent the two principals with whom I had individual interviews. The codes T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5 represented the five teachers from School "A" that participated in one focus group interview while T6, T7, T8, T9 and T10 represented teachers from School "B" respectively.

The types of discipline problems experienced in the selected schools

The data gathered exhibits that there is indiscipline among the learners of the involved schools. Instances include unauthorized absenteeism from school, being rude or lack of respect for teachers, being inattentive, early engagement in sexual activities, failure to do given work, getting up and moving around without permission, late-coming, noise-making, talking and laughing inappropriately, and abusive language (P1,P2, T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8 & T10).

Absenteeism

This study disclosed that discipline problems amongst learners such as frequent absence without permission, as well as dodging and absconding.T4 commented that:

There are times when learners leave classrooms without permission; some learners are used to cheating and noise-making during class. Late-coming and absenteeism from class lessons are also presenting some problems in my class.

P2 indicated that:

"Absenteeism without proper communication happens when a learner stays at home without informing the class teacher, and when there is no proper reason given".

These findings are in agreement with Makendano's (2016:124) findings that teachers in many instances complain of inappropriate types of behavior such as interruption of school activities by ill-behaved learners, skipping classes as they wish, absent without proper reasons given, rudeness to teachers, vandalizing furniture and textbooks in class, and lack respect for teachers. These types of behavior consequently contribute to a negative effect on the teachers' instruction. As stated by the participants, frequent absence from school is the most committed disciplinary infraction in these secondary schools. Learner's absenteeism in these schools revolves around the home environment such as broken homes and bullying from fellow learners.

Stealing

Most of the participants P1, P2, T1, T2, T3, T5, T6 & T8 described stealing as another individual's belongings without his or her approval. According to participants this behavior is mainly influenced by factors such as broken homes and peer pressure grouping. They complain about learners pilfering each other's goods such as food, stationery, clothes, and to some extent pocket money (P1, P2, T1, T2, T3, T5, T6, & T8). Talking about these issues P1 said:

"Some big boys bully the younger ones and to some extent stealing their properties such as calculates, underwear and money".

P2 remarked that:

"The life at home of the child sometimes results in a learner goes on stealing other learners' food".

The findings confirm the view of Nxumalo (2013:33), who noted that stealing is a widespread trend in educational settings and poses an everyday problem for teachers. Marais and Meier (2010:51) argued that learners pilfer each other clothes, cellular phones, lunch-boxes, food as well as stationery and pocket money. Mtsweni (2008:85) asserted that stealing by some secondary schools learners is an addictive behaviour which involves alcohol and substance abuse.

Learners steal and vandalise as a means to acquire money for alcohol or tobacco because pilfered articles are often recovered in shebeens. This is confirmed by Glasser's (2010) choice theory that unsatisfactory, combined with the strong sentiments in the offender that others should be punished for the way he or she feels is by far the main reason why anyone attacks at another human being. The theory advocates that the reason why an unsatisfied learner would lash out at a particular time cannot be predicted. In this study it is also notable that stealing can indeed corrupt the good behaviour and thus result in ill-discipline

The possible causes of learner misbehavior in selected schools

The causes of learner indiscipline are multifaceted and stems from a variety of contributing factors are generally dynamic depending on surrounding circumstances. This study has demonstrated that several factors are accountable for the lack of discipline in schools. These are: the home surroundings, the classroom and the school circumstances, the learner himself or herself, the community, the learner's parents and the teachers (P1, P2, T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9 & T10). Six subthemes were recognized, namely alcohol and substance abuse, lack of parental support, learners' rights, overcrowding classrooms, peer pressure, and teacher inconsistency.

Alcohol and substance usage

It was revealed by this study that drug abuse including cigarettes, alcohol, smoking dagga is another factor helping to cause the general learner indiscipline in the selected secondary schools. Participants complained of unpredictable worsening of the learners' behavior and impertinence, when they indulge in taking harmful substances (P1, P2, T1, T3, T6 & T7), They pointed out examples of some learners who attend school while under influence of drugs which is mostly "dagga" commonly known as "marijuana". In this regard, P2 had this to say:

"A group of learners had recently been found with a big supply of marijuana and cigarettes with the intention of selling them".

T9 concurred with this viewpoint by stating that:

"Learners are using drugs which make them disrespect their teachers. Learners bring drugs and alcohol on school premises which make them being rude to teachers".

Dealing with or merchandising unlawful drugs not only affects learners' actions directly but also changes the whole environment of the setting. This is supported by Charles (2008:23) who contended that alcohol is an ever-present temptation for many people during fun times, as it help loosen tongues and creates a relaxed atmosphere for socialising. According to Mtsweni (2008:85), alcohol and substances misuse add to the ill-behaviour of learners in educational settings and has turn into a horrible source of unsafe academic learning institutions. The ease with which alcohol and drug substances are accessible at settings therefore multiplies the chances of learners being attacked by fellow learners at school or in their way to or back from school.

Overcrowded classrooms

It was established during the interviews that overcrowded classrooms helps to cause a lack of discipline in the selected secondary schools. It was found that teachers have an average of 45 to 52 learners per class (T3, T4, T8 & T9). Participants view overloaded classrooms as the cause of some disorderly behavior among learners (T4, T8 & T9). T4 stated:

"Overcrowded classrooms promote hostile environment in the sense that learners do not concentrate on their work, instead they pinch, scratch and assaults each other and lastly start fighting one another".

While T9 put it as follows:

"The overcrowding of classes result in lack of textbooks in subjects and other materials".

Overcrowded classes increase the e lack of adequate resources, which in turn leads to increase tension between learners themselves. This finding confirm Charles' (2008:23) ideas that learners often becomes restless when made uncomfortable by inappropriate noise, lighting, temperature, seating, or workspaces. Mokhele (2006:154) asserted that congested classes force learners to sit around in big numbers. Sharing desks or books can turn into a tug of war when one learner may ask to make use of the textbook at home. During this process, arguments erupt which can end up in scuffling or even fighting.

How disciplinary measures are administered in selected schools

The most commonly used disciplinary measures to cope with learner ill-behaviour in the selected schools are: disciplinary committee; counseling of a problem learner, discussing the problem with a learner, suspension, involving parents, use of classroom and school rules, as well as the cleaning of the school surroundings and detention after learning period.

Learner counseling

Participants described learner counseling as an awareness of problems and knowing different kinds of misbehavior in school environment by talking and listening to the learner problem (P1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6 & T7). They pointed out that taking a personal interest in learner's lives motivates them to take an interest in learning from cooperating with the teacher. Regarding counseling of learners, P1 stated:

"A learner may in some other cases be referred to the school counselor for further counseling to rectify this improper behavior"

T3 explained that:

"From the class teacher we have the school counselor. Each learner is given an opportunity to be counseling to find out whether it's something that really needs counseling or something that really needs counseling or something that can just be talked about".

This study has established that speaking to a learner individually in private is of utmost importance since it can provide an opportunity to determine the root cause of ill-behaviour. Koenig (2008:60) found that it is important to make an effort to determine and know the actual causes of learner's indiscipline in an effort to figure out the problem. Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (2008:8) stated that talking and counseling a learner enable the learner to recover his or her composure from confusion and frustration. The counseling should look for the source of inappropriate behaviour in order to help learners to act properly. Glasser's (2010) choice theory believes that through counseling learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their own and peer's behaviour and learn to control themselves. Counselling assistance for disobedient learners should be done in their belief that learners miss insight and understanding regarding their own wrongdoing.

Parental participation

It is clear that information collected during the interviews with the participants shows that they needed support from the parents so as to play a meaningful role in their instructional task. According to participants (P1, P2, T3, T4, T6 & T7) they involve the parents by inviting them to school if there is disciplinary problem so that they can be informed about their children's behaviour.T7 stated that:

"Parents normally supervise the schoolwork of their children that they have been given by a teacher to go and do as homework at home".

P2 had this to say:

"Parents are a very important element of a school and as such their constant involvement in school issues is of utmost important. Parents play a role of a primary instructor at home that is why their constant involvement is needed".

This study revealed that parents are the cornerstone of their children's education, without them, learners would have to go it alone and the chances of failure are high. The findings are in line with Koenig's (2008:85) conclusion that parents who are involved in education of their children are likely to make sure that the standards of behavior, direction and character of the community are established and maintained in school. Van Deventer (2018:388) was of the view that through community participation in the work of the school parents may become more interested in the things their children are doing, and this may in turn help to reduce the number of learners who drop out of school. The choice theory argues that the family is the most important aspect in the life of a learner since it provides an emotional and physical environment that constantly surrounds the child and in which close psychological ties exist (Koenig 2008:60). When that influence is combined in a positive way with what goes on in the school, an enhanced outcome for the learner can be expected.

The impact of indiscipline in schools

Most of the participants who spoke on this aspect felt that indiscipline among learners has a negative effect on learning and teaching, as well as hampers the performance of learners (P1, T1, T3, T5, T6, T7 & T8). Participants explained that teachers waste much teaching time rebuking learners, regulating late-coming and controlling unnecessary noise-making, fighting and bullying. Three sub-themes were determined, namely hampering the performance of the learners, posing a threat to other learners, and late dropout from school in some cases leading to suicidal tendencies, hence affecting their entire lives as these learners remain delinquent.

Hampers the performance

The participants expressed the view that ill-behaviour has a negative influence on teaching and learning. In addition to causing disruptions, participants say that learners' acts of indiscipline also take up time that could have been used for teaching. According to P1:

"This ill-behaviour hampers the performance of the child at school. These learners who are ill-behaviour also lead a bad influence on the other learners, and these ill-behaviour learners are also difficult to handle in school".

T7 had this to say:

"Learners with ill-behaviour tend to perform low in their schoolwork and they mostly do not do their schoolwork as expected".

Cotton (2008:2) and Gastic (2008:394) have pointed that indiscipline is a serious problem in the classroom, and the way in which it is dealt with, result in learners getting into trouble at school, as well as causing them punished, whereas Upindi (2012:71) was of the view that learners can miss a lot in the process and this influences negatively the learners' overall academic achievement at school. For example, continuously learner absenteeism is and endless disruption of the schooling process. Prolonged absences mean that a learner falls behind and struggle to participate in and understand school work.

Pose a threat to other school learners, teachers and managers

The ill-behaviour of learners not only impacts learner performance, but also impact on teachers' ability to plan and present classroom teaching in a consistent and orderly manner. Some participants claim that schools are no longer settings of order and safety (P1, T3 & T8). P1 remarked that:

"Such kinds of children who are ill-behaved pose a threat to other learners. They tend to bully other learners, so as a result those other learners also will not be able to study well, they will not be able to concentrate at school".

T8 commented that:

"Learners' ill-behaviour frustrates the relationship between a teacher and learners. So, when that relationship is not well, performance of such learners also goes down so in the end they will fail".

According to Naong (2007:284), disorderly behavior makes situations alarming and intimidating which are not favourable to the formation of a conducive learning environment. Marais and Meier (2010:41) were of the view that badly behaved learners and disciplinary problems are getting out of hand and hard to deal with, forming part of every teacher's experience of teaching. The issue of ill-behaviour among learners not only has a negative influence on fellow learners or teachers, but it also has a negative impact on the way in which school managers make use of time. Instead of devoting their time to innovative teaching or enhancing the current programmes, they end up wasting time on disciplinary matters. Upindi (2012:71) attested that ill-behaviour occurring amongst learners often forces teachers to leave the teaching fraternity.

Conclusion

The objective of this investigation was to examine learner indiscipline in selected in selected schools in the Zambezi educational settings in Namibia. This was achieved through responding to the research questions stated above. The overall findings indicated that the management of learner behavior is a huge problem for teachers in the Zambezi region of Namibia, particularly schools under study. The findings of the study are that learners' ill-behaviour causes' emotional damage, affects the self-esteem of learners and adversely impacts their academic performance. Ill-behaviour is bad and no teaching and learning can happen in setting where disrespect, bullying, sexual harassment, threats or violence happens. These actions make social injustice and are unsustainable for standard schooling. As a result, learners' accomplishment is disturbed badly because no learner can work in a way that is suitable when frightened with violence. This study accounted on the disturbing scale at which indiscipline happens in the Zambezi educational region in Namibia. These occurrences happening frequently in various schools and school learners are at the earning pay-off. This study was limited to the use of a qualitative approach, by which interview schedules were conducted with principals and teachers at the selected schools. A further study could be carried out to provide same insight as to enlighten educationists, educational planners and teaching personal about the discipline phenomenon.

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EMOTIONS, THOUGHTS AND SUGGESTIONS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS ON SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH METHODS AND PUBLICATION ETHICS COURSE

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What are the reasons for participating in the joint Scientific Research Methods and Publication Ethics course of the students enrolled in the Graduate School of Educational Sciences, the benefits it provides, the quality of the education provided and the views on the additional course? In this study, the phenomenological method of qualitative research was used. Since the research is qualitative, no universe and sample determination were made. The appropriate working group was used. Students claimed that they attended this program because of “academic career, specialization and self-development”. It can be said that, the criticism and suggestions of the students toward the course are collected in the dimension of "system, course, lecturer, suggestions and affective". It can be argued that their views on the additional course are in the categories of "productive, unproductive and I could not participate". Students want to consider student requests and conditions, reduce the number of students, use the system effectively with the least number of error, extend the course duration, and give feedback and corrections to each student while doing distance education.

Keywords: Scientific Research, University, Student, Emotion, Thought, Suggestion

Introduction

Each cultivation can be evaluated before, during and after application. Adult evaluation models can be used during the evaluation process. These models may differ (Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2015; Uşun, 2012). Whichever model you use, there may be stakeholders to consult about the adult. These stakeholders can be students, teachers, administrators, supervisors, servants, parents, other people and systems that affect and are affected by the inputs, operations, and outputs of the system. The most important of these stakeholders are students; because they are the basic element of the educational system. Without the student, no educational system can exist and be prepared. In this context, students' opinions on the education system can be curicial .

In this process, it can be determined which gains (target behavior) the students gained, which ones they did not gain, which ones they learned half-way. Relevant content, tutorials, and test cases can be retained. Gains, content, training and testing situations related to deficiencies, mistakes and sloppy learning can be reconsidered and corrected according to students' views. Thus, the catch can be made more consistent.

In the process of preparing, applying, evaluating and developing a talent, seeking student opinions is a principle of talent development. Every education trainee is prepared for the student and put to work. In this context, one of the determining elements of scientific achievements (target behaviors) is the individual, that is, the student (Ertürk, 1972; Sönmez, 2012). The student's intelligence, special and general ability, knowledge, skill, level of perception and intuition, socio-economic, political, psychological, that is, cultural structure can affect what, how, why, when and why he/she will learn. These can affect and determine both the achievements, content, and the training and testing situations.

Problem Statement

What are the reasons for participating in the joint Scientific Research Methods and Publication Ethics course of the students enrolled in the Graduate School of Educational Sciences, the benefits it provides, the quality of the education provided and the views on the additional course?

Sub Problems

1- What are the opinions of graduate students of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences regarding the reasons for continuing their graduate education and the contribution of the program to them?

2- What are the opinions of the graduate students of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences regarding the criticism and suggestions for the course?

3- What are the opinions of the graduate students of the Institute of Educational Sciences regarding the additional course outside the classroom?

Methodology

The phenomenological approach of qualitative research was used in the research. In qualitative research, different types of interviews can be used as focus group interviews, observation, archive and document data collection methods (Creswell, 2013).

Working group

The study was conducted with 140 students who took the joint Scientific Research and Publication Ethics course in a university's education faculty graduate program in the 2020 -2021 academic year.

Data Collection and Analysis

Reasons for continuing postgraduate education about the course for graduate students, the contribution of the program to them; their criticisms and suggestions for the course, their feelings and thoughts about the extra course outside the course were collected at the end of the term by using Google forms, one of the web 2.0 tools. Ensuring validity and reliability in qualitative research can be achieved with credibility, transferability, consistency and confirmability (Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2014; Güçlü, 2019).

Findings

In this section, data related to sub-problems were collected and the data collected with Google forms were examined, tables created using percentages and frequencies were explained and interpreted.

Findings Related to the First Sub-problem

The reasons for continuing postgraduate education of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences students and their views on the contribution of the program are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Categories of Students' Reasons and Opinions on Contribution

Categories	**frequency**	**percentage**
Academic career, specialization	55	21,24
Self- development	125	48,26
Being a qualified teacher professional development	34	13,13
Scientific thinking article writing	34	13,13
Self- regulation self- respect	11	4,25

Total	259	100

As shown in Table 1, the categories of students' reasons for continuing their graduate education and their contributions are academic career, specialization, self-development, professional development, scientific thinking, article writing, self-regulation-self-esteem. According to these data, it can be said that students generally gather in the categories of "academic career, specialization and self-development". The written statements requested from volunteer students regarding these categories are summarized and presented below:

Participant 1: ***I started my master's degree*** *due to my academic career planning. With my master's degree,* ***I aim to complete my doctorate*** *without wasting time. While choosing my undergraduate program, my first target was the academy. I do not see myself as a teacher in the Ministry of National Education (MEB)* ***in the future, but as a faculty member at the university. To improve myself, to have different perspectives****, to be aware of the updated literature and* ***most importantly to be happy****. Researching and academic life makes me happy. The achievement that I think will add to me is the ability to follow* studies.

Participant 2: I have with precious ***professors*** *that I take as an example in the field****. I want to be a successful university teacher like them*** *one day. In fact, I would like* ***to put forward a new theory*** *and* ***be remembered and thought in the future like many valuable scientists whose names we are now commemorating.*** *I thought that* ***my inquiring and investigative*** *side would be nourished by postgraduate education. In this course,* ***I learned how to conduct scientific research.*** *It was instructive as I had the opportunity* ***to apply what I learned.*** *I think that the implementations made a positive contribution.* ***I learned to review articles.*** *I can say that it is useful because* ***I learned to write a thesis proposal****. Being able to do scientific research and write a thesis, in short, is a crucial course that must be taken to be a researcher.*

Participant 3: I think that all humanity has one purpose while living life. Regardless of whether it is good or bad, we are all concerned about leaving a mark on the blank canvas called life. When the canvases of all of us are put on top of each other, the concept called life emerges. As much as I could, ***I wanted the traces I left to be more permanent and beneficial to humanity,*** *albeit a point. In short, I have embarked on* ***this path both to learn and to prove to myself t****hat I exist in life.*

Participant 4: I think that these trainings I have received ***will improve my vision. I want to be appointed as a teacher with a master's degree.*** *I think that* ***the program will greatly contribute to my knowledge and experience.*** *I want to apply all that I have learned. I want to read more and improve. Above all, I hope to broaden* ***my perspective on life and to be able to look at the world and universe from a wider perspective, and to advance my self-regulation and self-respect.***

Participant 5: A program that gives me an opportunity to improve myself. Simultaneously, *I think it will be beneficial* ***for me to advance in my profession*** *in the future. It allows me to look at* ***education from a different perspective****. We can see* *the deficiencies* ***in our country and produce solutions about them****. First, ,* ***I wanted it for my personal development. My goal is not only to settle in an academic staff, but in today's digital age, learning occurs by ourselves, so every person must learn to conduct research.*** *I wanted to be more productive for my students in the institution I will be appointed by learning how to conduct research in an ethical way.*

Findings Related to the Second Sub-problem

The criticism and suggestions of the graduate students of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences are categorized and presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Categories of Students' Opinions on Criticism and Suggestions for the Course

Categories	frequency	percentage
System oriented	69	24,47
For the lesson	133	47,16
For lecturer	30	10,64
Suggestions	39	13,83
For the affective dimension	11	3,90
Total	282	100

As it can be seen in Table 2, it can be said that the categories of the students' criticisms and suggestions about the course are collected in the dimension of "from the system, toward the course, toward the lecturer, suggestions and affective". It can be said that students state their criticisms and suggestions about the **"system and course"**. Written statements requested from volunteer students regarding these categories are summarized and presented below:

Participant 1: ***It was a lesson that was not easy to understand****. In addition to the fact that the course is a difficult course in normal processes, I think it becomes* ***more difficult with distance education. During the course, I encountered many issues that I had difficulty in understanding.*** *In this course, which I think can be beneficial for me,* ***I think that I could not get enough efficiency due to the distance education system. Thanks to the course supported by the book, the quality of the education I received increased a little, but the constant corrections of wrong examples caused confusion for me. Systemic problems also caused*** *negativities in the understanding of the lesson.*

Participant 2: First, ***I want to thank you for your efforts by checking the work of so many students and giving feedback.*** *Many courses have been in* ***distance education up to a point, but I can say that it was difficult for this course to be distance education with so many students due to the importance of this course, in terms of efficiency. I think we could not have benefited so***

much if not for your efforts and individual transfer. *I can say that the rapid progress* ***in the first weeks had a negative effect on motivation.*** *I think this situation occurred because of the trainings that will occur in the following weeks. Thank you for your hard work, teacher.*

Participant 3. ***Distance education was a bit of a problem.*** *Since there are* ***too many students taking the course, our teacher's ability to take care of himself has decreased. I could not obtain satisfactory information about the processes of the courses.*** *It was a problem in terms of communication that we were teaching the courses not on the university's own system but on other systems. Despite all these problems*, ***our teacher's self-sacrificing behavior was admirable. Only system problems prevented us from understanding the lesson very well.*** *But under these conditions, it could have been that much.* ***There could also be a separate course for doctoral students.***

Participant 4. From my viewpoint , ***I find the lesson productive*** *under the conditions of the pandemic. Of course, it would be better to take this* ***training face-to-face*** *and be in one-on-one communication with my teachers and friends; but we are going through a difficult time and I think it was the best that could happen under these circumstances.* ***Although the course and subjects are heavy, I believe that we reinforce it thanks to the homework we do regularly. In addition, since I followed the lessons regularly every week, the efficiency I got was high. The main course that an academic should know throughout his life is the course of scientific research methods. This course is also offered at the undergraduate level. However, a more detailed and detailed explanation at the graduate level made it easier for us to practice. In short, I was satisfied with this course. Thank you to our dear teachers.***

Participant 5. Being taking this course ***with 200 people at the same time during the term affected the process badly.*** *I think that I cannot achieve effective learning and I have difficulties in homework.* ***Despite all efforts of our teacher, getting feedback was low.*** *I think that this process is not easy for both the students and our teacher.* ***I would prefer to take my course with my own department.***

Participant 6: My dear teacher patiently examined our homeworks one by one each week. ***He knew our mistakes were his own fault in the beginning; What an elegant and beautiful idea.*** *It would be unfair not to attend the lecture of such a gracious teacher carefully and to make mistakes.* ***I listened to each additional lesson with my breath held, and I enjoyed it immensely and learned a lot. Infinitely thank you.***

Findings Related to the Third Sub-problem

The opinions of the graduate students of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences regarding the additional course outside the classroom are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Students' Opinions on the Additional Course

Categories	**frequency**	**percentage**
Efficient (Useful)	109	75,69
Inefficient	24	16,67
I couldn't join the system	11	7,64
Total	144	100

As shown in Table 3, it can be said that the students' views on the additional course are grouped under the categories of "productive, unproductive and I could not participate". It can be said that students' opinions are gathered in the "useful (efficient) category. The written statements requested from the students regarding these categories are summarized and presented below:

*Participant 1**: Our teacher voluntarily arranged the additional lessons for us to improve,** so we can't thank him enough. **It is done because of your sacrifices.** I am aware that this situation is due to your efforts to enlighten us. You set an example for us with your determination. Scientific research methods are a difficult course and learning it online is even more difficult, but thanks to additional lessons and supplements, we have been productive**. With the repetitions of the lessons, it becomes easier to fit what is told.** Thanks to you, I have gained a new perspective. Thank you. Showing the examples we made in the supplementary lesson helped us to reinforce. **I saw that I could also look at things from the perspective of different disciplines. When my own homework came across, I realized my mistakes.** When I saw the ones of my other friends, **I transferred them to my own and furthered the process. I think we learned by doing.***

*Participant 2: **Your additional study shows your dedication and how much you want to eliminate the problems arising from this system. We, as students, have truly honored that you have left the choice of day and time to us and your efforts to close our gaps as time allows. However, as long as the system does not change, I think that no matter how much additional course is given, it will not be as effective as a department-based course. Having additional lessons provided a better understanding of the examples and subject** In this sense, the instructor of the course put a lot of effort and did his best to convey the subject well. Additional lessons were useful in this sense. But later I didn't want to participate because similar mistakes are still being made **and I am tired of listening**.*

*Participant 3: Although the **additional lessons** were selfless in terms of the teacher, **they did not reach their goal.** Lessons were conducted on the analysis of several student assignments. This situation caused confusion for students whose content study was different. In this course, which was held with many students, **it could not be productive because it was impossible to correct the homework of every student. Since the***

additional lesson periods are long, distraction has occurred. *In this context,* ***I think that additional courses contribute;*** *however the fact that we could not communicate with our teacher one-on-one because it was a course taken with many people created inefficiency in terms of our learning.*

*Participant 4****: I do not find it appropriate to add additional lessons without asking us. Because the only job of many people like me is not only school, and I couldn't enter because it coincided with my working hours when the additional course was added. I also think that absenteeism should not be taken in additional courses;*** *Because it is an "additional course",* ***only those who want to attend should attend and there should be no obligation to attend.*** *Again, it was* unproductive *because* ***there was too much participation and there was difficulty in reaching the teachers.***

Discussion and Conclusion

A person can have at least one goal in life. He may engage in various activities to achieve this goal. Education is one of these activities. Self-realization and development of skills can be through education. According to Maslow's triangle, every person tries fulfilling the basic physiological and gradually built needs of trust, belonging, self-respect and self-actualization at the highest level (Sönmez, Alacapınar, Zeybek, & Yıldızlı, 2019).

In this context, the students participating in the program gave answers in the categories of "academic career, specialization, self-development, professional development, scientific thinking, article writing, self-regulation-self-respect". Notice that all of these categories are related to the highest level of self-actualization in Maslow's triangle. This is a natural state. When the person reaches this level, he or she can feel happier, more comfortable and safe. The concept of life can change. Self-confidence may increase. He can also be a much sought-after person who is respected and loved by others and society. These features are related to the affective domain. The affective field can include what makes people humanize and live more consistently. There are such situations that the individual may give up on physiological needs, even living, because of what is related to the affective field (Sönmez, Alacapınar, Zeybek, & Yıldız, 2019).

Being a university lecturer in society can provide the necessary material and moral opportunities to live comfortably. When university students cannot find a job after graduation, they hope to find a job by completing a masters and doctorate. Therefore, they can enroll in masters and doctoral programs. As a matter of fact, the students supported this judgment by saying that "I can find a job and live more comfortably when I finish this program".

It can be said that the categories of the students' criticisms and suggestions about the course are collected in the dimension of "from the system, toward the course, toward the lecturer, suggestions and affective". It can be argued that students' criticisms and suggestions are generally related to the "system and course". The questions arising from the system were determined as the number of students being too high. Too many students can reduce the efficiency of education (Sönmez, 1987). As in the course, doing online education with a group of more than 200 can bring many problems. Many advantages of face-to-face education may disappear. It may not be possible to provide feedback, corrections, hints, reinforcements, and active participation of each student. Students expressed this situation as "I did not get enough feedback. Most of the time the same samples were corrected. I am tired of so many assignments. I could learn because of your sacrifice. It's not your fault. It is due to the system. When I have more than 200 students, which one of them can you give feedback or corrections to?" they stated. They suggested that the course be given by a faculty member who knows both the field and scientific research, or that it be divided into classes according to the field. They asked that the duration of the course be insufficient and extended. These variables can increase the efficiency of the course (Alacapınar, 2018; Bloom, 1976; Sönmez, 2012;).

Scientific research is a necessary and crucial course to become a scientist. This course should be given in all schools; because a person can solve the problems he encounters in life by using the scientific method. The students who took the course said that "it was perhaps the most important lesson of our academic life; but giving it online was inefficient because the group was crowded and mixed." They supported this view. Most students said, "It was nice and productive. I learned a lot. I was happy to take the course for the second time. The course is interesting under normal circumstances. Mendeley and Web of Science trainings were pretty good. I will use the information I learned while writing my thesis. I think we received very, useful training . It was productive to learn many applications that even our consultants have not heard of and to have the opportunity to follow current studies in the field.

I learned many new databases, sites, opportunities that I would normally not even know about. I got a lot of additional information that will be useful to me in the future. Apart from that, it was productive to progress with your book. There was an opportunity to open and read where I hung out." expressed their thoughts and feelings. The fact that the acquired knowledge and skills are useful to the student, learning new knowledge and skills can lead to learning and developing positive feelings toward the lesson. These positive emotions can increase success and motivation (Sönmez, 2012; Akgün & Güntaş, 2018; Duman et al., 2011). The person want to learn the knowledge and skills that will be useful to him much more. Indeed, "Especially SPSS and NVIVO etc. I want to learn to use programs for free. It will be beneficial for everyone, especially if SPSS training is provided." He states this view. Learning willingly, learning the knowledge and skills needed is a stimulant that increase the quality of education. If the individual knows what he/she learns will be useful in life, his/her motivation to learn can increase (Gagne & Brigs, 1979; Sönmez, 1987).

One of the most important variables affecting success is time. It is claimed that if everyone is given the time they need, they can learn anything

(Carol, 1963; Bloom, 1974; Bloom, 1976). However, time alone may not be enough in education. The amount of time used can affect the results. Time can be an important variable if the teacher effectively uses the variables required by pedagogy during the learning process. In other words, if the teacher uses feedback, corrections, hints, reinforcements in the educational environment, actively involve the student in the lesson, and becomes a role model, the time spent in education can be effective. Students expressed a positive opinion about the additional course. “Especially, although there was no face-to-face training, **it was really valuable for our teacher to give immediate feedback to the questions and give additional lessons.**

An additional course application is made thanks to your sacrifices. I am aware that this situation is due to your efforts to enlighten us. You set an example for us with your determination. You worked hard for us and tried to convey the best, I am grateful to you in this regard, **The additional course was much more useful for me to adapt to this course**. He went into detail and provided a better understanding. It was useful to deal with the topics that were left in the air in a short time in the normal lesson. **Seeing examples were helpful for our study.** It helped me understand the lesson better. **Additional course time may be extended.** Lesson time was limited and he could theoretically stay in the air. It increased the efficiency in terms of intensifying the questions in our minds in the additional lessons and explaining the subject with examples. Students who expressed their feelings and thoughts by saying, “**You read the answers and give feedback from all of us without getting tired of it”, claimed that they found the additional course useful.** Very few students stated that they did not find the additional course useful.

These are “I didn't get any feedback. I couldn't attend because it was a certain time. Everyone's homework was examined one by one and feedback was not given. I am tired of working on the same and similar samples. **This course is impossible with online education. Additional lessons take time. Often times the connection drops**. **I must constantly renew it. So it is inefficient at all.”** They are the thoughts and feelings they express. This support what was said above about teacher and time.

Suggestions

Based on these data, some suggestions can be made.

1. Students can be classified in their own fields and take this course from a faculty member who knows both the research and field

2. The number of students can be reduced.

3. Each student should be supervised by the lecturer and his/her active participation can be ensured by providing feedback, corrections, hints and reinforcements.

4. The duration of the course can be extended.

5. The course can be opened at different times during the week.

6. The needs of the students in this regard can be determined and the course topics can be enriched.

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THE IMPACT OF POPULAR CULTURE ON FOOD-RELATED BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

Food and beverages are among the most important components of culture and thus, popular culture. It is important to learn about how popular culture affect people's behavior by all terms. This study aims to determine the impact of popular culture on food and beverage consumption and whether there is a difference in consumption behavior in terms of demographic variables. For this aim, a quantitative approach is adopted in this study. According to the results, it is found out that popular food and beverages are mostly preferred by young and single students with a middle or low income. In parallel with this result, it is observed that the most important aspect in preferring popular foods is their being more saturating. The main reasons of consumption are affordability and features related to the product. Female and/or single participants are more affected by popular culture then male and/or married participants in their food consumption behavior.

Keywords: Popular culture, food-related behavior, fast food, food and beverage consumption, food purchase behavior.

Introduction

The concept of consumption is used in different ways in social research. For example, while psychologists often associate food consumption with "food intake" or what we eat, economists associate food consumption with the products we buy (Ashley, Hollows, Jones & Taylor 2004). However, such approaches can only picture a limited part of many factors that can influence food and beverage consumption. These approaches disregard cultural, social and fiscal constraints that limit freedom of choice by equating the food we eat and the beverages we drink with our choices (Warde & Martens 1998; Ashley et al. 2004).

Food and beverages are a big part of popular culture and beliefs, practices and trends within that culture affect people's eating habits in a more direct way. Together with commercial, political, media and other systems, popular culture is formed by ideas and objects produced by a society. With popular culture, new trends have emerged in food and beverage consumption. Some of these trends are outside-consumerism, dining out, dietary or herbal products, food and beverages for specific target groups (dieters, women, athletes, the elderly etc.), ready-to-eat or frozen meals, ethnic food (Rodriguez 2018) and fast food. For example, according to Lusiana, Laksono & Hariri (2020), popular culture leads the formation of new identities through Japanese food consumption which also results with a new lifestyle called "Japanese lifestyling" (pp. 21).

Previous studies on popular culture have mostly focused on fashion (Akar 2009), music (Chambers 1985; Rowe 1996), cinema (Morris 2004; Sargent, Heatherton, Ahrens, Dalton, Tickle & Beach 2002), TV shows (Couldry 2001; Couldry & McCarthy 2004a; Grossberg 2006; Güllüoğlu 2012; Kim, Agrusa, Chon & Cho 2008), sports (Rowe 1996), politics (Siu 1989; Goren 2016; Street 1997) and leisure (Rowe 1996). Apart from fast food research, the topic of popular culture in relation to food and beverage consumption has not been studied enough. Thus, more studies like current study should be performed for contributing to the literature on food-related behavior. The purpose of this study is to determine the impact of popular culture on food and beverage consumption and to reveal whether the consumption differs according to demographic variables.

Popular Culture

The term "popular" refers to generally accepted works that are appreciated by the majority of people. This can be many things like a dance style or a song (Mickunas 2017). According to Storey (2018), the definition of popular culture is open to discussion, because it has always been defined explicitly and implicitly compared to other conceptual categories. In general, it is defined as mass culture that is created and enjoyed by people. According to Mickunas (2017), popular culture is the opposite of "high culture" that "elite minorities" have. Because the popular generally reflects the general taste of the lower and middle classes, as opposed to the sophisticated class whose tastes form a more formal and refined culture. Grossberg (2006) defines popular culture as the culture that appeals to a large audience that cannot be defined by a single socio-demographic variable such as class or gender, regardless of where and by whom it is produced. Browne (1973) describes popular culture as all life elements that are not purely intellectual or elitist and also not completely spread by mass media tools and states that popular culture consists of spoken and printed words, sounds, pictures, objects and works, and in this context, it embraces all layers of society and culture that are "mass", "popular" and "public" except the elite class. In this sense, popular culture that belong to the people has characteristics of mass society as an element that is attributed to the masses in the process of mass society (Akar 2009). Fiske (1999) regards popular culture as a phenomenon that includes both the possibility of social change and the impulses to maintain this change within energy and vitality of human evidence. In short, popular culture is defined as the dominant culture in a certain period of a society (Sözen 2006) or a culture of use and consumption (Erdoğan 1999).

According to Bektaş (1996), popular culture represents the cultural elements of the public that are observed in all kinds of production forms in which urban life exists. It includes different elements such as football teams, religious holidays, pop music, blue jeans, arabesque and Coca-Cola. The common features of these elements are that they cover activities outside of work life and are intended to entertain people. Popular culture does not aim to provide useful information or to educate people; its main purpose is to make people have a good time. It is a widely accepted approach that popular culture is the culture of everyday life brought by modernization; it helps to get rid of negative aspects of reality and creates artificial happiness. Nevertheless, it is an undeniable fact that it arises from common needs of a society (Batmaz 1981).

After World War II, the meaning of popular culture has begun to change with mass culture, media culture, image culture and consumption culture and be seen as "the product of mass consumption". It is inevitable for popular culture to turn to mass culture for "anonymous" audiences. Nonetheless, general popular culture has become a part of consumption for consumers. This trend has been named as "culture industry" by Frankfurt School. Thinkers of Frankfurt School claim that popular culture is a factory producing standardized products. Popular culture reflects not "the original" but "the imitated". In other words, it does not represent anything. On the contrary, it just represents mass media culture (Mickunas 2017). One of the most frequently mentioned concepts in defining popular culture is mass media (Milestone & Meyer 2020). According to Grossberg (2006), since the beginning of 20th century, new communication technologies have become the main sources of popular culture. They have mediated not only the expansion and distribution of popular culture, but also its formation. Popular culture is thought to consist of "mainstream" ideas, attitudes, images, rituals spread by various media outlets. This thought is supported with globalization which has been highlighted by Western countries for the aim of creating "a more homogenized world order". There is also a connotation of popular culture such as "mass appeal" displayed by different media such as advertisements, movies and television (Mickunas 2017).

As mentioned above, one of the most important tools that feed and spread popular culture is mass media. Before mass media have become so widespread, it was observed that people looked out for their local cultures more.

According to Güllüoğlu (2012), continuous and unconscious consumption has started with the influence of the media. The individuals who are exposed to visual media that is an important element of mass media, are affected by what they see or hear in the media. What media displays as "trendy", "attractive", or "sensational" becomes the perception of the audience. Similarly, the behaviors and emotions displayed on a television screen by a charismatic actor are also embraced and imitated by viewers who want to define their ideal self with their favorite television star. Although it does not change the situation whether these emotions or behaviors are romantic or violent, positive or negative, many psychology studies show that people adopt their attitudes and behaviors through visual media at a very early age. These attitudes and behaviors continue to exist in the individual (Sargent et al. 2002) and are even strengthened by mass media (Couldry 2001; Couldry & McCarthy 2004a; 2004b).

Popular culture is a concept that has penetrated into contemporary society. It is the center of consumerism that feeds social media today. Although it is attributed to Western societies, there is no limit that it cannot reach with globalization (Harvey 1989; Storey 2018), and its effects have continued to be felt in every field. In recent years the impact of mass media has been adopted by social media which has become a part of almost every individual's life. And this also has affected the food-related behavior of consumers.

Food and Beverage Consumption and Popular Culture

According to Warde (1997), the consumption of food and beverages is universal, usual and very valuable. Every human being eats; although many people have several meals a day without even thinking about eating, this activity is holistically linked to many significant factors of life. In this regard, food and beverages are different from other fields that are used to explain consumption. Cultural studies generally focus on purchases that include symbols such as cars and clothing. Similar symbols are actually found in food and beverage industry. Many food and beverage related activities are private or family activities. It deals with physical and emotional needs and is an important element of family formation. It can also take up more space in families' budgets than clothing and entertainment. For this reason, food and beverage consumption is an element that regulates the aspects that strengthen identity and symbolize status.

Regardless of a society's economic system, food and beverages have always been a part of a symbolic system that conveys cultural messages. Food and beverages are specific indicators that makes modern social life comprehensible. For example, with whom and where, at what time of day and what we eat is affected by many different variables such as sex, age, social status and income level (Finkelstein 2003). Bell and Valentine (1997) state that every meal we eat gives information about our personality and our place in the world.

The impact of food and beverages on popular culture has increased as chefs have become famous and cooking has moved away from its traditional meaning through media and become one of the main subjects of TV shows. The impact of popular food and beverage culture on public policy has also increased as well as its use as a substantial tool to reflect cultural values and ideologies (LeBesco & Naccarato 2018).

According to Finkelstein (2003), the history of dining is one of the mechanisms of constant adaptation to new food and beverages and new cooking techniques. The flavors of food and beverages and cuisines are not static. For example, tomatoes, hot peppers and chili pepper have a dynamic past. Although they seem like ordinary ingredients in our diet now, they are indeed recent European discoveries. The same is true for Asian flavors such as coconut milk, bean sprouts, water chestnut and coriander. The integration of a cuisine occurs as a result of the interaction of many different social factors such as creativity, nostalgia and commercial pressures. Today one of the most significant social factors in this regard is popular culture. Health, self-care and pursuit of eternal youth have become personal goals because modern Western societies praise and promote youth and slimness in popular culture. Thousands of products are produced to assist people in their struggle to stay young and thin with commercial concerns. Highly recommended products such as supplements, dietary products or herbal extracts have become strong aspects of cultural pressures for individuals to follow this trend. Especially young people are more likely to follow the latest food and beverage trends (Fieldhouse 2013).

Necessity, pleasure, social distinction, opportunities and values intersect at dinner tables; these factors determine who will sit where at the table, what will be on the plate or whether there will be a plate, who will prepare and serve dishes. However, food and beverages are stronger indicators in situations which are repeated on daily basis. In Western societies, everyone can recognize social indicators of whether a family normally eats caviar, hot dogs or frozen foods (Grew 2018). In this context, the French sociologist Luce Giard regards cooking as a form of popular culture. This point of view is a potentially useful basis for developing food and beverage consumption within cultural studies. Culturally, Giard argues that there is a difference between "authentic" popular culture produced within traditional cultures of women and inauthentic popular culture which is mass and industrial, not produced by people but for people (Hall 1981; Bennett 1981). To recognize different and important social functions complemented by food and beverages requires considering the consequences when these functions change or deteriorate. For example, when food and beverages are universally available, homogenized and packaged, they may lose the possibility of symbolizing different social identities. Rather, they constitute social meanings that are tailored to society and to serve successful advertising campaigns, in other words, commercial concerns that have created the Pepsi generation, the Benetton tribe and McDonald's family. Such connections and affiliations lead to a new understanding of identity offered by global marketing campaigns that have been estranged from local and unique influences and are actually developed in very different locations from where consumers live (Finkelstein 2003).

Food and beverages are also known to represent temporary personal qualities such as cosmopolitanism and conservatism. While customized products such as squid, oysters, and tuna carry a different message, burgers and French fries may represent the opposite. According to Yılmaz & Bekar (2019), popular culture products' being in sight much is one of the most important factors affecting consumer preference. Some food and beverages described as traditional culture products fall behind in the competition with popular food and beverage products of this globalized world. Foods such as "pide", "lahmacun" and beverages as "sherbet" which are unique to Turkish culture have started to be replaced by popular culture products such as waffle, pizza and latte recently. According to Sakallı (2014), popular culture causes people all over the world to forget their own cultures, enjoy what is offered to them, take pleasure from it and act accordingly and eventually makes national values to be forgotten.

Of all sociocultural by-products, only a few have touched our lives as much as the relationship between popular culture and food and beverages. Because while we are exposed to popular culture every day, we also have to eat every day. This relationship creates brands and transfers the fundamentals of culinary education to consumers every day (Reum 2011). Öztürk (2014) describes the relationship between food and beverages and popular culture through fast food. He states that fast-food, which is the basic consumption style of the industrialized societies (Crothers 2021), has become more widespread with globalization process; this consumption style preferred to save time has become a part of social culture over time and fast-food consumption style has negatively affected many family functions.

In line with this conceptual framework, the study questions are listed as below:

(1) How much does popular culture affect consumers' food-related behavior?

(2) How frequently are popular food and beverages consumed? And which popular foods and beverages are consumed mostly?

(3) Does the impact of popular culture on food and beverage consumption differ by demographic characteristics of consumers?

(4) What are the factors that affect the consumer preference of popular food and beverages?

(5) Do these factors affecting the preference of popular food and beverages differ by demographic characteristics of consumers?

The study is shaped with regard to these questions. All answers are explained in findings and conclusion parts.

Methodology

The sample of this study which was conducted to determine the impact of popular culture on food and beverage consumption and whether consumption differs by demographic variables was 391 consumers over the age of 15 living in Mugla province, Turkey. The data of this quantitative study were collected with a questionnaire during customers' visits to food and beverage enterprises. The scales applied in questionnaire were prepared by the authors after a comprehensive literature review (Hall 1981; Bennett 1981; Finkelstein 2003; Warde 1997, Rodriguez 2018; Yılmaz & Bekar 2019). The questionnaire form consisted of 3 parts. In the first part, close-ended questions regarding demographic characteristics (age, sex, education level, monthly personal income, occupation and marital status) were asked. In the second section, the preference for popular culture foods and in the third part the reasons for this preference were measured with 5-point Likert type scaling. Before survey study, expert opinions were taken and then required revisions or additions were made by conducting a preliminary study with 20 participants. The collected data were transferred to statistical analysis software and before proceeding to analyses, extreme value analysis, item analysis, reliability analysis and validity analysis were performed. The item total correlation value and Cronbach's alpha value of the scales were examined. The obtained findings showed that total correlation value of each item was above 0,30 and the internal consistency coefficient was 0,905 (20 items about reasons for preference of popular culture food and beverages). The construct validity was determined by exploratory factor analysis. One item was omitted as it had a variance below 0,30 and four items were omitted due to the fact that the difference between their factor load values in two factors was less than 0,10 in the first factor analysis. Then a new factor analysis was performed. Finally, 15 items were grouped under 4 factors. As a result of analysis, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin was *0,893,* Bartlett's test of sphericity was $p<0{,}01$; $X^2=2746{,}135$; df: *105*; disclosure rate of total variance was 66,350. The finding that Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was above 0,8 showed that the sample size was sufficient (Hutcheson & Sofroniou 1999); and Bartlett's test of sphericity values were significant ($p<0{,}01$) showed that data set had a normal distribution with multiple variables and there was a high correlation between variables (Seçer 2018; Kalaycı 2014). The factors were named as "Psychosocial impacts", "Spatial features", "Product features", and "Affordability" (See Table 1).

In the phase of data analysis, percentage and frequency values were used for demographic information and frequencies of consumption of consumers' popular culture food and beverages. Student's t test and One-Way ANOVA were used to compare the reasons for preferring popular culture foods in terms of demographic characteristics. In addition, Tukey test was applied to determine which groups caused the difference in groups in which there was a difference as a result of variance analysis. In statistical analysis, $p<0.05$ was accepted as the level of significance.

Table 1. Factor Analysis

Factors	Items	Factors			
		1	2	3	4
Psychosocial impacts	I feel more sophisticated	,832			
	I feel more popular	,814			
	I feel more modern	,801			
	I am influenced by my circle of friends, relatives	,624			
Spatial features	The places where they are served are suitable for conversation		,752		
	The places where they are served are crowded		,731		
	I am influenced by advertisements		,692		
Product features	They are delicious			,756	
	They are inexpensive			,652	
	They look good			,629	
	I feel they are worth the price			,580	
	I think they are more hygienic			,563	
Affordability	They are promotional products				,723
	They are ready in a short time				,712
	Their portion sizes are large				,612
	Explained variance by factors	19,753	16,491	15,884	14,223
	Total variance				66,350
	Cronbach's Alpha value of the Scale				0,896
	Cronbach's Alpha values of the factors	0,878	0,791	0,767	0,704

Kaiser-Meyer Olkin= 0,893, p<0,001, X2: 2746,135, df: 105

Findings

Nearly half of the participants were male; 74,7% were at the age of 34 years or under; more than half (60,1%) had a associate or bachelor's degree.

Considering their marital status, it was seen that 73,4% were single. The rate of participants who had an income level of 2400 TL or under were 43,2%. Nearly 40% of the participants were students; 22,5% were public employees and 25,3% were working at private sector.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Sex	**n**	**%**	**Marital Status**	**n**	**%**
Female	215	55,0	Married	104	26,6
Male	176	45,0	Single	287	73,4
Age (Years)			**Monthly Income**		
24 and below	129	33,0	2400 & ↓	169	43,2
25-34	163	41,7	2401-3900	99	25,3
35-44	66	16,9	3901-4900	78	19,9
45-54	25	6,4	4901-5900	41	10,5
55 and above	8	2,0	5901 &↑	4	1,0
Education Level			**Occupation**		
Elementary school	20	5,1	Government employee	88	22,5
High school	73	18,7	Private sector	99	25,3
Associate/ Bachelor degree	235	60,1	Retired	15	3,8
Master/PhD degree	63	16,1	Not working	26	6,6
			Student	163	41,7
TOTAL	**391**	**100**	**TOTAL**	**391**	**100**

The participants were asked “How effective is popular culture on your food and beverage consumption?” and their answers are presented at the figure below.

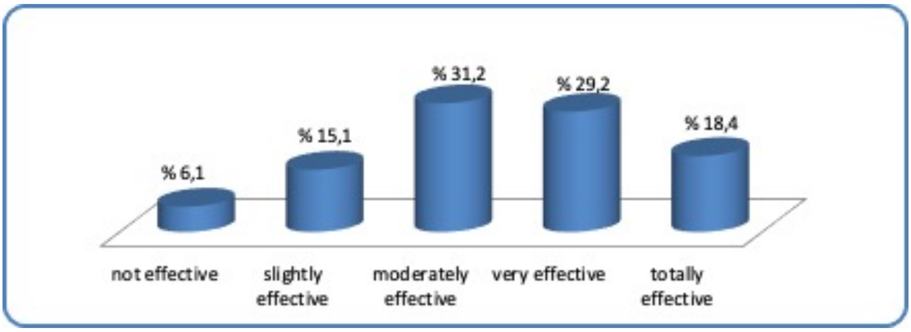

Figure 1. The participants' answers for the effectiveness of popular culture on their food and beverage consumption

According to the distribution of their answers, 6,1% were not affected by popular culture in their food and beverage consumption; 18,4% thought that popular culture was totally effective in their food and beverage consumption. The rate of participants who considered popular culture as slightly effective was 15,1%; as moderately effective was 31,2% and as very effective was 29,2%. The mean level of impact of popular culture on their food and beverage consumption was 3,38±1,13.

Table 3 shows the frequencies of consumption of some food and beverages that are recognized as popular culture products.

Table 3. The frequencies of consumption of some food and beverages that are recognized as popular culture products by the participants

Popular food and beverages	**Every day**	**A couple of times a week**	**Once a week**	**Once or twice a month**	**A couple of times a year**	**Never**	**Mean±SD**
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Burger	2,0	18,4	25,6	28,1	16,4	9,5	2,36±1,26
Pizza	2,0	16,9	26,3	33,2	16,4	5,1	2,39±1,15
Sandwich	9,7	17,4	33,0	22,8	11,0	6,1	2,73±1,31
Pasta	1,8	23,8	36,1	32,0	4,3	2,0	2,80±0,97
Sushi	-	-	-	4,9	19,4	75,7	0,46±0,86
Waffle	0,3	7,2	20,2	31,2	23,3	17,9	1,76±1,18
Tiramisu, profiter-ole, pud-ding etc.	1,3	14,6	27,1	32,2	15,9	9,0	2,26±1,19
Macaron	0,3	4,1	6,1	12,5	22,5	54,5	0,83±1,14

Donut	-	2,0	4,3	9,0	28,1	56,5	0,67±0,95
Croissant	2,6	6,9	16,1	22,3	21,2	30,9	1,54±1,38
Cappuccino, espresso latte etc.	16,4	23,5	22,0	15,3	9,0	13,8	2,81±1,61
Milkshake, frappe etc.	2,3	9,2	11,5	30,2	23,3	23,5	1,66±1,32

Sushi, donut, croissant and waffle were the least consumed foods, milkshake, frappe etc. were the least consumed beverages by the participants. While pasta was the most consumed food, the most consumed beverages were cappuccino, espresso, latte etc.

It was assumed that levels of being influenced by popular culture in food and beverage consumption differed by demographic characteristics of the participants. The tests of difference run with this regard were presented at Tables 4 & 5.

Table 4. The Comparison of the Impact of Popular culture on food and beverage consumption in terms of Demographic Characteristics of Participants (The Results of one-way ANOVA)

	Demographics	**n**	**mean**	**SD**	**F**	**p**
The impact of popular culture on food and beverage consumption	24 and under	129	3,57	1,05	3,863 (1-5)	**,004***
	25 - 34	163	3,42	1,14		
	35 - 44	66	3,16	1,06		
	45 - 54	25	3,04	1,17		
	55 and above	8	2,37	1,50		
The impact of popular culture on food and beverage consumption	Elementary	20	3,60	1,35	3,823 (2-3) (2-4)	**,010***
	High school	73	3,73	1,05		
	Associate or bachelor's	235	3,31	1,12		
	Master/PhD	63	3,15	1,08		
The impact of popular culture on food and beverage consumption	2400 and ↓	169	3,49	1,11	7,281	**,000***
	2401-3900	99	3,60	1,14		
	3901-4900	78	3,23	1,10		
	4901and ↑	45	2,75	,98		
The impact of popular culture on food and beverage consumption	Government employee	88	3,02	1,17	6,517 (1-4) (1-5) (2-4)	**,000***
	Private sector	99	3,25	1,08		
	Retired	15	3,00	1,46		
	Not working	26	3,92	,93		
	Student	163	3,61	1,05		

p<0,05

The results presented at the table above confirm the definition of popular culture (Grossberg 2006) as a culture that appeals to a wider audience and cannot be attributed to a single sociodemographic variable such as class or gender. In the current study, the impact of popular culture on participants' food and beverage consumption was observed in all of the demographic variables. However, it was noteworthy that the level of impact was higher in some groups and statistically significant than other groups. When the impact of popular culture on food and beverage consumption was compared in terms of age of the participants, it was deduced that young participants were more affected by popular culture and the level of impact decreased in groups of older participants (p<0,05). With regard to education level, high school graduates had the highest mean level and they were followed by the participants with primary education, the ones with an associate or bachelor's degree and the ones with a degree of master's or PhD. The results of Tukey test showed that the difference was between high school graduates and the ones with a higher education degree. As for income levels of the participants, as their income level increased, their level of being affected by popular culture decreased. Nevertheless, it was observed that in the group of participants with a low- or middle-income level, the results were higher than the mean values and in the group of participants with an income level of 4901 TL and above, the mean value was 2,75±0,98. The comparison in occupation groups resulted in that the impact levels of students or the participants who had not been working were higher than other groups. They were followed by private sector employees and government employees. The statistically significant difference was between government employees and students or the ones that had not been working and between private sector employees and the ones that had not been working.

Table 5 presents that the impact of popular culture on food and beverage consumption was higher in female participants and in single participants. In comparison in terms of the demographic characteristics, the results confirmed each other.

Table 5. The Comparison of the Impact of Popular culture on food and beverage consumption in terms of gender and marital status of Participants (The Results of t-test)

Factors	**Groups**	**n**	**mean**	**SD**	**t test**		
					t	**SD**	**p**
The impact of popular culture on food and beverage consumption	Female	215	3,48	1,05	1,957	351,31	0,051*
	Male	176	3,26	1,20			
	Married	104	2,97	1,20	-4,474	389	0,000*
	Single	287	3,53	1,06			

p<0,05

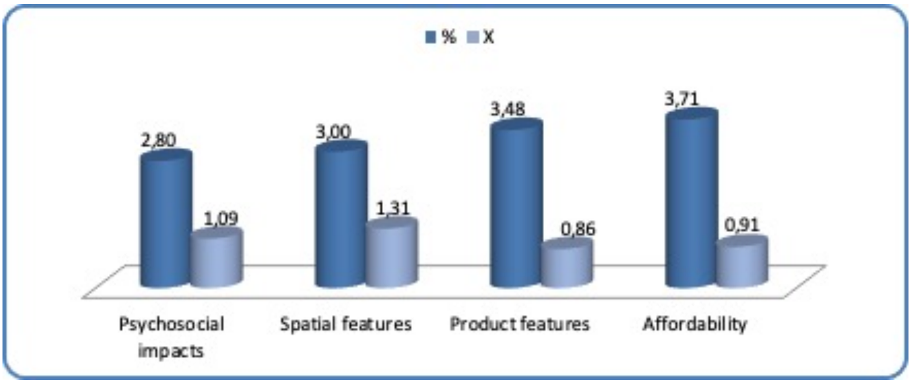

Figure 2. The Factors Affecting Food and Beverage Consumption

The reasons for being affected by popular culture were grouped under four factors in terms of the results of factor analysis applied and named in accordance with the items (See Table 1). The reasons for the consumers' being affected by popular culture based on these factors were shown at Figure 2 which suggested that the most important reason why the participants were affected by popular culture was affordability (3,71±0,91). While product features had impact above average (3,48±0,86), that factor was followed by spatial features and psychosocial impacts.

It was assumed that the reasons for consumption of popular food and beverages varied by demographic variables. The results of comparison tests conducted in line with study problems are presented at the table below.

Table 6. The reasons for preference of popular food and beverages in terms of gender

Factors	**Groups**	**n**	**mean**	**SD**	**t test**		
					t	**SD**	**p**
Psychosocial impacts	Female	215	2,82	1,09	0,48	389	0,63
	Male	176	2,77	1,09			
Spatial features	Female	215	3,10	1,12	1,90	389	0,58
	Male	176	2,88	1,12			
Product features	Female	215	3,57	,80	2,299	389	0,22
	Male	176	3,37	,91			
Affordability	Female	215	3,74	,89	0,756	389	0,44
	Male	176	3,67	,93			

$p<0,05$

It was deduced that female participants were more affected by popular culture than male participants in terms of all factors. Although there was not found any statistically significant difference, it was possible to say that female participants were more affected than male participants in terms of psychosocial impacts, spatial features, product features and affordability respectively (p>0,05).

Table 7. The reasons for preference popular food and beverages in terms of Age

Factors	**Age**	**n**	**mean**	**SD**	**F**	**p**
Psychosocial impacts	24 and under	129	2,91	1,20	,645	,630
	25 - 34	163	2,72	1,05		
	35 - 44	66	2,77	1,09		
	45 - 54	25	2,88	,79		
	55 - 64	8	2,68	,92		
Spatial features	24 and under	129	2,94	1,17	,436	,782
	25 - 34	163	2,99	1,13		
	35 - 44	66	3,05	1,10		
	45 - 54	25	3,25	1,08		
	55 - 64	8	2,95	,74		
Product features	24 and under	129	3,54	,82	1,207	,307
	25 - 34	163	3,47	,88		
	35 - 44	66	3,49	,88		
	45 - 54	25	3,40	,76		
	55 - 64	8	2,87	1,01		
Affordability	24 and under	129	3,82	,85	1,938	,103
	25 - 34	163	3,69	,94		
	35 - 44	66	3,65	,87		
	45 - 54	25	3,72	,98		
	55 - 64	8	2,95	1,18		

p<0,05

The participants under the age of 24 were more affected by psychosocial impacts and product features in their preference of consuming popular food and beverages than other age groups. The group of the participants whose age was between 35-44 had a higher level of being affected by spatial features. The affordability factor was a significant factor in the preferences of popular food and beverages by the young and middle-aged participants. Although there was not any statistically significant difference in the comparison by age, it could be claimed according to mean values that especially young and middle-aged participants preferred popular food and beverages for different reasons than other age groups.

Table 8. The reasons for preference of popular food and beverages in terms of Marital Status

Factors	**Groups**	**n**	**mean**	**SD**	**t test**

					t	SD	p
Psychosocial impacts	Married	104	2,77	1,05	-,310	389	,756
	Single	287	2,81	1,10			
Spatial features	Married	104	2,98	1,15	-,162	389	,872
	Single	287	3,00	1,12			
Product features	Married	104	3,29	,90	-2,601	389	**,010***
	Single	287	3,55	,84			
Affordability	Married	104	3,47	1,03	-3,231	156,1	**,001***
	Single	287	3,80	,85			

*p<0,05

When the impact of marital status on the reasons why consumers preferred popular food and beverages was examined, it was observed that the mean values of single participants were higher than those of married participants. While the mean value for being affected by product features was 3,29±0,90 in the group of married participants, it was 3,55±0,84 in the group of single participants. As for affordability factor, the mean value was 3,47±1,03 in the group of married participants and 3,80±0,85 in the group of single participants. These were statistically significant differences (p<0,05). Even though being affected by psychosocial impacts and spatial features had a higher mean value in the group of single participants, the difference between groups was not statistically significant (p>0,05).

Table 9. The reasons for preference of popular food and beverages in terms of Income Level

Factors	Income level	n	mean	SD	F	p
Psychosocial impacts	2400 & ↓	169	2,86	1,17	2,234	,084
	2401-3900	99	2,93	,96		
	3901-4900	78	2,68	1,10		
	4901 & ↑	45	2,48	,96		
Spatial features	2400 & ↓	169	2,80	1,09	2,397	,068
	2401-3900	99	2,87	1,12		
	3901-4900	78	3,20	1,11		
	4901 & ↑	45	3,11	1,22		
Product features	2400 & ↓	169	2,82	,96	2,718 (2-4)	**,044***
	2401-3900	99	3,00	1,13		
	3901-4900	78	3,51	,88		
	4901 & ↑	45	3,58	,77		
Affordability	2400 & ↓	169	3,49	,88	2,345	,073
	2401-3900	99	3,15	,87		
	3901-4900	78	3,48	,86		

	4901 & ↑	45	3,80	,90		

*p<0,05 (2400 & ↓:1, 2401-3900:2, 3901-4900: 3, 4901 & ↑:4)

When it was examined whether the reasons why consumers preferred popular food and beverages differed by their income levels, it was found that the mean values increased in parallel with the increase in income level of participants in terms of the product features factor and there was a statistically significant difference. With regard to psychosocial impacts (feeling more sophisticated, feeling more popular, feeling more modern etc.) it was observed that the mean values decreased in parallel to the increase in income level.

Table 10. The reasons for preference of popular food and beverages in terms of Education Level

Factors	**Educational Level**	**n**	**mean**	**SD**	**F**	**p**
Psychosocial impacts	Primary	20	2,73	1,02	11,367 (2-4) (3-4)	**,000***
	High school	73	3,35	1,12		
	Associate & Bachelor's	235	2,77	1,00		
	Master's & PhD	63	2,31	1,14		
Spatial features	Primary	20	2,83	1,35	13,116	**,000***
	High school	73	3,47	,89		
	Associate & Bachelor's	235	3,05	1,11		
	Master's & PhD	63	2,32	1,08		
Product features	Primary	20	3,23	,90	5,191 (1-4) (2-3.4) (3-4)	**,002***
	High school	73	3,72	,79		
	Associate & Bachelor's	235	3,51	,84		
	Master's & PhD	63	3,19	,92		
Affordability	Primary	20	3,21	1,17	5,818	**,001***
	High school	73	3,95	,83		
	Associate & Bachelor's	235	3,75	,84		
	Master's & PhD	63	3,44	1,05		

*p<0,05 (primary 1, high school 2, associate/bachelor 3, master & PhD 4)

Table 10 shows that the group of participants with a high school education was the group with the highest mean values in terms of all four factors. It was noteworthy that in terms of psychosocial impacts, the mean values of the participants with an associate or bachelor degree were the lowest values. The statistically significant differences were between the participants with a master or PhD degree and the participants with a high school education or the ones with an associate/bachelor degree. While the mean values of the factor product features were higher than the mean values in all of the groups, the lowest mean value was found in the group of the participants with master/PhD degree and the highest mean value was in the group of the participants with high school education. As a result of Tukey test, the difference was between the group of the graduate participants and other groups. Although the difference was found significant in terms of affordability and spatial features, it could not be determined which groups caused the difference. Overall, in terms of all four factors, the mean values of the participants with high school degree and associate/bachelor degree were higher.

Table 11. The reasons for consumers' preference of popular food and beverages in terms of Occupations

Factors	Occupation	n	mean	SD	F	p
Psychosocial impacts	Government employee	88	2,59	1,07	1,744	,140
	Private sector	99	2,87	,99		
	Retired	15	2,53	,87		
	Not working	26	3,10	,93		
	Student	163	2,85	1,18		
Spatial features	Government employee	88	2,95	1,18	2,463	**,045***
	Private sector	99	3,16	1,06		
	Retired	15	2,97	,64		
	Not working	26	3,48	,87		
	Student	163	2,85	1,18		
Product features	Government employee	88	3,33	,87	2,117	,078
	Private sector	99	3,45	,81		
	Retired	15	3,17	,90		
	Not working	26	3,68	,62		
	Student	163	3,58	,89		
Affordability	Government employee	88	3,50	,93	3,582 (1-5)	**,007***
	Private sector	99	3,58	,97		
	Retired	15	3,75	,97		
	Not working	26	4,02	,77		
	Student	163	3,86	,85		

*p<0,05 (government employee 1, private sector employee 2, retired 3, not working 4, student 5)

In terms of the affordability factor, the mean values within the groups of the participants who were not working or were students were higher than those in other groups. In terms of spatial features, the mean values of the students were lower than those in other groups. In both of these factors, the occupations of the participants revealed a statistically significant difference in reasons for preference (p<0,05). As a result of Tukey test, in terms of the affordability factor, the difference was between the groups of government employees and students. In terms of spatial features, although the difference was found significant, the groups that caused the difference could not be determined. In terms of product features, the mean values were higher than those in others for all occupation groups (P>0,05).

Results and Discussion

Popular culture which is defined as mass culture created by people and liked by many people (Storey 2018) has reached every segment in population with mass media and has become an important part of consumption. Consumers have unwittingly made popular culture permanent and integrated it into their lifestyles (Yılmaz & Bekar 2019). One of the significant areas influenced by popular culture is food-related behavior of people. This study is conducted with 391 consumers to determine the impact of popular culture on food and beverage consumption and food-related behavior and whether this consumption behavior differs by demographic variables.

The majority of the participants of this research are young, single and have low or middle personal income. Almost half of them are students. In terms of gender, the distribution is nearly equal. According to the obtained results, the vast majority of the participants are affected by popular culture in food and beverage consumption at different levels. It is seen that almost more than half of the participants are affected by popular culture in their food and beverage consumption.

In this study, the most preferred foods are found as pizza, burgers, pasta, sandwich etc. which are saturating and the most preferred beverages are found as cappuccino, espresso, latte etc. As almost half of the participants were students, it was understandable why the consumption frequency of foods such as burger, pizza, sandwich which were more saturating and relatively more affordable was higher than other foods.

The level of being affected is higher in female participants in terms of gender; in singles in terms of marital status; in young participants in terms of age and in students or in the participants who are not working in terms of occupation. It could be According to Love (1972) young people and families with children visit fast-food businesses more than other groups. In line with this suggestion, in the current study, it can be claimed that popular culture had more influence over young people.

In addition, it is seen that popular culture is more effective in each occupation groups than other demographic variables and the level of being affected decreases as the income level of participants increases. However, Akbay, Tiryaki & Gul (2007) find out that as household income increases, fast-food consumption increases too. In their study on the consumption of fast food which has become a part of social culture over time, Kayışoğlu & İçöz (2012) claim that as the level of education of consumers increases, the consumption rate of fast-food decreases. This study reveals a similar result.

The reasons for preferring popular food and beverages are affordability, product features, spatial features of the places where these foods are served and psychosocial impacts respectively. As for the determinants of fast-food consumption, Dunn, Mohr, Wilson & Wittert (2011) suggest convenience, social conscience, satisfaction and health in terms of behavioral beliefs and claim that consumer demands for food and beverages that are delicious, satisfying and convenient are high.

In terms of demographic variables, when consumption reasons are compared, female participants are more likely to consume popular food and beverages by being affected by these factors than male participants. In terms of marital status, single participants prefer popular food and beverages than married participants and especially affordability and product features are effective in this preference. In terms of age, younger participants are affected by affordability and product features at most in preference of popular food and beverages. The participants who are at the ages between 34-54 are affected by spatial features more than other age groups. In terms of spatial features, product features and affordability factors, as the levels of education and income of the participants increase, the mean values increase. And the mean values in terms of psychosocial impacts are higher in the groups of participants with lower education and income levels. Considering consumption behaviors and reasons with regard to demographic variables, the results are similar with each other.

Food and beverage enterprises operating in the province where this study is conducted are mostly located around university campus. Thus, during the data collection process, it is seen that the majority of participants are mostly university students. Besides being a limit for this study, it is understandable that affordability and product features have higher mean values in young, single and student participants.

Future research can focus on the relationship between social media and food-related behavior. It is also significant to learn more about the impact of visual social media on food and beverage consumption and food consumer preferences. With regard to food and beverage industry, business managers may follow popular trends but also may integrate popular food and beverages with local tastes. They may create a difference and gain a competitive advantage in especially young consumer market. Thus they can preserve local or national values and at the same time adopt world trends.

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGIOUS AND NATIONAL IDEOLOGY IN RADICALISM PREVENTION: A CASE STUDY FROM INDONESIA

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Abstract

The act of radicalism in the name of religion that occurs on earth gives the impression that it obliges its adherents to commit violence in solving every problem so that it raises the opinion that religion is synonymous with violence. Why has religion turned into a catastrophe of crimes against humanity? In this article, the author tries to answer the question, what factors have turned religion into a crime against humanity? To answer this question, the author will use the thought of Charles Kimball, who identifies five signs that become factors for religion turning into disaster, namely signs when the understanding of religion has deviated so that it will bring disaster. The five signs are claims of absolute truth, blind obedience, building the ideal age, the goal of justifying all means, and calling for "holy war". Besides that, the writer tries to answer the question, how can religion go hand in hand with nationality? To answer the second question, the writer will use the ideas of *"Ulama* and statesmen in Indonesia in instilling national values so that they can eliminate radicalism.

Keywords: *Religion, nationality, and radicalism.*

1. Introduction

The third millennium era became an era of religious awakening, which was accompanied by the increasing dynamics of different interpretations of religious teachings, which resulted in different religious patterns. The dynamics of differences in understanding in religion can occur, both ideologically, ritually, intellectually, actively and in social movements (Pratikno &

Lay, 2017). Besides, this phenomenon of different understanding can give birth to an inclusive understanding also an exclusive understanding (Haryanto et al., 2018). According to Johan Efendi, religion is often double-faced, at one time a face of peace by proclaiming peace, as a guide to safety, unity and brotherhood, but at other times it shows its fierce face and spreads conflict, sometimes even more than that is, as recorded in history, it led to wars that claimed lives (Aftab, 2019). If we return to the teachings of religion itself that the emergence of conflict is caused by religion - instead it raises the question - where will the God we worship and are asked for guidance allows damage, destruction and annihilation?

Is it true that the emergence of conflict that leads to destruction, destruction and destruction is caused by religion? Some researchers, say for example a large socialist figure, namely Karl Mark (Munck, 2021), criticized religion by saying that "religion is the opium of the people", meaning that religion is what always makes people complacent and raises problems in society (Lela Saputri & Gunaryo, 2021). Clifford Geertz seems to suspect religion as having a conflict function. How come? According to him, one of the functions of religion in human social life is to function as social integration (Conner, 2019). When religion functions as social integration, it can directly lead to a conflict function. This is because conflicts can arise when differences in understanding of religious teachings arise and these differences are reinforced by the unilateral and absolute truth claims of each religion (Parker, 2014).

A.N. Wilson said that religion is a dilemma (Turner, 2020), this is because religion as a belief system will place the belief held by a person must have a building of truth that forms the belief that each individual believes in intolerant of other people, even more and more feel entitled to disbelieve others. From here religion becomes the source of the dilemmas of chaos (Ozturk, 2016).

The exclusive style of religious understanding places oneself as the most self-righteous concept and practice. This is what is currently sweeping the world, including Indonesia. Exclusive religious ideology has become a scourge for the life of the nation and state (Knutson et al., 2021). Why is religion often a trigger for radicalism? Especially in Indonesia.

2. Factors Causing Religion to Become a Source of Radicalism in Indonesia

The birth of a form of violence in the name of religion can occur because of the emergence of a relationship between the two which is marked by ambiguity, namely a very real ambiguity (Du Toit, 2019). There is a saying: religion is like two opposing sides of a coin, meaning that one side of religion is a source of peace; as well as a source of violence and conflict. Religious circles may claim that an orientation to peace is intrinsic to the traditions and teachings of religions, but intrinsically religion has provoked conflict and violence (Ismail, 2019). The roots of theological violence can also be internal and external. For internal theological roots, called them religious fundamentalists, while the theological roots that were external, according to him, were secular fundamentalists (McAnulla, 2014).

What is interesting to note is Charles Kimball's view of the emergence of violence "masterminded" by religion. According to Charles Kimball (Keown, 2017), there are five situations where religion has the potential to integrate with acts of violence. First, when religion claims religious truth as absolute truth and the only true teaching, what is wrong and what is wrong can be destroyed; Second, religion can give birth to acts of violence when accompanied by blind obedience to religious leaders; Third, religion can also integrate with violence when its people begin to miss their ideal era in the past and are determined to make it happen in the present; Fourth, religion can integrate with violence when certain goals justify any means; Fifth, religion can integrate with violence when holy war has been shouted (Olson, 2020).

If we look closely at the factors put forward by Charles Kimball, it is possible to accumulate the *ta'ashub* factor (excessive fanaticism), although it does not mean to simplify (Sahrul, 2017). In today's world reality, excessive *ta'ashub* attitude has given birth to the deadliest terrorist cells. They become ignorant because of the whispers of religion by their rotten teachings. In a person, the destructive instinct and the *eros* instinct are attached to the life instinct, and most of the battle for two instincts in a person that wins is the *Thanatos* instinct (the destructive instinct), especially in the psychology of the masses which are indeed directed to do damage (Theißen, 2019).

In Indonesia, searching for forms of violence that take place in the realm of religion is very easy, because during the last year there have been various forms of violence, such as a catalog that is able to present a lot of data making it easier to find information on violence in it (Intan, 2019). For example, forms of violence that involve mass organizations in the same religious community. For example, the case of expulsion of Ahmadiyyah residents that occurred in NTB. In another incident, a number of masses on behalf of a joint Islamic group protested the Inter-Ethnic and Religious Dialogue in Purwokerto, West Java, May 23, 2006 which was attended by Gus Dur (As'ad, 2009).

Another example of cases involving violence in the same religious sphere is violence aimed at the Liberal Islam network, where the figures will be killed for calling out an appeal not to interpret Islamic doctrine too *harafah* (Fenton, 2016). On June 25, 2005, violence in the name of religion also befell a lecturer at the Muhammadiyah University in Palu, who wrote an Islamic article calling "Religion Failed", was protested by 2000 people calling it the Muslim Community of Palu City, and threatening to mobilize a large and large crowd will solve the problem on their own if the police does not act for 24 hours. The most recent interfaith violence was hate speech attacks by a man named Jozeph Paul Zhang, who offended Muslims by claiming to be the 26th Prophet and insulting one of the pillars of Islam.

Violence that may not be purely caused by religion, but religion as its tool has also filled a painful space in Indonesia's dark history, namely the DI / TII rebellion. The DI / TII incident. A political movement that emerged in the post-independence era that uses religion as its justification in an effort to realize its political ideals. History records DI / TII failed. In the Soeharto era, it appeared again. It's just that some of the radical groups in the Suharto era were products of military or intelligence engineering through Ali Moertopo with his Opsus and Bakin who engineered former DI / TII members. Some of them were recruited and then ordered to carry out various actions such as Komando Jihad in order to discredit Islam. Since the fall of Soeharto, this group has emerged more visible, more militant and vocal. This is further exacerbated by the presence of mass media, especially electronic media such as TV, which provides a lot of coverage of the activities of similar groups (Schiller & Garang, 2002).

Regarding violence resulting from religious understanding should be put forward as an interesting perspective. Religious violence classified into three types. First, internal religious violence. This violence can occur in both divine and *ardhi* religions. This cannot be separated from the role of religious leaders. Religious leaders who try to carry out internal criticism (as an effort to reform or purify) have to deal with groups that want the status quo. From here emerged the tendency of progressive radicalism and orthodox radicalism which led to violent relations as a result of the deadlock in communication. This violence can be said to be purely due to religion. Second, violence in the name of religion arises when religion sees itself in the midst of a wrongdoing society. Hence religion feels it has a moral imperative to fight it, as is the call for "jihad". Often it is due to failure in preaching in the midst of society - instead of inviting faith, what happens is the persecution of missionaries, or even the development of a view of disobedience. Third, violence occurs when religions feel threatened by other religions (Samsuri, 2003).

In history, the emergence of stereotypes of one group against other groups of different religions has usually triggered conflict between religious communities which was followed by attempts to attack each other, kill each other, burn houses of worship and places of value for each religious adherent. In the last few decades, many followers of other religions have given stereotypes to Muslims as being radical, intolerant, and very subjective in seeing the truth of other religions. While Christians are seen as aggressive and ambitious people, with a tendency to dominate all aspects of life and try to spread the message of Jesus, this is devastating religious violence.

From the explanation above, basically what forms violence in the name of religion can emerge from the type of person who is religious or the typology of the exclusive model diversity, this exclusive model is a model the exclusive nature of religious understanding is a threat to the life of a multi-ethnic nation and state like Indonesia. Such a thing is because for the exclusive people they see only their opinion as the most correct one and others are wrong and must be eliminated if necessary, it must be eradicated by force because for them it is against the teachings of their religion. Models or religious patterns like this are usually puritanical and militant in nature, which ultimately results in friction in understanding religious texts and leads to ethnic-religious conflicts. This phenomenon is in line with Huston Smith's thesis, which states that the existence of ethnic-religious has led people to claim their respective identities and they feel different from one another, thus creating cultural fault lines more and more is happening on the very basic line of contradiction (Saputra, 2016).

Religion, which should provide prosperity and peace to its adherents and oppose all forms of violence, because it is dragged along in the political realm, actually contributes to disaster. This is in line with the apologetic statement, especially from religious circles, that religion essentially only teaches peace and opposes violence; however, it is only humans who then misuse religion for personal or group interests, thus igniting violence. What is clear is that the phenomenon of violence in the name of religion actually occurs in our lives.

3. The Relationship between Religion and Nationality in Indonesia

Historically-factually, the founding fathers in determining *Pancasila* as the state ideology could not be separated from the role of Islamic scholars. The acceptance of *'Ulama* is based on the fact that Indonesian citizens are plural in nature (Arifinsyah et al., 2020). Thus, unity in diversity becomes a necessity in order to maintain the integrity of the Republic of Indonesia. Borrowing Edmund Husserl's language (Mansilla Sepúlveda et al., 2019), the acceptance of *'Ulama* towards *Pancasila* in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia cannot be separated from the transcendental understanding stage, where the state founding *'Ulama* have been able to grasp the substance of religious norms after going through a comprehensive understanding from various points of view. Thus, they can provide an ideal and inclusive national and state life system.

Based on the basic values of state life, the scholars gave birth to the *maqasid al-ahkam* approach, which emphasizes a view of life that spreads welfare for the universe (*rahmatan lil 'alamin*) (Surah al-Baqarah: 177 and QS 2: 32) (Adinugraha et al., 2020). From this spirit, the purpose of the State in Islamic religious norms (*maqasid asysyari'ah*) is to protect basic human rights (*alkulliyat al-khamsah*) (Adinugraha, 2020). When the religion of Islam functions to create the welfare of the people (*masalih ar-ra'iyah*), the state becomes a tool to achieve this goal. In this case, the goal and realization through *al-ghayah wa al-was'ail* are used (Adinugraha & Muhtarom, 2021). If the NKRI can become a tool for the purpose of enforcing Islamic religious norms, then this state system must be maintained.

There are three typologies of the relationship between religion and the Muslim State to respond in various ways, including the following (Zuhdi, 2018): First, those who argue that the relationship between religion and the state runs integrally. The domain of religion is also the domain of the state, and vice versa, so that the relationship between religion and the state does not have a distance and runs into one unit. The figure supporting this movement was al-Maududi. Second, those who argue that the relationship between religion and state runs symbiotically and dynamically-dialectically, not directly, so that the two regions still have distance and control respectively, so that religion and the state go hand in hand. The two of them met to realize their respective interests. Religion needs State institutions to accelerate its development. Meanwhile, State institutions need religion to create a just and sacred State. Some of the world's Muslim figures who belong to this group are Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, Muhammad Syahrur, Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid, Abdurrahman Wahid, and Nurcholis Madjid. Third, they claim that religion and State are two different sources and have no relationship at all. The followers of this group separate the relationship between religion and State (politics). Therefore, the group refuses to accept the foundation of state religious beliefs or formally incorporate religious norms into the national legal system (Supriyanto, 2020).

Religion in Indonesia functions as the spirit of the state. In this model, the state does not formally adhere to a particular religion. So, there is no religion that becomes the official state religion. Religious values are the spirit of the administration and administration of the State. The state guarantees the right of citizens to embrace a certain religion and worship based on that religious belief. As a consequence, all Indonesian citizens are free to practice their religion according to their respective beliefs as long as it does not conflict with existing laws.

The existence of religion in Indonesia is implemented in state life and is reflected in the form of official recognition by certain religious institutions within the State. Then, this is also reflected in the adoption of religious values and norms in the national system and in the making of public policies. Suppose that certain religious (Islamic) laws become national laws. Apart from that, the state also recognizes the existence of political parties and mass organizations based on religion (Khadduri, 2018).

The relationship between the state and Islam in Indonesia is still marked by tension and moderation (Khmas, 2019). Colored by tensions due to efforts to force religion to become a state ideology as a form of rejection of the Western ideology that separates religion from state life. In dealing with the West, religion only functions as an individual affair with God, it cannot be included in state institutions to regulate public and social space. The role of religion is marginalized.

It is undeniable that the majority of Muslims in Indonesia take a moderate attitude in viewing the relationship between religion and state. Those who are in the majority do not reject all from the West nor do they make a religious state, therefore democracy can develop and Muslims become moderate (Kasdi, 2019). Thus, the relationship between the state and Islam in Indonesia is not always pursued through the path of tension and violence, but the tension can be managed through the path of moderation and tolerance (Nashir et al., 2019). Islamic teachings are universal teachings (*rahmatan lil 'alamin*). For this reason, Islam strives for the values of Islamic teachings to benefit the Indonesian people and all mankind (Siswanto, 2020).

4. Religion and National Integration to Prevent Radicalism in Indonesia

The reform era encouraged citizens to express their opinions, aspirations and interests freely and openly, including the expression of ideology which was very limited during the New Order era. However, this freedom of expression has also led to various exaggerated actions that have resulted in conflicts, disputes and violence in society. Religion-based conflicts flourished in various parts of Indonesia. Many studies have reported the number of religious-based violence in Indonesia (Intan, 2019). This violence is mostly perpetrated by radicalism adherents who apply exclusive teachings so as to erode the values of togetherness and tolerance, which are the local wisdom of the Indonesian nation.

The emergence of expressions of freedom in religion has led to various forms of violence that lead to terrorism as a result of radicalism (Bagir et al., 2020). This can damage harmony and peace in the life of the nation and state, and can even threaten the Republic of Indonesia and the diversity of Indonesia. In a pluralistic society, it is not easy to create harmony and peace because each religious group has different aspirations and interests and this can have implications for the emergence of competition. Especially when each group develops a political identity and selfishness in the name of freedom of expression and human rights. Disagreements, disputes and conflicts are things that cannot be avoided in the life of society and nation. However, if the conflict develops into violence, it shows that the people in certain areas in Indonesia are still not civilized. In addition, those who commit violence can be said not to practice the existing religious teachings in Indonesia (Saraswati et al., 2018).

Various conflicts, tensions, and violence based on religion, especially Islam, arise due to various factors. Conflicts based on religion are very vulnerable to causing violence that originates from terror activities that are disturbing the community (Susanto, 2017). After Al-Qaeda, ISIS (Islamic State) is one of the terrorist organizations against Islam which shocked the world with cruel actions. His followers were able to attract attention from various countries around the world because of his cruelty. In Indonesia, the spread of ISIS looks quite massive and widespread because several radical figures with influence have announced joining the movement, such as Abu Bakar Baasyir, Oman Abdurrahman, and Santoso (Tobing & Indradjaja, 2019). In addition, several old radical groups have also expressed their support for ISIS, such as the East Indonesian Mujahidin, Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid, Jama'ah Islamiyah, the Islamic Sharia Activist Forum, Awhid wal Jihad, Daulah Support Forum, Asybal Tauhid Indonesia, Mimbar Tauhid wal Jihad, KUIB (Bekasi) (Martian Permana & Adam, 2020).

Several potential things that could lead to religion-based violence (Sudjito et al., 2018), including (1) the emergence of radicalism in religion, such as the ideological Jama'ah Ansharut Tauhid and Jama'ah Islamiyyah and the non-ideological Islamic Defenders Front; (2) the emergence of Islamic ideas that are considered heretical, such as Ahmadiyah; (3) the emergence of different religious ideologies that are still recognized by the Muslim world, such as Shi'ah; (4) the emergence of puritan groups that often label other Islamic groups as heretical and bid'ah, such as Salafis; and (5) the emergence of heretical local Islamic sects in the name of Islam, such as Al-Qiyadah Al-Islamiyah founded by Ahmad Mushaddeq and Jama'ah Salamullah founded by Lia Aminuddin or Lia Eden.

Efforts to counteract the notion of intolerance are not absent. One of the verses that often forms the basis of the views of radicals is the verse of the Koran which emphasizes that Jews and Christians are not pleased with Muslims (*wa lantardlo 'ankal Yahuduu wa lan Nashoro hatta tattabi'a millatahum*), and that verse is also used as the basis for not justifying cooperation with the Jews in the political, economic and cultural fields. Gus Dur explained that the meaning of being displeased was not in a sociological sense, but in theological sense, namely Jewish, Christian and Islamic beliefs theologically did not meet, but it did not mean that socially they could not interact, because the Prophet was also mixed with Judaism. Gus Dur's meaning is nothing but to clarify the problem proportionally so that there is harmony between religious communities. In addition, Gus Dur also viewed with a humanitarian approach, and Gus Dur explained and enlightened that religion has a peaceful nature, so things that can disturb peace must be avoided, the same thing in religion needs to be emphasized and also things that are ritual in nature (Shohib, 2020). Religion does not need to be equated. He also added that the problem of belief is between himself and his God, so when there are people who question things that are of belief, Gus Dur does not want to serve (Khasanah, 2020).

Gus Dur reflected moderate values, especially the tendency to choose the method commonly referred to as the middle way approach (Anam, 2019). In a term often used by students, it is called *tawasuth*. The term *tawasuth* is taken from the letter Al-Baqarah: "And in the same way we make you the mediator (*wasatha*) so that you become witnesses for all mankind." (2: 142). The term *wasatha* itself is defined as "synthesis" and is defined as a middle way between two extreme attitudes.

Tawasuth has three elements, namely *tawazzan*, which means balance and harmony, *I'tidal*, which means courage, does not deviate to the left or right, and iqtishad which means to act as necessary, not excessive (Rohman, 2020). Thus in itself the value of *tawasuth* is very much in accordance with the moderate value which is currently being promoted by the Indonesian government in the face of rampant radicalism. The idea of moderate Islam is very much in line with the character of Islam which always maintains a balance between physical and spiritual needs, between the needs of society and personal needs, and between the traditions developed by previous generations and the aspirations and needs of the present and future generations (Sholehuddin et al., 2021). This balance and synthesis in Islam states and strengthens the relationship between Muslims.

To counteract the influence of radical ideologies and doctrines, the National Counterterrorism Agency has also provided several strategies that can be applied by all Indonesian citizens, especially youth as the next generation of national integration, namely (1) fostering a spirit of nationalism and love for the country; (2) enriching moderate, open, and tolerant religious insights; (3) strengthening self-confidence by always being vigilant on all matters relating to terrorist provocation, incitement and recruitment activities both in the community and in cyberspace (online); (4) building networks to interact with peace-loving communities to broaden their horizons, both offline and online; (5) join a community that promotes messages of peace and love for the Republic of Indonesia (Paikah, 2019).

Sects that carry the name Islam have the potential to create tension in society, which is likely to lead to conflict and violence based on religion (Hoffman, 2020). Generally, these traditions convey their beliefs and aspirations by blaming, confusing and disbelieving the beliefs that have been held by local residents since the time of their ancestors. Streams in extreme Islam such as *Mu'tazilah, jabariyah, Syi'ah, Qadariyah and Khawarij* their beliefs in history are too biased and create tensions and divisions in society. Therefore, many residents were angry and could not accept these accusations.

National integration needs to be nurtured and preserved in the life of the nation and state. In fact, various attempts have been made to strengthen the national insight of Indonesian citizens. The People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) is one of the institutions that has strived to strengthen national integration through the four pillars of nationality, namely *Pancasila*, UUD 1945, NKRI, and diversity (pluralism). Ideological revitalization is one of the strategies undertaken to strengthen nationalism as an effort to erode radicalism in the name of Islam.

The *Pancasila* ideology which is more open as social capital must be able to lead to a rational and modern understanding which is very important to support a pluralistic and religious Indonesian society (Sudjito et al., 2018). Religious values should be able to make a positive contribution to the revitalization of the *Pancasila* ideology (Supriyono & Kusumawati, 2020). This understanding may change into a moderate and tolerant religious attitude, not an absolute and exclusive radical religious attitude. As a result, Indonesian society is dealing with (anti) radicalism through positive legal methods and religious (theological) methods. This is because relying solely on security or legal means is not enough (Udah, 2018). Moreover, for ideological radicals, the perpetrators may feel proud when punished and think of themselves as heroes. Therefore, in addition to security and legal methods, it is also necessary to use theological methods that emphasize the propagation of Islam as a religion of harmony and peace, promote human rights, and spread tolerance.

If there are two opposing positions, Islam will establish truth between them. The difference between syncretism and synthesis is that the former implies an attempt to unite, in a disobedient or dangerous way, opposing elements, whereas the latter leads to a wise fusion of compatible and mutually reinforcing elements. Since 'truth and goodness only come from Allah', Muslims must preserve and develop these traits in Islam whether or not it is Islam (Warto, 2018).

It is also not denied that if there are elements that are good outside Islam and do not contradict Islamic law, then these elements are justified to be absorbed as part of the struggle to strengthen and spread Islam. Carefulness in the synthesis process is the most important part in the struggle of Islam to unite all the different and divided mankind so that they can unite as servants of Allah Almighty (Rothman, 2019).

The Indonesian people should be grateful to have the historical face of the spread of moderate Islam, as developed by the *Walisongo*, where thoughts and actions use a middle and moderate approach. *Walisongo*'s ability to absorb pre-Islam cultural institutions and forms into the pursuit of Islamic goals without sacrificing sharia. In this way they can communicate effectively with the local community and facilitate public acceptance of Islam (Kasdi, 2017).

The moderate paradigm developed through the *Walisongo* legends has become the main characteristic of the perceptions of the Indonesian Islamic community (Suparjo, 1970). This attitude of *tawasuth* is the main differentiator from what they see as dry and puritanical Islamic radicals that are applied by radical organizations in Indonesia and the Middle East (such as Thaliban, al-Qaida, ISIS, etc.). Therefore being moderate is an attitude that is willing to accept the presence of others, not extreme, militant and illiberal. *Walisongo*, who has a pithy knowledge until the Prophet Muhammad was very rich in the practice of living a moderate attitude, as exemplified by the Prophet who could live side by side with anyone, including neighbors with Jews, without being hateful and hostile even the Prophet was willing to cooperate in *Mu'amalah* (M. Jamhuri, 2019).

Moderate attitudes give birth to an understanding of inclusive and accommodative attitudes as well as being tolerant towards inter-religious communities. The inclusive attitude of Muslims is directed towards making Muslims an umbrella for all groups in the order of national and global life. Here Muslims must be clever at playing Islam in the midst of politics. According to Nur Cholis Majid, placing Islam solely as a political force will make Islam even more unattractive (Mukaromah, 2020). Meanwhile, Gus Dur has the view that Islam must be presented as a complementary element in the socio-cultural and political formation of this country. Gus Dur also reminded us to consider the local situation in the application of Islamic teachings with the term "Islamic indigenousization". This personalization should apply to aspects of Islamic manifestation and not to the core of faith. With this attitude Islam can accommodate various developments that are running dynamically (Munandar et al., 2020).

The most prominent perception of its relationship with society where Islam is seen as the majority shareholder, therefore there are parties who are based on the power of the majority (the quantity of the *ummah*) and want to mobilize with the strength of a strong Islamic party, Gus Dur responded by looking at the side of the other context. In the context of social relations, according to Gus Dur, Muslims should not demand more just because of their majority position. In social relations, nationality, and statehood, the rights and obligations of Muslims in Indonesia are the same as other people.

To avoid forms of tension and things that lead to forms of radicalism, as Gus Dur and Nur Cholis Majid have always fought for, namely placing Islam as an ethical foundation in socio-political life, is the most appropriate solution. So the perspective of placing religion as an ethical foundation in socio-political life must also be the big agenda of the holders of religious authorities in Indonesia. The substantive norms of Islamic teachings need to be emphasized not in the form of political ideology. Experience with the New Order which was very repressive, with an Islamic approach as an ethical foundation in socio-political life, finally found a common ground that Muslims know *Pancasila* not in a position that is contrary to Islamic teachings (Nurrohman, 2014). On the contrary, Islam can be compatible with *Pancasila*.

Another result of the experience of placing Islam as an ethical value in socio-political life is the birth of Islamic-style political aspirations that can be accommodated, including access to Muslims in the New Order political system, prohibition of the Social Fund Donations with Prizes, imposition of *jilban*, compilation of Islamic law, establishment of Charity Charities, infaq (BAZIS), the Education Law, the establishment of the *Mu'amalah* bank and various cultural accommodations. The thoughts conveyed by such Islamic leaders opened up Islamic-style political aspirations and got a better place.

The thoughts and practices of Muslim leaders who place Islam as the ethics of national and state life, need to be supported by other religious authorities, so that religion becomes the foundation of ethics for the nation and state. Thus, the existence of various religions in Indonesia can be used as an excuse to unite the nation and not as a reason for national disintegration. As a civilized Indonesian society, Indonesian citizens are required to be able to understand and respect all differences and life in religion and nation. When conditions of harmony between citizens have been achieved, religion and *Pancasila* will become very important social assets in national integration under pluralism in Indonesia (Arif, 2020). To make it happen, it requires the understanding of various parties regarding the multiethnic, multi-religious and multicultural conditions that exist in Indonesian society.

5. Conclusion

When religion becomes a source of disaster, as stated by Charles Kimball, it is because it is influenced by five factors, among others: First, when religion claims religious truth as the absolute truth and the only teaching that is the most true, others are wrong and what is wrong can be destroyed ; Second, the factor of blind obedience to religious leaders; Third, the factor when his people began to miss their ideal times in the past and were determined to realize them in the present; Fourth, the factor when a certain goal justifies any means; Fifth, the religion of the holy war factor has been shouted. The relationship between religion and the State is a complex relationship, in which it is full of various interests and groups. Political modernization is a necessity as an effort to create a modern state that applies a more substantive democratic system. In the context of Indonesia with the *Pancasila* ideology, political modernization that occurs will never lead to a secular state. This is because *Pancasila* and the 1945 Constitution clearly recognize the existence of religion in the life of the nation which is manifested in the adoption of certain religious institutions. Then, it is also seen the adoption of religious values and norms in the national legal system and public policy as a whole. In this case, the relationship between religion and State is still a cross-relationship, in which the cross between religion and state is not fully integrated or completely separate. In fact, in all aspects of national and state life, religious legitimacy is still very much needed. To strengthen national integration and in minimizing disputes and conflicts in society, especially religious-based conflicts, it is necessary to emphasize the strengthening of ideology in the process of nationalism so that the national insight of Indonesian citizens becomes stronger and not easily eroded by religious ideologies that tend to be radical. Religious leaders can make a positive contribution by providing input to make religion a comprehensive factor that values social diversity rather than a disintegration factor that supports socio-religious exclusivity. Then, political figures in providing good examples and role models in implementing the values of *Pancasila* and the 1945 Constitution in their behavior, both in daily life, in state institutions and political institutions.

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IMPACT OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON EMPLOYMENT: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN THE NORTHERN PROVINCE OF SRI LANKA

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Abstract

This paper studies the impact of vocational education and training (VET) on the probability of getting job. 4562 individuals who were randomly selected for annual labor force survey were included in this study. Nearest- neighbor matching method has been chosen for this study. The result of this study shows that VET increases the probability of getting job by 17 percent. The logit model for participation in VET indicates that the probability of participating in VET by a female student is lower than that of a male student and also the probability to participating in VET increase with schooling and decrease with age. This study suggests that more students should be admitted to the VET programme and government authority should encourage and motivate school children, especially female students, to enroll in VET programme.

Keywords: Matching; Propensity Score; Treatment Effect Model; Vocational Education and Training,

1. Introduction

Sri Lanka has produced a population with higher than 96% literacy rate in 2016. Literacy alone is not sufficient for economic growth in the knowledge era. It becomes vital to supply the labour force with skills which is needed for rapid economic growth and development. Sri Lanka has been unable to supply labour force with high quality education and skills. Sri Lanka received lower rank in providing quality of education in science and math and access to internet in schools. Sri Lanka primarily focused more on basic education in secondary level of education and less focus on higher levels of education. The mismatch between the quality of the education and the labour market requirements has led to significant unemployment of higher education institute graduates in Sri Lanka. A large number of jobs are vacant as there are no workers with the skills for the labour market requirements. Enrolment at university has dropped due to higher opportunity cost in pursuing higher education. Sri Lanka's formal education system has failed in providing market oriented skills. Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT) institutions in Sri Lanka became an effective alternative for students leaving from high School. TEVT institutions have helped to produce labour force with market oriented skills. Currently public, private, and NGO sector in Sri Lanka are involved in providing TEVT. Vocational training programmes became an important agenda of many governments and international donor agencies (King and Palmer, 2010). The persistence of labour market imbalances emphasized the training on market oriented skills to reduce mismatch between the quality of the education and the labour market requirements (ILO, 2012). Investing in public vocational education and training (VET) center is very important in developing countries. Due to the advancement in information and communication technology and the globalization, VET became a very important aspect of the educational development (UNESCO, 2001). VET act as a center between formal education and the labour market. VET has helped tremendously for rapid economic growth and development in South-East Asia and industrialized world. Economic benefits of VET are extensive. VET has positive impact on wages, employment, mobility, employment opportunity, productivity, innovation, and organization culture. Low rate of unemployment can have favorable consequences for national competitiveness and GDP growth. The Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka (VTA) established in 1995 is currently operating with 224 Rural, 22 District and 7 National Vocational Training Centers. Around 25,000 youth are trained in 18 different sectors and graduated annually from these training Centers. The objective of this study is to investigate the impact of VET on the probability of getting job.

The empirical literature on effect of vocational training on employment is extensive and reports contrasting findings. A meta-analysis by Card et al. (2018), based on 350 estimates of the employment effects of active labour market policies, confirmed significant impacts of training on women who participated in training programmes after long-term unemployment. Mo Costabella (2017) examined vocational training courses for the unemployed organized in the years 2007-2009 and found positive employment effects on women. Kumar et al. (2019) investigated the factors that affect the participation in formal vocational training and the effect of vocational training on wage in India and found that individuals with formal vocational training had higher wage in the primary and secondary sector than the individuals without formal education and enrollment of female in formal vocational education is lower than male. Vandenberg and Laranjo (2020) analyzed the impact of vocational education and training on wages and likelihood of being employed in the Philippines using propensity score matching and found that graduates of vocational education and training earned higher wages and are more likely to be employed than those who graduated from secondary school or below.

Matching method has become famous to estimate treatment effects and also extensively applied to evaluate policies in labour market (Dehejia and Wahba (1998), Heckman et al (1997)). Rosholm et al (2019) employed propensity score matching to evaluate the effectiveness of a bridging intervention which consists of classroom training, educational internships and mentoring on the educational enrollment and completion for all participants. Brunello, G., and Roccol, L. (2017) applied propensity score matching to investigate the effect of vocational education on adult skills, employment and wages. Matching can be applied in any field of study. Empirical studies have been found in various fields of study. Statisticians (Rosenbaum & Rubin, 1983) and (Heckman, 1978) have developed propensity score matching (PSM) to estimate treatment effect. Econometricians have contributed much for addressing selection bias. The PSM approach has become popular among research from various disciplines, especially economics, health, education, and substance abuse. The PSM applications have been used to evaluate child welfare programmes (Fraser, 2004), but there were arguments between advocates and adversaries of non experimental approaches. Sosin (2002) is one of the few scholars used PSM method to evaluate noneconomic programmes using non experimental approaches. The term propensity score first introduced by Rosenbaum and Rubin in 1983 to estimate causal effects between variables more precisely in their article. Estimation of treatment effects were addressed from the heckman's work on sample selection and dummy endogenous variables (Heckman, 1978). This work can be considered as a generalization of the propensity score matching.

2. Methodology

The objective of this study is to measure the effect of VET programme on the probability of finding job. To know the effect of VET on the probability of finding job by a participating individual, the observed outcome of a participating individual must be compared with the outcome that would have resulted if the participating person is not participated in the training programme. Nevertheless, only the outcome of the participating person is observed. The impact of a programme across individuals will be heterogeneous. There are two measures to estimate the effect of treatment. The average treatment effect (ATE) is the effect of participation in the programme on an individual who were randomly selected from the population. The average effect of treatment on treated (ATET) is the effect of participation in the programme on an individual who participated in the programme. The effect of the training programme can be described by two processes. First, the decision to participate in the training programme takes place. Second, the process of determining job entry happens. Selection bias can occur when some of the factors influencing the participation in programme also affect the outcome. In general, unobservable characteristics determining participation can also affect outcomes. It can be seen that highly-motivated persons most probably participate in training programme and also most probably find job. The estimated treatment effect will be biased unless sample selection issue is addressed. Roy-Rubin Model is the standard framework to formalize the sample selection problem and evaluate the treatment effect (Roy (1951), Rubin (1974)). In the case of a binary treatment, the dummy value for the treatment (D_i) = 1 if individual, *i*, is treated and 0 if not treated. The potential outcomes depends on the treatment, Q*i*(*Di*), for individual *i*,. The treatment effect for an individual *i* can be defined as:

$$\tau_i = Q_i(1) - Q_i(0) \quad (1)$$

Only one outcome is observed for each individual *i*. The unobserved outcome (counterfactual outcome) is needed to estimate the individual treatment effect, τ_i. The Average treatment effect on the treated (ATET) can be defined as:

$$\tau_{ATET} = E\,[\tau||D = 1] = E\,[Q(1)||D = 1] - E\,[Q(0)||D = 1] \quad (2)$$

The counterfactual outcome (unobserved outcome) for those being treated is defined as $E\,[Q(0)||D = 1]$. As the outcomes of individuals from treatment would differ from the outcomes of individual from comparison group even in the absence of treatment, there would be self-selection bias. Therefore, ATET can be defined as:

$$E\,[Q(1)||D = 1] - E\,[Q(0)||D = 0] = \tau_{ATET} + E\,[Q(0)||D = 1] - E\,[Q(0)||D = 0] \quad (3)$$

The true parameter τ_{ATET} is only identified if `self-selection bias' is equal to 0

$$E\,[Q(0)||D = 1] - E\,[Q(0)||D = 0] = 0 \quad (4)$$

To solve `self-selection bias' problem, some identifying assumptions should be made. The average of differences between the outcomes of treated and non-treated is the mean effect of treatment. Average treatment effect (ATE) is defined as:

$$\tau_{ATE} = E[Q(1) - Q(0)] \tag{5}$$

In the method of matching, a matching individual for every individual in the treatment group is found from among the comparison group by identifying individuals sharing similar observable characteristics. The probability of finding a match reduce when the number of characteristics considered in the matching process increases. Rosenbaum and Rubin (1983) showed that matching on all covariates as a single index formulated based on the chance of participation could achieve reliable estimates of the treatment effect. This matching is called propensity score matching. To generate a propensity score for each observation, a logit regression model is developed with treatment as the dependent variable and the potential covariates as explanatory variables. After generating propensity score, it must be ensured that graph (series) of propensity scores across treatment and control groups are overlapped and the propensity score should be balanced in the treated and control groups. And also individual covariates across treatment and control groups within blocks of the propensity score should be balanced. After creating a balanced propensity score, it can be used to compare treatment and control groups. Matching and weighting strategies are most popular among the comparison strategies (Austin 2009, 2011). There are a number of possible ways of identifying this matched group. Kernel matching uses multiple comparators to match each treatment group member. Matching balances characteristics across the treatment and matched control groups. The extent of matching can be determined by examining the propensity score's distribution in the treatment and matched control groups and also by comparing standardized differences. Covariates are strongly related to the outcome if there are small differences in means of covariates (Ho et al. 2007).

The data randomly collected by Department of Census and Statistics for 2014 annual labour force survey from five districts of Northern Province of Sri Lanka were used for this study. The data of the individuals who are 15 years old and above and not going to school include 1539, 811, 800, 752 and 656 individuals from Jaffna, Vavuniya, Mannar, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts respectively. Totally, 4562 individuals were included in our study. The variables considered in this analysis are age, gender, education level, vocational training, employment, Cross sectional data of these variables were used to develop the models for the probability of getting job, using treatment effect estimation..

3. Results and Discussion

The descriptive statistics of variables considered in this analysis are given in Table 1. Average age and average education level of individuals selected for this study are 42 years old and around 9th grade respectively. 48% of these sample individuals are employed. Among 4562 individuals, 272 individuals (6%) got vocational education and training. A logit regression was developed with participation in the VET (treatment) as dependent variable and gender, age, and education level as explanatory variables to create a propensity score for each observation.

Table 1: Description and descriptive statistics of the variables

Variable	description	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Gender	If male, dummy value is 1 Female is 0	4,562	.4715	.499	0	1
Age	Number of years	4,562	42.85	16.60	15	65
Education	Number of years of schooling	4,562	8.680	3.232	0	17
Employment	if employed, dummy value is 1 Unemployed is 0	4,562	.4813	.499	0	1
VET	If participated in VET, Dummy value is 1 If not is 0	4,562	.0596	.236	0	1

The logit model for the participation in the VET was given in Table 2. Graph of propensity scores (Figure 1) indicates that propensity scores across treatment and comparison groups are overlapped. The balance test divides the treatment group into 8 blocks on the basis of the propensity score and showed that mean propensity score is significantly indifferent for treated and comparison group in each block and also the individual covariate of the treatment and comparison groups are significantly indifferent from each other within these blocks. This implies that the distribution of propensity score within each block is similar across groups and that the propensity score is correctly specified.

Table 2: Model for Participation in Vocational Education and Training

Variable	coefficient	z	p value
Gender	-0.39	-2.82	0.005
Age	-0.027	-5.18	0.000
Education	0.529	16.6	0.000
Constant	-7.183	-17.09	0.000

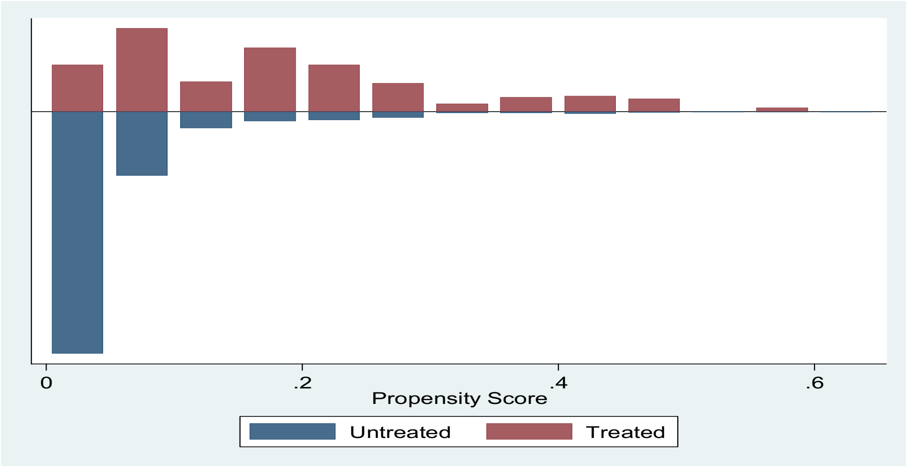

Figure 1: Distribution of Propensity Score across Treatment and Comparison Groups

After creating a balanced propensity score, logit models were employed to estimate the average treatment (VET) effect on the individuals participated in the VET (ATET) and on the individuals randomly selected from the population (ATE) using different matching and weighting estimators. How well the treatment and comparison groups balanced were tested by comparing standardized differences, propensity score graph of covariates, propensity score graph of treated and control group before and after matching or weighting. ATET and ATE estimated from different matching and weighting estimator and summary of balance statistics were presented in Table 3 and Table 4 respectively. After comparing the standardized differences given in Table 3, the smallest standardized difference in the matched or weighted covariates were found when estimating treatment effect on treated individuals (ATET) using the nearest matching method. The smallest standardized difference, the propensity score graph of treated and control (Figure 2) and the propensity score graph of covariates (Figure 3, 4 and 5) before and after matching or weighting indicate that treatment and comparison groups well balanced when estimating ATET using nearest-neighbor matching method. Therefore, nearest- neighbor matching method has been chosen to evaluate the effect of VET on participants (ATET) in this study. The estimate of ATET of nearest- neighbor matching method (0.13) indicates that probability of finding employment by a participant in VET increases by around 13 percent. As shown in Table 4, the smallest standardized difference in the matched or weighted covariates were found when using the nearest matching method to estimate treatment effect on randomly selected individuals (ATE).

Table 3: Average Treatment Effect on Treated and Statistics of Different Matching and Weighting

Matching/ Weighting Estimator	ATET	Variable	Number of Treated observations Matched/ Weighted	Number of Comparison observations Matched/ Weighted	Raw	Standardize difference Matched/ Weighted
Nearest Matching Neighbor	.132 (0.000)	gender	272	272	-.192	0
		age			-.701	.003
		Education			1.399	.002
Inverse Probability Matching (IPW)	.123 (0.000)	gender	2,241	2,321	-.192	.0013
		age			-.701	.0019
		Education			1.399	-.077
Regression adjusted With IPW	.131 (0.000)	gender	2,241	2,321	-.192	.0013
		age			-.701	.0019
		Education			1.399	-.077
Propensity Score Matching	.127 (0.005)	gender	272	272	-.192	0
		age			-.701	.089
		Education			1.399	.026

Table 4: Average Treatment Effect and Balance Statistics of Different Matching and Weighting .

Matching/ Weighting Estimator	ATE	Variable	Number of Treated observations Matched/ Weighted	Number of Comparison observations Matched/ Weighted	Raw	Standardize difference Matched/ Weighted
Nearest Matching Neighbor	.172	gender	4,562	4,562	-.192	0
	(0.034)	age			-.701	-.25
		Education			1.399	.31
Inverse Probability Weighting (IPW)	.213	gender	1,940	2,622	-.192	.0296
	(0.000)	age			-.701	-.496
		Education			1.399	.407
Regression adjusted With IPW	.240	gender	1,940	2,622	-.192	.0296
	(0.000)	age			-.701	-.496
		Education			1.399	.407
Propensity Score Matching	.268	gender	4,562	4,562	-.192	.209
	(0.156)	age			-.701	-.427
		Education			1.399	.0356
Augmented Inverse Probability Weighting	.203	gender	1,940	2,622	-.192	.0296
	(0.000)	age			-.701	-.496
		Education			1.399	.407

P-value in Parentheses

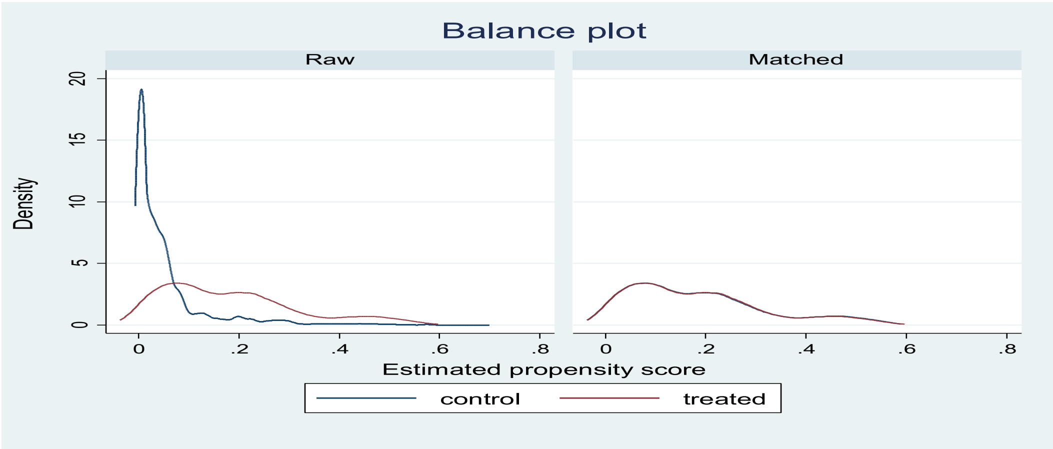

Figure 2: Balanced Plot of Treated and Control Groups (ATET)

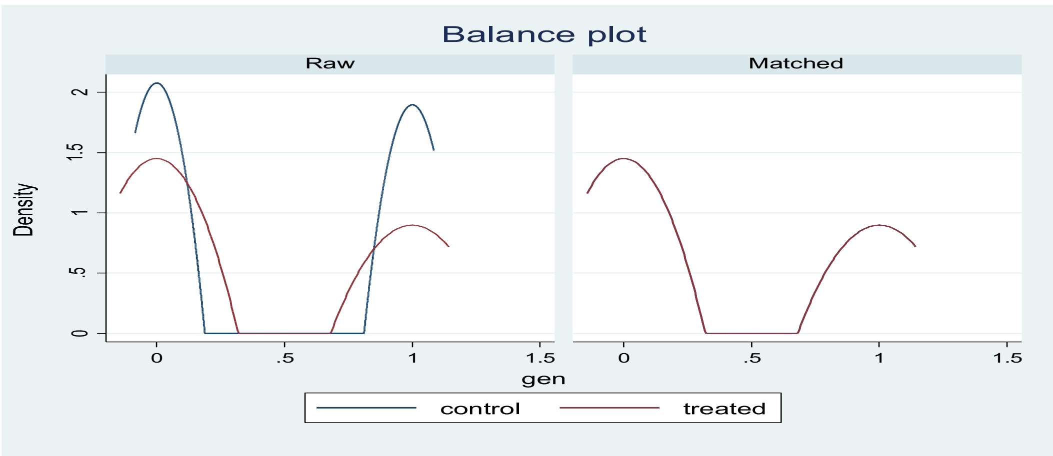

Figure 3: Balance Plot of Gender (ATET)

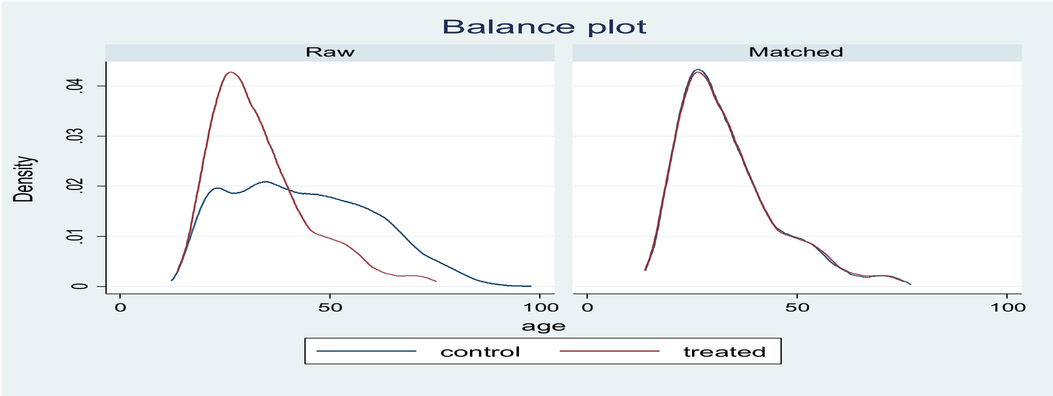

Figure 4: Balance Plot of Age (ATET)

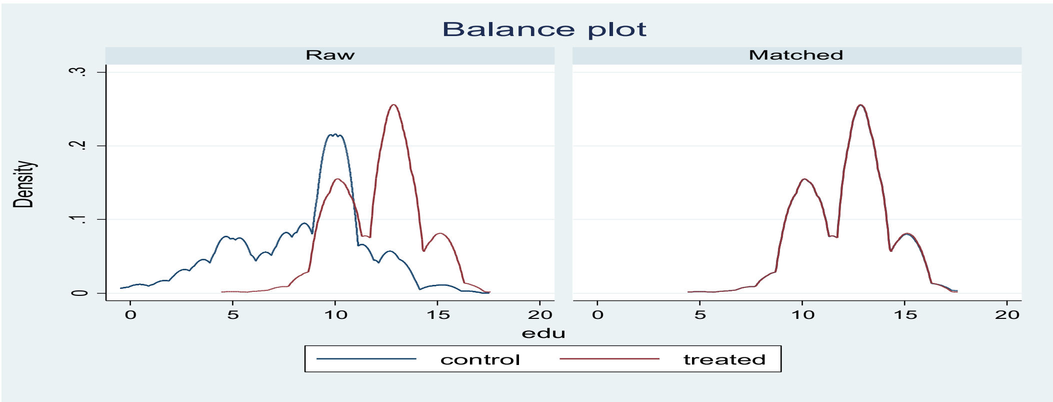

Figure 5: Balance Plot of Education (ATET)

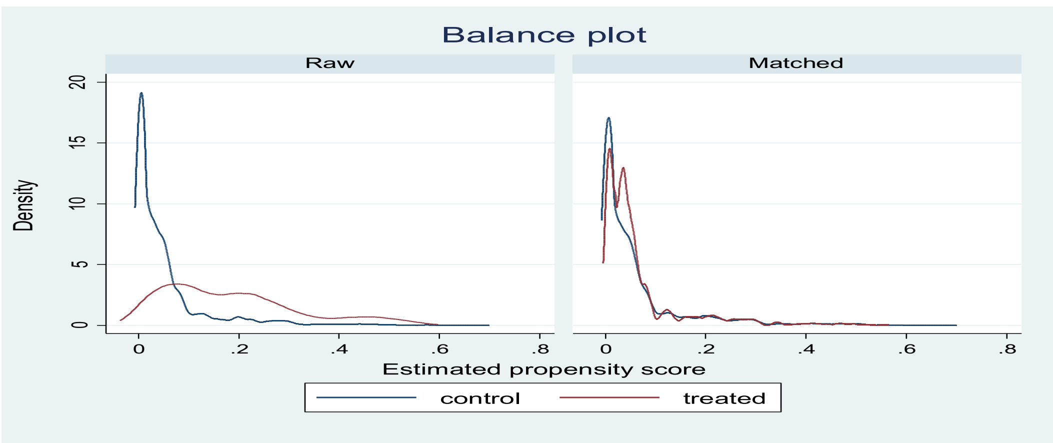

Figure 6: Balance Plot of Treated of Control Group (ATE)

The propensity score graph of treated and control (Figure 6), the propensity score graph of covariates (Figure 7, 8 and 9) before and after matching or weighting and the smallest standardized difference indicate that treatment and comparison groups well balanced when using nearest-neighbor matching method in this study. Therefore, nearest- neighbor matching method has been chosen to evaluate the effect of VET on participants (ATE) in this study. The estimate of ATE of nearest- neighbor matching method (0.172) indicates that probability of finding employment by a randomly selected individual increases by around 17 percent after completing VET. As shown in Table 2, the logit model for participation in VET shows that the probability of participating in vocational education and training by a female is lower than that of a male student. Every additional year of schooling of a student increases the probability to participate in VET. Coefficient of age implies that the probability to participate in VET decreases with age.

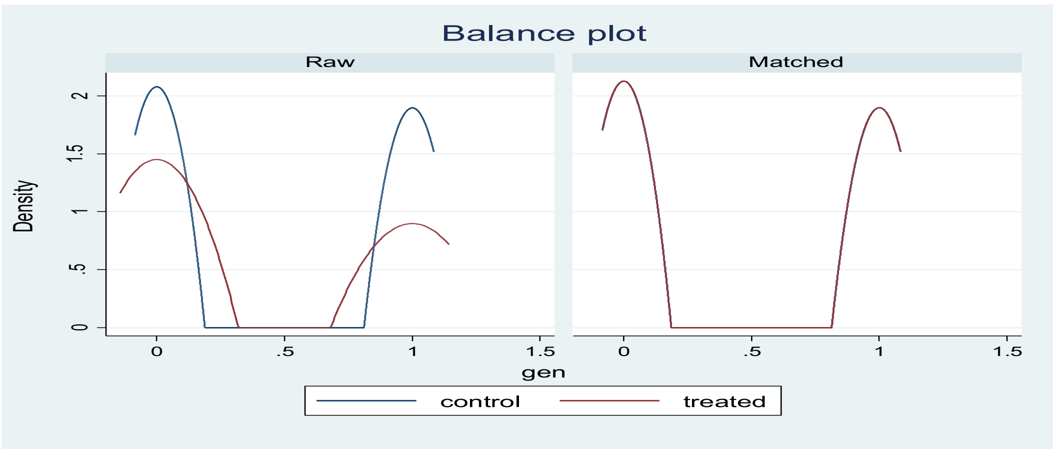

Figure 7: Balance Plot of Gender (ATE)

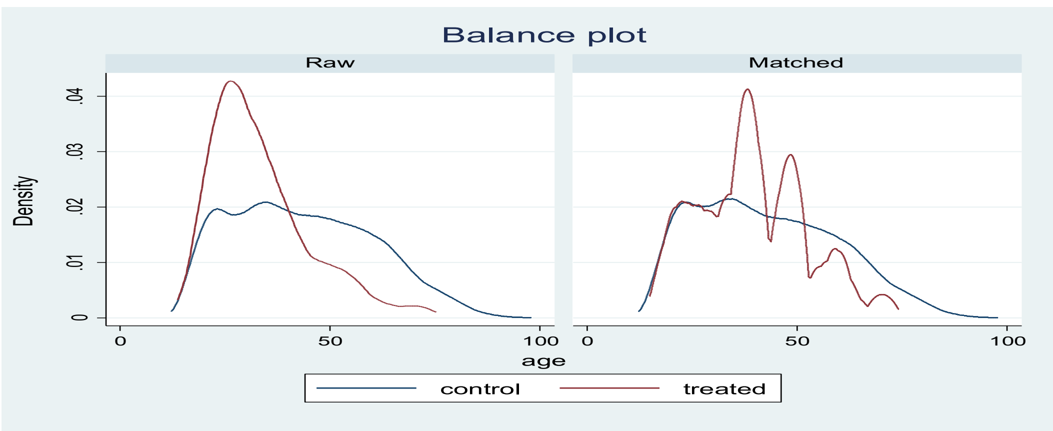

Figure 8: Balance Plot of Age (ATE)

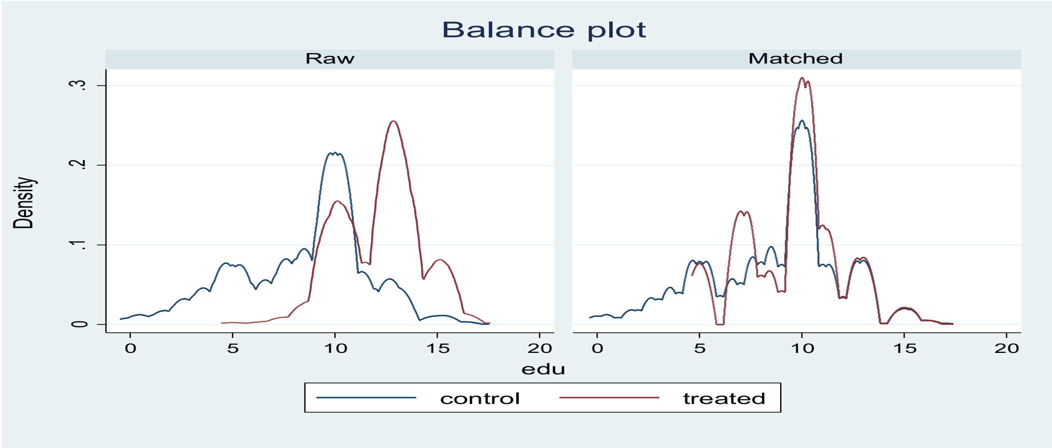

Figure 9: Balance Plot of Education (ATE)

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that probability of finding employment by a participant in VET increases by around 13 percent and probability of finding employment by a randomly selected individual increases by around 17 percent after completing VET. The logit model for participation in VET indicates that the probability of participating in VET by a female is lower than that of a male student and also the probability to participating in VET increase with schooling and decrease with age. This study suggests that more students should be admitted to the VET programme and awareness programme about VET should be conducted to motivate the school students; especially to female students, to enroll in VET

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OBSTACLES TO ONLINE LEARNING FOR THAI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN THE ERA OF COVID-19 CRISIS

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Abstract

As a precaution against the spread of the COVID-19 epidemic, most educational systems across the world have transited to online learning. This incident is generating a lot of obstacles and challenges for students; particularly in developing countries. Thailand is a country has been affected by this phenomenon. This paper attempts to describe the obstacles to online learning for Thai university students as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. Based upon descriptive qualitative research approach, forty university students were purposively and conveniently selected for the research study. The collected data were analyzed using a content analysis technique. The findings revealed the five major themes of the obstacles to online learning: technology, learning and instruction, communication, finance, health and well-being. This study will be of benefit of efficient transforming traditional learning to online learning or any remote education of schools and universities as well as research area of educational technology and development for future sustainability.

Keywords: obstacles, online learning, universities, Thai, COVID-19 crisis

Introduction

The coronavirus disease (COVID) 2019 crisis has had a significant influence not only on the world's economic, psychological, and social elements, but also, to a large extent, on the educational sector (Verschuur, Koks, & Hall, 2021; Josephson, Kilic, & Michler, 2021; Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021).

The virus, which initially appeared in December 2019, became a pandemic, forcing school closures and, finally, the transfer of all levels of educational institutions to online learning in the new normal education (Dhawan, 2020).

As a result, the traditional delivery of teaching in education has changed, and learning environments have been rearranged. To meet the challenge of developing educational delivery mechanisms in higher education, colleges and universities around the world have brought Emergency Remote Education (ERE) as an educational and pedagogical mode of delivery (Toquero, 2021).

It is a momentary shift in teaching triggered by the unexpected development of a crisis. ERE does not imply abandoning the existing teaching method or establishing an entirely new educational system. It provides a temporarily viable option for educators to execute instruction and give required instructional assistance to students (Hodges et al., 2020).

ERE is also a derivative of distance learning, but in times of crisis it is considered an "option" rather than an "obligation" (Bozkurt et al., 2020).

In addition, ERE provides full advantage of available resources, including the various technologies that provide distance learning capabilities. In this case, it should also be emphasized that ERE is the best term to describe education during this turmoil and is not the same as the previous distance learning modality (Bozkurt et al., 2020).

In view of the present COVID-19 crisis, World Bank (2020) highlighted that ERE is required to be utilized for education system and prepares different learning methods to facilitate learning for students to participate and endure learning.

Conversely, the abrupt shift in educational delivery demonstrates the inverse trend for most students, who were already disadvantaged prior to the epidemic. According to UNESCO (2021), school and university closures have affected more than 1.5 billion students of all ages worldwide.

Shutdowns have excessively impacted students. With the goal of providing education as a fundamental human right, educational systems throughout the world were once again pushed to devise new strategies to instantly sustain education initiatives (UNESCO, 2020). However, this does not take into account providing answers to the challenges of each individual learner. In general, the education system is spur-of-the-moment and may have unanticipated repercussions during and after the crisis (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020).

In the meantime, after the government of Thailand declared "social distancing" policy, the Ministry of Education (MOE) issued a strict regulation to schools and universities to commence online learning. As a result, all higher education institutions across the country have been obligated to close indeterminately (Lao, 2020).

Classes at several universities have begun in the last few months before emergency of the pandemic, and online learning has encountered numerous obstacles (Mateo, 2020), which have proven tough for Thai university students to handle. The COVID-19 crisis also increasingly indicates administration and management of Thai government which has been dramatically disappointing due to long corrupted politics and economic recession. (Ludpa, 2016) resulting in the lack of sufficient financial support from the government for the transition to online learning of students.

Besides, not every student can afford or adapt to the rapid change of technological development in today's digital era (Alvarez, 2020), particularly in developing nation.

Online learning indicates a digital gap among students in developing countries (Santos, 2020). This presents that state of online learning may aggravate existing disparities and create obstacles.

For instance, in the context of Thailand, most students seem to struggle with online learning; that is, of the 310 university students, 64.51% have communication problems when studying online. In addition, 80.65% of them find it easy to get distracted when studying online (Imsa-ard, 2020). In addition, 83.87% of students faced technical issues such as application flaws and lack of internet access, including 70.97% of them feel that online learning did not reinforce their motivation at all (Imsa-ard, 2020).

Even in a big metropolis like Bangkok, many school and university students face a significant lack of basic resources, educational materials, and insufficient access to internet services for online learning (Lao, 2020).

Apart from this, Thai university students engaging in online learning encountered additional online learning obstacles.

Recent research studies have been undertaken in order to reveal tension and obstacles confronted by students from online learning (AlAteeq, Alijhani, & AlEesa, 2020; Baloran, 2020; Matswetu, et al., 2020; Subedi et al., 2020).

Bozkurt et al. (2020) investigated how the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted global education. The research reported extensively on thoughts, lessons gained, and recommendations for navigating education in the time of emergency.

This study aims to study the obstacles faced by Thai university students in the context of a developing country in order to assist authorities in establishing superior educational solutions.

If this query is addressed, lessons can be learned and potentially appropriate actions can be taken when it comes to online learning in the aftermath of the COVID-19.

Methodology

This section presents the methods used in this study. It includes the research design, research sample, data collection, and data analysis. They are discussed as follows.

Research Design

This research used a descriptive qualitative research approach. This research design was suitable for this study since it endeavoured to provide a description of obstacles to online learning of university students in Thailand during the COVID-19 new normal era.

Research Sample

Forty university students were purposively and conveniently selected based upon their ability and connectivity to provide necessary information during the period of the conduct of this research. Besides, participants were selected notwithstanding their genders, ages, courses, years of study, monetary status, as well as geographical locations.

Data Collection

The data were collected using online survey method through Google Form between March 2 and March 9, 2021. The online survey in this research comprised open-ended questions concerning the obstacles to online learning of students amidst the time of the COVID-19 crisis.

The online survey in this research was firstly carried out by requesting the consent of the target participants. Then they were explained that their involvement was not mandatory due to the current situation and stressed that their identity will remain anonymous including their responses will be analyzed once they participate in the research. The link to the online survey was posted via emails of students.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using a content analysis technique. The process of content analysis in this research pertained to stages of repeated exploration of the collected data.

The transcripts downloaded from all participants' responses were firstly organized. The raw data were then intensively analyzed to provide the initial identification of the relevant codes.

These codes were transferred into an independent file. They were constantly evaluated identifying their similarities and differences and finally grouping them. Based upon a series of similar codes, themes were developed and structured to provide answers for the research question.

Results

This research was guided by its objective to describe the obstacles to online learning of university students in Thailand amidst the COVID-19 new normal era. This section presents 5 main themes of online learning obstacles as follows. The result is presented in Figure 1.

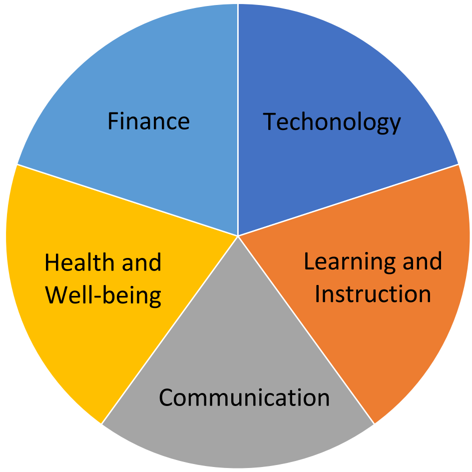

Figure 1. The Five Main Themes of Online Learning Obstacles.

Theme 1: Technology

One of the most recurring obstacles to online learning encountered by the students is unsteady internet connection. Several times, this problem is caused by poor or weak internet connection signal ("I live in a rural area so it is difficult for me to find a stable internet signal. Of course, it is hard for me to follow the activities in Zoom or Microsoft Team meetings" -P17).

At other times, students lack of technological device for their study. ("I would need a laptop or PC to achieve my assignments" -P23).

Moreover, technological competency of students is inadequate. ("I lack the capability to apply technology to facilitate my online learning efficiently" -P04).

Theme 2: Learning and Instruction

Most of the time, obstacles to online learning encountered by students are related to learning and instruction. Students face the problem on how hard they have to try to understand the lesson ("I try to listen to the Microsoft Team but cannot understand the lesson" -P12) since the instructions are vague. ("Some instructions are not clear to me" -P08) and this causes students' confusion ("Additional explanations are required to avoid confusion" -P32).

Due to the time constraints to online learning, several in-class activities are assigned. ("I am overloaded with so many tasks from different courses" -P24).

Students feels that tasks designated are overwhelming and impede their learning outcome ("Study time is wasted and is ended up without any lesson learned" -P18).

Theme 3: Communication

Communicational obstacles are regarded as one of obstacles to online learning. It affects peer to peer communication. Online learning leads to poor communication of students during their group discussion. ("My team keeps silent and turns their laptop cameras off while in a meeting" -P29).

Besides, approaching to their teachers when needed is totally obstructed ("I keep in touch with my professors in many ways but it is ruined" -P22). It causes big problems especially on the examination and submission of assignments. It devours students' motivation in their online learning as a result of student-teacher communication.

Theme 4: Finance

Obstacles to online learning students encountered is also placed with financial support. Online learning requires internet charges ('I need a financial demand to internet access for online courses" -P09).

Desperately, students though try hard to overcome the challenge, they cannot owing to the current set of circumstances ("Due to the epidemic, I face economic challenges to support learning needs" -P35) and this finally becomes additional burden of parents ("I still rely on parents since there is no job added" -P16).

Theme 5: Health and Well-being

Regarding physical obstacles, students always stick to their electronic devices to complete their study contributing to deteriorating health ("I pay fully attention to my laptop for all day long to keep track with the task and activities. It hurts my eyes and causes eye fatigue" –P07).

Most of the times, students are deprived of sleep to wait for a high speed internet late night ("I have to delay my submission until midnight for 5G signal" -P10).

Plus, online learning impacts students' psychological health. Students mentally suffer from online learning. They are required to rely more on themselves and it frequently causes psychological impact ("I need someone to talk to. Some certain tasks are too difficult and make me feel uncomfortable" –P02).

Additionally, online learning gets students earn less confidence for their examination preparation. ("I occasionally experience lack of confidence to review all lessons before examination" –P25).

Discussion

The key findings came from robust research methodology regarding data collection and analysis. They also met the central objective of this research: the obstacles to online learning of university students in Thailand amidst the COVID-19 new normal era.

According to the research findings, students have suffered a significant disadvantage as a result of the abrupt shift in education from traditional on-site learning to online learning. Whereas universities have had significant success in implementing online learning systems for their students, it has been noted that most universities' shift to a new educational paradigm has not been well-organized.

Regarding technological obstacles, a shaky internet connection is regarded as one of the most significant challenges that students face when engaging in online learning. This is in line with preceding research that a strong internet connectivity has a huge impact on online learning. (Wisconsin, 2020).

Aboagye, Yawson, & Appiah (2020) pointed out that poor network is a frequent issue in developing nations with inadequate telecommunications and information and communication technology (ICT). Despite the fact that there are several internet packages available in the nation, they are fluid and not produced similarly in terms of speed and reliability (Saminathan, 2020).

In the interim, the findings of the research by Henaku (2020) support another finding of this study that students face a variety of challenges, including a lack of suitable learning materials. This finding could imply that students are unable to fully engage in and profit from online learning.

This also supports the findings that accessing to online learning equipment such as laptops has been a reoccurring issue for students as a transition to online learning in the midst of a global health crises. (Ferri, Grifoni, & Guzzo, 2020).

One of the obstacles students face while learning through online classroom is that they lack of technological competency with unfamiliar online platform application. This is in line with the previous research by Rasheed et al. (2020) that technological implementation and competency play a vital role in online learning especially during the wake of new normal era.

Regarding learning and instructional obstacles, the findings show that obstacles to online learning faced by students are pertain to learning and instruction. Equivocal learning content and ambiguous instruction get many students confused.

Even though online learning has been used as a mode for learning and instruction during the global pandemic, learning content is still stick to traditional on-site learning. This reveals that teachers' experience on online learning is totally significant (Chen et al., 2020) since it can help out the obstacle their students encounter. This notion is also congruent with Burgess & Sievertsen (2020) that the instructional design would meet the online learning platform.

Besides, overwhelming learning activities and tasks are assigned. This is corresponded with Sundarasen et al., (2020) that teachers requires several tasks and assignments which are overloaded for students to complete. According to Sarvestani et al. (2019), they also support the findings that designated tasks are occasionally excessive and obstruct learning outcome of students.

Regarding communicational obstacles, online learning contributes to low level of communication among student communication specifically their group discussion. Students tend to sit still and do not engage with their peers in the discussion activities. This is consistent with the findings by Chung, Noor, & Mathew (2020) that students avoid asking questions and sharing thought in their online discussion.

Furthermore, research findings by Baticulon et al. (2020) and Sarvestani et al. (2019) showed that students struggle to cope with online learning due to deprived peer communication. This also supported the findings that COVID-19 lockdowns caused a lack of communication among students in online platforms (Gaur et al., 2020).

Besides, students face difficulties approaching to their teachers when learning online. It demolishes students' motivation in their online learning as a result of student-teacher communication. This finding is confirmed by that of Alawamleh, Al-Twait, & Al-Saht (2020) that online learning contributes to the lack of enthusiasm, less communication between students and teachers, and a sense of seclusion.

Regarding financial obstacles, online learning necessitates the use of the internet. Students attempt to conquer the obstacles, but they are unable to do so owing to the new normal circumstance, which becomes an additional strain for parents. This finding is consistent with Adle (2020) that financial difficulties for impoverished households began to intensify during the pandemic crisis and economic shutdown.

Besides, the research finding by Azhari and Fajri (2021) supported that financial circumstances of student families do not assist online learning, such as a lack of funds to acquire internet data and instruments to facilitate online learning.

Regarding health and well-being obstacles, another issue that students are concerned about is their poor physical and psychological conditions. As regards physical health, students spend nearly the whole day and night attending online classes and completing exercises. This is in line with Sundarasen et al., (2020) that spending super-long period of time on online learning dramatically increases stress levels of students.

As regards psychological health, the finding concurs with that of Tandon (2020) that COVID-19-related mental health concerns such as despair, tension, and nervousness have a negative influence on students' motivation to online learning.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This paper attempted to describe the obstacles to online learning of university students in the context of the Thailand amidst the COVID-19 crisis.

Based upon the research findings, five major themes were revealed: technology, learning and instruction, communication, finance, health and well-being.

These findings offer context for the multiple obstacles university students in a developing country face in the light of the existing global crisis.

It is recommended that these obstacles of online learning should be regarded as contributions for the government to reform the national education act in order to efficiently develop educational system; place strategies for administration and management specifically financial support, international collaboration, stakeholder cooperation, community alliance; and get ready for coping with future uncertainties.

Besides, it is recommended for educational institutions throughout the nation to plan institutional strategies and policies, reorganize structure of institutions, reshape curriculum and instruction, and prepare training programs for educational human resources. These will potentially meet the scholarly need of students, including fully assist and develop students learning; particularly for remote learning and education.

University administrators should also take steps to improve student assistance in all areas. Teachers should examine their instruction, learning materials, and class activities, as well as students' physical and psychological concerns.

Finally, parents should take an active role in determining their children's learning time and space. They should also provide all essential support so that students can lastly survive this remote education in the midst of the crisis.

As this research has presented the obstacles to online learning in a university of Thailand. Therefore, future research studies for other contexts are strongly recommended.

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MULTICULTURAL ISLAMIC EDUCATION: GUS DUR AND CAK NUR PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

Indonesia is a country with various tribes, nations, races, ethnicities, religions, and languages. This diversity is unique for the Indonesian people. Multicultural understanding is needed to be implemented in the life of a pluralistic society. Multicultural understanding that is tolerant, egalitarian, democratic, inclusive, as well as understanding and appreciating diversity is important and urgent to be instilled through multicultural Islamic education. Indonesian Muslim scholar, Gus Dur Wahid and Cak Nur give more attention to multiculturalism education seen from their ideas in various writings. This type of research is library research using a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using technical content analysis. The results of this study indicated that multicultural Islamic education upholds tolerance, democracy, humanism and pluralism. According to Gus Dur, multicultural Islamic education is learning based on local cultural diversity that is synchronized with the teachings of Islam, built on the spirit of equality, equality, humanity, and plurality through mutual respect for existing similarities, differences, and uniqueness. Meanwhile, according to Cak Nur, multicultural Islamic education is education that views that diversity is not a barrier or reason for discrimination against other groups. Then in the thoughts of Gus Dur and Cak Nur, there are similarities that lie in the aspects of multicultural ideas, the objectives of multicultural Islamic education, the concept of educators and learning methods. While the differences are in terms of concepts, curriculum, and implementation of learning evaluation.

Keywords: *Indonesia; comparison; Islamic education; and multicultural.*

1. Introduction

Education is an aspect that has a vital role in creating quality human resources for the future of the nation, where education is expected to be able to foster and guide the nation's generation with all the diversity of its potential in order to compete in the current of globalization according to the demands of the times (Nugroho et al., 2020). Indonesia is a country with approximately 17,000 islands stretching along the equator from Sabang to Merauke, consisting of various tribes, nations, languages, customs, cultures and religions, which shows a high level of pluralism (Sholehuddin et al., 2021). Meanwhile, Indonesian culture cannot be separated from the touch of beliefs and religions that develop in this maritime country (Dewi Yulianti, 2020). This diversity on the one hand is a treasure that should be grateful for and nurtured and can provide dynamics for the nation, but on the other hand it is a starting point for discriminatory disputes and conflicts. This conflict often occurs because of the lack or absence of tolerance towards others to respect and appreciate the differences that exist (Gunara & Sutanto, 2021).

The new paradigm in the world of education (Mas'ud, 2021), namely multicultural Islamic education is education that emphasizes efforts to cultivate a way of life of mutual respect, sincerity, tolerance for cultural diversity in the midst of the plurality of Indonesian society (Maulana & Adinugraha, 2020). This multicultural education is in line with the principles of national education as stated in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System in Chapter III of the Principles of Educational Implementation, article 4 which explains that education is held in a democratic and fair manner and is not discriminatory by upholding human rights, religious values, cultural values, and the progress of the nation. Education should play a role in resolving conflicts of intolerance and discrimination (Musthofiyah et al., 2021).

Multicultural Islamic education acts as an effort to strengthen faith and piety to God Almighty, in accordance with Islamic teachings, being inclusive, rational and philosophical in order to respect others in harmonious relations and cooperation between religious communities in society to realize national unity (Marzuki et al., 2020). Seeing the social reality in Indonesia where diversity has strong potential, multicultural-based Islamic education is a solution to minimize various criminal acts in the name of religion, ethnicity, race, and irresponsible radical actions (Lestari et al., 2021).

The multicultural problems that exist have made various figures in Indonesia and the world to create their own concepts, KH is no exception. Gus Dur and Cak Nur are two great Indonesian figures who are neo-modernist. Judging from the basic understanding of Islam, they are very strong, but also enthusiastic about modern Western thoughts which they think are good and can be integrated with Islamic values. Abdurrahman Wahid or more familiarly called "Gus Dur" is known to be liberal in his thoughts, pluralist, humanist and rational personality, all of which are contained in his thoughts, ideas and phenomenal works. Meanwhile, Nurcholish Madjid or more familiarly called "Cak Nur". Like Gus Dur, Cak Nur is also known as a liberal, pluralist, critical of surrounding and controversial situations. His thoughts and ideas have been widely discussed and raised pros and cons (Syarif, 2021).

Departing from the explanation above, the researcher has an interest in studying more deeply about multicultural Islamic education in the perspective of KH. Gus Dur and Cak Nur. It is an interesting thing to examine more about the thoughts of these two neo-modernist figures in the field of education, especially multicultural Islamic education with reference to the condition of Indonesia, which has a very diverse society (Herlina et al., 2021). The purpose of this study is: to describe the concept of multicultural Islamic education in the perspective of KH. Abdurahman Wahid and Nurcholish Madjid, as well as to analyze the similarities and differences of multicultural Islamic education in the perspective of KH. Abdurahman Wahid and Nurcholish Madjid.

2. Biography of KH. Abdurrahman Wahid

KH. Abdurrahman Wahid or who can be familiarly known as Gus Dur. Abdurrahman Wahid was born on September 7, 1940 in Denayar, Jombang, East Java, Gus Dur was born into a charismatic family. KH's father. Wahid Hasyim who always wrestled in the national movement, was the son of the famous KH. Asy'ari, founder of Pondok Tebuireng and founder of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest organization in Indonesia. His mother's name is Nyai Hj. Sholehah, also the daughter of a prominent Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) figure, namely KH. Bisri Syamsuri, founder of the Denanyar Jombang Islamic Boarding School who was also the Ris Aam of PBNU in 1971-1980. Gus Dur married Sinta Nuriyah bint Abdullah Syukur on September 11, 1971 and had four daughters, namely Alissa Qatrunnada Munawwaroh, Zannuba Arifah Chafsoh, Anita Hayatunnufus, and Inayah Wulandari.

Gus Dur learned the Koran and read the Koran from his grandfather, KH. Hasyim Asy'ari. Gus Dur along with his 6 younger siblings entered the people's school (SR) formed by the Dutch East Indies government for indigenous children, then moved to Matraman Perwari Elementary School. After that he continued his education at the Junior Economics High School (SMEP) in Tanah Abang. Then he moved to Yogyakarta and lived in the house of a Muhammadiyah figure, KH. Junaid. In April 1954, Gus Dur continued his education at SMEP in Gowongan while staying at Krapyak Yogyakarta. In addition, along with learning Arabic at the Al-Munawir Islamic Boarding School, Krapyak Yogyakarta under the guidance of KH. Ali Maksum. Then he stayed at Tegalrejo Magelang (1957-1959). In 1959-1963, Abdurrahman Wahid studied at Muallimat Bahrul Ulum, Rice Farm (DIA, 2020).

Then in 1963, he continued his studies at Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt, majoring in the Department of Higher Islamic and Arabic Studies. Gus

Dur decided to stop his studies midway and thought that Cairo was no longer conducive to his wishes. He moved to Baghdad Iraq in 1966 and took up the faculty of literature. After returning from Baghdad, in 1972-1974 he was trusted to be a lecturer and at the same time served as Dean of the Faculty of Ushuluddin, Hasyim Asy'ari University, Jombang. 1974-1980 by his uncle, KH. Yusuf Hasyim, was given the mandate to become general secretary of the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School, Jombang. During this period he began to be involved in the management of NU by serving as the initial Head of Syuriah PBNU since 1980 and was elected general chairman of PBNU in 1984-1994. Gus Dur's highest career in politics was when he was elected as the fourth president of Indonesia in 1999-2001, accompanied by Megawati Soekarno Putri as vice president (Muharromah, Gabriele Lailatul; Anwar, 2020).

Busyness and extreme activities made Gus Dur suffer from many diseases from visual impairment, stroke, diabetes, and kidney disorders. As a result of the complications he suffered, Gus Dur died on Wednesday, December 30, 2009 at Cipto Mangunkusumo Hospital, at 18.45 WIB and was buried at the Tebu Ireng Islamic Boarding School in Jombang (Malla et al., 2021).

3. Biography of Nurcholish Madjid

Nurcholish Madjid or who is familiarly called "Cak Nur" was born on March 17, 1939 in Jombang, East Java. Cak Nur had the first name Abdul Malik before the name changed to Nurcholish Madjid on the grounds that little Abdul Malik was often sick. Cak Nur's mother is Hj. Fathanah, daughter of kiai Abdullah Sajjad. His father is H. Abdul Madjid, a kyai who graduated from the Tebuireng pesantren, which means he is a student of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari. He was very close and even became the son-in-law of KH's nephew. Hasyim Asy'ari is Halimah before finally divorcing because she has no children. His father adhered to NU customs in religious matters, but was affiliated with Masjumi in political matters. Nurcholis Madjid passed away on Monday, August 29, 2005 at Pondok Indah Hospital, Jakarta.

As a child, Cak Nur received religious education from his father, so that it was very influential in his education and thoughts. Cak Nur attended the People's School and Madrasah Wathaniyah which one of the managers was his own father. In the academic field, Cak Nur obtained extraordinary achievements. At the age of 14, he studied at the Darul Ulum Rejoso Islamic boarding school (1953), but only lasted 2 years because he was always ridiculed by other students because his father was involved in Masyumi. Finally in 1953 Cak Nur moved to the modern Islamic boarding school Gontor, Ponorogo, East Java. Cak Nur said that the Gontor Islamic Boarding School was very decisive and gave color to the development of his thoughts.

In 1961, Cak Nur continued his studies at IAIN Syafir Hidayatullah Jakarta at the Adab Faculty, Department of Arabic Language and Literature until he completed a full bachelor's degree (Drs.) in 1968. Since being a student, Cak

Nur was active in the Islamic Student Association (HMI) until he became the General Chairperson PB HMI two periods (1967-1969) and (1969-1971). Then studied political science and Islamic philosophy at the University of Chicago in 1978-1984 under the guidance of a Muslim scientist Neo-modernism from Pakistan named Fazlur Rahman so that he received a Ph.D. in the field of Islamic Philosophy (Khaeroni, 2021).

Upon his return to Indonesia, Nurcholish Madjid taught at the Adab Faculty in addition to the Postgraduate program until he became a Professor. Cak Nur also briefly became the Dean of the Postgraduate Faculty in 1985. In 1986, Nurcholish Madjid and several Islamic reform figures founded and led the Paramadina Waqf Foundation which is engaged in educational institutions and officially launched on October 28, 1986 at the Sari Pon Pacific Hotel. Furthermore, since 1991 he has also served as Chairman of the Expert Council of the Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association (ICMI), a member of the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM) in 1993 and is also listed as a member of the People's Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia (MPR-RI) in 1995 (Nabil Amir & Abdul Rahman, 2021).

4. Multicultural Islamic Education in the Perspective of Gus Dur

Some of Gus Dur's version of multicultural Ideas are:

a. Indigenization of Islam

Gus Dur gave birth to an idea called "Indigenization of Islam", which is an effort to integrate Islam with local culture. The idea of Indigenization of Islam in the style of Gus Dur wants to show Islam as a religion that is friendly and appreciative of local contexts while maintaining the existing cultural reality (multiculturalism). Gus Dur was against uniformity, because the uniformity that occurred would not only kill the cultural creativity of the people but also alienate Islam from the mainstream of national culture. The differences between us, should be considered as the wealth of the nation.

This idea is in line with the dimensions of multicultural Islamic education which upholds local cultural identity without discrimination, especially differences in religion, race, ethnicity, and other diversity. The use of local culture in multicultural-minded learning can enrich, develop, and strengthen local culture as a national culture. Indigenization of Islam indirectly reflects the goal of Islamic education, namely to form perfect individuals who are intelligent and uphold ethics, morality, and respect for differences (Bashri, 2021).

b. Democracy and Human Rights

Democracy is very thick with sovereignty in the hands of the people. A truly democratic country certainly leaves all affairs in the hands of the people and upholds human rights. What is clear is that the people want justice, well-being in physical and spiritual life, both materially and spiritually. With the fulfillment of all people's rights, the life of the nation and state will be beautiful with its plurality while respecting the opinions and principles of each individual's life.

In line with that, multicultural education is an appropriate educational strategy as the basis for upholding democracy and human rights. Multicultural education can be applied in learning by using the cultural differences that exist in students so that the learning process is more effective and multicultural values are still achieved. Multicultural education trains and builds the character of students to be able to be democratic, humanist, and pluralist in their environment by not forgetting the values of religiosity (Rafif, 2021).

c. Humanism and Pluralism

Gus Dur said that the harmony of religious and state life did not arise from the same thing, but was born from different perspectives and knitted together harmoniously, not denying each other that could lead to conflict and violence. Gus Dur believes that the plurality that exists is a necessity in human life. Multiculturalism itself grows as an understanding that respects humanism, so that its rights and obligations are fulfilled as creatures whose existence, opinions, and all life activities must be recognized.

Multicultural education adheres to the ideology of humanism that emphasizes the human element. These humanistic values return to belief in God's truth, treatment that is wise and honorable to himself, builds the spirit to be loyal to others, and treats the universe as he treats himself. Multicultural education with a humanitarian orientation is expected to make people who animate humanistic values without losing their respective identities. Multicultural Islamic education recognizes plurality, a learning tool for cross-border encounters, and transforms indoctrination into dialogue.

As for the concept of multicultural Islamic education in Gus Dur's perspective, Abdurrahman Wahid's view on multicultural Islamic education, he explained that in the life of the nation, Muslims need to dialogue and cooperate with other people so that humans continue to learn and are able to coexist with other people. This must be applied in multicultural Islamic education by allowing diversity in Islamic education as it is so that it is not rigid. All human beings are equal, regardless of their origin, gender, ethnicity, race and nationality (Muhyidin, 2020).

Islamic education requires diversity without eliminating the existence of the existing culture. Islamic educational institutions must be confident in facing the challenges of globalization with their respective cultures. Multicultural-based Islamic education is a solution offering in minimizing various criminal acts in the name of religion, ethnicity, and irresponsible radical actions (Saeful Ridhwan MZ, 2019).

The purpose of multicultural Islamic education. In the book of "My Islam, Your Islam, and Our Islam", Abdurrahman Wahid said that the main goal of multicultural Islamic education is to guide and deliver people to become complete, independent and free from the shackles of oppression. Multicultural

Islamic education seeks to make the world of education aware that there is no single authority that can impose uniformity and a single point of view, this must be avoided because uniformity will actually lead to sectarian and exclusive attitudes.

Gus Dur views multicultural Islamic education as a renewal movement and a process to create an equal educational environment for all citizens. This education provides every student with a guarantee to have the opportunity to achieve maximum performance according to their abilities (Muhyiddin, 2019).

The concept of educators in multicultural Islamic education. Abdurrahman Wahid emphasized that in multicultural Islamic education educators are required to use a diverse and democratic approach by minimizing and avoiding students from the form of uniform patterns of thought, ideas and opinions. So that it stimulates students' critical and creative thinking skills in looking at the diversity that develops around them (Khaqim, 2019).

Gus Dur describes educators as those who are competent, professional, charismatic, and have broad insight into harmonization and high humanization in creating multicultural education. Gus Dur himself during his lifetime became an example of an educator who dared to apply freedom in educating, respecting the rights and obligations of each individual, and providing free space to express his thoughts (Anam et al., 2019).

The curriculum in Gus Dur's view must adapt to the existing diversity, without trying to impose uniformity. The implementation of Islamic education in Indonesia can be in the form of formal education such as in schools, as well as non-formal education such as in recitation, social gathering, and so on. However, non-formal education is often neglected. The diversity of the implementation of Islamic education should be complete and not ignore the existing reality.

Gus Dur emphasized the appreciation of the differences between each Islamic educational institution, both formal and non-formal. The educational curriculum is adapted to the conditions of diversity that exist in each Islamic educational institution. Where the curriculum development initiated by Gus Dur is based on cultural principles with a multicultural approach (Al-Qadri, 2020).

Islamic Religious Education which is synchronized with Gus Dur's idea of Indigenization of Islam carries a dialogical approach method to instill awareness of living together in diversity and difference. This educational method is built on the spirit of equality and equality, mutual trust, mutual understanding and respect for similarities, differences and uniqueness. Multicultural Islamic education recognizes plurality, is a learning tool for cross-border encounters, is free of prejudice and racism, and transforms indoctrination into dialogue (Nasrowi, 2020).

Besides that, Gus Dur also said that multicultural Islamic education also needs to apply coaching and training methods on increasing student motivation to learn. The learning system must be able to balance theory and practice in its implementation so that students do not experience boredom of thinking and are ready when required to apply their knowledge in society and the world of work.

In developing a multicultural Islamic education curriculum, Gus Dur said that the orientation of education must be comprehensive, covering cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. So the assessment or evaluation must also cover these three aspects. In addition to the three normative evaluations, Gus Dur also explained the need for coaching and training related to community development. So, evaluation can also be done when students are directly involved in the community by practicing their knowledge while also learning with the community.

Evaluation in multicultural Islamic education is emphasized on students' awareness of cultural diversity and the various biases that exist in society. Evaluation of multicultural-based learning is seen from the understanding and attitudes of students who can appreciate diversity and differences in society (Arif, 2020).

5. Multicultural Islamic Education in Cak Nur's Perspective

Some multicultural ideas according to Nurcholis Madjid can be explained as follows:

a. Islamic universalism

The source of the idea of Islamic universalism is the notion of the word of Islam itself, namely submission, submission and obedience to Allah. Islam is called a universal teaching because it is full of human values that are universal or comprehensive, owned by every human being on earth. Islam within the framework of universalism applies to all people in every place and time (*al-islam shahih fi kulli Zaman wa Makan*). Islam as a teaching for all mankind, does not depend on language, place, people, or groups, a source of mercy for the whole world.

In Nurcholish Madjid's view, multicultural Islamic education has the spirit of Islamic universalism, namely education is a process of developing all human potentials that respects and recognizes plurality and heterogeneity as a consequence of ethnic, ethnic, and religious cultural diversity. Multicultural Islamic education views that diversity does exist, but not as a barrier or reason for discrimination against certain groups (Sulbi, 2021).

b. Tolerance and Universal Harmony

Nurcholish Madjid views tolerance as giving freedom to fellow human beings to practice their beliefs or regulate their lives and determine their own destiny, as long as it does not conflict with the requirements for creating order and peace in society. The principle of brotherhood in Islam is based on the view that even though humans have religious backgrounds, nationality, ethnicity, gender, culture and traditions are different but they have elements in common in terms of origins, processes, necessities of life, and places of return.

Islamic teachings about tolerance are in line with multicultural Islamic education which requires an appreciation of diversity in society. Multicultural Islamic education is designed to instill tolerance from simple to complex. This must be carried out intensively to deliver students to individual and social piety and mutual understanding that differences can complement, fill and contribute so that harmonious and peaceful relations are realized and far from conflict due to these differences (Abdullah, 2021).

c. Human rights

Islam teaches that each human soul has the same value and dignity as other human beings in the world. Characteristics of Islamic teachings that protect all human rights, namely the right to life, the right to religion, the right to think, the right to have offspring, and the right to obtain, own, protect and use property. According to Nurcholish, true humanity must be based on a sense of divinity because true humanity must aim to please God. The understanding of humanity taught by religion is believed, lived and practiced as an important part of religiosity.

In line with the above idea, the internalization of human rights values is an important priority in the implementation of multicultural-based education in Indonesia. The internalization of human rights values aims to strengthen the formation of the human spirit. Multicultural Islamic education provides equal space and place for the interests of individuals and cultural groups, without prioritizing/overriding the rights of individual interest groups (Mustofa, 2021).

The concept of multicultural Islamic education. Nurcholish Madjid revealed that plurality and multiculturalism are the rules of Allah (*Sunnatullah*) that cannot be denied and denying the law of cultural pluralism will only cause endless upheaval. Multiculturalism is not just a social phenomenon, but is a necessity that is not only co-existence, but pro-existence. Multiculturalism in Islamic education is not only seen as a fact that is just left to exist, but is something that must be grown and developed in the context of the good of life.

The concept of multiculturalism in religious education (Islam) can foster internal and inter-religious dialogue with an egalitarian position. Through the concept of multiculturalism in religious education developed by Nurcholish, religious communities regardless of their religion are positioned parallel, without any subordination and domination of one another, but are equally seen as servants of God who seek the truth and greet each other. It is very important to instill an optimistic and open perspective and attitude in multicultural Islamic education (Rosida et al., 2021).

The purpose of multicultural Islamic education by Cak Nur is to emphasize that Islam is a universal religion, for all mankind in the universe. Islamic education seeks so that humans can achieve faith in Allah, God Almighty by understanding diversity (*as caliph fi al-'ard*). The multicultural principle fosters an attitude of accepting differences that arise as a response from a plural and pluralistic society. The pluralistic socio-cultural conditions require a common ground in the common values of all the same groups (Nasution et al., 2020).

This multicultural-oriented Islamic education is oriented to the formation of individual piety, personality, and noble character, obedience and obedience as an attitude of submission to God based on the Qur'an and al-Hadith. Multicultural education seeks to lead students to become the caliph of Allah who is able to prosper nature with local wisdom, tolerance, moderate and inclusive understanding (Barton et al., 2021).

Educators in multicultural Islamic education. Cak Nur views the Prophet Muhammad as an ideal educator figure. As an educator, Prophet Muhammad SAW at that time was very charismatic, democratic and humanist in dealing with his people of different ethnic groups. He has always been a role model for his people (Riyadi & Adinugraha, 2021). Islamic religious educators must have behavior that is in accordance with universal divine values such as being devoted to God Almighty and having good character in every action (Naim & Muhajir, 2020).

In accordance with Cak Nur's conception of Islamic thought regarding inclusive Islam, educators must be able to be socially oriented with their environment without having the most correct principles and discriminating against different groups, religions, ethnic groups, and groups. Multicultural Islamic education teachers should have an inclusive nature and act objectively due to considerations of religious, family, and social background, must be communicative, friendly and polite to anyone (Mukhtar, 2021).

Nurcholish Madjid idealized Islamic education in the style of the Medina community which was applied to the multicultural Islamic education curriculum. Cak Nur emphasizes the appreciation of differences within the scope of an educational institution, where in one educational institution there is diversity brought by each individual. So that the curriculum is adapted to the existence of different individuals in an educational institution. According to Nurcholish Madjid, the educational curriculum must give additional weight that is relevant to modern life and enlightens the intellectual and spirituality of students (Hidayatulloh, 2020).

The curriculum of multicultural Islamic education must emphasize the values of humanism, pluralism, democracy, peace, unity, and social justice. The education curriculum integrates religious knowledge and general science to eliminate the gap between the dichotomy of these sciences (Adinugraha et al., 2018). This multicultural learning also develops a student-oriented pattern so that students are not only consumers of education but also producers by continuously thinking and mastering religious and general sciences orally and in writing (Amali, 2019).

In the implementation of multicultural Islamic education, Cak Nur puts forward the tradition of Islamic education of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina in the Medina charter. Like what the Prophet did at that time, he prioritized democratic methods in educating by taking into account the diversity of students' backgrounds and the basis for equal rights and obligations for all individuals and groups. Democracy in learning is also done by applying the widest possible opportunity and opportunity for students to ask questions, argue, and appreciate every idea and idea, whether true or not (Nurdin, 2016).

Besides the democratic method, Cak Nur also believes in the importance of implementing guidance and development in multicultural Islamic education. It means that Islamic education unites physical and spiritual as a process of coaching and guidance that is carried out based on the Qur'an and as-Sunnah to develop the potential of students in studying social facts and developments of the times to form human beings who are intellectually intelligent and respect values and plurality value (Adinugraha & Ulama'i, 2020).

According to Nurcholish Madjid, evaluation is not a tool to judge students, but evaluation aims to map the skills and disciplines mastered by students and there is no uniformity effort. Because the potential and tendencies of students are different, evaluation must respect the diversity of students. The evaluation must touch the three domains that are the goals of multicultural Islamic education, namely affective, cognitive, and psychomotor (Munir, 2018).

In Nurcholish Madjid's view, evaluation is more important to be carried out daily with notes on student progress and process evaluation is more important than objective evaluation. The success or failure of this multicultural Islamic education is seen from the process that students go through in developing into a pluralistic, inclusive, and respectful person. When the process goes well, then the goals of multicultural Islamic education that have been outlined can be judged to have been achieved

6. Comparative Analysis of Multicultural Islamic Education

KH. Gus Dur and Cak Nur grew up in a *pesantren* education environment that was thick with religious life and continued their wanderings to foreign universities which made their minds open to the Western world. Gus Dur and Cak Nur have nicknamed neo-modernism figures, where they still maintain the typical Indonesian Islamic treasures, and are also interested in Western criticism. From the above background, in terms of initiating multicultural Islamic education, Gus Dur and Cak Nur have the same ideas.

These equations include the following:

1. Multicultural Ideas

Gus Dur in initiating multicultural Islamic education based on his progressive ideas, namely the idea of Indigenous Islam, the idea of democracy and human rights, and the idea of humanism and pluralism. Cak Nur in line with that also initiated progressive ideas in conceptualizing multicultural Islamic education, namely the idea of Islamic universalism, the idea of universal tolerance and harmony, and the idea of human rights.

From each of Gus Dur and Cak Nur's multicultural ideas, it indicates that multicultural Islamic education as education that protects local cultural identity and diversity is synchronized with Islamic teachings as a religion of mercy for the universe, built on tolerance, equality, equality, and humanity in the midst of a pluralistic society without discrimination of gender, ethnicity, nation, race, religion and other differences.

2. The Purpose of Multicultural Islamic Education

The purpose of multicultural Islamic education developed by Gus Dur is to guide and deliver people to become complete, independent, and free from the shackles of oppression. Multicultural Islamic education seeks to make the world of education aware that no single authority can impose uniformity, because uniformity will only create sectarian and exclusive attitudes. Furthermore, the goal of multicultural Islamic education according to Cak Nur is to guide individuals to become perfect human beings (*insan kamil*) as *khalifah fi al-ardli* who are able to accept pluralism as it is and foster healthy shared attitudes such as tolerance, openness, justice, and freedom by finding common ground (similarity) of all groups.

The two figures wanted multicultural Islamic education to be able to present a perfect, complete and free educational output from the shackles of oppression and uniform traditional patterns. Accepting the diversity of each individual with open arms and full of tolerance regardless of ethnic background, religion, race, nation, and culture

3. The Concept of Multicultural Islamic Education

Abdurrahman Wahid emphasized that in multicultural Islamic education, educators are required to use a diverse and democratic approach by minimizing and avoiding students from the form of uniformity of thought patterns, ideas and opinions. Abdurrahman Wahid described an educator as one who is competent, professional, charismatic, and has broad insight into harmonization and high humanization in creating a multicultural education.

Cak Nur views that an educator must imitate the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina. Educators must have a humanist, democratic, charismatic, inclusive character, be a role model and socially oriented with the environment without assuming the most self-righteous. An educator must understand the diversity of students, whether from religion, ethnicity, race, and ethnicity without forcing uniformity.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that Gus Dur and Cak Nur view that an ideal educator must be professional, charismatic, democratic, broad-minded, humanist, inclusive, being a role model and socially oriented. An educator must also be able to understand the diversity brought by students. All of these characters exist in the Prophet Muhammad as a role model for mankind.

4. Multicultural Islamic Education Method

Abdurrahman Wahid adopted a dialogical method to instill awareness of living together in diversity and difference. This educational method is built on the spirit of equality and equality, mutual trust, mutual understanding and respect for similarities, differences and uniqueness. Coaching and training methods are also important to increase learning potential and motivation so that students have a high and lifelong interest in learning.

In terms of multicultural Islamic education methods, Nurcholish Madjid puts forward democratic methods in educating by taking into account the diversity of backgrounds between one student and another. Democracy requires a foundation of equal rights and obligations for all individuals and groups. As well as providing physical and spiritual coaching and guidance methods to develop the potential of students in learning the facts of diversity (Khasanah et al., 2021).

It can be concluded that, in the method of multicultural Islamic education, Abdurrahman Wahid uses the term dialogical and Nurcholish Madjid uses the term democratic. However, the dialogical and democratic methods have the same core and common ground, namely methods that pay attention to the diversity of students with the spirit of equality and equality. In addition to coaching and training methods, dialogical methods and democratic methods in their various forms can teach the meaning of equal rights and obligations for all individuals and groups as well as train students to think critically, creatively, innovatively, and visionarily.

Some of the points above show that the thoughts of Gus Dur and Cak Nur have close correlations. However, between the two there are also differences that arise in initiating multicultural Islamic education. Differences in multicultural Islamic education from the perspectives of Gus Dur and Cak Nur are as follows:

1. The Concept of Multicultural Islamic Education

Abdurrahman Wahid explained that in the life of the nation, Muslims need to have dialogue and cooperation with other people with the aim of making Muslims continue to learn and be able to coexist with other people. All human beings are equal, regardless of their origin, gender, race and nationality. This must also be applied in multicultural Islamic education by leaving the diversity that exists in education so that it does not become rigid.

On the other hand, Cak Nur views multiculturalism as not just a social phenomenon, but as a necessity. The phenomenon of multiculturalism must be pro-existence. Multiculturalism in Islamic education is not only seen as a fact that is just left to exist, but is something that must be grown and developed in the context of the good of life.

It appears that Abdurrahman Wahid in dealing with diversity in education is to just leave it as it is, there is no need for uniformity. Meanwhile, Cak Nur stated that diversity should not be left alone, but its existence must be cultivated for the good of life so that it does not become extinct by the times.

2. Multicultural Islamic Education Curriculum

Abdurrahman Wahid said Islamic education in Indonesia has many learning models that can be in the form of formal education and non-formal education such as social gathering, recitation, markets, and so on. However, non-formal education is often neglected. The diversity of Islamic education must be complete and not ignore the fact that it exists. Abdurrahman Wahid emphasizes the differences in educational institutions, the curriculum is adapted to the conditions of diversity of each educational institution in the community. Curriculum development is based on cultural principles with a multicultural approach.

While Cak Nur, he idealized Islamic education in the style of the Medina community with multicultural Islamic education. Cak Nur emphasizes more on the appreciation of differences within the scope of an educational institution where in one institution there is diversity brought by each individual. So that the curriculum is adapted to the existence of all different individuals in one educational institution.

Abdurrahman Wahid wants a Multicultural Islamic Education curriculum that rewards the diversity of Islamic educational institutions both formal and non-formal in society, where the curriculum is based on multicultural principles. Meanwhile, Cak Nur puts forward an appreciation for the differences in diversity brought by each individual in an institution. Cak Nur is more focused on formal educational institutions such as the *Paramadina* educational institutions that he founded. So that all individuals who have different backgrounds get the same rights from these educational institutions.

3. Evaluation of Multicultural Islamic Education

In carrying out educational evaluations, Abdurrahman Wahid wants a comprehensive evaluation, both normative evaluations that include cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, as well as evaluations in the form of coaching and training related to community development. Students go directly to the community by practicing their knowledge while learning new things with the community. Abdurrahman Wahid eliminates results-oriented evaluation, but rather process-oriented because the process is more important than the results.

Meanwhile, Cak Nur views that evaluation aims to map the skills and talents that are mastered by students without uniform efforts. Evaluation does need to be done thoroughly, but it is more important to do it daily through notes on the progress of students. The success or failure of this multicultural Islamic education is seen from the process that students go through in developing into plural, inclusive, and respectful individuals.

Both Gus Dur and Cak Nur agreed that the evaluation of multicultural Islamic education was carried out comprehensively in terms of attitudes, knowledge, and skills as well as evaluation in the form of coaching and training. However, in the technique there is a difference in emphasis. Abdurrahman Wahid emphasized that it is better to evaluate education through community coaching and development, where students are directly involved in learning and sharing knowledge with the community. Meanwhile, Cak Nur emphasized that the evaluation process that is more important is the evaluation that is carried out every day with daily notes containing the progress of students.

7. The Relevance of Multicultural Islamic Education in Modern Era

Indonesia is known as a country rich in diversity as a reality that should be preserved and developed. So there needs to be an understanding of equality between one group and another through education. Multicultural Islamic education is also in accordance with the motto of the Indonesian nation, namely *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (different but still one), where Islamic education is a forum for implementing this motto through integration with Islamic teachings and multicultural principles (ATMAJA et al., 2021). This is in accordance with the concept of multicultural Islamic education according to Gus Dur and Cak Nur.

Departing from the concept above, the objectives of multicultural Islamic education from the perspective of Gus Dur and Cak Nur are obtained in accordance with the goals of today's national education as regulated in the National Education System Law no. 2 of 2003 chapter II article 3 which reads: "National education functions to develop capabilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in the context of educating the nation's life, aiming at developing the potential of students to become human beings who believe and fear God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become a democratic and responsible citizen."

The goals of national education are relevant to the goals of Gus Dur and Cak Nur's multicultural Islamic education, namely the realization of ideal, perfect, whole, and free students from the shackles of oppression. Students who believe in God Almighty, are civilized, have noble character by fostering an attitude of tolerance, openness, competence, democracy, and upholding human rights.

Furthermore, in terms of the concept of educators, Gus Dur and Cak Nur agree that an educator must be broad-minded, competent, charismatic, humanist, democratic, and can be a role model. Educators are asked to use a diverse and democratic approach as a form of understanding the diversity of students from ethnicity, religion, race, ethnicity, gender, and other differences.

The criteria for an educator according to Gus Dur and Cak Nur are in line with Law no. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers Chapter IV Article 10 paragraph (1) which essentially states that teachers must master four mandatory competencies, namely pedagogic competence, personality competence, social competence, and professional competence. An educator must be able to manage learning well, effectively, educate, and dialogue, have a qualified personality, have noble character, and be authoritative, and be an example for students and the community. Educators must also be able to socialize and get along politely and respect diversity as part of society. And educators must be competent and professional in their fields.

In curriculum development, Gus Dur and Cak Nur argue that the multicultural Islamic education curriculum requires the elimination of the dichotomy of science, educational orientation that emphasizes affective and psychomotor aspects with student-oriented and process-oriented patterns. Learning is not just a transfer of knowledge but also includes the transfer of values and skills and character building. Gus Dur wants a curriculum that rewards the diversity of Islamic educational institutions both formal and non-formal in society, where the curriculum is based on multicultural principles. Meanwhile, Cak Nur puts forward an appreciation for the differences in diversity that each individual brings in an institution, so that all individuals with different backgrounds get the same rights from the educational institution.

The multicultural Islamic education curriculum of the two figures is relevant to the current educational curriculum, namely the 2013 Curriculum. The 2013 curriculum rewards every difference so that every formal and non-formal institution can express and complement each other and each individual also has the same rights. The orientation of the 2013 curriculum eliminates the dichotomy of science covering four core competencies, namely, Spiritual (KI-1), Social/Affective (KI-2), Knowledge (KI-3), and Psychomotor (KI-4) with student-oriented and process-oriented learning patterns. . The 2013 curriculum emphasizes the transfer of values, skills as well as character building.

Then with regard to learning methods, multicultural Islamic education Gus Dur and Cak Nur both put forward a democratic and dialogical method where educators and students as well as between students must pay attention to diversity in terms of backgrounds, mindsets, and opinions. The learning method used requires students to play an active role in the learning process, not only as learning objects but also as learning subjects. Methods that are coaching and training are also needed to improve the physical, spiritual, and intellectual qualities of students so that they become physically and mentally healthy, intelligent, critical, creative, and open individuals.

In line with that, today's education also requires the application of various, interesting, and motivating learning models and methods for all students to be actively involved in the learning process without feeling inferior because they are different. The learning method used must invite students to actively participate in scientific thinking, make discoveries, create educational projects, dare to express opinions, ideas and ideas and be trained to solve problems, both individually and in collaboration with teachers and fellow students. So that education is created that is active, critical, creative, innovative, and open to each other with different opinions.

Next is the evaluation of learning according to Gus Dur and Cak Nur carried out comprehensively covering cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. In addition, daily evaluations also need to be carried out through student progress records as well as in the form of coaching and training related to community development. Educational evaluation is not result-oriented, but should be process-oriented because process is more important than results. When the process goes well, then the goals of multicultural Islamic education that have been outlined can be judged to have been achieved.

The thoughts of the two figures above are also relevant to the evaluation system that applies in the 2013 Curriculum which is commonly referred to as authentic assessment, namely an assessment that touches three domains, namely affective, cognitive, and psychomotor. This authentic assessment describes the results of the learning process, improvement and development of student learning outcomes. Various assessment techniques can be used to evaluate the three domains above, including in the form of tests, assignments/projects, self-assessments, observations, diaries, as well as in the form of coaching related to community development.

8. Conclusion

Abdurrahman Wahid's perspective on multicultural Islamic education, Gus Dur is of the view that cultural diversity with a positive connotation can be realized in several aspects, one of which is education. As a figure who is dubbed the father of Pluralism-Multiculturalism, in his book he explains that Islamic education must vary according to their respective cultures. Diverse education does not deviate from the goal, but rather an effort to achieve educational goals through various means. Multicultural Islamic education seeks to make the world of education aware that there is no single authority that can impose uniformity, this must be avoided because uniformity will actually lead to sectarian and exclusive attitudes. In addition, uniform education is incompatible with democracy, openness, and equality.

Nurcholish Madjid's perspective on Multicultural Islamic education, Cak Nur puts forward the leadership tradition of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina, he equates the *Madinah Mintaq* (Declaration of Medina) with the typical *Pancasila* belonging to the Indonesian nation which is then idealized with his version of Multicultural Islamic education. Education is not an ivory tower that seeks to stay away from social and cultural realities. According to him, education must be able to create a social order that only glorifies social prestige as a result of the wealth and prosperity it experiences. Cak Nur argues that Multicultural Islamic education is a way of building unity in the motto of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* which aims to present an attitude of accepting diversity, pluralism as it is, then fostering a healthy shared attitude in the context of diversity itself without reducing a Muslim's belief in the truth of his religion, attitude and attitude towards diversity. What is unique in the relationship between religions and groups is tolerance, freedom, openness, fairness, justice, and honesty.

Based on the thoughts of Gus Dur and Cak Nur regarding multicultural Islamic education can be found in several aspects, namely first, the idea of multiculturalism where education protects the identity of local cultural diversity adapted to the teachings of Islam as a religion of grace. Second, the goal of multicultural Islamic education is to produce human beings who are perfect, whole, tolerant, inclusive, democratic, and free from oppression. Third, the concept of the ideal educator is in the Prophet Muhammad. Namely charismatic, professional, democratic, humanist, broad-minded, understanding diversity. Fourth, the learning method used in addition to the coaching and training method, must also use a dialogical and democratic method.

While the difference between Gus Dur and Cak Nur in initiating multicultural Islamic education, among others, first, on the concept of KH education. Abdurrahman Wahid just let the diversity that exists in education, while according to Cak Nur, diversity must be cultivated and developed. Second, related to the curriculum. Gus Dur appreciates diversity in Islamic education in formal and non-formal institutions, while Cak Nur prioritizes diversity in only one educational institution (formal education). Third, Gus Dur prioritizes evaluation in the form of community development, while Cak Nur assesses that evaluation is more important to do with a diary containing the progress of students.

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NATIONAL CENSUS POLICY: A BENCHMARK FOR PEACE, SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

Census exercise is designed upon the conviction that clear-cut population data, lies in its heart the roadmap that enables good planning, precise execution and defined sustainable development of any nation. Having not been able to fulfill these purposes, most of the past studies on census in Nigeria have been dedicated to prospects, challenges, housing units and politics behind the falsification of census figures. Shockingly, none have really espoused how census could be imperative for trivet of peace, security and development of the nation. However, as a point of divergent departure from the recurrent focus on census and contentious debate enveloping the population of the nation, the paper examines the indices census has on the peace, security and development of the country. The cross-sectional survey design was adopted for the study using the proportionate stratified sampling techniques in the selection of 270 respondents that cut across three towns: Ado, Ikere and Ikole representing each senatorial district of Ekiti State. A structured questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection. Content analysis was used for the qualitative data. Findings revealed that there are mixed perceptions about the functionality of census cum panacea for tackling security challenges and planning for development in the country. The study recommends strict adherence to the standard decennial census exercise to ensure enhanced peace, security and development of the nation.

Keywords: National Census, Policy, Benchmark, Peace, Security, Development

Introduction

The rationale behind the idea of conducting census at regular intervals in most societies is to guarantee better performance in terms of planning sustainable development not restricted to the socio-economic sector only, but at the same time extended to other sectors for attainment of holistic development at a faster pace. Ashkpour (2019:15) observed that "censuses contain a wealth of information about nations and societies. They structurally capture societal information needs at given times in the past. Throughout history, the censuses have served to provide information to governments, i.e. to understand the development of the nation and its population on several fronts, for decision-making purposes". In United States, for instance, Reamer (2018) noted that topical research indicates census-obtained data were used to allocate more than $850 billion to states and localities through 302 programs in Fiscal Year 2016 alone. As such, a national census policy presents basic information on a country's population that enables seamless government planning and policy implementation that underscores all-around national development.

This importance informed the Nigerian government to specially create the Nigeria Population Commission (NPC) in 1988, domiciled under the Federal Ministry of Interior with the statutory powers to collect, analyze and disseminate demographic data in the country. Its other duties include undertaking demographic sample surveys, compile, collate and publish migration and civil registration statistics and also to monitor the country's population policy (www.devex.com). Therefore, it is deducible that the Commission superintends everything that hovers on human and housing population, growth and sustainable development of the nation. Buttressing how census could be imperative for all the sectors: socio-economic, political, general security etcetera. Mohammed *et al.* (2019:16) observed that:

Over time and from pre-independence to date, several heads and housing counts have been conducted to obtain the total number of persons in Nigeria over given periods. Those were particularly important as no meaningful planning and development could be made and successfully implemented without knowing who and how many to plan for, what to plan and at what time? Without these, no sustainable development can be achieved.

As significant as census is to the socio-economic advancement, political landscape, security architecture and the jigsaw for developmental stride and other multi-circular sectors of the nation, worryingly, it has remained utopia and elusive for the Nigerian government to come up with the exact number of her citizens and the accurate statistics of housing units in the nation. Though there have been population exercises conducted in the past aimed at ascertaining the population of the country, but on each occasion, it has always ended in one controversy or the other. According to Akanni (2020), "all previous attempts at conducting population and housing censuses in Nigeria have been beset with challenges. These have ranged from staffing and logistical shortages to undue political interference and manipulation. Controversies and disputes have followed". The last in the series of censuses and controversies was the 2006 national census. Figures recorded in the exercise could not be relied upon as there were sharp practices that undermined and increased the number geometrically beyond what the country would even have been in two more decades away from the time.

Indeed, it is not unnatural that there were issues responsible for the fictitious and over-blotted figures declared at the end of the exercise. A good example is the heterogeneity of Nigerian society, as each region was careful of being dominated or marginalised from the scheme of things. Stalings (2006) argued that, “elite are often over-zealous about the value and importance of population census, and they always do anything, not only to enumerate all their people, but also engage in various illegalities: electoral violence, falsification and manipulation of population figures”. Making validation on what orchestrated the outrageous figures of censuses in Nigeria. Idike and Okechukwu (2015:47) argued that, “census politics in Nigeria is conterminous to petty-bourgeois politics. It refers to the struggle amongst states and/ or ethnic nationalities towards the inflation of census figures to their selfish advantage”. This position has further been reechoed by Serra and Jerven (2021) when they opined that anomaly accompanied census figures in Nigeria is as a result of “importance of population returns for federal parliamentary representation and the allocation of federal revenues and social services, it is not surprising that Nigerian census results have been hotly contested”.

A decade and half down the lane, the question glued on everyone’s lip is, how many are we? The unsurpassed answer to the unanswered question remains rooted in the dictum; ‘your guess is as good as mine’. Part of this quagmires stems from the fact that the nation has not been able to organise and conduct census exercise for nearly two decades running. Conversely, an eyebrow has not been further raised as to why Nigeria as a nation keeps begging and guessing for an answer whenever the question of the precise population of the country gets raised even in the 21st century. This is due to the contestable figures released in 2006 by the National Population Commission (NPC), that pegged Nigeria’s population at 140,431,790 and also the failure of successive governments to conduct credible census since 2006, has further boosted everyone’s speculation and thickened the debate as per the actual number of people in the country not leaving out the academics, researchers, content developers and policymakers off the guess desk.

Still in the doldrums of exact population becoming insatiable for the country, the Chairman of National Population Census (NPC), Nasir Kwarra maintained that, in the absence of an actual census we formally make projections, and we estimate that as of 2020, the estimated population of Nigeria is 206 million(Sahara Reporters, 2020). However, with the recent declaration by the Chairman National Population Commission (NPC), Nasir Kwarra, the nation does not seem to be in a hurry to provide an answer to the puzzle of ‘how many are we? This is evident in the speech of the NPC boss, as he categorically affirmed that as a country “we are not going to conduct census this year” (Vanguard, 2021). In the face of this lingering dilemma that has kept the argument going about census figures and the inability of a genuine census exercise which could have resulted in a much improved or a robust transformation of sectors like socio-economic, political landscape and security architecture of the nation.

Rather, the missing link has impeded development, dwarfed the socio-economic and handicapped security design of the nation. As a response to these challenges, the paper examined amongst other things how virile national census policy can translate to improved peace, security and development of the nation.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria's policy and strategic mechanisms as regard exact population of the country which can readily be an operational modus when it comes to planning and implementation of societal transformational initiatives to enhance socio-economic activities, political stability, robust security network and a facelift of infrastructural development of the nation has been hampered and hindered by the continued utilization of the defective, outdated and fly-by-night census figures of 2006.As such, various government policies, strategies and programmes having direct implications on the population of the country have failed to measure up with the current realities of the day. The failures have been amplified and replicated in the critical sectors of the country. For instance, security which is the umbilical cord shaping the existence of other important sectors has not been adequately taken care of due to the inconsistency with data available for tackling challenges such as kidnapping, human trafficking, cattle rustling, banditry and other terrorism-related activities.

However, a question that must first be answered by any sane government before embarking on tactics aimed at cushioning these acts and also implementing developmental infrastructure that has to do with people is to sincerely identify the number of people inhabiting the surface of the country at a regular interval. Thus, if after more than fourteen years Nigerian government still largely depend on the festering 2006 census, which has been relied upon too long as if it has the whole country under its feet and becomes obligatory for the figures therein to be constantly used in piloting policies, programmes and implementation, then, it does appear the government has finally gave up on providing a convincing answer to the question of how many are we? Again, it is not surprising that the outcomes of the dependency on the old-fashioned 2006 census figures have not been anything different from disappointment, because those policies and initiatives have been outshined by the dwarfed socio-economic realities and gross security challenges such as incessant arm banditry, eternal Boko Haram insurgency, ceaseless farmers/herders clashes, festering cattle rustling, constant kidnapping and other issues increasingly threatening the relative peace, safety and survival of the nation.

Again, there is a clear stagnation of infrastructural development which does not imply heydays for the wellbeing of the citizenry. Following this lapse, machinery has to be set in motion at conducting census at intervals to improve the security, peace and development of the nation. Besides, every idea that seeks to transform a nation hangs and hinges on dependable census. As enshrined in the words of Harper and Mayhew (2012), that it was possible to replicate local census enumeration and there are yet again many other data sources available to academics but national coherence can only be found in the census.

Aims of the Study

The main aim of the study is to examine how national census policy can meaningfully translate to improvement on peace, security and development of the nation. The other specific objectives are:

i. To determine the importance of census on the peace, security and development of the nation;

ii. To examine the extent of census data usage while strategically implementing the security architecture and execution of infrastructural development of the nation.

Literature Exposition

As far as census and related issues are concerned, there are arrays of literature on them. As such, most of the scholarly inquiry/papers have explicitly espoused population, housing, statistics and sustainable development. Others have discussed issues hanging around population figures, such as falsification, quota politics, problems and prospects, patterns of population distribution and administrative census as an alternative to the conventional headcount system. Writing in support of census as the elemental conceived and most reliable form of researching that others strive to emulate, Golata (2014:1) stressed that, a population census is not only the oldest research, best-known, well-formed in terms of methodology, but also a research, which is widely regarded as the most reliable data source. Equally, Mohammed *et al.* (2019: 21) argued that:

The fundamental objective of conducting a population and housing census all over the world is also to set forth plans for development that is targeted to be achieved and sustained. Statistics, figures, facts and forecasts are, therefore, made, analysed, documented, used and also followed up as working plans to attain the desired level of development.

Coming out of this exposition, the definition of census thus appeals to our attention. Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations defined a population census as the total process of planning, collecting, compiling, evaluating, disseminating and analyzing demographic, economic and social data at the smallest geographic level pertaining, at a specified time, to all persons in a country or a well-delimited part of a country (United Nations, 2017:2). Similarly, a housing census is defined as, the total process of planning, collecting, compiling, evaluating, disseminating and analysing statistical data relating to the number and condition of housing units and facilities as available to the households pertaining, at a specified time, to all living quarters and occupants thereof in a country or a well-delimited part of a country(United Nations, 2017:3).However, combining the two descriptions within the context of the census, the United Nations defined census as an operation that produces an official count of a country's population, right down to the lowest level of geographical detail, at regular intervals (UNECE, 2006:6-7).

However, moving away from the concentration on definition of census to the strategic relevance or indispensability of census to issues of policy, socio-economic and other social aspects, in short, census end product (figures) are utilized diversely. However, the interrelationship is considered mutually dependent on census, peace, security and sustainable development of a nation. In other words, how census as an instrument could help position the security, safety and enduring development of the nation towards being a 21st century compliant nation. Census importance on a wide range of decisions and sectors that affects humanity has been described as sin qua non in the communiqué of the United Nations (United Nations, 2017:1), "establishing a public consensus on priorities would be almost impossible to achieve if it were not built on census counts". Therefore, it is observable that development is indispensable to planning which is rooted in robust and accurate census figures and whilst development has to do with a tactical change in security architecture, sustainable development and advancement of various human aspects needed to achieve desired progress, every country's safety and peace is determined by its development which is attached to the reliability of census module obtained in the country.

Nonetheless, the relevance of census to planning, implementation and execution of public initiatives which performance is mirrored through critical sectors such as economy, security and sustainable development of any nation has been stressed by United Nations as follows:

The population and housing census plays an essential role in public administration. The results of a census are used as a critical reference to ensure equity in the distribution of wealth, government services and representation nationwide by informing the distribution and allocation of government funds among various regions and districts for education, health services, delineating electoral districts at the national and local levels and measuring the impact of industrial development, to name a few (United Nations, 2017:1).

Expanding census relevancy to a multipurpose usage, Egeler *et al.* (2013:396) argued that, "the usability of the results has become much more varied. It ranges from policy issues and economic aspects to social themes. In the statistical field, too, census results are used in manifold ways".

Theoretical Perspective

The study adopted symbolic interactionism theory as the substratum of explanation. Symbolic interactionism is one of numerous explicative models commonly adopted in social science, humanity and related disciplines for *ex-planandum* of phenomena. The model was first used by Mead (1934). However, it was Blumer (1969) who refined it further to the status of a theoretical outlook. The development ensured that the theory could be used to explain varieties of phenomena such as genesis and evolution of meaning and identity. Three central hypotheses underscore Blumer‘s formulation of symbolic interactionism, the assumptions are:

i. That human beings act toward things based on the meanings that things have for them.

ii. That the meaning of such things is derived from, and arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one‘s fellows.

iii. That these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters.

Symbolic interactionism has further been given a facelift by scholars such as Maines (1977) and Stryker (1981) by dynamism, symbolic interactionism has, in consequence, progressed rapidly and its applicability stretched to the school of thought like social science, humanity and management sciences. It is vital to know that symbolic interactionism is not only about the study of symbols. The phrase 'symbolic' points to a central idea that humans exist in a world of objects that do not have built-in connotations. As a substitute, the denotations of objects occur out of the connotations that people allot to them in the course of daily group exchanges amid others. Through these dealings, mutual as well as local connotations surface but are always theme to the likelihood of transformation. This ongoing progression of analysis takes place chiefly employing the common symbols of language. People make sense of their world using symbols that convey the meanings of different objects, and these meanings (including the concept of self) in turn influence people‘s actions toward the objects (Swan and Bowers, 1998). Population and housing censuses are conducted to obtain information, data and statistics required for planning and development across the board.

Methodology

The cross-sectional survey design was adopted for the study. The study was carried out in Ekiti state in the South-Western part of Nigeria. Three towns (Ado, Ikere and Ikole) were purposely selected as representing the three senatorial districts of the state. The choice of the towns was carefully made because they are the biggest town in each senatorial district of the state. Ekiti state was among the six states created by the former military head of state, Late General Sanni Abacha, on the 1st of October, 1996. The state was formerly part of the old Ondo state before the bifurcation in 1996. The state is endowed with human resources coupled with agricultural supportive vegetation which invariably makes its bulk population preoccupied with farming. The populations for the study were made up of farmers, civil servants, politicians and youths from, 18 years and above. The study used quota random sampling method to select respondents across different cadres. The study employed a blend of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. Data analyses were done using a simple percentage and frequency distribution table, while the qualitative data was analysed through content analysis and verbatim quotations by the research participants which added value and aphorism to the study.

Result, Findings and Discussion

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Gender		
Variables	**Frequency (n=270)**	**Percentages (%)**
Males	182	67.4
Females	88	32.6
Total	270	100
Age Distribution		
Variables	**Frequency (n=270)**	**Percentages (%)**
18 – 40	185	68.5
41 – 60	57	21.1
60 and above years	28	10.4
Total	270	100
Education Qualifications		
Variables	**Frequency (n=270)**	**Percentages (%)**
Trade & Vocational Training	29	10.7
Primary	20	7.4
Secondary	65	24.1
Tertiary	156	57.8
Total	270	100
Employment Status		
Variables	**Frequency (n=270)**	**Percentages (%)**
Student	71	26.3
Unemployed	118	43.7
Employed	53	19.6
Retired	28	10.4
Total	270	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

The demographic characteristics of respondents are represented in Table 1 above. The gender distribution indicated that 182 deciphering 67.4 percent of respondents were males, while 88 representing 32.6 percent were females. The indication of this is that the bulk of respondents were dominated by males with 67.4%.

The respondents' age distribution showed that 185 equaling 68.5 percent were between the ages of 18-40, 57 representing 21.1 percent were within the age range of 41-60, while 28 translating 10.4 percent were 60 years and above. The import of this analysis is that majority of the respondents 68.5% fall within the age group of 18-40 years of age.

The respondents' educational qualifications show that 29 implying 10.7 percent have a trade and vocational training certificate, 20 representing 7.4 percent of the respondents possess a primary school leaving certificate, and 65 equaling 24.1 percent of the respondents have secondary education, while 156 deciphering 57.8 percent have tertiary education. The translation of this is that the majority (57.8%) of the respondents attained tertiary education.

The respondents' employment status shows that 71 deciphering 26.3 percent were students, 118 indicating 43.7 percent were unemployed, and 53 implying 19.6 percent of the respondents are employed, while 28 representing 10.4 percent of the respondents are retirees. This means that majority of the respondents with 43.7% are unemployed.

Objective 1: To Determine the Importance of Census on the Peace, Security and Development of the Nation

Table 2: Intensity of Census as Template for Robust Peace, Security and Development of the Nation

Variables	Frequency (n=270)	Percentages (%)
Very large importance	77	28.5
Large importance	125	46.3
Little importance	49	18.2
No importance	19	7.0
Total	270	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table 2 indicates that 77 of the respondents translating 28.5 percent observed that census has very large importance in ensuring robust peace, security and development of the nation, 125 of the respondents representing 46.3 were of the thought that peace, security and development of the nation rest largely on census template and 49 of the respondents translating 18.2 percent think census has little importance on the robust peace, security and development of the nation, however, 19 of the respondents signifying 7.0 percent believed that census has no importance on robust peace, security and development of the nation. On the importance of census, here is a respondent's reaction:

Census is important not only to security but to all the sectors in the country. Can you identify a sector that does not need an accurate census blueprint for planning? If your answer to *my question is unenthusiastic, then, it is a required catalyst for advancement and an econometric measurement of equitable distribution of infrastructure across board. It is when this is done we can have a meaningful and unbridled development we all clamour for in this 21st century. IDI/M/Lawyer/2021.*

Table 3: Failure of Credible Census has Handicapped Peace, Security and Development of the Nation

Variables	Frequency (n=270)	Percentages %
Very large impairment	131	48.5
Large impairment	92	34.1
Little impairment	33	12.2
No impairment	14	5.2
Total	270	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table 3 shows that 131 of the respondents representing 48.5 percent noted that failure of the credible census has done a very large impairment to the peace, security and development of the nation, 92 of the respondents translating 34.1 percent held the view that failure of the credible census has done large impairment to the peace, security and development of the nation, and 33 of the respondents indicating 12.2 percent opined that failure of the credible census has done little impairment to the peace, security and development of the nation, while 14 of the respondents deciphering 5.2 percent observed that the failure of the credible census has not done any impairment to the peace, security and development of the nation. A respondent quips does:

In my point of view, most of the problems manifesting in abridged peace and insecurity which have not been abated despite the responses from the security agencies, have been as a result of the inadequate personnel trailing the unknown population. In other words, if we can have genuine census of the country, at least government would know that there is a need for the ratio of security personnel to be commensurate with that of the nation's population. IDI/M/Civil Servant/2021.

Table 4: Periodic Census Exercise is a Yardstick Needed for Continued Improvement in Peace, Security and Development of the Nation

Variables	Frequency (n=270)	Percentages %
Very large requirement	88	32.6
Large requirement	152	56.3
Little requirement	24	8.9
No requirement	6	2.2
Total	270	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table 4 indicates that 88 of the respondents representing 32.6 percent held the view that for continuous improvement in peace, security and development of the nation, periodic census exercise is a very large requirement, 152 of the respondents deciphering 56.3 percent said periodic census exercise is a large requirement for continuous improvement in peace, security and development of the nation and 24 of the respondents equaling 8.9 percent observed that periodic census exercise is of little requirement in terms of yardstick for the continuous improvement of peace, security and development of the nation, while 6 of the respondents indicating 2.2 percent upheld the view that periodic census exercise is of no requirement as a yardstick for the continuous improvement of peace, security and development of the nation.

Objective 2: To Examine the Extent of Census Data Usage while Strategically Implementing the Security Architecture and Execution of Infrastructural Development of the Nation

Table 5: Government Apply Census Data while Preparing the Annual Budget of Security Sector and Infrastructural Development of the Nation

Variables	Frequency (n=270)	Percentages %
Very large consideration	17	6.3
Large consideration	41	15.2
Little consideration	130	48.1
No consideration	82	30.4
Total	270	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table 5 illustrates that 17 of the respondents translating 6.3 percent noted that a very large consideration is given to census data by the government while preparing the annual budget of the security sector and infrastructural development of the nation, 41 of the respondents representing 15.2 percent observed that a large consideration is given to census data by the government while preparing the annual budget of the security sector and infrastructural development of the nation and 130 of the respondents indicating 48.1 percent held the opinion that in preparation of annual budget of the security sector and infrastructural development of the nation, census data is given little consideration by the government, while 82 of the respondents equaling 30.4 held the view that no consideration is given to census data by the government while preparing the annual budget of the security sector and infrastructural development of the nation.

Ordinarily, this should form the major consideration while preparing the nation's annual budget. But the 'holocausts' we have in the corridor of power are majorly preoccupied with how much will enter their pockets rather than what stands to benefit the nation as a whole. That is to tell you that these issues are never put on the front burner while preparing the annual budget. IDI/M/Civil Servant/2021.

Table 6: What Extent do the Nation's Security and Developmental Policies Depend on Census Data

Variables	Frequency (n=270)	Percentages %
Very large extent	26	9.6
Large extent	63	23.3
Little extent	122	45.2
No extent	59	21.9
Total	270	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table 6 illustrates that 26 of the respondents deciphering 9.6 percent believed that to a very large extent the nation's security and developmental policies depend on census data, 63 of the respondents translating 23.3 percent said to a large extent, the nation's security and developmental policies depend on census data and 122 of the respondents deciphering 45.2 percent believed that to a little extent, the nation's security and developmental policies depend on census data, while 59 of the respondents equaling 21.9 percent believed that the nation's security and developmental policies do not depend on census data. On policymakers using census data in formulating policies, one respondent has this to say:

Most of these policies are done haphazardly and therefore fail to have a positive impact on citizens. Ours have been somewhat of building a castle in the air. The policies are never tailored towards addressing any issue because there has never been consideration given to the actual number of people, and it is less surprising because people's welfare has never been a topmost priority for policymakers. IDI/F/Student/2021.

Table 7: The Security Agencies Use Census Data in Carrying out Geo-surveillance in the Country

Variables	Frequency (n=270)	Percentages %
Very large degree	11	4.0
Large degree	24	8.9
Little degree	140	51.9
No degree	95	35.2
Total	270	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table 7 signifies that 11 of the respondents translating 4.0 percent noted that very large degree, the security agencies use census data in carrying out geo-surveillance in the country, 24 of the respondents deciphering 8.9 percent believed that to a large degree, the security agencies use census data in carrying out geo-surveillance in the country and 140 of the respondents indicating 51.9 percent noted that census data is of little degree for security agencies in carrying out geo-surveillance in the country, while 95 of the respondents representing 35.2 percent held the view that census data is of no degree for security agencies in carrying out geo-surveillance in the country.

Limitation of the Study and Suggestion for Further Study

Since the sample size of the study represented only a portion and sparse of the people in three communities in Ekiti State, the generalization of the study must be made with precise tenderness. It is advised that future studies in this spot should cover other communities within and outside the state to accommodate views and opinions from other parts of the country which is tantamount to fairness, representation of geographical spread and ample generalization.

Conclusion

The conclusion arrived in this study is that the continued underprivileged developmental returns, fragile peace and vain security architecture of the country have been further boosted by the abysmal national census policy of the country. In other words, there have been lackadaisical attitudes on the part of successive governments towards fine-tuning a credible and reliable census for the nation. This shunning of responsibility or inability is responsible for the gap since the last census exercise which is closing on the double of the standard period advocated by the United Nations, which is ten years interval. Nonconformity with this standard, one could not eschew the fact that the country has waited too long for another census exercise to happen. Finally, its failure has done more of retrogression than improvement to the multi-circular sectors of the system. Hence, national census policy remains a benchmark or catalyst that must be fulfilled for the peace, security and development of the nation.

Recommendations

Stemming from the opinions expressed by respondents in this research, the following are drawn and weighed as avid recommendations:

1. Census exercise, having experienced doldrums and moratoriums for too long, it has become an emergency issue that seeks emergency response from the government to organize another round of population and housing census exercise liberally done with genuine resolve to ascertaining the exact number of people and housing units in the country. Doing this will no doubt put a stoppage to the speculations enveloping the actual population of the country and also help a great deal in planning and implementing policies in the country.

2. The Nigerian government must imbibe and practice the minimum standard of period in conducting census exercise as advocated by the United Nations, which is a decennial (10 years period) population and housing census that is crucial and central to the evolvement and optimal performance of Nigeria's socio-economic, political, security, peace and sustainable development of the country. The emphasis is that both the population and housing units are ever-changing variables, hence, there has to be periodic census hounding to accommodate updates and changes.

3. However, it is important to correct the impression that census is done for number sake or a jamboree exercise. Rather, it is done with the intent desire to have positive reflections when applied in strengthening the socio-economic, political landscape, security architecture, proper infrastructural development that cut across the divide and other sectors that are vital for people's welfare and wellbeing and also upward evolution of the country.

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COMMUNICATION AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CRAIOVA

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Abstract

In the development of this approach, we started from the idea that communication at organisational level has different ways of expression depending on the type of institution in which it takes place and the values and symbols it promotes. Moreover, the specificity of the organisation is reflected in the specificity of the communication. Therefore, we have proposed to follow, through some defining elements, not exhaustive, the characteristics of communication within the institution we belong to, the University of Craiova. We have added the forms of expression of organisational culture to these characteristics.

Keywords: communication, communication and organisational culture, academic institution

1. COMMUNICATION VERSUS ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Scholastically, communication can be understood as a transfer of meanings between sender and receiver through a communication channel. Most theorists believe that there is communication and not just a mere transfer of information when there is a transmission of the receiver's reaction back to the sender.

When it comes to organisational communication, not only feedback, but also the quality and speed of feedback are becoming the touchstone of any modern organisation.

In the organisational context, the term communication is not used in the sense of discipline, but refers to one or more of the following categories: direct or mediated interpersonal communication between members of the organisation: employees, managers, specialists, collaborators; communication between different organisational structures: between departments, divisions, subsidiaries, directorates, divisions; the way in which the abstract organisation communicates by conveying meanings to its own employees, to customers or to other organisations. This type of communicating is done through personnel policies, internal marketing, advertising, public communication, market policies.

From the above, there are differences between the notion of communication and organisational communication. If the communication process, in general, means report, relationship, notice, news, organisational communication is deemed as a continuous process, permanently subordinated to the management information system.

2. ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION - GENERAL LANDMARKS

Built out of a general human need to convey information, ideas, feelings, emotions, thoughts, communication generally becomes synonymous with existence. At the organisational level, communication remains the vital means by which performance is achieved. Thus, within organisations, the communication process is the act that triggers their existence, facilitates their development or, if this process becomes defective, can cause them to stagnate, even disappear. The demise of an organisation often means bankruptcy.

Although it seems simple, the meaning of organisational communication is complex and full of underpinnings. Communication is characterised by a multitude of meanings, a multitude of purposes and about as many methods of expression and manifestation. This means the intentional transmission of data, information at the level of organisational structures. We also subscribe to the idea that "there is no communication without a communication plan. For corporate communication to exist and be recognised as a profession in its own right, it must have a methodological basis that is impossible to dispute. Communication can be seen as an objective, but it must be understood above all as a technique capable of supporting a development dynamic. In corporate communication, there will be no professionalism without a thorough reflection on the communication plan" [1].

This type of communication takes place on several levels: between people within an organisation, between sub-units of the same organisation (i.e. intra-organisational) or with people, institutions functionally linked to the organisation's activity: suppliers, customers, public (i.e. extra-organisational). Each of these levels has different forms of complexity and is characterised by restrictions related to organisational roles: manager – subordinate, decision-making compartments – executive compartments, specific rules and organisational structure.

Organisational as well as managerial communication is part of the infrastructure of any organisation. The complexity of the organisation, the degree of centralisation, the degree of uncertainty in the activity are factors that determine significant differences within organisational communication as a process. Thus, in *small organisations* communication is generally oral, through direct contact between members. At the same time it takes place horizontally and vertically, all participants have access to information and written communication is used more in external relations.

At the level of *large organisations*, written communication is crucial. Information has a slower flow, there are communicational differentiations by compartments, because not all participants need the same information in the work process. If the number of coordinated compartments increases, the communication network becomes more complicated and full of information flow.

Organisational communication is understood as "a field of study that seeks to determine why and how organisations send and receive information in a complex systemic environment"[2].

3. ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CRAIOVA

Alongside *organisational communication*, another growing concept is *organisational culture*. Every educational institution has a strong business card, translated by an organisational culture that has become a representative and identifiable emblem. For "just as people have a character, a personality, likewise organisations are represented by a certain culture"[3]. The manifestations of organisational culture are numerous, among them we can distinguish *visible elements* such as: behaviours, common language, rituals, symbols, ceremonies, but also *invisible elements*: values, beliefs, norms, concepts.

Symbols fall into the category of manifestations through which an organisation's culture becomes visible and are used in relations with other cultures to express certain similarities or differences. For example, for the higher education institution we represent, the University of Craiova, a symbol is the *logo* itself. The central element is an open book with the inscription *Universitas Craiovensis*. It is a direct invitation to get to know this institution, to penetrate its mysteries through the light of the book, of learning, as the representatives of the Romanian Enlightenment claimed more than two centuries ago. The logo includes an image of a lion emerging from a bridge. It is the bridge of Drobeta, built by the Romans with the help of the Greek architect, Emperor Trajan's favourite, Apollodorus of Damascus. The lion on the logo of the University of Craiova has a crown on its head, for the lion is the symbol of divine power, of royalty, of grandeur, of triumph. In some Near Eastern languages, such as Hittite, the same word was used for lions, heroes and kings.

Another visible form of culture at the organisational level is the *slogan*, considered a verbal symbol. From an etymological viewpoint, the slogan is the equivalent of a battle cry, as attested by the Celtic language from which the term is taken and later developed in Germanic languages. Its purpose is to pin the image of the organisation, to make it known to the competition, to present the vision, the strength of the institution. The slogan of the University of Craiova is *Sapientia et dignitas*.

Two other visible forms through which culture, at the institutional level, marks its existence are *rituals* and *ceremonies*. It is through them that beliefs and values are expressed and reinforced and which are considered decisive for the survival and evolution of organisations.

Ritual is a set of planned actions with a dramatic content, giving cultural expression to certain values specific to each organisation. Further on, we will mention some rituals that take place at the University of Craiova: the open meetings, in the Mihai I Hall, where first-year students are welcomed. They take place at the beginning of each academic year. It can be seen as an initiation ritual, introducing new students to the atmosphere and academic life.

The ceremony is also one of the collective events, less formal, which expresses an awareness and an assumption of tradition, of the history of the school. Ceremonies would be, for example, reinforcing a person's status in an organisation, the values they promote.

In our university the ceremony is carried out, for example, by publicly awarding prizes and distinctions to both professors and students. This ceremony, called "Excellence Awards Gala", is an open recognition of the scientific research performance achieved by the teaching staff of the University of Craiova.

In the category of ceremonies, we can also include the honorary title of *Doctor Honoris Causa*. Thus, the University of Craiova has welcomed personalities such as: Dan Dediu, President of the Senate of the National University of Music, Bucharest; Dan Bălteanu, Academician, Institute of Geography; Mihai Coman, Dean of the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Sciences, University of Bucharest; Christian Heiss, Prof. Dr., specialist in orthopaedics – sports medicine at the University Hospital of Giessen – Marburg, Germany and many others.

In organisational culture, *heroes* appear alongside stories and myths, personifying the values of the organisation and emphasising its strength. Heroes can be school founders, senior leaders or ordinary employees. Through their behaviour, heroes reflect the organisation's core values and become leaders themselves. Of course, an organisation of the level of the University of Craiova counts as heroes, first of all, King Mihai, the founder of the institution, then we add the names of the rectors Andrei Moraru, Ion Lungu, Alexandru Buia, Mircea Oprean, Marius Preda, Titus Georgescu, Silviu Pușcașu, Tiberiu Nicola, Mircea Ivănescu.

On the other hand, considered an important element in the conduct of some professional activities, *jargon* naturally permeates the culture of organisations. For each institution tends to create its own language that reflects both the characteristics of its members and the nature of the activities carried out and the objectives pursued. Language specific to a particular organisational culture is formed gradually over time. The longevity and permanence of an organisation guarantees the existence of a strong culture on which it is based and hence impressive forms of its manifestation. At the University of Craiova, too, elements of jargon are structured, without meaning an elitist language, but rather a language adapted by each professor to the context. During the act of teaching, it is natural to use terms specific to the subject we represent, without abusing neologisms, out of a natural desire to use a Romanian language characterized by two basic attributes: accessibility and adaptability. Of course, when the context becomes informal, our language, that of professors, descends to the colloquial register, without leaving the level of the profession we represent.

CONCLUSIONS

Building an organisational form of communication is an ongoing, living process, like the language of a people. Organisational communication is naturally associated with organisational culture, which reflects the symbols, values and concepts of an institution.

By presenting the culture of the University of Craiova we wanted to highlight its strength, its specific, elitist nature, given by the members of this higher education institution. These are, of course, just some milestones, important, we believe, but they can always be amplified. As the University of Craiova grows institutionally, so will the entire culture that represents it.

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THE PRACTICE THAT MAKES COMMUNICATION THEORY

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Abstract

The present research is limited to the theory of communication in general and literary communication in particular. Using the analysis of language, the analysis of concepts and the comparative analysis of a literary work, the aim is to prove the thesis that a) first of all the theory we have decides what we observe / notice from a communication point of view and b) that on the other hand from a communication point of view a generic practice takes the place of theory.

Keywords: communication, communication practice, communication theory, communication efficiency

1. Introduction

"The child of the party", by Marin Beşteliu (2008) is the novel of an important literary critic from Craiova, with a clear conceptual thinking and a sense of sobriety of the critical themes approached. Without being a dry illustration of a Romanian poetics or aesthetic of conjuncture, the book is in terms of an engaging creed. More sensitive in the last decade to poetry (Macedonski and Arghezi), then oriented towards Eminescu, professor Marin Beşteliu was and remains a thinker of the epic, an expert in prose theory. His reflections as a "theoretical being" (as H.-G. Gadamer called the thinking man) found, at one point, their convergence in an radiant "postulate": "all authentic forms of human creativity are claimed, in -one way or another, from the knowledge of life "(M. Beşteliu," The realism of fantastic literature ", Craiova, Scrisul Românesc, 1975, p. 53). He who with calm, orderly admiration has thoroughly read the literary critic cannot fail to notice the power of occurrence in the novel of this postulate of poetics and of some of its corollaries. The novel proves and fixes a knowledge of life. The main component of epic knowledge is experience. Theory (the one that decides what we are able to observe) and experience, the decisive premises of prose are met. The fact that the author sees, theoretically, from above and far the object of his aesthetic practice has implications on the comprehension and explication-explanation, on the decoding, deciphering, decryption of the work.

First, it should be noted that the title of the book has a meaning. It has functions of summary, orientation, marking positions, highlighting options, determining reading paths, inducing and stimulating interpretive paths. The "child of the party" is one of the answers to the book's repeated fundamental question: "who am I really" (p. 62, p. 103, p. 185, p. 187). It is not a question that triggers a philosophical clarification, but one that solves a life situation. The meditation framework is part of the broader epic context of the dismissal of a senior party official. In order to continue "to be", to "exist" in a situation of dismissal, Ilie Baldovin finds that the most important thing is to clarify who he really is. "Colonel, he tells Ion Tănăsucă (the head of the County Security), we have to ask ourselves who we really are, at least that way, sometimes, when ... (...) At least to ..." (2008, p. 62). In the context of the replacement and in the situation of a routine meeting with his relatives (Ion Tănăsucă, Ion Florescu, the head of the propaganda department, Lily and the engineer Alexandru), the ex-secretary with propaganda says this in the strict framework of the "critical point of discussing the truth on its destiny "(2008, p. 49). We are not dealing with a free-philosophical meditation on self-knowledge (Basic & Delić, 2019; Csesznek & Coman, 2020; Koetaan, 2020), but with an occasional reflection: "when" ... we are going through a difficult situation. Elucidation aims to find a practical solution to life, and not to solve a philosophical problem in principle. The event induces, therefore, internally a thorough meditation on the alternatives of continuing existence in the new reality.

2. Imagination and communication

The epic imaginary of the novel is structured on four significant areas, benefiting from clear delimitation landmarks: an erased biography (A.), an activist career in which the party is seen as a form of power (B.), living a search for what it is truly himself (C.) and a parabolic meditation on power (D.).

A. Ilie Baldovin does not have a complicated story. Born in the village on July 14, 1932, the son of Catrina and Tudor, he grew up in the country, near a railway, where he goes with the cattle to graze. The primary classes finish them mediocre in the village. At school, "there was no one who knows what", learning from the fear of the zulufi practice practiced by the teacher Vasilescu (2008, p. 76). Then he goes to normal school in the city, stays in boarding school, being just as unremarkably intellectual. Here, through a contest of circumstances, he enters the UTM and acquires the taste of power. Following a fight with Gogu Grasu's neighborhood gang, in order to have access to the dancing evenings at the Green Fence, solved by the popular militia, Ilie "finds out" that he took part in a TUM action. His picture appears in the newspaper and he becomes secretary of the UTM organization. Now the membership card changes his "destiny" and "discovers what it means to fear others for the new power" (pp. 78-79). At the same time, his erotic life begins. He returns as a village teacher and secretary of the TUM Committee. Take part in the numerical growth of the party organization and collectivization. He has an affair with Lenuta, the daughter of a former legionnaire. "On a Friday" he is called to the Regional Party Committee by Aurică Mărgineanu, the chief of staff. After verifying his "origin" and "relatives", Mărgineanu deals with "attitude" and "level" where Baldovin presents, according to an anonymous report, serious shortcomings. In essence, he was complained that although he was given the task, he refused to expose the mathematics teacher Vintilă. Baldovin tells the cadrist that Vintilă had made "Chinese" a student who did not understand an exercise; he had also told the director Vasilcoiu in Chinese. The latter had asked Baldovin to send a dispatch to the party: "I, a young UTM member, outraged by the bourgeois attitude of Professor Vintilă (...) who expressed his impartiality towards the great Chinese people (...)" (2008, p. 71). Mărgineanu clarifies what it is about. Identifies the informer in the person of director Vasilcoiu; He telephoned him and, building on Baldovin's correctness, said, "Yes, leave Baldovin alone, do you understand?" Yeah, that's the party kid, you know? Let me know, you're afraid they won't come for you. If I want you to fly tomorrow, do you understand? ” Then he tells Baldovin: "Comrade, now everything is clear! Where you have been, you have worked well, we will promote you as an activist ”(2008, p. 72). He is trained for six months before being appointed as an instructor. His first task at the city organizer was to dismiss school principals with bourgeois, retrograde convictions. Because he did not receive the list of visas from Aurică Mărgineanu, Baldovin "decided to change everyone from his position", "then he forced his former director to retire" (p. 207). He also purified the libraries, on which occasion he made an enviable library out of the "forbidden" books (Carlos Bonifacio, 2021; D'Auria et al., 2021; Tian & Yu, 2021). Going to a commune to investigate a complaint against the engineer-agronomist Maria Smărăndescu, he discovers in the beautiful chief engineer an honest and industrious man. He marries her a year later, telling her that "he loves the party first and then he loves her" (p. 99).

Now he is promoted by Vasile Corâci, the regional secretary with propaganda, as head of the district's organizing commission. Also from Coraci comes his advancement, at the age of 24, as head of the region's propaganda commission. As the first step in his life as an activist, Baldovin was dismissed and sent by Coraci as a simple instructor to a northern district. Since he did not understand why he was demoted, he then invented the "soul agenda" (p. 228): in order to write down the secrets and analyze the situations, "in order to understand". On this occasion he received the second lesson of life: "never let himself be discovered, always remain on guard" (p. 229). The first lesson had been to "trust that he would abolish man's exploitation of man." He stays in the district for three years. Now he invents, also to understand, notebooks: one to write down people, how they were and when he met them; another to record problems, mindsets, and what they could do to change them; another red, in which he retained "secret thoughts that no one should have known" (p. 231) and an agenda (blue) for noting immediate tasks and ticking solved tasks (Crăciun, 2019).

During the "sanctioning" interval, he meets Professor Mateescu (former director of the legionary high school) where he finds peace of mind looking back with the understanding that sometimes undeserved troubles happen to you, you suffer it through no fault of your own. From this he learns that from the balance to an inner balance one reaches "through work" (p. 234). With the lesson of work learned, in the three years he "worked hard to forget and to know." He then returned to the regional party, studied with Ștefan Gheorghiu and became the second man in the county, secretary with propaganda. We see him on visits, receiving in the audience. Demanding, harsh and sharp, he dismisses and takes action on behalf of the party. Without the knowledge of the first secretary, the staff file for the Central Committee is drawn up, so that he is rightly expected to be promoted. In this context, after the XIII Congress (p. 170) and the Plenary of Mangalia, for the promotion of women, he is replaced from office and left as a member of the bureau with the same salary, among the secretaries.

B. The cultural foundations of the activist's personality are well defined. Ilie Baldovin has a poor education and a low culture. There was no one at school. He learned little, out of obligation and under threat of punishment. He has no university education; "The courses taken at Ștefan Gheorghiu were equated by decree with higher education, and the graduation exam with the doctorate". His readings are poor, dry: "he never read a whole book" (p. 125). In his youth he had endeavored to learn political economy after Capital, but he had a severe headache and had not advanced more than "thirty pages." He skipped Lenin, following the text's underlinings before him, and in the literature he retained only the texts in the textbook. His basic reading was Spark: He "read Spark daily" (p. 83) since high school. Even later, as an activist, he did not have to kill himself with reading, because in Scânteia he found "all the explanations and they were on the line". He had learned four poems ("Clăcașii" by Bolliac, "We want land" by Coşbuc, "Cor de robi" by Th. Neculuță, "I speak to you, America" by Maria Banuş) and excerpts from "Surâsul Hiroshimei" by Eugen Jebeleanu (p. 86). If we were to think of the communist activist in terms of Ilie Baldovin's poor culture, then most party members were activists. Activist Baldovin is a servant of the "Power represented by the party." "I am the party's child," he tells his wife, trained as a career activist "(p. 86). He had a "troubled life as an activist." However, he was always "a prospective activist", a "professional activist" (p. 100). His first role model as a "true activist" (p. 213) is Vasile Coraci (propaganda secretary), a man who "was not afraid of anything." He is also the first disappointment, because he demotes him from the position of head of the Regional Organizing Commission and moves him to a northern district as a simple instructor. This is the first step in the "activist career". He has now "matured as an activist." In time, Baldovin became a "skilled activist" (p. 139). His relatives consider him "an important party activist" and draw on his experience: "he has not been mentioned since you were a party activist" (p. 154). Baldovin "analyzes as an activist" all events. He has an activist conscience and avoids social behaviors that profile him as "one of them, an ordinary activist": "I am the activist and they are simple party members" (p. 164). As secretary with propaganda, he "set an example of intransigence" (p. 100): he dismissed, changed positions, took harsh measures. In this context, in the spring before his replacement, Spânu proposed that a file be made for the staff reserve at the highest level, at C.C. He was called to the C.C. ward, was questioned and confirmed for a "shadow team," the ward chief had told him. He did not tell anyone about this: not even the first secretary or his wife. After that, he acted "with more energy", he went without hesitation to where "it was not his job" (p. 100) to control and sanction, passing on the area of competence of the other secretaries. Against this background of optimism and offense, Baldovin is replaced. Although he knows that he is the child of the party, although he realizes that he has sins, but he did not make mistakes, despite the fact that he is fully aware that there will be a place in the system for him, even thinking that it is not good to dramatize. a drama. "Let's not dramatize" (p. 92), he tells his wife and also states that "she was going through a drama" (p. 202). After his replacement, he was informed that he would remain "active", "at the disposal of the County Committee as an activist" (p. 103). He is confirmed by the staff that his file continues to be "on the top shelf, the one with the members of the Central Committee", that he also received a certification note, which showed that "it is on the wave" (p. 109). He was later received by the Grand Prime Minister and was given the prospect of becoming secretary of propaganda at the C.C.

In Baldovin's system of analysis, the situation is the element from which it starts both professionally and personally. He always begins "building his own image of the situation" (p. 264). As an activist, he seeks to build on the "real situation on the ground." When what he knows is not structurally structured, he starts from the "analysis of virtual situations". Once the situation is set in clear terms, he decides to act: "he was not shy to be angular, threatening or understanding, as the situation required" (p. 212). In terms of work, his effort consists, in particular, in "knowing the problems" and in "adapting propaganda to conjunctural situations". He succeeded in this endeavor better than others "because he understood the demands of the moment and knew how to master situations" (p. 91). Ilie Baldovin puts the real data in a deficient reasoning. His emotions are the result of a wrong thought of his personal situation. It would be said that he knows through anamorphosis, through the deformation of a situation. However, he lives it as if it were real. He lives his "precarious situation in the party" (p. 259) and deals with this: "now my situation in the party must come to the fore." These reflections make him "calm and at peace" (p. 185). The leitmotif is "This is the situation" (p. 185, p. 212, p. 149). His way of reasoning remains a peasant one (Ionescu, 2013; runză, 2020; Frunză, 2021). The city culture (high school) is too little to be able to change it. The postulates of his thinking are based on proverbs. In his conduct, the "peasant mentality" is observed (p. 36), especially the one that sees that "it is good to beware of the horse's hoof and the boss's eye". The judging criterion is also the fact that "in the country it is said" not to get "gargoyles on your head". From this perspective, the emphasis on the premonition brought by the dream, on the signals given by it, becomes explicable. "The truth of the dream", the old images "give a signal" (p. 7). He also relies on the signals given by anxiety, because after the first scale "he learned to listen to the inner fear and to discover the possible centers of radiation of danger" (p. 37). Sign the notes in the red diary. He feels the replacement is a big failure and wonders, "now why didn't the alert signal work?" (p. 37). The reality is that being in no danger, he had no warning signal to trigger. In fact, he admits that it could be something else than he considers: "" Unless ... ", he lost himself in a dream" (p. 37). At one point he gives in to "only if", that is, to the idea that he misjudged the situation and that, in reality, he remains on the wave. Then he chooses not to get out of the artificial drama, saying that, however, "It is not bad to simulate the fall, to be prepared" (p. 194). The essence of his peasant mentality is in the past and in the country. Particularizing an idea of Professor Eugen Negrici, we claim that Baldovin's anxieties, his fear and anxiety "activate the matrix myths (" securing time "and" securing space ") and trigger compensatory impulses" (E. Negrici, "Illusions of Romanian literature", Iasi , Polirom, pp. 284).

The past is the security time, and the village is the security place. That is why diving into the past and daydreaming is comforting, invigorating, "refreshing" (p. 269), for that is its essence. In his youth he was more peasant than now, so becoming younger again is protected and authentic. After all, he says, "we are children of the country who have conquered the city" (p. 56). Remembrance is a form of being at home. Another form is the trip to the country with his parents and mother-in-law Ileana: "he makes a trip to his origins" (p. 129). Arriving in the village means for him to re-verify and consolidate his thinking criteria. On the other hand, the past and recollection also give a way of understanding: "try to recall the sequences in order to understand what had happened" (p. 33). In fact, Ilie Baldovin does not understand the situation to be replaced. In the country and in the past, Ilie Baldovin seeks the essence of being. By living in the country, he knows, the peasants "defended (...) the authenticity of their being" (p. 231). In his opinion, his true being consisted of two parts: one inherited or "formed in time, and the other imposed, that of the party function" (p. 64). The epic depicts the related facts under an intention of realistic analysis of life. Dismissal is investigated from a causal perspective, not as a resultant fact, as an effect of a contest of circumstances, but as a materialization of a planned approach. Mechanical imagination and logicoid reasoning are the two limits within which the search for the trigger for the process of "change" in function falls. Ilie Baldovin has a typical activist mentality. Through his qualities as a man with a measured and lucid awareness of his deeds, the peasant mental prototypicality (Gioroceanu, 2018; Zita, 2020; Li, 2021; Hoque et al., 2021) comes to be rehabilitated. Generally the intended measure in all outlines the constant savior of the human spirit. A man of a sense of proportion, Baldovin is an activist and that's it. He is an activist, and nothing can be done for or against him.

The inertial thinking of a man of power (Strechie, 2008; Negrea, 2018; Popescu, 2020), of a man who knows everything, makes him all the more incapable of enduring insecurity. From this perspective, he appears as an illustration of man in the situation of being the object of his own doubts in the face of insurmountable obstacles. As is well known, beneath every emotion lies a thought, and every new emotion creates a new thought. Baldovin is haunted by thoughts. Dismissal brings uncertainty, and uncertainty produces anxiety. We will find in the end that the change of position leads Ilie Baldovin to overtaking himself. The crisis of self-confidence and the idea of going through a drama do not demobilize the well-versed activist. In the new attempt, he revalidates a behavior he was previously forced to resort to (at the age of 24). In his exploratory conduct are attracted different means: dream, imagination, intuition, elements of natural logic (analogy, induction, deduction). In order to capitalize on his arsenal of processing tools, Baldovin has preserved in agendas and notebooks facts, opinions and analyzes. The thinking that is applied on the matter is also one of ideological orientation, of propagandistic type. Baldovin is a bone marrow activist. He is an activist in world thinking and social chess. He is an activist in the family, he is an activist with his mistresses, he is an activist even in his relationship with himself.

C. The clarification of "who I really am" takes place on the basis of political education and for the purpose of evolution on the scale of power. The return to self through the recollection of the past occurs on the interval of a structure of finalities in which the political power, the power and again the Power preside. The search for true identity enables reason to capitalize on dark data provided by the subconscious: "wolves". In his search, reason also enters the repository of myths and the abyssal psyche. Try to exploit any signal. Internally or externally, emitted by attractive ideas of the intellect, by the obscure background of the ego, by the indecipherable social sub-body. He searches even in the unaltered signs of primary bodily psychology. It is forced to decrypt signals even from the field of peasant basal genes, of the founding matrix of the personality. He is inclined to trust even the (favorable) signs brought to light by the books given by his mother-in-law Ileana. His faith in the truth of his childhood, of adolescence, of his "home", of his parents, his confidence in the values of the past are the source, the strength and the criterion for overcoming the artificial impasse. Ilie Baldovin cares about himself, his identity. He feels that he is not everyone and optimistically translates the mythology of personal inertia. It ultimately relies on itself as a mysterious entity whose cryptic language has learned to decode it. The register of research goes from instinct, affectivity and cunning, from dream and dream trance to decipherable elements of social consciousness in potency and act. Its axiological anchoring grid in reality consists of: measure, responsibility, honesty, balance, common sense and commitment.

The emotional center of the character's psychology is delimited by emotions and feelings such as: anxiety, fear, anxiety, terror, nightmare, anxiety, fear, strangeness, joy, nostalgia, melancholy. Areas of affectivity are stimulated from dark-anxious to tonic-comforting. In general, the past, the memories, the recollections are comforting, invigorating, invigorating. The insistence on outlining the one who "really is" is based on the subsidiary idea, on the corollary that it is always fruitful to clarify through analysis the events in which you took part. The meaning of the facts comes after. Faced with the risk of simplification, however, it is necessary that the essences be fixed in lasting, clear and distinct ideas. The cardinal question is clarified in existential practice by equivocal answers called signals. Ilie Baldovin's drama does not consist in his dismissal, change, replacement, but in the rapid misunderstanding of his already ordered destiny. After all, according to Thomas' theorem, man does not behave as reality dictates, but as he thinks what is happening is real (Badal, 2021; Bunăiașu, Strungă, Stoian & Tilea, 2021; Okorokova, 2021). He generally takes the unfavorable signals, which he reads optimistically: he takes a chance at every opportunity.

Approached explanatory, the epic event that occupies the scene of the present narrative is part of the party's strategy to promote women. If he had not gone into the confusion of decoding the legitimate signals legitimate for change, Ilie Baldovin could have deciphered the situation as a moment of stagnation in the idea of a promotion. Through the suffering he produces, deciphering the signals in an unfavorable reference system, Baldovin reaches a self-clarification. Find out who he really is. In self-knowledge, he outlines his identity more precisely, delimits his activist profile more transparently and consolidates himself as a personality. In this respect, the political novel stands out as a novel of promotion in the order of power (Bușu & Popescu, 2018; Du, Li & Luo, 2021; Sharma et al., 2021).

The interval of the present covers an illumination of subjectivity that is discovered in a new reality. As acts of knowledge, recollection and analysis authentically express the dialectic of abandoning a deposed self in favor of one comforted, toned and purified through natural contact with the world of subjects (tails to flesh and milk). In this context, the vocation of man to rise through authentic self-knowledge, through self-revelation, is reaffirmed. There are four steps of Ilie Baldovin in finding out who he really is: a) to make the principles of living and acting strong; b) to be aware of loneliness; c) to capture the elements that prove that you cannot choose to disappear; d) in moments of balance, to give yourself back.

The first step is to reveal principles. Three proverbs are raised to the rank of existential postulates: "to see along your nose", "did you not lie down more than the blanket keeps you covered?", "To sleep peacefully with your head on your head" (p. 41). The coordinates of his praxeology show the peasant-popular nature of the activist Baldovin.

The second step is to reveal loneliness. Personally, his replacement puts him in a special situation (Căpățînă et al., Sandu, 2020; Sandu & Nistor, 2020). The first aspect of this inaugural state is loneliness: "he felt alone and as if a stranger" (p. 8), "tortured by loneliness". He now has "suddenly the revelation of his loneliness" (p. 97). He realizes that in the decisive moments of life man is "always alone." In moments of loneliness, the past is erased, becoming invaluable, and the future is shaping up as "a white sheet on which you cannot write your destiny." The impasse, through which he passes in a way, one would say artificially, is radiographed as a situation, and the situations must be accepted as such: “Again alone? What to do to them, that is the situation, we have to adapt ”(p. 149).

The third step is to reveal the places where he could return: he is not a man who has nowhere to go, he cannot choose to disappear, because, "child of the practice", power will always protect (Li, 2021; Hategan, 2021a; Hategan, 2021b). He seeks protection "at home" in the village, and finds it. The village is a safe place.

Self-revelation, as the fourth step in self-knowledge, consists in testing the limits to which you remain and the extent to which you become nothing else. Where you run into something, where you end up not doing something, there is the edge of your identity. Of course, reaching the limits, as L. Wittgenstein said, means having already exceeded them, but the discovery of the true self means, in addition, the validation of the self as a value and the fixation of identity. Within his spectrum, the activist individualizes through emotion, feeling and deliberation. The knowledge that the experience of change of function brings produces a change of function. The way he endures and suffers dismissal and fall makes him all the better prepared for a greater function in a system that operates according to the rule of the first function. Through the honesty and responsibility of Ilie Baldovin, fixed as coordinates of an acceptable reference system, the novel brings us in the situation of judging according to normal criteria an abnormality, the totalitarian system. However, self-revelation is also a highlight of those who make your destiny. Baldovin does not find his own way: he accidentally arrives in TUM, he happens to be an activist (Aurică Măgureanu sees him as the “child of the practice” when he discovers him honestly and with an argument-oriented thinking) and so on. Baldovin's suffering, in the area of self-revelation, results from the inability to realize that you cannot go your own way and that there must be someone to bring you to your own destiny. Fane Croitoru, Aurică Măgureanu, Corâci, Covrig, Maria Smărăndescu, Mateescu, the first secretary and the Grand Prime Minister are the people who make up Ilie Baldovin's destiny. He lives a fearless object. In its maintenance he engages the desire to be lucid and with his feet on the ground ("because everything is arranged in the end", p. 269), inner reflection and analysis. He eliminates psychosubjective motivations one by one and retains for the self-generation of anxiety only the elements of perception, knowledge and processing of causes. The more he is subjectively anxious, the more he turns his attention to the facts: he knows from Mateescu to heal himself through work. Anxiety has as its intellectual equivalent uncertainty. Although his findings lead him to the conclusion that the party has unionized, that it has changed its line and is going in a direction that is not its own, although it takes into account that society presents itself as two antagonistic worlds (Roşca, 2020), although it is aware of all this in its imaginary. activist "child of the practice" and representative of power, does not accept to take seriously the bankruptcy of the system. Over time, the party divides society into "two worlds" (p. 198). Then, between them through ideology and favoritism he organizes an indelible hatred (Banta, 2017; Pîrvu, 2019; Suherman, 2021). In fact, in order for him to remain an activist, the structure does not have to change at all. He couldn't be anything else. His ideal of society is built as a derivative of his ideal of activism. The development of Power is not done according to an ideology, but according to a scheme in which he and the party remain in the vital center. The last steps of becoming aware of what he really is before he is anything else are done in a Kafkaesque parabolic atmosphere (Koetaan, 2020; Chiriță, 2020).

D. In the drama he builds himself, he finds that he is going through, as an activist, a second scale and he feels "for the first time humiliated by a Power that seems to come from outside" (p. 35). From here you enter the fourth coordinate of the book, from the power "represented by the Party" to the analysis of power in general. The reflections are aimed at clarifying the situation in which he is, clarifying what the individual is and what he lives in relation to the Power, about the relationship between Power and ideal, between Power and image, about what he is, really, ultimately. As a novel hero, Baldovin saves himself through something. He has something extra. Ilie Baldovin has firm beliefs that are structured in a dream, in an ideal. Through his ideal, the erased activist becomes pregnant, becomes significant. On the other hand, through Baldovin's dream, the novel ascends to a meditation on existence and to the parable. The fourth level of the novel is that of power and reflection on power. The events of the novel take place in an unnamed village, in an unnamed city and at an unspecified time; thus some parabolic coordinates are fixed. Being part of power is the imposed component of being. Power has two aspects: "The power that the party represents" (p. 19) and Power as a function in a hierarchy. Party power is in the realm of realism, it underlies the thought of "hierarchies and functions" (p. 242). In this plan, the man can be "the child of the practice" (p. 68), "accomplice" (p. 247), "executor" (p. 54), "informant" (p. 255), "pawn" (p. 282). He can have "feeling" (p. 213), "taste" (p. 213), "sweetness" (p. 199), "the flavor of power" (p. 54). Parabolic are the "mirage" (p. 40) and the "fascination" (p. 40) of power. Realistic power is "only the means which it is normal to struggle to have, in order to fulfill your ideal" (p. 53). Parabolic power is "a privileged space that if you enter you will never leave" (p. 53). Realistic power leaves you free; you are free when you "ignore that you represent power" (p. 103). At the same time, freedom gives authenticity to the being. The experience of parabolic power is made with the feeling that power "does not let me out" (p. 60). It isolates you, makes you feel like you are in a "greenhouse" (p. 60). Realistic is the being who is based on the "function given by the Power" (p. 103), fighting for it as an ideal, because every man has "his dream too" (p. 9). Parabolic is the idea that without power "you are an ordinary person" (p. 103). Realistic power is the one that manages a single world. Instead, the parabolic one separates "two worlds" (p. 198): the world of power and the world of submission. The world of parabolic power is one in which "you cannot part with the mask", the realistic one is the one lived with the idea that "the function is transient" (p. 64). Chapter X is the totally parabolic part of the book. One of the inflections started earlier is stabilized here parabolically: the bulldog characteristic. From where at first Ilie Baldovin had features that made him "look like a bulldog" (p. 33), along the way he resembles "again a blazed bulldog" (p. 103), so that on the parabolic area he appears with a " stubborn bulldog air ”(p. 289). Power produces a bulldog and we can't help but think of Eugen Ionescu's rhinos. Connected, the waiting situation to reach the Grand Prime is similar to that of Kafka's "Castle." For Baldovin, as for the surveyor, the days lived in the residential area (respectively the castle area) are stressful, the time expanding uncontrollably.

3. Conclusion

It turns out that in this realistic novel, we see how the practice of communication embraces the theory of communication, how different feelings and decisions influence the choice of communication methods when honestly debating issues such as self-knowledge (who he really is), what is Power, what it is freedom, which means the authenticity of being.

The irony stops where the thinking of the being and the ideal begin. It is a tainted ideal, a compromised ideal in itself, but it is an ideal. Baldovin is not an irremediable villain (although, for example, the villa where he lives has been forcibly taken from the owners), he is not a dull or dull mind. With "Child of the Party" politics re-enters literature. The political novel, camped for years between 1950 and 1960, changes in this case its substance and structure. The novelist adapts to the circumstances and lucidly demystifies what the activist was. The attempt takes place with ecstatic irony, with moral probity, with literary art, elements that had been sacrificed in the "pre-revolutionary" political novel, largely the novel of the "obsessive decade". The prose writer's optics regarding the individual's relationship with history changes: the condition of the man aiming at an ideal appears to be more important than the legitimacy of history. The book manages to highlight the armor, the essence of communist power and its strategies. The writer discovers more powerful ways of talking about the complexities and complications of history. Activists were written long before

1989. Because it was mandatory for the activist to be a role model for "comrades", the books took on a fad and fake outline. A way, a situation and a way had to be identified for the activist to be a man without annoyance. Ilie Baldovin is a quality activist. Ilie Baldovin is not, as in other books, a figure of the author in a self-portrait with barely moving data. From this perspective, we find that the novel by the critic Marin Beşteliu is above the value level of those written about the "obsessive decade". Baldovin is a rocky character, built from the crumbly material of a true novelist's imagination. He reaches us on the path opened by Marin Preda with Nicolae Moromete from "The Great Lonely One".

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IRANIAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS ACTIVISTS AND THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF CORE CONCEPTS OF CRITICAL MEDIA LITERACY

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Abstract

Media has an important role in socializing Iranian women into sexism and patriarchy. The women have been indoctrinated to believe that gender inequality is natural and neutral, so they do not challenge the existing power structure. Given the power of media in shaping Iranian women's identity, it is imperative to be analyzed critically. The current study investigates how Iranian women's rights activists understand the core concepts of critical media literacy. Through a qualitative approach and conducting semi-structured interviews with 15 Iranian women's rights activists, this study reveals that the activists know the five core concepts, non-transparency, audience interpretation, politics of representation, media motivations, and social justice. However, they know little about other core concepts, languages and techniques, and how the media could subordinate women further through employing these techniques.

Keywords; Critical Media Literacy, Gender Ideology, Women's Rights Activist, Oppression

Introduction

"The message of media texts never simply mirrors or reflect 'reality', but instead construct hegemonic definitions of what should be accepted as reality" (Carter & Steiner, 2003, p. 21). Therefore, the ruling groups in society try to control representation and encode the world in formats that continue their own power, remain their privilege, and preserve the status quo in society (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1995). Thus, social and political inequalities and injustice are maintained and legitimized by creating and employing oppressive and negative representations.

With respect to gender, the media serves the dominant gender ideology, patriarchy, and makes it appear as "non-ideological," "objective," "neutral", and "non-gendered". "Sexist messages socialize people into thinking that dichotomized and hierarchical sex-role stereotypes are natural and normal" (Carter & Steiner, 2003, p. 2). By representing women as inferior and associate gender discrimination with human genes and nature, the media could perpetuate male domination and patriarchal values.

Iranian women have been struggling for equality for at least a century since they have been deprived of many of their basic rights and have suffered from sexism and patriarchy (Fazaeli, 2016; Rostami-Povey, 2013; Vogel, 2018). Although Iranian women movements over the last century have made notable achievements in educational, scientific, literary, artistic, economic, and socio-political participation, they still have not succeeded in gaining equal rights in many areas, particularly in matters of the family (inheritance, marriage, divorce, and child custody) (Tohidi, 2016).

In addition to oppressive gender politics (*World Report* 2021), Iran's state TV perpetuates gender stereotypes and patriarchal values by portraying women as submissive, obedient, dependent, and emotional — in contrast to men, who are active, pioneering, rational, prominent, assertive, and intelligent (Ahmadi, Agili, & Mehdizadeh, 2015; Chanzanagh & Haghpors, 2010; Navabakhsh & Ghomi, 2011; Rahmani, 2016). Depicting women as mothers and housewives, and men as fathers, employed outside the home, and being the breadwinners normalizes the dominant sexist ideology and gendered divisions of labor in Iran (Bashir & Parvaneh, 2018; Habibpoor Getabi, Talebi, & Ahangran, 2013; Khoei, 2016). Besides, by attributing specific tasks and behaviors to femininity and masculinity, TV series and advertisements construct and maintain gender identity within the dominant male-controlled system. Iran's national TV further manipulates women to reject emancipation and feminism by portraying those resisting normative behavior as deprived of family, having no personal life, aggressive and unsuccessful (Murray, 2014; Rahmani, 2016).

The portrayal of women as inferior and subordinate, and men as dominant and superior, Iranian TV seeks to stabilize and continue male supremacy and the unfair gender relations inherent in the existing discriminatory laws and culture. In this way, TV serves to legitimize sexism and patriarchy and describe them as common sense and concrete reality that cannot be changed or challenged.

Given the power of media, particularly Iran's national TV, in shaping Iranian women's identity, reproducing, reinforcing, and legitimizing gender ideology, it is crucial to read media messages critically. Otherwise, oppressive representation leads to perpetuating gender oppression. Through learning critical media literacy, they can be empowered to reveal latent messages in the media and learn to resist the messages (Alvermann & Hagood, 2000; Share, 2009).

This paper examines how Iranian women's rights activists understand the core concepts of critical media literacy. This paper is divided into four parts, including review researches on media literacy in Iran, the study's theoretical framework, the method used, and Iranian women's rights activists' views on core concepts of critical media literacy.

Media Literacy among Iranian Women

Despite the important role of media in reinforcing dominant gender ideology, media literacy education has not yet been developed to empower Iranian women. There is also inadequate research in the area. The relationship between media literacy and the impact of commercials on female students was studied by Zendehboodi and Zendehboodi (2011). By questionnaires, the findings show that commercials less influence students (at Allame Tabatabaei University) with more media literacy. Besides, the students who consume media more, their media literacy level is lower. Similarly, the positive effect of media literacy is revealed by Bahmani and Bostani (2015), studying 410 women in Shiraz city. The research demonstrates that improving media literacy decrease consumption.

Fazelian Dehkordi and Mohammadi (2017) find out how there is an association between media literacy and reading newspapers, books, journals, listening to music, watching TV, and using the Internet among women in Kurd City. By questionnaires, the study demonstrates that the women consumed the media products more with increasing media literacy. Knowing the owner of the media also influences the consumption of the media.

The impact of media literacy on students' attitudes toward self-medication with slimming supplements was investigated by Solhi, Jormand, and Gohari (2016). The authors studied 98 students in female dormitories at the University of Medical Sciences in Iran through a questionnaire technique. They found that mean scores for attitudes about body image, self-esteem, and media literacy dimensions in both a test and a control group were moderate, with no significant differences between groups before a quasi-experimental media literacy education intervention. However, one and three months after the intervention, mean scores for body image attitudes, self-esteem, and media literacy were significantly improved in the control groups. The results reveal that the attitudes about slimming supplements could improve by media literacy education.

The influence of media literacy on female students' beauty surgery was examined by Khazir, Dehdari, Majdabad, and Tehrani (2016). By applying questionnaires, the authors studied how media literacy education could impact on the attitudes of female students about cosmetic operations at two female dormitories at Tehran University of Medical Sciences. The research indicates that the female students' opinions on cosmetic surgery were significantly affected by media literacy education, increased self-esteem, and reduced body dissatisfaction.

Given the high consumption of the Internet by Iranian women, the role of critical media literacy in Iranian women's virtual activities was studied by Montazerghaeim and Sahabn Kasegar (2015). Based on the completed questionnaire of 429 Iranian women identified as active in cyberspace, the research demonstrates that women with higher critical media literacy used the Internet more to motivate others, influence people's views, share knowledge and skills and express themselves creatively.

Reviewing the researches reveals that the harmful effects of media usage, such as overconsumption, could be decreased by media literacy. In other words, in most of the studies, a protectionist approach was applied to media literacy to demonstrate how media literacy may lower the damaging impacts of media messages. The review also reveals the despite the vital role of media in shaping identities, there are insufficient studies about media literacy, particularly the critical approach of media education. Thus, the current study intends to explore the critical perspective on media literacy among Iranian women's rights activists by a qualitative method.

Theoretical Framework

Critical media literacy and feminist standpoint guide the researcher to formulate a question, choose a method and participants, collect and analyze data. Feminist standpoint theory represents a way for women, as an oppressed group, to become empowered (Harding, 2004). Based on the theory, women "need to understand the conceptual practices of power through which their oppression was designed, continued and made to seem natural and desirable to everyone" (Harding, 2004, p. 7).To struggle against women's subordination, they require to realize how the subordination works in diverse ways and how gender discrimination is made not only to seem natural but indeed desirable.

According to feminist standpoint theory, it is easier for oppressed groups and marginalized people to understand oppressive situations and positions than those who do not experience oppressive structures (Narayan, 2004). However, just experiencing the subordination does not result in critical consciousness automatically. "The moment of critical insight is one that comes only through political struggle for it is blocked and its understandings obscured by dominant, hegemonic ideologies and the practices that they make appear normal or even natural" (Harding, 2004, p. 9). Raising critical awareness and revealing the structures of oppression needs collective, intellectual, and political struggle (Van Heertum & Share, 2006).

Considering the important role media plays in sustaining gender inequality and making it seem natural, women need to acquire knowledge to comprehend that oppressive structure, thereby empower themselves to struggle against gender oppression collectively and individually. They require to discern how the marginalization of women is designed, sustained, and naturalized through media representation.

Since critical media literacy aims to liberating individuals by critical understanding of media (Engstrom & Beliveau, 2021) it could empower women to discern hegemony and power in media representations. Critical media literacy exposes the structure of oppression and power in media materials and analyzes dominant ideologies. As Kellner and Share (2007b) point out:

Critical media literacy focuses on ideology critique and analyzing the politics of representation of crucial dimensions of gender, race, class, and sexuality; incorporating alternative media production; and expanding textual analysis to include issues of social context, control, and pleasure (p. 8).

Thus critical media literacy includes a critical analysis of ideologies in media texts and scrutinizing representation of gender, race, and ethnicity in media messages (Kellner & Share, 2009). Discerning ideologies inspires "readers to perceive that all cultural texts have distinct biases, interests, and embedded values, reproducing the point of view of their producers and often the values of the dominant social groups" (Durham & Kellner, 2009, p. xiv). Thus, "notions of ideology and hegemony, as well as the politics of representation in media (which includes dimensions of sexism, racism, classism and homophobia, to name a few) are central concerns" in media literacy (Hammer, 2009). This is a vital step in reading media critically; otherwise, oppressive representations can maintain inequality and injustice.

In terms of gender, critical reading of media focuses on representing gender, sexism and critical questions that dispute specific depictions of gender (Iyer & Luke, 2011). It helps women question the social construction of gender and sexist ideology and rebut the claimed connection of gender with biology and genetics (Funk, Kellner, & Share, 2016).

Critical media literacy has six core concepts (Funk et al., 2016; Kellner & Share, 2007b, 2019). The first concept is non-transparency, which indicates that media products are not unbiassed and transparent but are instead socially created and shaped. Thus, they represent reality by offering a biased selection of a socially created reality. Languages and techniques of media materials are the second concept and involve discriminating languages, genres, codes, and conventions used in media messages.

Audience interpretation is the third one, which implies that audiences are active in the meaning-making process and how groups understand media messages similarly or differently, depending on multiple contextual factors.

The next concept, politics of representation, examines the process of representation in media to reveal issues of bias, point of view, ideology, omission, power, privilege. The fifth concept, media motivation, indicates that "all media texts have a purpose (often commercial or political) that is shaped by the creators and/or systems within which they operate"(Kellner & Share, 2019, p. 8).

Social Justice is the last core concept of critical media literacy and points out that media messages are not created in a vacuum; they influence people within societies. It helps to question racism, classism, and sexism, and how some people and groups benefit more than others from media messages, as well as how some groups are further marginalized.

Feminist standpoint theory guides the study to select Iranian women's rights activists for interview. As a marginalized group, perceiving the structure of gender oppression in media representation is easier for them and also being engaged in the political struggle against gender oppression. Critical media literacy, which could empower Iranian women to develop critical insight and dissect gender ideology, is applied to analyze data and findings.

Method

The purpose of this study is to explore how Iranian women's rights activists understand the core concepts of critical media literacy. A qualitative approach and a semi-structured interview are used for achieving the purpose. The interview helps to explore people's knowledge, views, understandings, interpretations, experiences, and interactions, all meaningful parts of social reality (Mason, 2002).

Purposeful sampling was used to select the participants of the study. In the sampling, the researcher purposefully choose individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon (Creswell & Clark, 2017). As mentioned earlier, Iranian women's rights activists were selected to interview, as they are engaged in political struggles against gender inequality and discrimination in Iran. As a result, they have a critical view of women's subordination and marginalization. According to feminist standpoint theory, they also understand oppression more easily than dominant groups. Therefore, in this study, participants were Iranian women's rights activists with at least three years of experience in the struggle against gender discrimination in Iranian society. By a snowball sampling, 15 Iranian women's rights activists were selected for the study. In the sampling, key participants were requested to suggest other suitable subjects for the research (Creswell, 2012).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with fifteen women's rights activists to explore how they understand the core concepts of critical media literacy. Data analysis and discussion subsequently followed with using a critical media literacy framework, and with an emphasis on its core concepts. All names used here are pseudonymous.

Findings and Discussion

This section discusses how Iranian women's rights activists understand the core concepts of critical media literacy. As the findings reveal, the Iranian women's rights activists perceive the principle of non-transparency, audience decoding, politics of representation, media motivation, and social justice. However, most of them do not know the techniques of media representation used to attract audiences and deliver messages. The activists did not discern how media and Iran's state TV productions could subordinate women further by employing particular techniques.

Principle of Non-Transparency

According to critical media literacy, one important concept is understanding the relationship between media and reality. The media does not present simple reflections of external reality; they present productions with specific purposes (Silverblatt, 2013). This concept helps in understanding that although media productions appear to be natural, they are, in fact, constructed and include a range of decisions. Accepting media representations as "real" is highly problematic, and it allows harmful stereotypes to become naturalized (Share, Jolls, & Thoman, 2007). Most women's rights activists believed media do not show reality because media have their own interests; gaining money and reproducing the dominant ideology. In this regard, Melina, a 44-year-old activist, explained: "In the Islamic Republic [of Iran], media are controlled by the ruling system, and they should follow its interests… . They must then represent things that support its [dominant system] interests." And Tarannom, 34 years old, expressed:

"Each medium promotes its sponsor's interests. When you watch Gem TV [you can see] that the jewellery, [which is presented] in the *Harim Soltan* series, is on the market or advertised with the highest price, you can conclude that the series is not made based on historical documents … but they want to sell the jewellery which the actresses wear."

Melina mentioned that since Iran's political system controls media, they must follow the system's interest and show things that support its interests. Tarannom also believed that media make reality based on their interests, including gaining money and economic benefit. She argued that every medium has its sponsor, then it looks out for its (sponsor's) financial benefit. For example, Gem TV (a satellite channel) showed a historical series in which the actresses wore certain jewelry. The jewelry was also sold in the market for a high price. It demonstrates that the series is not based on historical documents and real events but is designed to sell the products. In other words, they (the TV) did not represent reality (in history); they just made programming for financial advantage.

Ava, 33 years old, stated that another interest of the media is maintaining the dominant system's power and ideology;

"[Iran's dominant system] uses many tools to maintain its power, and media is one of the most potent tools … . One of its [Iran's dominant system] aims is perpetuating the subordinated status of women … .They use media for their purpose, and as a result, do not portray reality and truth."

According to her, the media try to sustain the dominant system's power, so they do not show reality. Reinforcing the dominant patriarchal structure and perpetuate the subordination of women is the purpose the ruling group is looking for.

Similarly, Armita, 30 years old, noted that media does not show reality because reality does not exist. Everybody sees reality based on their ideologies and perspectives. "It is clear media does not show reality. Reality does not exist.

I show reality based on my camera and view … If I am a feminist, I show it in one way … and liberals show it in another way."

Parnian, a 28-year-old activist, thought media not only does not show reality because of their ideology but also, they make and represent a version of reality based on the worldview they want their audience to adopt. "The message of media texts never simply mirrors or reflect 'reality', but instead construct hegemonic definitions of what should be accepted as reality"(Carter & Steiner, 2003, p. 2).

In summary, the findings demonstrate that media, particularly Iran's national TV, are not transparent and do not show reality because they have their particular interests; gaining benefit and money, maintaining power, and reinforcing the dominant ideologies, such as sexism.

Drawing on critical media literacy (Kellner & Share, 2005, 2007b, 2009), the findings indicate that Iranian women activists challenge media power to present transparent messages. They perceive that media has interests that could be economic or ideological; so, they do not represent reality. They comprehend media messages are created by people who make decisions about them, so all messages are influenced by bias, ideological positioning, and the interest of those who create the messages. In a similar way, media in Iran controlled by the ruling group are influenced by that system's interests and ideology. As a result, they do not show reality.

Techniques of Representation

Another key concept of critical media literacy is representation techniques, including words, music, color, movement, camera angle, and other techniques that influence the meaning of media messages. Most of the women's rights activists have little knowledge about techniques such as music, camera angles, and lighting in media representation. Even when the researcher explained the techniques further and gave them examples, they remained unclear. Some believed that techniques are professional, and it is not their job to know them. For example, Mitra, a social facilitator, stated: "I do not know [about the techniques] much, it is professional." Only a few knew about colors and a little about music. Armita, a 30-year-old activist, said, "In [Iran's] national TV advertisements, music, fast cutting, strange jump cuts, strong color … happy music in series are used."

As a result, most of the women's rights activists do not know and understand how media such as Iran's national TV could legitimize women's subordination by using the techniques of gender representation. Mitra, 38 years old, said: "I do not know how much techniques can impact [on the subordination of women], I do not really know, because it is professional." However, she recognized how the use of music relates to the oppression of women: "Soft music is used to represent the weakness of women … Harsh music is deployed for bad, evil women."

A few activists knew a little about how the techniques are used to oppress women further. They understood how particular clothing or dress contributes to meaning. For example, women who have chador and care about hijab are portrayed as good and acceptable, while the women who do not care about these things are presented negatively. Melina, 44 years old, noted:

For example, in series and movies [on Iran's national TV], at most times, good women wear a chador. It means a good woman wears a chador; while rarely seeing positive representations of women in a series wearing a manto [a long dress]. Characters in negative roles also do not wear chador most of the time.

Women are identified as "good" by wearing chador on screen, while "bad" women are those who do not care about it. In this way, Iran's national TV service constructs a value on the hijab and legitimizes the dominant system ideology and repressive laws concerning it.

Mahnoosh, a 38-year-old activist, explained that red and colorful dresses are used for divorced, bad women, and this is how TV contributes to the subordination of Iranian women. She continued by identifying how media impose special codes for women:

I have to wear colors which are not my choice … . Iranian women usually wear black because the media shows it. In our media, bright and attractive colours are not used for good people … .If I wear a red color, I do not feel comfortable, and people look at me badly … . the media produces it … and men are allowed to annoy me [since I am considered a bad woman]. Then it [the representation] affects my choice … the verbal violence leads me not to wear red … because I do not want to be harassed.

Mahnoosh explained why most Iranian women wear black. On Iran's national TV, good women do not wear bright and colorful attire, as that is what bad people wear. As a result, if women wear colorful clothing, they do not feel comfortable, and people consider them bad. Besides, the representation allows men to annoy those who wear colorful dresses, as they are marked as not being good women. It affects Iranian women's choices, as they cannot wear any color they like without facing verbal and nonverbal violence and harassment.

Portraying bad women via costuming in the media has influenced public opinion and how women are recognized. In other words, society judges women based on the color of their dress, with those wearing bright or colorful dresses considered to be bad women. In contrast, those who wear dark colors are known as good and respectable women. This representation causes limitations for women and restricts the choices available to them.

The current findings demonstrate that most of the Iranian women's rights activists did not understand the techniques used by media to represent social and cultural values on the screen. Further, they do not discern how TV programs, along with other media, subordinate women more by employing different techniques.

A significant observation is the women's rights activists failed to perceive the technical and creative aspects of media products, including the choice of camera angles, and the effects of color schemes, and the visual and audio effects. The techniques could create specific impressions and ideological statements. For example, camera angles can make products appear larger, or women appear smaller and more diminutive (Luke, 2003). A high camera angle, looking down on actors, could make a woman appear less powerful and less significant, or even submissive. In contrast, a low camera angle causes them to appear more powerful or dominant. The findings demonstrate that the Iranian women's rights activists did not identify how media techniques and languages play an essential role in the women's marginalization and reinforcing dominant ideologies.

Audience Interpretation

The next concept is related to audience interpretation. As Kellner and Share (2009) point out, understanding this concept helps develop democracy. "The perception of different audiences means there are multiple interpretations, which enhances a pluralistic democracy when its citizenry embraces multiple perspectives as a natural consequence of varying experiences, histories, and culture" (Kellner & Share, 2005a, p. 376). Hearing multiple interpretations can build respect for different cultures and an appreciation for minority and divergent opinions (Share et al., 2007). In this regard, all the Iranian women's rights activists believed gender, ethnicity, religion, class, and experiences could lead to different interpretations of media messages.

Hora, a lawyer, Arina, an unemployed, Kiana, a director, Anahita, a news reporter, Diana, a public relations officer, and Parnian, a social facilitator, explained how gender could influence our interpretation of media messages. Parnian said:

For example, many women ask why most TV programs on Iran's national TV are about polygamy or concubines. A man may not think about it. It is not because he is a proponent of the issue, but it is not his issue and does not affect his interests. [While it impacts on women's lives], so women think about it a lot.

Parnian believed when Iran's national TV broadcasts shows and films involving polygamy, many Iranian women questioned it, while men did not. It is because polygamy is not a men's issue and interest. Women who suffer from gender oppression think about the representations of polygamy more than men who do not suffer from that oppressive law.

Their views are more in line with feminist standpoint theory in which recognizing oppressive situations and positions for subordinate groups are easier and more achievable for those who have experienced the oppressive structure (Narayan, 2004) because those people have experienced and suffer problems and issues which are produced by the structure.

Hora, a lawyer, and Arina, an unemployed, mentioned the impact of gender awareness in interpreting media messages. If women do not have gender awareness, they interpret media messages in line with the dominant sexist ideology. This also confirms feminist standpoint theory. Being an oppressed group, itself may not affect the understanding of gender oppression; critical insight into the structure of gender oppression is required to comprehend the structure. In other words, although being a woman makes it easier to understand oppressive gender representation in media, it is not enough; a critical view is necessary to understand women's subordination in media texts.

Melina, a journalist, and Arina, a 54-year-old activist, believed that besides gender, ethnicity also significantly impacts on people's interpretation of media productions:

Ethnicity is also like that [gender]. For example, when Azari people are represented as stupid or a Mazandarani is portrayed as naïve, those ethnicities react to the representations … .If ethnicity would not impact [on interpretation] when they [Iran's national TV] mocked Lours, all Iranians should protest, but we saw only Lours protested. Then the ethnicity affects the interpretation.

Melina remarked ethnicity has influences the interpretation of media messages because when an ethnic group is represented negatively on Iran's national TV, only the ethnic protests against the negative representation, not others. It also indicates how experiencing oppression makes it easier to understand the oppressive structure.

Nevertheless, Mana,31 years old, pointed out that the influences of gender, religion, and ethnicity on the interpretation of media messages depend on how a person has been brought up and matured. In the same way, Mahnoosh, an organization officer, believed the conditions of one's upbringing, such as environment and tradition, impact on the understanding of media texts. Mahnoosh argued that people's situations and environments are as important as gender, ethnicity, and religion in people's interpretations of media materials.

Aysan, a journalist, mentioned the role of different cultures in the interpretation of media products, in addition to the other factors. Amrita, a social facilitator, cited the importance of background, level of knowledge, and culture, besides class and gender sensitivity, in interpreting media materials.

People's experiences, such as marriages, are also remarked by Mahnoosh, a 30-year-old activist, as a factor impacting on the interpretation of media messages. For a woman who experiences domestic violence, the interpretation of watching violence in movies is different from a woman who has not experienced it. Portraying domestic violence may not be typical and not surprising to a woman who experiences violence in her marriage, while it is strange to someone who does not experience domestic violence.

In summary, the findings demonstrate that the Iranian women's rights activists understand how gender, ethnicity, class, and religion can influence different interpretations of media texts. Some of the activists believed that those are not the only factors leading to varying understandings of media messages. People's upbringing, culture, knowledge, literacy, and life experiences can also influence the interpretations. Some thought these aspects are more important than gender, ethnicity, age, class, and religion.

As mentioned earlier, one significant concept in analyzing media is that "individuals and groups understand media messages similarly and/or differently, depending on multiple contextual factors"(Funk et al., 2016, p. 7). Considering this concept, the Iranian women's rights activists understand how gender, race, ethnicity and different cultures and backgrounds can impact on the interpretation of media texts. They discerned how differences bring various interpretations of media messages and how similarities generate common understandings.

Politics of Representation

Politics of representation is another core concept of critical media literacy, which involves examining ideology, bias, and point of view in media messages. The study mostly focuses on examining gender ideology as it is represented on Iranian national TV. All the women's rights activists believe that Iran's national TV represents a sexist ideology. It reinforces the dominant gender ideology through portrayals of gender roles and stereotypes, misrepresentation and omission of feminist women, the portrayal of religious patriarchy, and legitimizing gender discriminatory law. As Ava, a social facilitator, indicated, "it is ideology of women's subordination and weakness."

Armita, Mitra, Parnian, Mana, Aysen, and Tarannom mentioned the representation of a gender division of labor and stereotypes based on patriarchal values. Parnian, a social facilitator, noted how women are relegated to the domestic sphere and men are celebrated in the public sphere;

It [Iran' state TV] reproduces traditional gender roles and represents them as good and positive. It shows women are at home, do housework, and [shows] this is right. Men are outside, the breadwinner, and this is right. Moreover, if it changes, some problems will be created.

She mentioned how Iran's national TV promotes traditional gender roles and a gender division of labor. Based on this division, women do housework while men work outside and are breadwinners. As Parnian pointed out, the TV not only represents the division of labor based on gender, it also portrays the division as the right and the most suitable and effective way of life. If these patriarchal gender roles change, supposedly, it will create problems to families and society.

These findings support the studies of Bashir and Parvaneh (2018), Khoei (2016), Ahmadi, Agili, and Mehdizadeh (2015), Habibpoor Getabi, Talebi, and Ahangran (2013), Azin and Heidari Tabrizi (2015), Ravandrad and Mohammadi (2016), Mousavilar & Sh. Leylian (2015), Mehdizadeh and Azar Baragozaz (2016), Aslani and Kianpour (2016) and Kosari, Azizi and Azizi (2015). Each study shows that Iran's national TV reinforces gender division of labor and male domination.

Some of the women's rights activists, Arina, Armita, Tarrannom and Shafigeh, believed that gender ideology of Iran's national TV comes from Islamic ideology on gender which is patriarchy, and also comes from the Qur'an and the hadith in Islam. As Navabakhsh and Ghomi (2011) and Delap (2007) also demonstrate, in this ideology, good and acceptable women are represented as religious women.

According to Tarrannom, 34 years old, wearing hijab and caring about it is a part of this Islamic ideology about gender, which is represented on the national TV. "One part [of gender ideology] is religious value … and it promotes a special kind of hijab and clothing." On the one hand, the state TV represents good women as religious and veiled women; on the other hand, it depicts non-religious women negatively. In this regard, Shafigeh, a social facilitator, remarked "[The gender ideology is portrayed] through representing good women with hijab and bad women without hijab…"

Armita, Arina, Taranom and Mana identified through misrepresentation of feminist women, the omission of women who reject male domination as other ways Iran's national TV tries to indoctrinate Iranian women with its sexist ideology. Armita, a social facilitator and researcher, explained the negative representation of feminist contrasts with the positive representation of traditional women. In this way, Iran's national TV promotes a sexist ideology:

A woman who is feminist or thinks about herself is bad. There are a bad one and a good one which tradition defines … and in the tradition, women may be educated, and even this [education for women] may be sanctified … . Still, a good woman is one who could take care of her family and work outside simultaneously, and a woman who only works is not a successful woman.

Armita pointed out, similar to Navabakhsh and Ghomi (2011) and Chanzanagh and Haghpors (2010), Iran's national TV tries to portray feminist women as selfish and only think about themselves. Armita mentioned how Iran's state TVs defines traditional women as good and acceptable. Although in the traditional belief women may be educated, their primary role is taking care of children and family. Those who work outside the home are not represented as successful women. As Damean (2010, p. 93) observes, "media manipulates women into rejecting the 'emancipated' model by portraying intelligent or successful women as deprived of family or personal life."

Mana and Mahnoosh asserted that the gender ideology of Iran's national TV precisely aligns with gender discriminatory law passed by the ruling group in Iran. Mahnoosh, a 38-year-old activist, stated that the system employs national TV for perpetuating and legitimizing gender politics, which are oppressive and discriminatory. As an example, according to Mahnoosh, gender politics of the dominant system support polygamy, and men have the right to marry more than one woman. The discrimination is enshrined in the law and supported by Iran's national TV via representing polygamy as good and pleasant. In the same way, hijab is a law and women should have full hijab, so TV series portrays the hijab as good and that everyone who does not care about it is not an acceptable person/woman.

Overall, according to the viewpoints of the Iranian women's rights activists, gender ideology of Iran's national TV is sexism. The ideology, as represented on the national TV, tries to portray gender division of labor and stereotypes in which women are best suited to a domestic role, while men are located in the public sphere. To reproduce and normalize its gender ideology, Iran's national TV misrepresents and omits women who are feminist and those who are successful in their career and their life, and resist patriarchal values. In contrast, women who are traditional and follow patriarchal conventions are depicted as good and acceptable. Besides, the gender ideology comes from Islamic ideology, in which women should wear the hijab and be religious; otherwise, they are not acceptable and decent women. They are good mothers, wives, and women as long as they are religious and covered. Non-religious women, however, cannot be kind and responsible mothers.

Regarding the findings, Iran's state TV, which is controlled by the dominant system works as an ideological state apparatus to legitimize and internalize gender discriminatory politics and male domination. Iranian women are imbued with patriarchal beliefs through gender ideology represented on the national TV. They are indoctrinated to believe that gender discrimination and inequality is natural, and it originates in their sex. As such, they may have internalized subordination and marginalization to the extent that they cannot change it.

When people, particularly Iranian women, are being socialized into patriarchy, not only they would avoid challenging discriminatory law, but would also cease demanding equality and rights. The dominant system uses oppressive representations of women not only to make gender discrimination (in law and society) acceptable but also to depict this repression as being in the best interest of women and make them happy and redemptive. By normalizing the dominant sexist beliefs and patriarchal values as common-sense assumptions, they are presented as reality and cannot be challenged.

Media Motivation

Another core concept of critical media literacy is media motivation, in which "all media texts have a purpose (often commercial or governmental) that is shaped by the creators and/or systems within which they operate" (Funk et al., 2016, p. 7). According to the Iranian women's rights activists, Iran's national TV has three aims when showing TV dramas and commercials. The most important aim is to maintain the dominant ideology; another is entertaining people; the last one is an economic goal, to gain more money and benefit.

According to the views expressed by the Iranian women's rights activists, the most significant aim and goal of commercials and series on Iran's national TV is perpetuating and reinforcing the dominant ideology. Hora, a lawyer, Melina, a journalist, Anahita, a news reporter, and Armita, a researcher and social facilitator, pointed to promoting and reinforcing the ideology of the dominant political system through TV series and commercials. In this regard, Melina, a journalist, said, "Overall, TV programs function to perpetuate the dominant ideology and maintain the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran."

An important ideology of Iran's political system is sexism, it was mentioned by Shafigeh, Diana, Mahnoosh, Kiana, Mana, Tarannom, and Mitra. Shafigeh, a social facilitator, indicated that: "They [the TV programs] send the message that women should stay at home, and their main goal is to be mothers…". Iran's national TV tries to perpetuate or legitimize its sexist ideology by consistently representing gender division of labor and stereotypes in which women are expected to stay at home, and their primary mission is to be a mother. In other words, the media carry on the dominant gender ideology through Iran's national TV series and commercials.

Some of the women's rights activists, Arina, Melina, Hora, and Aysan, pointed out that the national TV series and advertisements want to entertain audiences alongside disseminating dominant ideology. Aysan, a journalist, said: "In the series, people should be entertained and also be reminded of the dominant values." Aysan believed that TV series entertain people and transfer the dominant ideology to viewers at the same time. In other words, by entertaining people, Iran's national TV tries to disseminate and reinforce the dominant culture and ideology. Significantly, the more engaging and entertaining the production, the more people are exposed to the dominant ideology, which is the aim of the ruling group.

In addition to reinforcing dominant ideology and entertaining, the national TV also has an economic aim, earning money and benefit for its operation. Kiana, a 40-year-old activist, said the second goal of Iran's national TV series and advertisements is making money (the first aim is promoting patriarchy). Similarly, Parnian, a social facilitator, mentioned that the aim is both financial income and transferring its ideology: "One part is financial income, and another part is that the programs are tools to disseminate the state's ideology. "Social facilitator, Ava and Aysan, a journalist, also indicated the financial aim of Iran's national TV commercials and dramas.

In sum, the Iranian women's rights activists remarked that the aims of series and commercials are reproducing dominant ideology, gaining financial benefit, and entertaining. As the interview subjects are women's rights activists, based on their views, the most important ideology for TV series and commercials is sexism. Besides, Iran's national TV also has financial goals in showing dramas and advertisements. Entertaining people is also part of the purpose of programs while the TV transfers the dominant ideologies.

Regarding critical media literacy theory, all media texts have a purpose of gaining profit or/and power shaped by the creators and/or systems within which they operate (Share, Funk, & Kellner, 2016; Share et al., 2007). Through the critical analysis of media texts, people will see beyond basic purposes of informing, persuading, and entertaining. The current findings also demonstrate that the Iranian women's rights activists understand that media, particularly Iran's national TV, has aims beyond just informing, persuading, and entertaining. Through its programs, the state TV, controlled by Iran's ruling group, tries to legitimize and perpetuate its ideologies, such as sexism, ethnicism, and its religious beliefs, values, and culture. Furthermore, it seeks to gain profit from TV programs. Even when the state TV wants to entertain Iranians, it reinforces the dominant group's ideology and culture.

Social Justice

"Media culture is a terrain of struggle that perpetuates or challenges positive and/or negative ideas about people, groups, and issues — it is never neutral"(Kellner & Share, 2019, p. 8). Since media do not operate in isolation from the world around them, some people and groups benefit more than others from media messages because information and communication have impacts and influence in different contexts. In this regard, another core concept of critical analysis of media is social justice (Beach, Share, & Webb, 2017; Funk et al., 2016; Share & Mamikonyan, 2020), which considers how some groups are marginalized and subordinated by media representation, while others benefit.

Considering the concept, the Iranian women's rights activists believed that Iran's national TV programs could oppress women further by reinforcing gender stereotypes and roles. Mitra, a social facilitator, explained:

Some women in Iran do not have financial independence, and TV series reinforces this by representing women should not work outside, or if they do, they will be deceived … . It means that society is not safe, then women should not work …

Mitra explained how Iranian national TV perpetuates women's financial dependency by telling them that outside the home is unsafe. It is better to stay at home for their safety and take care of the family. The gender role sends the message to Iranian women that they have no chance of successfully changing their prescribed role as housewives and mothers.

Shafigeh, 32 years old, and Diana, 38 years old, also pointed out that through teaching gender roles, the TV programs subordinate women further. Similarly, Melina, Mana, Tarannom, Anahita, Ava, Armita, and Kiana mentioned that portraying gender roles and stereotypes institutionalize discriminatory views on gender and marginalize Iranian women. By sanctifying some roles, like mothering, Iran's national TV institutionalizes gender discrimination and patriarchy in Iran's society. It creates obstacles for those who do not conform to dominant gender roles.

Mahnoosh, 38 years old, expressed that if women do not follow the gender roles represented and reproduced by Iran's national TV, they are blamed and teased by people and are not considered good and acceptable women. Women are not only indoctrinated to perform femininity consistent with what they see on TV; they are also forced to be like typical versions of their gender because of social pressure. Then they oppress themselves by ignoring their own needs and following the dominant gender roles and stereotypes.

In addition to the above ways Iran's national TV marginalizes Iranian women, Mahnoosh and Aysen argued that omission, negative portrayal, and misrepresentation of women are at odds with the dominant sexist ideology also subordinate Iranian women further. Mahnoosh, an organization officer, stated:

Women who want their rights are portrayed as aggressive [in the TV]. They [are represented as women who] ignore their family … .Those representations are negative and dark. In general, the word "feminist" has never been used positively … .Then, that representation becomes society's opinion about feminists and women's rights defenders… .

Chanzanagh and Haghpors (2010) and Navabakhsh and Ghomi (2011) also demonstrate how Iran's national TV represents women who struggle for their rights as aggressive and do not care about their families. Then those negative representations form Iranians' opinions about feminism and rejecting feminism. In other words, Iran's national TV manipulates women to reject those who are emancipated by portraying feminists as being deprived of family and personal life and as aggressive and unsuccessful. When feminist thought is not acceptable for society, then the dominant representations of femininity and masculinity will be the only way of being a man and woman in the community.

Arina, 54 years old, Hora, a lawyer, stated that by representing women only in traditional gender roles, the TV intends women to think media representation are natural and right, as a result; women not to be an agent for transforming inequality and injustice.

Overall, Iran's national TV marginalize Iranian women by representing gender role and stereotypes. By portraying an image of what makes a good woman, TV programming teaches women how to be acceptable and brings social pressure, which forces them to behave based on that pattern. Otherwise, they are considered strange and are "othered." Furthermore, omission, and negative representations of feminists and women who do not accept the dominant gender role and stereotypes, the TV manipulates women to reject emancipation and marginalize them.

Conclusion

As mentioned earlier, media play an important role in shaping Iranian women's identity and perpetuating dominant sexist ideology. Despite this fact, there is little concern and research on critical analysis of media texts and messages among Iranian women. The current research expands the literature by studying how Iranian women's rights activists perceive the core concepts of critical media literacy. The study's findings reveal that the Iranian women's rights activists understand the core concepts of critical media literacy except for one, the techniques of representation.

Iranian women's rights activists believed that media, particularly Iran's national TV, do not show reality because of its own interests in gaining money, maintaining power, and promoting the dominant gender ideology and patriarchy. They understand that media messages are not neutral or transparent, nor do they present objective reality, but only a selection of reality. Often, they actively construct reality. Besides, the women's rights activists did not have enough knowledge of media languages and techniques using in media products. As a result, they did not discern how Iran's state TV could subordinate women further by employing different techniques and languages.

According to the viewpoints of the Iranian women's rights activists, gender, ethnicity, class, religion, and people's awareness, upbringing situation, culture, knowledge, literacy, and life experiences can affect the interpretation of media messages.

Regarding the concepts of representation politics, the women's rights activists think the gender ideology of Iran's national TV is sexism. The TV transfers the dominant sexist ideology by representing gender stereotypes and roles and negative and misrepresentations of feminists and women who do not follow patriarchal values. Some believe that the gender ideology is religious patriarchy, and it follows Islamic values such as the hijab.

With respect to media motivation, the aims of Iran's national TV series and commercials are to perpetuate the dominant ideologies, such as sexism, gaining benefit, and providing entertainment. Regarding the last concept, social justice, they discerned the harmful effects that media could have on marginalizing women through oppressive representations of gender. Via legitimizing and normalizing the current gender relation and structures in media texts, the media further subordinate Iranian women.

While the findings indicate that Iranian women's rights activists know about the five core concepts of critical media literacy, it cannot conclude that the activists practically incorporate the concepts into their critical analyzes of media messages. There is a gap in if and how the core concepts are deployed when they analyze media materials. Thus, future research could investigate how these core concepts are used when they analyze media materials.

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TRANSFORMATION - THE STATE ISLAMIC INSTITUTE BECOMES A STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY: INSIGHT FROM RELIGIOUS MODERATION AND SCIENCE HARMONIZATION

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Abstract

This study aims to describe simply the strengthening of the concept of religious moderation and harmonization of knowledge as an effort to prevent radicalism at IAIN Pekalongan. This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive analysis approach. The results showed that the strengthening of the concept of religious moderation at IAIN Pekalongan through: the establishment of a house of religious moderation and the internalization of moderate Islamic values in lectures were carried out with four approaches, namely: a contributive approach, an additive/additional approach, a transformative approach, and a social action approach. The four taglines owned by IAIN Pekalongan, namely spirituality, scientific, entrepreneurship, and nationality, were transformed to achieve the vision as a leading and competitive campus in the development of Indonesian-minded science and technology at the national level in 2036. The implementation of the four values or taglines can be seen through the behavior Moderate attitude of IAIN Pekalongan students in facing various problems of life. Modernization of Islamic studies at IAIN Pekalongan is carried out through *Islamization of Knowledge* in all majors. Modernization is adopting new sciences that are in accordance with the needs of the times, but still maintaining the old traditions that are still relevant. IAIN Pekalongan which will transform into State Islamic University (UIN) also has the concept of harmonization or harmonization of knowledge. The concept is the integration of science, namely

science, technology and religion. This integration between religion and science appears in the form of new courses such as Islamic mathematics.

Keywords: *Religious moderation; harmonization of science; and transformation.*

1. Introduction

Indonesia is a pluralistic and multicultural country (Syam, 2020). Diversity in Indonesia includes many things including: ethnicity, language, culture, and religion. With so many differences in Indonesia, higher education in Indonesia, especially Islamic universities, should be oriented to the moderate concept, so that it can become a unifying basis for all kinds of differences that exist in the Indonesian nation (Anggriyani & Dartanto, 2019). In addition, the concept of religious moderation can be used as a middle ground in dealing with differences between extreme and fundamental groups (Kasdi, 2019).

One of the State Islamic Religious Colleges (PTKIN) in Central Java is IAIN Pekalongan. As a *rahmatan lil'alamin* campus, IAIN Pekalongan has an obligation to fortify students from extreme and radical ideas. Millennial students who always follow the current developments are currently experiencing moral and religious degradation. The phenomenon that occurs is that they prefer to learn religion from the internet, YouTube, and social media where the scientific chain is not yet clear. They understand religion very superficially. But strangely they claim that what they learn is correct and blame other groups who do not agree. Understanding that is only textual causes them to forget that the teachings in the Qur'an and al-hadith are still global (Adinugraha & Ulama'i, 2020).

Educational institutions must have programs to strengthen deradicalization to prevent and counter radicalism that attacks students or millennials. Those with minimal religious knowledge are very easily influenced by a new environment (Musthofiyah et al., 2021). Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the concept of religious moderation in higher education (Riyadi & Adinugraha, 2021). In this context, the role of the campus is needed to foster students to be *tawassuth* or moderate in religion (Adinugraha et al., 2021). This means not too right and not too left, not too extreme or radical and not too fundamental.

In addition to the role of educational institutions (colleges), the role of the family and community is also needed. All three must synergize and be consistent in teaching and educating good and positive things to students. It's not the other way around that families and schools or educational institutions teach goodness, but they are distorted by the community. The destructive power is very high when it is damaged by the community (Basyir, 2020).

A real example in society, there is a child who from childhood until he graduated from high school had good habits like children in general, even when at school he was a smart and accomplished child (Tolchah et al., 2021). However, when he entered college, he found a friend who had a radical ideology, so in a short time the child could change drastically (K. M. Arif, 2021). In terms of clothing, speech, even ideology is easily distorted by the new environment, considers people other than their group to be infidels and becomes intolerant (Sihombing et al., 2020). Even worse is if the person commits acts of violence because of the differences that exist, causing victims such as bombing places of worship, and so on.

Seeing this, the paradigm of religious education in universities must develop the concept of religious moderation, namely the concept of *wasathiyah* or moderate Islam (Rusmiati & Ritonga, 2019). The concept develops 10 characteristics that have been approved by the Indonesian Islamic Ulema Council. Among its characteristics are: *Tawasuth* (taking the middle way), *Tasamuh* (tolerance), *Shura* (deliberation), *Musawah* (legalitarian and non-discriminatory), *Tawazun* (balanced), *Tahaddhur* (civilized), and so on (Muvid & Aliyah, 2020). Educational institutions must become the basis of a laboratory for religious moderation through a socio-religious approach in religion and the state (S. Arif et al., 2019).

In practice, at IAIN Pekalongan, the implementation of the concept of religious moderation has entered the course curriculum and is integrated. Such as interpretation courses, hadith, moral science, *ulumul qur'an*, *ulumul hadith*, Arabic, English, *Pancasila* and Citizenship Education (PPKN), Indonesian and so on. The concept of tolerance and respect for differences to create harmony, harmony, and respect for fellow believers and also for adherents of other religions is highly emphasized in order to realize the vision of Indonesia (Mubarok et al., 2021). However, the challenges of globalization and the large number of mass media that teach hatred and violence against groups who do not share the same opinion cause students whose faith is weak to be easily shaken (Fuad, 2020). Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the concepts and doctrines that are more mature in order to produce the next generation of a moderate nation.

Besides strengthening the concept of religious moderation, harmonization or alignment of modern secular education is needed (Siswanto, 2020). IAIN Pekalongan, apart from teaching Islamic sciences, also teaches science and general sciences such as English and mathematics. Therefore, the integration of science with religious knowledge is very necessary so that the millennial generation is able to develop science and stick to Islamic values.

Based on the issues and problems above, the internalization of religious moderation values in the education sector, especially universities is very important in managing world civilization (Kamal, 2017). Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the concept of religious moderation in higher education (Purwanto et al., 2019). The transformation of the campus tagline is also expected to be able to produce a millennial generation that is qualified, tough, loves the Republic of Indonesia, and is anti-radical. Harmonization between religious science and general science must be carried out in the context of integrating science and religion.

2. Strengthening the Concept of Religious Moderation at IAIN Pekalongan

Moderation comes from the word moderate which means balanced. In Arabic it is called *al-wasathiyah* which means in the middle (Ekawati et al., 2019). Ibn Asyur defines the word *wasath* as Islamic values that are built on the basis of a straight and middle mindset, not excessive in certain respects (Ibn Asyur, 1984: 17-18). The meaning of Moderation can be said to be not fanatical, not liberal, not radical and also not fundamental. Radical people are usually only fixated on the text alone and do not understand the context (Smeer & Rosyidah, 2021). Therefore, anything that is different from himself will be considered wrong, even to the point of being considered infidel. On the other hand, liberal people believe in religion based on reason or reason. To combat this, it is necessary to strengthen the concept of religious moderation in higher education with the aim of teaching students about moderate Islamic values and synergizing text with context and practicing moderation values (Misbah & Fahmi, 2021).

The concept of religious moderation at IAIN Pekalongan refers to the policy direction of the Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia Fachrul Razi and the Circular Letter of the Director General of Education and Culture Number B-3663.1/Dj.I/BA.02/10/2019 dated October 29, 2019 regarding the Circular of the House of Religious Moderation on the PTKIN campus. With the house of religious moderation on the IAIN Pekalongan campus, it will become a place for education, strengthening the concept of religious moderation, and mentoring lecturers and students who will later give birth to academics who love the Republic of Indonesia and have moderate insight.

The religious moderation house at the IAIN Pekalongan Campus as one of the pioneers in organizing the moderation house, will be an example and role model for the community around the campus. In addition, through this moderation house, it is hoped that it can provide reinforcement in the field of research on moderation and create a moderate environment. Cases that arise in the midst of society such as the emergence of intolerant attitudes and violence in the name of religion must be handled immediately. The academic community must have the courage to fight radicalism and are obliged to provide enlightenment and role models to the community.

The concept of religious moderation at IAIN Pekalongan has been included in the integration of courses. The concept of religious moderation is delivered directly in all religious courses and is integrated in general courses such as *Pancasila* and citizenship education, Indonesian, English, and so on. Religious moderation can simply be interpreted as a person's religious way of emphasizing the principles of simplicity, politeness, and brotherhood. *Ukhuwah Islamiyah* and *Ukhuwah Wathaniyah* are closely held in the concept of religious moderation.

Religious expressions are expressed in polite and brotherly ways as the implementation of *Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin*. In addition, the concept of religious moderation also reflects one of the values of *Pancasila* and the motto of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*.

The concept of religious moderation at IAIN Pekalongan is to include material about religious moderation in the lecture process. Moderate Islamic values are conveyed to students through lecture discussions as a form of tackling the increasingly spreading radicalism movement. Students who still have shallow religious knowledge are expected not to fall into the flow of radicalism (Rohman, 2017).

The principles of tolerance among religious believers have been regulated in the 1945 Constitution article 28E paragraph 1 which reads: "Everyone is free to embrace a religion and worship according to his religion, choose education and teaching, choose a job, choose a nationality, choose a place to live in the territory of the country and leave it, and has the right to return."

The concept of religious moderation will lead and direct students to fair and proportional character and behavior in every respect (Doi & Ritonga, 2021). In religious moderation there are three important pillars, namely: justice (proportionately according to what is needed), balance, and tolerance (Nugraha & Widyaningsih, 2021).

There are ten basic values that serve as indicators of religious moderation, namely: (1) peaceful education, which respects human rights and friendship between nations, races, or religious groups; (2) education that develops entrepreneurship and partnerships with industry; (3) education that pays attention to the prophetic content of Islam, namely humanization, liberation and transcendence for social change; (4) education that includes the teachings of religious tolerance and pluralism; (5) education that teaches Islamic understanding which is the mainstream of moderate Indonesian Islam; (6) education that balances intellectual insight (head), spiritual insight and morals (heart) and vocational skills (hand); (7) education that produces scholars who are intellectual and intellectual who are scholars; (8) education that is a solution to current educational problems such as the problem of dualism and learning methodologies; (9) education that emphasizes the quality of education comprehensively; and (10) education that is able to increase mastery of foreign languages (Ali, 2020).

The values of moderation taught to students in the integrated learning process in the courses are as follows:

a) *Tawassuth* (taking the middle way), namely understanding and practicing that is not *ifrath* (excessive in religion) and *tafrith* (reducing religious teachings);

b) *Tawazun* (balance) is a balanced understanding and practice of religion which includes all aspects of life, both worldly and hereafter, firm in stating the principle that can distinguish between *inhiraf* (deviation) and *ikhtilaf* (difference);

c) *I'tidal* (straight and firm), which is placing something in its place and exercising rights and fulfilling obligations proportionally

d) *Tasamuh* (tolerance), namely recognizing and respecting differences, both in religious aspects and various other aspects of life;

e) *Musawah* (egalitarian), namely not discriminating against others due to differences in one's beliefs, traditions and origins

f) *Shura* (deliberation), namely every issue is resolved by way of deliberation to reach consensus with the principle of placing benefit above all else;

g) *Ishlah* (reform), namely prioritizing reformative principles to achieve better conditions that accommodate changes and progress of the times based on the general benefit (*mashlahah al-ammah*) by sticking to the principle of "Preserving old traditions that are still relevant, and implementing new things that are more relevant";

h) *Aulawiyah* (putting priority on priority), namely the ability to identify things that are more important to be implemented than those of lower importance;

i) *Tathawwur wa Ibtikar* (dynamic and innovative), which is always open to making new changes for the benefit and progress of mankind;

j) *Tahaddhur* (civilized), namely upholding noble character, character, identity, and integrity as khairu ummah in human life and civilization (Martanti, 2020).

IAIN Pekalongan campus with moderate Islamic character can be a contributor to the formulation of religious moderation in the world of education. There are 4 approaches used, namely: Contributive Approach, that is, the basic structure, goals, and main characteristics in a curriculum should not change, but the principle is to insert content about religious moderation in the course; Additional approach, namely the addition of content, concepts, themes, and religious moderation perspectives into the curriculum without changing the basic structure, objectives, and characteristics of the curriculum. An additive approach can be done by adding learning resources such as books or references into the curriculum without changing them substantially; Transformative approach, that is, the fundamental purpose, structure, and perspective of the curriculum change. This transformational approach allows students to see concepts, issues, themes, and problems from various perspectives. The transformation of the curriculum based on religious moderation requires a change in paradigm, perspective, and the basic structure of the curriculum; Social action approach, that includes all elements of the transformation approach but adds components that require students to be able to make decisions and take actions related to the concepts and problems they face. The main objective of this approach is to educate students to carry out social criticism, change and decision-making skills. In the social action approach, students are required to act as agents of social criticism and agents of social change in society (Et al., 2021).

3. Transformation of Spirituality, Scientific, Entrepreneurship, and Nationality Ideas at IAIN Pekalongan

IAIN Pekalongan has a mission to organize education to produce graduates who have spiritual intelligence, breadth of knowledge, loyalty to Indonesia, independence, and pioneers in life. In order to create a campus that is *rahmatan lil 'alamin* and has an Indonesian perspective, IAIN Pekalongan has 4 organizational values or what is called a tagline, namely: spirituality, scientific, entrepreneurship, and nationality.

To realize this vision and mission, IAIN Pekalongan students must have broad and deep knowledge related to religious knowledge, knowledge related to the chosen major, and a deep understanding of national insight. Knowledge of theory alone is not enough. In addition to the depth of theoretical understanding, students are also required to be able to implement and apply the noble values of *Pancasila* as the ideology and basis of the state, both in the family environment, in the educational environment and in the community.

The vision of IAIN Pekalongan is to become a leading and competitive Islamic Religious College in the development of Indonesian-minded science and technology at the national level in 2036.

While the missions are Organizing education to produce graduates who have spiritual intelligence, breadth of knowledge, loyalty to Indonesia, independence and pioneering in life; Develop science, technology and art through research for the benefit of Indonesia and humanity; Pioneering and taking an active role in strengthening and empowering the community; and Organizing professional, transparent and accountable institutional governance in order to achieve the satisfaction of the academic community and stakeholders.

After the Vision and Mission are determined, then the tagline or values for the development of the IAIN Pekalongan campus are set, there are four values, namely: a) Spirituality, the implementation of spiritual values in order to form the IAIN Pekalongan academic community to have good religious attitudes. This is where the implementation of the values of religious moderation to students, lecturers and employees; 2) Scientific, the realization of the vision of IAIN Pekalongan: wanting to become a leading and competitive Islamic Religious College in the development of Indonesian-minded science and technology at the national level in 2036. This is where the depth of knowledge of IAIN Pekalongan students in the chosen field is important. In addition, students can integrate general science and religious knowledge; 3) Entrepreneurship, values that encourage and develop students' independence in the economic field. IAIN Pekalongan students besides being academics, they are also equipped with life skills to be able to survive in the community. IAIN Pekalongan alumni will always exist and be able to compete in the era of globalization; 4) Nationality, an understanding of the values of nationalism and national insight. Students are always taught to love the homeland of the Republic of Indonesia. The nationality tagline also supports the vision of the IAIN Pekalongan campus, which is Indonesian-minded.

Then the implementation of the four values or taglines can be seen through the moderate attitude of IAIN Pekalongan students in dealing with various life problems. Students must firmly hold on to the four pillars which were abbreviated to PBNU by K.H. Maimoen, namely: Pancasila, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), and the 1945 Constitution (Nurdin, 2019). The whole concept of spirituality, scientific, entrepreneurship, and nationality is very relevant to today's education concept to welcome civil society.

4. Modernization of Islamic Education at IAIN Pekalongan

Since the entry of Islam in Indonesia until entering the 20th century, there have been at least two models of education as a representation of Islamic education that developed in Indonesia, namely the pesantren and surau models. From the management aspect, pesantren and surau are led by a Kiai (Jauhari et al., 2020). The *pesantren* model grows and develops in Java, while the *surau* is in Sumatra. Both of these educational models are still very traditional, conservative, old-fashioned, and do not meet international educational standards (Gusnarib & Dulumina, 2020). The modernization of Islamic education is one of the approaches to solving the problems of Muslims today and in the future. This is very important to spark a modern Islamic civilization (Subandi et al., 2019). Therefore, the modernization of Islamic education is absolute and very urgent, especially in universities.

The concept of *tajdîd* (renewal/modernization) of Islamic education is very urgent. Because so far the concept and practice of Islamic education is felt to be too narrow, meaning that it places too much emphasis on the interests of the hereafter, while Islamic teachings emphasize the balance between the interests of the world and the hereafter. Furthermore, current Islamic educational institutions, including universities, have not been or are less able to meet the needs of Muslims in facing the challenges of the modern world and the challenges of the Indonesian people and nation in all fields (Subandi et al., 2019).

The modernization of Islamic education at IAIN Pekalongan is an attempt to change the notions and customs of the old institutions which are then adapted to a new, more advanced and modern atmosphere. IAIN Pekalongan in the context of modernizing Islamic education is carried out by sticking to the old teachings which are considered still relevant for use and not leaving new knowledge that is currently developing in accordance with the progress of the times.

In order to counteract radicalism, IAIN Pekalongan has initiated many new programs. Among them are moderation houses, flash boarding schools, *turats* book studies, and the insertion of anti-corruption educational materials in lectures. New activities in the context of modernizing education have the aim of changing to a more advanced direction without leaving the main learning source guidelines from the writings of great scholars whose scientific chains are clear (Mustofa et al., 2020).

The modernization of Islamic education is carried out to adapt to the world constellation in a certain period in which the nation lives. In modern times and in the era of globalization which is filled with technological advances, people's perceptions of Islamic universities are still underestimated than public universities. Islamic universities are also required to be adaptive to the currents of globalization and technological advances that are increasingly competitive and futuristic-oriented. Where the orientation lies in superior quality, egalitarian, fair, democratic, dynamic, and innovative (Saefudin & Al Fatihah, 2020).

IAIN Pekalongan in 2020 also made various efforts to redesign the curriculum in accordance with the current era, namely referring to the policy of the independent learning curriculum - independent campus. Curriculum development is always carried out adaptively (Lestari et al., 2021) . A curriculum reshuffle with new course designs that support the realization of the vision of IAIN Pekalongan is currently being designed. New programs designed in accordance with the guidelines as a manifestation of curriculum implementation, can later be converted into relevant courses.

The design of modernization of Islamic education at IAIN Pekalongan refers to: (1) education must lead to integrity between religious knowledge and general science so as not to create a gap because in essence all knowledge comes from Allah SWT, (2) education towards the achievement of attitudes and behavior " tolerance", being generous in various matters and fields, this includes the implementation of the values of moderation (3) education is able to grow the ability to be self-reliant and independent in life, (4) education fosters a work ethic, has aspirations to work, is disciplined and honest , (5) Islamic education must be designed to be able to answer the challenges of civil society (Adinugraha et al., 2018).

In addition, efforts to modernize Islamic education at IAIN Pekalongan are the implementation of the *Islamization of Knowledge* (IoK) which is seen in all majors at IAIN Pekalongan. This is also supported by Fazlur Rahman who offers three approaches to modernizing education, namely Islamizing modern secular education, simplifying traditional syllabus, and combining branches of old science with branches of modern science (Nugroho et al., 2020). However, the modernization of Islamic education cannot be felt in one or two days, but requires a long process.

Modernization of Islamic education at IAIN Pekalongan can also be found since the establishment of this institution. The modernization of Islamic education at IAIN Pekalongan is very clear in its tagline, namely spirituality, scientific, entrepreneurship, and nationality. Furthermore, the elaboration and implementation of the modernization of Islamic education at IAIN Pekalongan can also be seen from the Vision, Mission, and Organizational Goals of IAIN Pekalongan itself. The modernization of education at IAIN Pekalongan is intended to create an educational institution that has a truer cultural identity (*Indonesianness*) as a new Indonesian education concept in which the values of Islamic universality can also be found that are able to give birth to a future Indonesian civilization. Then, IAIN Pekalongan also characterizes the authenticity of indigenous Indonesia, because it is culturally born from the original Indonesian culture.

In addition, IAIN Pekalongan created a place for students called the "House of Moderation" as a way to prevent the entry of radicalism in the campus environment. Through this Moderation House, lecturers and students can discuss interactively and develop research on moderation. One of the programs carried out by the Moderation House is student development. Through the integration of material in the course as a topic of discussion, students are expected to be able to understand the concept of religious moderation. In addition, student activities are also intensively monitored by the campus. The existence of a guardian lecturer or academic supervisor also plays a role in monitoring student development, both academic and non-academic. Through the guardian lecturers and the Moderation house, they monitor all student activities and progress, so that if there are indications of radicalization, they can be detected early.

5. Harmonization of Science at IAIN Pekalongan

Harmonization means balance. The meaning of the word harmony in general is harmony, conformity, compatibility and balance. Etymologically, the word Harmony comes from the Greek, namely *harmonia* which means bound in harmony and conformity. Harmonization in terms of science is undeniable, a thing that is certain for the existence of a harmony of science, between religion and science, especially in Islamic universities.

In the 21st century with the current of globalization and the rapid development of science, the field of education that we experience will never escape capturing this latest century with some positive changes in terms of science. Not only education in the general field, but also education that has a specialization in Islam. In the 21st century, it seems that it is no longer relevant if there is still a dichotomy of science, especially religious science and general knowledge (Zagviazinsky, 2021). It is a necessity that Islamic education should be increasingly integrated with general education. The notion that seeks to integrate Islam with science is often referred to as harmonization of knowledge. There is an internalization of Islamic values in modern sciences and vice versa. Some parties also call Islamic education in the 21st century as the integration and interconnection of religious and scientific education systems. Muslims should not be blind and lame in understanding knowledge (Sholehuddin et al., 2021). That is, if the person masters religious knowledge without general knowledge, then he is like a blind person, while people who study general knowledge without studying religious knowledge are like a lame person.

The scientific dichotomy will be a ruin in Islamic civilization, because the notion of secularism (is an understanding related to ideology or belief that religious understanding should not be included in the affairs of politics, the state, or other public institutions) separates science and science. In Islam, religion and science are a unity. Muslims must see the reality of science by using the lens of Islam and the existence of the humanities in the Qur'an and al-Hadith (Adinugraha et al., 2020). Islam as a text (al-Qur'an and as-Sunnah) is faced with reality. In other words, textual becomes to the contextual level (Adinugraha, 2021). Then, a question arises, why should Muslims see reality through the eyes of Islam? According to cultural science and the sociology of knowledge, reality cannot be seen directly by people, but through the veil (words, concepts, symbols, culture, people's approval).

The main problem with this reality is that there is an emphasis on religious knowledge to the exclusion of science and technology. The emphasis on religion is certainly a positive thing. However, putting aside the development of science and technology, for whatever reason, is not a good thing. So, here, a conceptual formulation of the epistemology of an integrative and comprehensive Islamic education is needed as was developed in the golden era of Islam, namely Islamic education that encourages the progress of science and civilization as a unit.

Actually, the harmonization between religion and science are two related things. In Islam, various kinds of scientific findings found by scientists are precisely in accordance with the verses in the Islamic holy book (Maulana & Adinugraha, 2020). So, several scientists emerged, such as Harun Yahya and Zakir Naik, who presented these scientific findings as proof of the truth of the verses in the Holy Quran. Kuntowijoyo put forward a theory which he called the effort of 'Islamic scholarship'. This theory was originally recommended to replace the theory of "Islamization of science" and to encourage the intellectual movement of Muslims to no longer be a reactive movement, but a proactive one. Kuntowijoyo (1995) distinguishes three terms that can be confusing, namely 'Islamic science', 'Islamic paradigm', and 'Islam as a science'. Islamic knowledge is a process, the Islamic paradigm is the result, and Islam as a science is a process and a result.

Then in the context of developing knowledge, IAIN Pekalongan which will transform into UIN, especially the Faculty of Education and Teacher Training has opened two new study programs based on science and language, namely English language education and Mathematics education. In addition, FTIK is also proposing to open a new study program, namely Indonesia language education. Then the transfer of IAIN development status to UIN will add a faculty called faculty of science and technology). This is where the process of integration and harmonization of knowledge will be further developed. Higher education development must be aligned with the development of science and technology and in accordance with the needs of the community. Religious Colleges are present not only as a place to gain religious knowledge, but also general knowledge that also upholds religious values.

Harmonization of knowledge at IAIN Pekalongan is done by aligning old knowledge with new knowledge. This integration between religious science and science appears in the form of new courses. For example, courses in Educational Technology, Computer Science, to Islamic Mathematics. Efforts to prevent radicalism through harmonization of knowledge are carried out so that students as millennials who enter the digitalization era still hold fast to Islamic values. Sophisticated technology and speed of information must be fenced with faith and piety. Science and technology must go hand in hand with faith and piety. IAIN Pekalongan seeks to accommodate the needs of students for technology by always updating and upgrading the latest issues.

Strengthening the concept of religious moderation and harmonization of science at IAIN Pekalongan in the transformation towards UIN. The description is as follows: The Religious Moderation House; *Islamization of Knowledge* (IoK); Development of a new faculty which integrates science and technology with Islamic sciences (Faculty of Science), the concept of *Tajdid* (renewal/modernization) is modernization of learning implementation plan with the integration of religious moderation values; Curriculum modernization in accordance with the independent learning curriculum - independent campus; Internalization of the institute's tagline, namely spirituality, nationality, scientific, and entrepreneurship in strengthening campus vision and mission and strengthening the concept of religious moderation; Innovation of courses based on Indonesian insight and technology as well as harmonization of knowledge in moderate campuses.

The Religious Moderation House is a forum for students, lecturers, the community, and officials at IAIN Pekalongan as an open medium for various aspirations and thoughts in addressing contemporary issues that occur in society. The Moderation House is also used as a place for research development in the field of religious moderation. In addition, it is used as a means of guidance and assistance to students in order to prevent the entry of radicalism in the IAIN Pekalongan campus.

Islamization of Knowledge concept offers three approaches in the harmonization of science, namely Islamizing modern secular education, changing and simplifying the traditional syllabus into today's RPS, and combining the branches of old science with branches of modern science.

The faculty of science and technology is a development of the faculty of tarbiyah and teacher training. This faculty is more inclined to the integration of science and technology, and to implement Islamic values. The Faculty of Science and Technology IAIN Pekalongan has the goal of producing graduates who are compatible in the fields of science and technology who still uphold Indonesian and Islamic values in facing the future era.

This concept of *Tajdid* (renewal/modernization) is a modernization of Islamic education at IAIN Pekalongan by adopting new knowledge that is in accordance with the times and still maintaining the old knowledge that is still relevant. One example is the modernization of the RPP which integrates the values of religious moderation.

The Indonesian National Qualifications Framework curriculum which is currently used at IAIN Pekalongan after going through a study on curriculum redesign, an adjustment was made to the independent learning curriculum - independent campus in accordance with the times.

Implementation of spiritual values in order to shape the character of students who are religious, able to internalize moderate Islamic values, love the homeland, and have adequate soft skills. The implementation of the tagline is carried out by integrating curriculum and course content at IAIN Pekalongan.

Course innovation based on Indonesian insight and harmonization of knowledge at IAIN Pekalongan by redesigning the curriculum. New course innovations are adapted to the times and the needs of society. Like the batik course as one of the characteristics of Pekalongan City. Islamic mathematics courses as integration and harmonization between science and Islam. In addition, educational technology courses are presented so that students can be literate towards future technological updates.

6. Conclusion

The strengthening of religious moderation at IAIN Pekalongan is carried out by establishing a house of religious moderation. One of the programs from the house of moderation is assistance to lecturers and students who will later give birth to academics and the next generation of the nation who love the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia and have moderate insight. IAIN Pekalongan strives to prevent radicalism in various ways including internalizing the values of moderation in the curriculum and integration of the concept of religious moderation in the all subjects. Modernization of Islamic studies at IAIN Pekalongan is carried out through *Islamization of Knowledge* in all majors. Modernization of education is intended to create an educational institution that has a truer cultural identity as a new concept of Indonesian public education in which the values of Islamic universality can also be found that are able to give birth to a future civilization of Indonesian society. IAIN Pekalongan in order to strengthen the concept of religious moderation also harmonizes knowledge. This is one of the steps that can be taken to prevent extremism and radicalism. IAIN Pekalongan which will transform into State Islamic University or UIN has the concept of integration between science, technology and religious science. In essence, all knowledge is one, namely the knowledge of the Creator. The development of Islamic higher education must be aligned with the development of science and technology and in accordance with the needs of the community. Therefore, IAIN Pekalongan is present as a place to gain knowledge, both religious and general knowledge

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PERCEIVED IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON ELEMENTARY PUPILS' SCIENCE ACHIEVEMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on elementary pupils' science achievement. Five research questions and five hypotheses guided the study. The study made use of the survey research design. The research was done in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. The sample of the study constituted of 300 primary six pupils. The instrument titled "Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown Questionnaire (PICPLQ)" was used for data collection. The statistical mean and standard deviation was used for answering the research questions while the independent t-test at 0.05 level of significance was used for testing the hypotheses. The major findings from the study showed that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the primary school pupils in the area of the time spent in learning, learning motivation and parental support but had no impact on their pressure/stress signs and ways of interaction. Also, the differences in the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on male and female primary school pupils in the discussed areas were found not to be significant except for their pressure/stress signs. It was recommended among other things that government should provide training for both the teachers and the pupils of primary schools on the proper and effective use of online learning media/platforms in case of another lockdown/outbreak of any disease.

Keywords: Covid-19 pandemic, time spent in learning, learning motivation, parental support, pressure/stress signs, ways of interaction.

Introduction

The year 2019 was a very significant year in the history of the world as it saw the outbreak of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) corona virus in Wuhan, China which was later declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a global pandemic (Zhao et al., 2020) and this led to a total lockdown in major countries of the world, Nigeria inclusive. In an effort to contain the spread of the virus, Nigeria, with the announcement by the Minister for Health on the 27th of March 2020 shut down all her educational institutions in the country resulting in the abrupt cutting shut of the second term of the 2019/2020 academic session which lasted for several months before the eventual reopening of schools. This shut-down of her educational institutions just like most countries of the world, led to the temporal suspension of the face-to-face classroom instruction (Oyinloye, 2020). She then advocated for a change in classroom teaching and learning involving face-to-face classroom interaction to online teaching and learning which necessitated pupils to take their classes from environments other than the normal classrooms. Literature (Huber & Helm, 2020; Oyinloye, 2020; Sonnemann & Goss, 2020) further posited that this change to online classes forced pupils to adapt to new environmental, technological and psychological learning conditions which impacted the pupils in the following ways; time spent in learning, pressure/stress signs, ways of pupils' interaction, learning motivation and parental support amongst others.

Huber and Helm (2020) observed that during the pandemic, pupils spent lesser amount of time in learning while using online learning platforms because the pandemic took the control of active learning time from the teachers and handed it over to the learners as well as their parents. The learners now as well as their parents determined the amount of time spent in learning during online classes since they could join or exit the online classes at will. Sonnemann and Goss (2020) also asserted that students learnt very little during the pandemic's disruption of the normal face-to-face teacher-student interaction which occasioned online learning. They further asserted that the disadvantaged students who could not access online learning platforms suffered most from the loss of learning/study time. Oyinloye (2020) asserted that for Nigeria with a less developed e-learning platforms for schools, her students tend to suffer most from the loss of learning hours. With respect to pressure/stress signs, Sprang and Silman (2013) showed in their work that children who were isolated or quarantined during pandemic diseases are more likely to suffer from acute stress disorder, adjustment disorder, and grief; Steele and Kuban (2011) maintained that such adverse psychological factors may affect learners and the learning process. Oyinloye posited that the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated an unprepared and forceful lockdown, isolation and quarantining as part of measure to curb the much "dreaded disease". The exertion of this measure cuts across all ages and levels of education but primary school pupils could actually be the ones most hit by these measures considering their tenderness and their low tendency to adjust and adapt to new conditions in the environment.

As regarding ways of pupils' interaction, Huber and Helm (2020) posited that the pandemic limited teacher-student as well as student-student interactions in the classroom but allowed only a limited form of interaction with the online learning facilities. Considering the role classroom interactions play in students' learning according to Goodman et al. (2015), the primary school pupils are considered most vulnerable to any form of limitations in these interactions and they also tend to lose the social skills which these interactions provide for their future personal and professional growth. Sacerdote (2011) also observed that the school environment influences achievement through peer effects since being in a classroom provides students the opportunity to interact with their classmates and thus produce important positive externalities. Peer effects may operate through many different channels like students teaching each other and getting improvement together, classmates' high achievements may motivate the student (through competition or social influence) to work harder and the student can also develop an interest in their studies. But the isolation/social distancing as emphasized in some of the protocols for containing the COVID-19 disease may not have provided such opportunities for primary school pupils.

As touching the condition of learning motivation, Elikai and Schuhmann (2010) concluded from their work that grades can motivate pupils to learn since pupils may be more externally motivated to learn if they know that their learning will be assessed but considering Nigeria's less developed e-learning platforms (Oyinloye, 2020), proper and effective assessment of pupils' learning using these platforms may not be feasible and this could actually discourage pupils' learning as they realize their learning would not be assessed. With respect to the condition of parental support, Anger and Heineck (2010) correlated students' cognitive skills to parental support and this goes to show that parental support both cognitively and otherwise (Holmund et al. 2008; Vigdor et al. 2014) is essential for improved pupils' learning. But with the economic hardship brought upon the greater Nigerian population as observed by Oyinloye (2020), parents especially from the low class families spent lesser time with their children at home regardless of the lockdown, as they sought for other means of survival and sustenance of the family after their means of livelihood was halted by the lockdown and government's incentives to cushion the adverse effect of the pandemic was not forth-coming. They also were not able to provide some of the educational resources needed for their children's participation in online learning. The perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on primary school pupils may vary based on pupils' gender.

Okeke (2011) defined gender as the social or cultural construct, characteristics, behaviours and roles which society ascribes to males and females. It is also defined by Ezeh (2013) as the personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power, influence, roles and expectation that society ascribes to the two sexes (male and female) on a differential basis. The perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on primary school pupils' time spent in learning, pressure/stress symptoms, ways of pupils' interaction, learning motivation and parental support may vary and this could be as a result of the stereotyped responsibilities assigned to the male and female children in the home (Onyeizugbo, 2003).

Although several researchers from around the world have carried out studies on COVID-19 pandemic as it relates the educational sector, this study is an attempt to however, cover the literature gap on the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on primary school pupils in Awka South, Anambra State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on primary school pupils in Awka South. Specifically, the study seeks to find out:

1. the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' time spent in learning in Awka South
2. the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' pressure and stress signs in Awka South
3. the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' ways of interaction in Awka South
4. the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' learning motivation in Awka South
5. the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' parental support in Awka South

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' time spent in learning in Awka South?
2. What is the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' pressure and stress signs in Awka South?
3. What is the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' ways of interaction in Awka South?
4. What is the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' learning motivation in Awka South?
5. What is the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' parental support in Awka South?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' time spent in learning in Awka South.
2. There is no significant difference in the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' pressure/stress signs in Awka South.
3. There is no significant difference in the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' ways of interaction in Awka South.
4. There is no significant difference in the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' learning motivation in Awka South.
5. There is no significant difference in the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' parental support in Awka South.

Method

The study adopted the survey research design. This type of design (Anikweze, 2013) involves a detailed and critical examination of a topic or situation with a view of finding out what is and how it is.

The target population of the study comprised of all the 4,225 primary five and six pupils in Awka South LGA of Anambra State. The choice of primary five and six pupils was based on the fact that the pupils have been sufficiently exposed to primary education and they are expected to have attained certain level of intellectual ability to be able to answer raised questions bothering on the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on them. Simple random sampling technique was used in constituting a sample of 300 primary school pupils for the study.

A self constructed instrument by the researchers titled "Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic Questionnaire (PICPQ)" was used for collecting data. The PICPQ was developed with a four-point rating scale of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree. The statistical mean was used for answering the research questions while the independent t-test at 0.05 level of significance was used for testing the hypotheses.

Results and Discussion

Research question 1: What is the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' time spent in learning in Awka South?

Table 1: Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Male and Female Primary School Pupils' Time Spent In Learning in Awka South.

		Male				Female			
		N	Mean	Std	Remark	N	Mean	Std	Remark
1	I was not involved in any online classes	159	2.97	.97	A	141	2.90	.82	A
2	I spent much time playing	159	2.79	1.04	A	141	2.76	1.00	A
3	I spent much time in online classes	159	2.76	1.08	A	141	3.05	1.06	A
4	I could not concentrate during online classes	159	2.83	1.13	A	141	2.89	.99	A
5	I enjoyed online classes	159	2.03	1.01	D	141	1.84	1.02	D
6	I spent most of my time watching television	159	2.69	1.05	A	141	2.78	.97	A
7	I could not use teaching and learning facilities for online classes	159	2.65	1.07	A	141	2.60	1.15	A
8	I had no access to facilities for online classes	159	3.03	.90	A	141	2.71	.54	A
	Time spent in learning	159	2.74	.54	A	141	2.73	.54	A

Result on table 1 shows the mean and standard deviations of respondents on the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' time spent in learning in Awka south Local Government Area. The result shows that all the items except item 5 for both male and female pupils' had mean ratings above 2.50 set as criterion level. This shows that both male and female primary school pupils have the same perception on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on primary school pupils' time spent in learning. The respondents agreed in overall that the COVID-19 pandemic had some impact on the time they spent in learning thus corroborating the studies of Huber and Helm (2020) Oyinloye (2020) and Sonnemann & Goss (2020). This observed finding could be as a result of the transition from face-to-face teaching and learning to online teaching and learning which in Nigeria is still less developed and lacks proper, sufficient and efficient resources for its actualization.

Research question 2: What is the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Male and Female Primary School Pupils' Pressure and Stress Signs in Awka South?

Table 2: Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Male and Female Primary School Pupils' Pressure and Stress Signs in Awka South.

		Male				Female			
		N	Mean	Std	Remark	N	Mean	Std	Remark
1	My parents never allowed me to play	159	2.87	1.00	A	141	2.68	1.03	A
2	My parents engaged me with excess academic work	159	2.03	1.02	D	141	1.99	1.07	D
3	Being indoor most of the time made life unbearable	159	2.08	1.09	D	141	1.69	.95	D
4	I was overburdened with house chores	159	2.42	1.09	D	141	2.24	1.16	D
5	I felt bored and unhappy	159	2.43	1.06	D	141	2.17	1.23	D
6	My private home teacher gave me much assignments	159	2.69	1.05	A	141	2.64	1.10	A
7	Online classes was very stressful	159	2.60	1.09	A	141	2.48	1.16	A
8	Online classes presented excess workload to me	159	2.32	1.08	D	141	2.27	1.145	D
	Pressure and Stress Signs	159	2.43	.53	D	141	2.27	.59	D

Result on table 2 shows the mean and standard deviations of respondents on the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' pressure/stress signs in Awka south Local Government Area. The result shows that items 1, 6 and 7 for both male and female pupils' had mean ratings above 2.50 set as criterion point, while both also disagreed on the statements in items 2, 3, 4, 5 and 8 because their mean scores are less than 2.50. In overall, the pupils disagreed that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted their pressure and stress signs. The unprepared and forceful lockdown, isolation and quarantining caused by the COVID-19 pandemic as also observed by Oyinloye

(2020) did not actually cause any pressure/stress signs in pupils as was proposed by Sprang and Silman (2013) and Steele and Kuban (2011). This contradicting finding could be as a result of their exposure to other productive activities such as online classes, home lesson amongst others even under lockdown.

Research question 3: What is the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' ways of interaction in Awka South?

Table 3: Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the male and female Primary School Pupils' ways of Interaction in Awka South.

S/N		Male				Female			
		N	Mean	Std	Remark	N	Mean	Std	Remark
1	I could not see most of my friends	159	1.63	.76	D	141	1.48	.85	D
2	I spent most of my time indoor	159	1.74	.94	D	141	1.60	.93	D
3	My parents restricted my movement	159	1.91	1.00	D	141	1.85	1.08	D
4	I was always sad because I was not allowed to play with my friends	159	2.22	1.18	D	141	2.04	1.05	D
5	Staying indoors made me read more	159	2.99	1.04	A	141	3.22	.99	A
6	I had sufficient time interacting with my family	159	3.16	.92	A	141	3.31	.96	A
7	Reading/learning bored me	159	2.69	.98	A	141	2.74	.99	A
8	I enjoyed interacting with my books	159	2.85	.99	A	141	2.74	.98	A
	Ways of Interaction	159	2.39	.39	D	141	2.36	.40	D

Result on table 3 shows the mean and standard deviations of respondents on the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on primary school pupils' ways of interaction in Awka south Local Government Area. The result shows that both male and female primary school pupils' had the same perception of agree on items 5, 6, 7, and 8 as their mean ratings on the items are above 2.50 set as criterion point and disagreed on items 1, 2, 3 and 4 since their mean scores are below 2.50 criterion point. Overall, the respondents disagreed that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted on their ways of interaction. This finding is in contradiction to the findings of Huber and Helm (2020). The respondents maintained that their ways of interaction remained the same regardless of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Research question 4: What is the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' learning motivation in Awka South?

Table 4: Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Male and Female Primary School Pupils' Learning Motivation in Awka South.

S/N		Male				Female			
		N	Mean	Std	Remark	N	Mean	Std	Remark
1	My parents motivated me to learn	159	3.06	1.09	A	141	3.13	1.19	A
2	Online teaching made learning difficulty	159	2.50	1.09	A	141	2.47	1.03	D
3	I enjoyed online classes	159	2.89	1.12	A	141	2.94	1.09	A
4	Online teaching and learning is boring	159	2.83	.98	A	141	2.74	.969	A
5	I found online teaching and learning very exciting	159	2.85	1.11	A	141	2.76	1.12	A
6	I saw online classes as a waste of time, money and effort	159	2.81	.92	A	141	2.60	.916	A
7	Lack of proper planning made online classes uninteresting	159	2.31	1.11	D	141	2.53	1.00	D
8	I lacked motivation for online classes	159	2.67	1.08	A	141	2.72	.936	A
	Learning Motivation	159	2.74	.56	A	141	2.74	.576	A

Result on table 4 shows the mean and standard deviations of respondents on the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' learning motivation in Awka South. Result shows that the male and female primary school pupils shared the same opinion as touching every item except item 7 where the female primary school pupils disagreed with their male counterparts over online classes making learning difficult. In overall, the pupils agreed that the COVID-19 pandemic had some impact on their learning motivation. The inability for a proper and efficient assessment of pupils' learning due to Nigeria's less developed e-learning platforms as observed by Oyinloye

(2020) could have discouraged the pupils from learning as they realize that their learning may not be assessed.

Research question 5: What is the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' parental support in Awka South?

Table 5: Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Male and Female Primary School Pupils' Parental Support in Awka South.

S/N		Male				Female			
		N	Mean	Std	Remark	N	Mean	Std	Remark
1	My parents showed no care about my academics	159	3.11	.44	A	141	2.94	.60	A
2	My parents provided facilities to enable me join online classes	159	3.32	.98	A	141	3.43	.95	A
3	My parents were too busy for me	159	2.65	.92	A	141	2.57	.97	A
4	My parents could not afford to get me facilities for online classes	159	2.99	.75	A	141	3.05	.66	A
5	My parents guided me on how to use facilities for online classes	159	3.26	.91	A	141	3.37	.96	A
6	My parents motivated me to learn/read my books	159	3.55	.79	A	141	3.61	.69	A
7	My parents engaged on my behalf the services of a private home teacher	159	2.55	1.06	A	141	2.74	1.09	A
8	My parents regulated the time for my play.	159	3.17	.95	A	141	3.26	.79	A
	Parental Support	159	3.07	.37	A	141	3.12	.37	A

Result on table 5 shows the mean and standard deviations of respondents on the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' parental support. The result shows that both male and female pupils' agreed on all items because their mean rating scores are above 2.50 set as criterion level. Overall, the pupils agreed that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted on their parent's support towards their academics. This finding corroborated the findings of Oyinloye (2020) and Moroni et al. (2020) and this could be as the untold hardship the pandemic brought upon the teeming masses or low class families.

Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Male and Female Primary School Pupils' Time Spent in Learning in Awka South.

Table 6: t-test Comparison of the Mean Ratings of Male and Female Pupils' response on the Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Primary School Pupils' Time Spent in Learning.

Source variation	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Male	159	2.75	0.54	298	.286	.775	Not significant
Female	141	2.72	0.54				

The result in table 6 shows that there is no statistical significant difference between male and female primary school pupils on the perceived impact of COVID-19 pandemic on primary school pupils time spent in learning. This is because the p-value .775 is greater than the level of significance at 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis was not rejected. This finding goes to show that regardless of gender, primary school pupils were given the same time and opportunity to be involved in the online teaching and learning sessions.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' pressure/stress signs in Awka South

Table 7: t-test Comparison of the Mean Ratings of Male and Female Pupils' response on the Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Primary School Pupils' Pressure/Stress Signs in Learning.

Source variation	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	Sig
Male	159	2. 42	0.53	298	2.47	.014	Significant
Female	141	2.27	0.59				

The result in table 7 shows that there is a statistical significant difference in the male and female primary school pupils' perception on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their pressure/stress signs. This is because the p-value

.014 is less than the level of significance at 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. This finding corroborated the study of Onyeizugbo (2003) who posited that the stereotyped responsibilities assigned to male and female students at home, cause them to differ by certain factors.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Male and Female Primary School Pupils' Ways of Interaction in Awka South.

Table 8: t-test comparison of the Mean Ratings of Male and Female Pupils' response on the Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Primary School Pupils' Ways of Interaction in Learning.

Source variation	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	Sig
Male	159	2.39	.39	298	.701	.484	Not significant
Female	141	2.37	.40				

The result in table 8 shows that there is no statistical significant difference between male and female primary school pupils on the perceived impact of COVID-19 pandemic on primary school pupils' ways of interaction in learning. This is because the p-value .484 is greater than the level of significance at 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis was not rejected. This finding goes to show that regardless of gender, primary school pupils shared similar interaction patterns even during the lockdown.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the male and female primary school pupils' learning motivation in Awka South.

Table 9: t-test Comparison of the Mean Ratings of Male and Female Pupils' on the Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Primary School Pupils' Learning Motivation.

Source variation	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	Sig
Male	159	2.74	.56	298	.059	.953	Not significant
Female	141	2.74	.58				

The result in table 9 shows that there is no statistical significant difference between male and female primary school pupils on the perceived impact of COVID-19 pandemic on primary school pupils learning motivation. This is because the p-value .953 is greater than the level of significance at 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis was not rejected. The findings showed that both male and female primary pupils had the same or similar learning motivation while using the online learning platforms for the teaching and learning process.

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant difference in the Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Male and Female Primary School Pupils' Parental Support in Awka South.

Table 10: t-test Comparison of the Mean Ratings of Male and Female Pupils' on the Perceived Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Primary School Pupils' Parental Support.

Source variation	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	Sig
Male	159	3.07	.37	298	-1.095	.275	Not significant
Female	141	3.11	.37				

The result in table 10 shows that there is no statistical significant difference between male and female primary school pupils on the perceived impact of COVID-19 pandemic on primary school pupils' parental support. This is because the p-value .275 is greater than the level of significance at 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis was not rejected. This finding shows that the parents to these pupils gave them the same kind of support during the pandemic regardless of their gender.

Conclusion

The study thus concludes that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the primary school pupils in the area of the time spent in learning, learning motivation and parental support but had no impact on their pressure/stress signs and ways of interaction. The differences in the perceived impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on male and female primary school pupils in the discussed areas are not significant except for their pressure/stress signs.

Recommendations

1. Government should provide the necessary resources to be deployed for effective online teaching and learning.
2. Government should provide training for both the teachers and the pupils of primary schools on the proper and effective use of online learning media/platforms in case of another lockdown/outbreak of any disease.
3. Parents should provide maximum support in any way possible to help the pupils adjust effectively and recover lost grounds occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic
4. Proper and effective assessment should be incorporated in online learning platforms.

5. Gender equality should be considered in the assignment of responsibilities to pupils both at home and in school.

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THE RELATIONSHIP OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE CLIMATE IN THE CLASSROOM BETWEEN TEACHERS AND STUDENTS, A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF BEING

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ABSTRACT

Within the classroom there are many situations with which teachers and students have to live to generate experiences, whether positive or negative. The present study investigates the influence of teacher emotional intelligence and the climate that develops in the classroom. According to the results, the students respond that the teacher must develop a more latent emotional intelligence, especially in exact science teachers, which generates a negative climate in the classroom in general. This is where the importance of establishing strategies for the teacher to reach the different dimensions such as personalization, participation, cohesion, satisfaction, task orientation, innovation and individualization and thus the teacher achieves self-awareness, empathy, self-confidence, motivation, self-control and social awareness.

Keywords: students, emotional intelligence, teachers, classroom climate.

INTRODUCTION

The development of Emotional Intelligence in the teacher is of great importance for an optimal climate in the classroom.

A review of approximately fifteen investigations related to the subject was carried out for the documentary study on the socio-emotional teaching competences between the year 2000 to the present day around the world, especially in Spanish and Spanish-speaking countries, although the most relevant references start from the year 2009 towards the present.

Most of the investigations have a quantitative approach based on the elaboration of instruments that allow to measure these socio-emotional competences, usually, they are based on instruments on emotional intelligence; being the survey the chosen method, in addition, the most studied subjects have been university teachers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical discussion on teaching socio-emotional competencies is carried out, the most relevant studies, being of a quantitative and qualitative nature.

Emotional Intelligence: approaches to the concept.

Mayer and Salovey (1990) defined the concept of "emotional intelligence" for the first time, although later in 1997 they reformulated their original idea, giving more importance to cognitive components and the ability to reflect on emotions. Since then, numerous publications have been made on this topic in the educational, organizational and health fields (Ciarrochi, Forgas and Mayer, 2006; Matthews, Zeidner and Roberts, 2007; Mestre and Fernández-Berrocal, 2007; Schulze and Roberts, 2005; Zeidner, Matthews and Roberts, 2009).

From the EI-ability model (Mayer and Salovey, 1997) a hierarchical structure of cognitive capacities is proposed for the adaptive management of emotions: perceive, facilitate, understand and manage or regulate emotions; This being the concept that Mayer and Salovey (1997) propose about socio-emotional competence.

Mayer & Salovey define emotional intelligence as "the ability to accurately perceive, value and express emotions; the ability to access and generate feelings that facilitate thinking; the ability to understand emotion and emotional awareness; and the ability to regulate emotions and promote emotional and intellectual growth "(Mayer & Salovey, 1997: 10).

The development of Emotional Intelligence: Implications for teachers.

The basis for understanding teaching socio-emotional competencies, part of the knowledge, development and application of emotional intelligence.

It implies that teachers develop a greater capacity to identify, understand, regulate and think with emotions intelligently, they will have more resources to get students emotionally more prepared and to better cope with stressful events that frequently arise in the educational context. Our educational system is witnessing a very important process of transformation of study plans and a modification of compulsory schooling aimed at the integral development of the person focused on competencies (LOE, 2006).

Sometimes it is forgotten that these emotional, affective and social skills must be taught by a teaching team that masters these skills, since classrooms are for the student one of the most important socio-emotional learning models.

Emotional intelligence development.

Socialization, with its emotional aspects, finds a very adequate space in the school environment, as Extremera and Fernández Berrocal (2004) point out, not only because the student remains in the classroom for a large part of their childhood and adolescence, periods in which especially emotional development occurs, but because of the number of problems that arise in the educational field (school failure, violence, difficulties in coexistence, etc.), thereby demonstrating once again that the needs raised in educational institutions go beyond promoting the cognitive development of students, aiming to ensure that their students achieve comprehensive training, as one more consequence of the current conception of the role of affectivity and emotions in education, which shows that the cognitive configures the affective and the affective conditions the cognitive (Hernández, 2002).

Research by Fernández-Berrocal (2010) focused on analyzing the relationship between emotional intelligence and the teacher's personal adjustment point out that the teacher's emotional intelligence predicts the level of burnout they suffer (Brackett, Palomera & Mojsa, in press; Extremadura, Fernández – Berrocal & Durán, 2003). Furthermore, teachers experience more negative than positive emotions more frequently.

Class climate

The learning environments will allow constant interactions between student-teacher, student-student, student-experts, guests / community members, student-tools, student-content, student-environment.

The Aspen Institute (2021) considers the classroom observations can also be used to assess

the extent to which teachers are using instructional practices that foster positive social and emotional development, which is associated with classroom climate.

According to what constructivism is based on, it is about posing situations that promote the discovery and construction of knowledge by the student. In this case, the teacher has a place of mediation between knowledge and the student, mediation that is developed through a strategy that is oriented in this direction.

According to Azlin Norhaini, Mansor, Mohd & Zabil Ikhsan (2021) A school climate is defined as a pattern of shared perceptions of the characteristics and atmosphere, including its norms, values, and expectations of an organization with its members. In addition, a school climate is also defined as the quality and character of school life.

Method

The methodological approach will be developed through the correlational method, which is used when the purpose is to know the relationship between two or more concepts, categories or variables in a particular context. Associates variables through a predictable pattern for a group of settlers; offer predictions, explain the relationship between variables and quantify these relationships of the variables (Hernández Sampieri, 2014), this method stands out for the present research since it is desired to study the teacher's emotional intelligence as well as the teacher-student relationship and how this affects the development of the learning climate.

Hypothesis

- There are significant differences between the perception of the climate in the classroom of teachers and students.
- There are significant differences between the perception of the climate in the classroom according to the sex of the student.
- There are significant differences between the perception of the school climate of the students according to the grade they are in.
- There are significant differences in the emotional intelligence of men and women.
- There are significant differences in the emotional intelligence of teachers and students.
- There are significant differences in emotional intelligence according to the career they are studying.
- There is an association between the emotional intelligence of teachers and their students.
- There are significant correlations between the age of the students and their emotional intelligence.
- There is an association between emotional intelligence and sex.
- There is an association between the emotional intelligence of students and the career they are pursuing.

Sample

The type of sample is non-probabilistic, also called directed samples, they assume an informal selection procedure. From them, inferences are made about the population (Hernández Sampieri, 2014) in the Industrial Maintenance career in the subjects of Comprehensive Calculus, Electrical Machines, Industrial Service Networks, Digital Electronics, Programming Principles, Oral and Written Expression, Training Sociocultural I.

Instruments

For the measurement of the variables, the instruments will be validated; A suitable measurement instrument is one that records observable data that truly represents the concepts or variables that the researcher has in mind (Grinnell, Williams & Unrau, 2009). In quantitative terms: the "reality" that you want to capture is truly captured. The instruments used are:

- Classroom Climate Inventory By Calvin College.
- Emotional Intelligence Teachers (Adapted From Emily Sterrett's Test.)

111 students, 91 men (82%), 20 women (18%) responded the test of emotional intelligence and climate in the classroom of the industrial maintenance career, the minimum age of the respondents is 17 years old, the maximum age is 23 years old with an average age of 18.8 meanwhile in the self-evaluation test of teacher emotional intelligence, 8 teachers of the same career responded.

Cronbach's alpha for the classroom climate test is 0.841, which is considered to be a high value of internal consistency in the test.

Through t-student, significant differences were sought between the perception of the school climate by men and women and only in 1 of the 50 items (2%) were significant differences found. This is the item (men have a better perception of this aspect from the climate in the classroom): 33. Class assignments are clear so that everyone knows what to do.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the test results, the students perceive that teachers consistently show Emotional Intelligence (EI), since their scores are above one standard deviation with respect to the mean.

Students perceive that teachers consistently do not show EI, since their scores are below one standard deviation with respect to the mean.

That is, students perceive that their teachers are not capable of expressing their points of view with honesty and thoughtfulness, without overwhelming (seen in the opposite sense, one could say they try to impose their points of view)

- Students perceive that their teachers frequently bring their negative emotions to the classroom and are unable to control their moods.
- The student perceives that their teachers do not pay their full attention to when they are listening.
- Students perceive that their teachers do not consider that teaching work makes sense and adds value to society.

Atudents perceive that their teachers cannot persuade others to adopt their views without coercion.

According to the test of Classroom Climate: the students perceive an organized class and do not consider their classes to be a waste of time but for example in this ítems they perceive there's a negative classroom climate:

- Students constantly observe the clock during class
- The seats or tables in this class are arranged in the same way in each session.
- Students seem to do the same kinds of activities in all classes.
- It takes a long time to get to know everyone by first name in this class.

- Students can choose the activities and how they will work.
- The teacher often thinks of unusual class activities.
- New and different ways of teaching are seldom used in this class.
- Students don't have many opportunities to meet in this class.
- The class is made up of people who don't know each other well.
- The teams in the class are organized with the same students in each sesión.

CONCLUSION

Something that draws attention is how students point out that teachers express negative emotions in class giving way to a tense or stressful classroom climate, in addition to generating situations where students are not classmates, they are individuals who separately they perform tasks, that is, there is no companionship. Even so, the teacher teaches an organized class but the majority of the lack of emotional intelligence is pointed out.

It is in the exact science classes where there are more deficiencies in emotional intelligence than in the sciences based on human values and interpersonal relationships.

It is here where the need to undertake improvement strategies in the teacher is shown because with a negative climate in the classroom, learning is not the same.

It is expected to reach a conflict resolution and support the teacher in his self-knowledge so that he can develop an enriching class, with a climate in the classroom where not only the student learns but also the teacher.

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TOGGLING THE MESSAGE TO ONTOLOGY

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Abstract

This study falls on the border between the ontological axis and the epistemological axis of the consolidated science of communication. It is an x-ray of how the message is perceived at the beginning of the third millennium. The method of investigation is meta-analytical of comparative type. In essence, the alternative is to face the interpretation of the message either in a metaphysical key or in a dialectical key. It is concluded that after the year 2000 from the area of epistemology the interpretation of the message passes to the area of ontology.

Keywords: message, communication, metaphysics, dialectics, epistemology, ontology

1. Introduction

In a previous research (Vlăduțescu, 2013) dedicated to making a map of the field of communication, we analyzed "Traditions Matrix-Standard" of Robert T. Craig. We have shown that an alternative to the model proposed by the renowned American specialist may be our model entitled "Axes Matrix-Standard": "the standard of axializing the communication universe. In communication we identify 15 axes: communication ontology-A1, communication epistemology-A2, communication methodology-A3, communication axiology-A4. There are 8 soft axes, namely: communication history-A5, communication psychology-A6, communication sociology-A7, communication anthropology-A8, communication hermeneutics-A9, communication praxeology-A10, communication ethics-A11, communication logics-A12, communication ecology -A13, communication philosophy-A14, communication law-A15. " Noting our reconfirmation of his theory, Robert T. Craig accepted the possibility of an axial standard of the field of communication (Craig, 2015).

The message is in the center of communication, but the science of communication has lately turned its attention to its own message. Therefore, in its conceptualizing evolution it has not come to this day to conceptualize the problem of the message. It is only at the intersection of the nihilistic deconstruction, produced by Nietzsche, with the nihilistic establishment of the situation of theoretical hermeneutics and factual hermeneutics, made by

Heidegger, that it becomes possible and efficient to highlight the message. Gianni Vattimo shows that the continuity between them (Nietzsche and Heidegger) is nihilism, understood as a true ontology of being, as a new thinking of being, capable of situating itself beyond metaphysics (Vattimo, 2020).

Martin Heidegger conceived of metaphysics as a thought that identifies being with being. Generic Nietzschean-Heideggerian nihilism goes beyond metaphysics. The new thinking, the new ontology considers that the being is not confused with the being. Heidegger, in asking the question, forms (in "Being and Time") what he calls an "ontology of Presence", a new ontology: "Ontologie des Vorhandenen" (Heidegger, 2013). The event is the pure presence, but before the event is found the language of the one for whom the event emerges as an act from the potential of the presence. The exact event of the being - the message - is at the heart of the new ontology. But the message cannot exist without the language in which it is put into discourse. The ontology of presence solves both the occurrence of being being time and the existence of time as a language that is "a home of being." Gadamer is the one who sees as the essence of "Sein und Zeit" that "being is time".

2. The new ontology

The new message ontology must be thought of dual: as presence and as language. A work that goes in the direction of presence from Heidegger's ontology, but which does not start from the presence in language, but from metaphysics, is a "metaphysics of presence". By overcoming the spatio-temporality imposed by the Ego by leaving the field of knowledge, one can reach the presence, that field of contemplative living. Presence as contemplative living is purification, and as purification is beautiful thought (Stănescu & Suciu, 2018; Hristea & Colhon, 2020). When the beautiful thought is purified until it reaches what is simple, it passes to intuition.

The method of reaching the presence is intuition. In the intuition of what is simple we meet the Presence, the road to the Presence being an endeavor of eliminating everything that is related, of knowledge in general. In the joy of living the Presence nothing is known. The first step towards purification in order to reach the Presence is There are those few moments when the man overcomes the concern. Presence and care (concern) are Heideggerian anthological concepts. The metaphysics of presence is a contribution to the ontology of presence. Metaphysics is understood not as knowledge", but pure living, aiming at overcoming existence, capturing a world that is beyond space and time, an immutable, eternal, absolute world.

Although in the metaphysics of presence knowledge is removed and with it any relationship (Vlad, 2017; Li, 2021), any connection with the phenomenon, before taking the step towards the message as the founder of the meaning of being, the contemplative experience is diverted to "immutable, eternal absolute". By abandoning by presence the core of metaphysics, however, the step towards the message is not made, because the problem of language does not arise, which annuls in the presence the eternal, the immutable and the absolute. The ontology of presence cannot be reached, because the approach cannot be detached from the metaphysical or, when it is detached, it returns quickly and unmistakably. Likewise, unilaterally, the issue of the ontology of presence from another direction. This, starting from Eminescu's thesis that "language is our master", brings language to the presence. The Life of the Being appears as sealed by an invisible historical language. In order to decipher the ontology of presence, it is necessary to work on a grammar of presence. A whole grammar of the Presence, for our language, does not exist and undertakes to build it. In this endeavor we are asked to start from personal encounters with existence. Even if the enterprise does not build a "grammar of Being," it manages to convey that sense of chance on which any message is based. The attempt at the grammar of presence contains the possibility of the message and is thus part of the continuation of the new ontology.

The new ontology deals with being as chance, as a way of reality to be configured in a very specific way to the "situation of the age". Like any situation, the "situation of the age" (as Vattimo calls it) comes from the epochs that preceded it. In our opinion, the situation of understanding is always a situation of understanding the past, no matter how close and related it may be to the present. We understand history, we understand a book, we understand the previous line in the current dialogue, in a word we understand the precedent. What Vattimo calls the situation of the age is what M. Heidegger and H.-G. Gadamer designated by the hermeneutic situation: that positioning that is not allowed to be taken into account in advance and is not given, but which is the only one that allows the explanation of the discourse and the understanding of the message.

After all, the precedent must always be understood. Only the precedent is and can be understood. Only he is prepared for the pre-winding. Comprehension can only occur in the conditions, limits and requirements of a hermeneutic situation. The needs of comprehension that make up the precedent find their convergence in the hermeneutic situation. The new ontology thinks the being. To think of being, as think states G. Vattimo (2000), means to listen to the messages (sn) that come from those previous epochs and those that come from others, even contemporaries - from the cultures of some groups, from the languages of those "other" cultures that the West encounters in its act of domination and unification of the planet from the sub-cultures within the West itself that are beginning to speak. he gives himself to us, in our concrete experience today.

As long as philosophizing is a conceptual organization of experience and cogitative material, so long as it needs a concept of message, for one cannot understand messages that belong to being and that constitute its meaning without a concept of message. These messages represent the theme of a post-metaphysical ontology (Rimkus, 2020; Sayyari, Keimasi & Motaghi, 2021), it mean a dialectical ontology. However, neither Vattimo nor the philosophy around him, hermeneutics, deconstructivism, pragmatism configured a concept of message. The message as a theme must start from the fact that Vattimo highlights, that in these messages no essence, no deep structure or necessary law is revealed: in them some historical values are announced , some configurations of experience, some symbolic forms, which are traces of life, concretions of being, which must be listened to with piety, with that attention full of devotion that the traces of the lives of our fellow men deserve (Călin & Bîrsănescu, 2017; Gioroceanu, 2018; Vlad, 2021).

The message must be listened to with piety. The path to the message is not governed by any categorical imperative. It is free of pressure. The interpretation that leads to the message is made possible by the freedom of the interpreting being to understand the being. The message is on a rational path. The path to the message is a path beyond metaphysics. The path to the message is the one that discovers the being from the expressions of the being (books, documents, dialogues, etc.).

3. Conclusion

The essential mutation that took place at the end of the second millennium and the beginning of the third millennium is the fact that the message is no longer interpreted primarily in the key of knowledge, but in the key of existence. We consider the basis of judgment to be the fact that life on earth was abruptly endangered by nuclear weapons. At the end of 2000, there were enough weapons on Earth to destroy life on the planet in a war. People then understood that their existence was in danger. From that moment, the flows of messages passed from the interpretation in the sense of knowledge (of epistemology) to the primary interpretation in the key of existence, of survival (of ontology). From the metaphysics of knowledge to the dialectic of existence.

Thus, today talking about the message means being outside metaphysics. The end of metaphysics, proclaimed by Heidegger, is the beginning of attention to the true message of being. The discourse of metaphysics was directed towards essences, towards the immutable. The new ontology goes beyond the ambiguity of the discourse that is clearly intended, but remains metaphysical. "Essential" structures are pushed into the background by a message that expresses a being in front of the being and in the course of history. The new ontological content called message expresses being as chance. He legitimizes himself in living the ephemeral as essence, in the deeds of the being, in reading the signs of the times. The ontology in which the message works is an ontology of actuality. The message exists only in a hermeneutic situation. The delicacy, ease and generosity of the new philosophy "founds" the listening to the messages. The science of communication is no longer grounded, it is grounded in raising the message. The new philosophy arises while the message is constituted as obedience and attention to the being.

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BEAUTY COMMUNICATION; THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMUNICATION INTO THE BEAUTY FIELD

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Abstract

The presented study is considered as a research, developed in order to be like a "radiography" of the *Beauty Communication concept*. Its method based on, is meta - analytical and the targeted purpose is to build the foundation of a beauty communication, qualified and specialised, also to highlight few of the components of the Beauty Communication concept. The main conclusion reached is that, into the current reality, there is a distinct communication language, with the main purpose to reach beauty objectives such as cosmetology, aesthetic consultancy, makeup, eyebrow design, body remodelling, hairstyling, manicure, pedicure, spa relaxation techniques & well being. This specialised communication, developed in order to reach & accomplish the beauty objectives, we are considering to be called as *"Beauty communication"*.

Keywords: *beauty, beautician, beauty field, beauty domain, spa, well being, beauty language, beauty communication.*

1. Introduction

The preoccupation for *beauty* and *beauty through health* was, even from the Antiquity, one of the preoccupation which increased together with the development of different civilisations and societies, in general. Without saying chronologically exact time when the first "Beauty Manual" has appeared, we definitely noticed an extraordinary proliferation of beauty manuals, skincare and beauty advices books, during 21st century. Among them we may mention few, such us: Scott, 1973; Sassoon, Sassoon & Duhé, 1975; Romm, 1989; Morris, 1999; Raichur & Cohn, 1999; Neal-Barnett et al, 2000; Masterson, 2014; Park, 2021. In Neal-Barnett et al. (2000) it was mentioned a book published in 1900, with beauty as main objective: *Walker, MCJ (1900). The Madame CJ Walker beauty manual: A thorough treatise covering all branches of beauty culture.* Indianapolis. On the other part, A. Ramsbrock (2015) speaks about *"a science of beauty"*. We must take into consideration that, since thousand years, the preoccupation for beauty and the beauty themes were one of the favourite, into the general frame of discussions between women.

With other words, we may say that Beauty has evolved along with the society. In the current times, Beauty is integrated into the economic circuits, even if we are talking about products which maintain health (and implicit, beauty), or we are talking about services which help to beauty preservation, beauty restoration, or services which "create" beauty. The last category is under the influence of the "so called" Beauty Standards - a common set of "fashion rules" or proportions, under the direct influence of fashion, regarding aesthetic surgery.

In the last century, simultaneously with the technological & industrial development, it was noticed a "boom" of all beauty's aspects, having as a natural consequence, the creation and, unprecedentedly, the rapid expansion of the Beauty Industry.

The Beauty industry has several main directions, if we take into consideration the final "consumer" or client. Among them, we may mention:

- professional lines dedicated to the beauty salons / spas/ clinics use, for the specialists from the beauty field - factories or laboratories which are manufacturing beauty products (cosmetic products, Nutri - cosmetics, cosmetics accessories or other products related to this topic) for the specialists from the beauty field. Usually, this professional lines are characterized with a greater concentration of active ingredients, comparing with the cosmetic lines produced for the regular customer;

- products destined to the regular customer - here we may find:

- exclusives lines (bio, organic, vegan, created by stars, singers, actors, even by so-called influencers);

- luxury lines;

- retail lines (specialised location, perfumeries, drugstores, beauty points, beauty sites;

- professional lines created from the same brands which are producing the professional Beauty salon lines with the purpose that customer to maintain a longer time the effect of the ingredients received during beauty treatments / procedures;

- dermato - pharmaceutical lines available in pharmacies and medical clinics, for the customer with special care needs;

- m ss market lines, characterised by low prices, usually available at supermarkets.

If we take into consideration that ALL those directions are targeting the final customer: people with different ages, sexes, races, education, religions, professions, values, believes, financial and social levels, more or less interested about technology, from different geographic areas, we definitely understand **the importance of proper communication,** in order the products to reach their finals customers.

2. Beauty and communication

„The communication plays an important role into the process of product reaching its customer. Can be a communication realised with the help of media channels (tv, radio, internet, social media, magazines, newspapers, specialists or research publications), or a customised direct communication such as:

- conferences, symposiums;
- presentations or launchings of the new beauty products (with audience or "one to one" presentations);
- sampling;
- beauty consultancy sessions etc.

Being a specific, relatively new language, the **Beauty Communication** has developed into a close interdependence with the people's preoccupation for the art of beauty, and reach an extraordinary impact, simultaneously with the rapid growth of the beauty industry. If the invariable subject of beauty is omnipresent into almost all discussions between two or more women, using a regular language, definitely *for the professional beauty specialist, the proper communication with the client is a must,* if we are talking about aestheticians / beauticians, makeup artist, lash artist, eyebrow designers, hair stylist, nail stylists, beauty products merchandisers, pharmacists, beauty products sale agents, beauty advisers, aesthetic councillors, image consultants or any other subjects involved into the beauty field. If we are taking as example, the communication in the beauty salons or clinics, we have to highlight the reasons why the proper communication is vital and may bring their contribution to the increase of revenues:

- the beauty specialist should know how to communicate efficiently. Even from the first point of discussion, that may be the appointments made via mobile phone (oral or written). Some examples related with this topic may be: phone calls, text messages WhatsApp, Facebook, Messenger, Instagram, Viber, Telegram, in order to provide to the customer pertinent information, concerning the beauty product or service;
- to offer viable alternatives for other services or products, in case when offer is neither valid nor available anymore;
- to know how to suggest and offer other time intervals for appointments, than those from the initial request;
- the beauty specialists should have excellent communication skills verbal or non-verbal, for welcoming the clients, to introduce them into the beauty saloon's , spa's or clinic's atmosphere;
- to know how the offer the exact information needed, regarding the preliminary procedures;

- to use all their communication abilities in order to do an efficient diagnose, to inform about possible contra - indications, the procedure's steps, post - procedure indications, recommended home-use products, needed to maintain longer the effect of the procedure or beauty service performed;

- to maintain an excellent communication with the clients / customers and after treatment / procedure, with the purpose to obtain a feedback regarding the beauty product's effect, quality of the performed beauty procedure / beauty service or any other beauty news relevant for the customer.

From my own 20 years professional experience into the aesthetic field with Romanian and international customers, also 13 years as Beauty trainer, I've noticed the acute need for the improvement of communication abilities into the beauty salons, spas, clinics, not only at front desk / receptionist level (or the person who is doing the customer's appointments), but also at the level of the specialist who is performing the beauty procedure. This specialist has a direct connection with the final customer from the chain *beauty product / beauty service - client*, so the excellent communication skills are highly needed.

As a valid example: In 2009 I have founded the first Spa from South Romania - Aquarium Spa Center, in Slatina - a small city with almost 50.000 inhabitants, with a medium to low salary level. Being inaugurated during the 2008 - 2009 economic crises, in a private and quiet zone of the city, but with no traffic or commercial advantage, the prognoses weren't optimistic.

Instead to follow the common and usual marketing pathways, together with the Spa's team, using efficient communication, we have created, an unique spa's identity: being defined as a fusion between a *"Day Spa"* and a *"Medical Spa"*, an unique concept for those days.

First of all, everything was built and created with the help of an excellent communication:

- v**isual communication of the spa's concept**

- the team, their leader and the visual identity, reflected non - verbally into the visual aspects of them in front of the customers (physical aspects, uniforms)

- The decorations elements and the personalization of the services, according to the aquatic / marine spa's theme concept

eam m- tembers communication, in order to mediate the conflicts, to build a solid team, with their members connected to the same values;

- **communication trainings for the team members**, with the goal of an excellent communication *specialist - customer*

P**ersonal development trainings & team buildings,** with the purpose of increasing empathy and communication skills, highly necessary to intuit and preview the customers needs, to identify their communication languages and to be able to adapt to their needs.

During 13 years, with thousands of customers experiencing the spa's beauty & health services, we may definitely say some conclusions regarding the importance of the communication, especially into the beauty business. Finally, *the result of successfully achieving a beauty objective, is highly interrelated with the excellent communication "specialist - customer" and vice versa.* If the client feels that his beauty needs were successfully anticipated or fulfilled and he found in the specialist a reliable "partner", even the imperfections can be forgiven or unnoticeable. But, if a beauty specialist is not successful in establishing a good communication and eventually a good connection with the client / customer, he(she) may present him in vain the most efficient or advanced beauty products or services: the client will neither buy nor try them! This can happen for a simple reason: his(her) emotions will lead him in the majority of the exemplified situations, especially that an educated customer, as nowadays is, will expect, demand, and is total entitled to receive beauty services, via an excellent communication.

The communication skills are expected and required in equal measure, also into the communication between *Sales Agent / Beauty Representative and the Beauty specialist*. In this case, actually, the beauty specialist is *"the customer"* itself. Usually, an educated, specialised "client", with high expectation from the sales agent.

As a trainer for several Beauty cosmetics lines, I've noticed immediately the importance of Beauty sales agents speeches or discourses.

If he is a good communicator (verbal and non verbal), he may be able to convince the power decision person to:

- introduce a new cosmetic / beauty line in the beauty salon / spa / clinic;
- dhange the existing line with the one that he is representing;
- increase the trust accorded to the specific beauty brand, that they are representing.
- gaining the loyalty of the beauty specialists, making them love the beauty products, they will transmit their enthusiasm or trust, regarding the beauty product, to the final customer.

As a future prediction, the communication in the beauty field, will have a key role in the success of beauty business, in the actual ambiguous economical, political and social context.

3. Conclusions and future research

After unprecedented time of lock down, restrictions, limitations of individual liberties, with the level of stress and panic increased, the beauty consumers orientated to health, relaxation, elimination of the stress, self esteem increasement, with the help of procedures which help to obtain the beauty's maintenance, a better or ideal body shape, the people will highly appreciate an excellent *human - to - human* communication, also a better anticipation and understanding of their needs. Having this in mind, as a future objective, for bringing my professional and academical contribution to the development of this new concept **Beauty Communication**, I will investigate the most important aspects of the communications at the specialist - beauty consumer level, in order to help for the improvement and discovering new paths, which lead to success, harmony, professional and personal satisfaction.

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METAVERSE AND VIRTUAL JOURNALISM

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Abstract

The concept of immersive virtual worlds, sometimes termed the "metaverse," represents an emerging frontier for digital journalism. This paper provides a synthesized literature review focusing on scholarship regarding immersive and virtual journalism. Drawing on foundational texts and peer-reviewed research, it defines key concepts and critically examines the potential evolution of journalism within immersive environments. By analyzing existing scholarship from a global perspective, this paper identifies significant patterns, contradictions, and gaps in understanding. Key theoretical lenses, including media convergence, digital journalism ethics, and immersive presence theory, frame the analysis. The synthesis reveals a consistent vision of immersive journalism as an extension of digital practice, offering first-person news experiences. Dominant patterns identified in the literature include the reliance on technological advancements, a shift towards heightened audience interaction, the emergence of novel ethical dilemmas, the experimental nature of business models, and evolving journalistic practices. Contradictions emerge between the potential for immersive engagement and concerns regarding accuracy and ethical risks. Significant gaps noted in the literature include empirical research on audience effects, sustainable monetization, and standardized ethical protocols. While immersive technologies offer opportunities for engaging storytelling, substantial challenges—ranging from infrastructure disparities to normative uncertainties—were apparent. The paper concludes that immersive journalism holds potential to influence the future of news, but realizing this requires addressing identified gaps through targeted research, collaborative innovation, and inclusive strategies.

Keywords: *Metaverse, Virtual Reality, Immersive Journalism, Digital Journalism, Media Ethics, Presence Theory*

Introduction

The idea of the "metaverse," originating in science fiction (Stephenson, 1992), gained traction in discussions about the future trajectory of digital media and communication. Broadly conceived as a network of persistent, immersive virtual worlds where physical and digital realities converge, such environments present novel platforms for human interaction and potentially, journalism. Within this context, "virtual journalism" or "immersive journalism" signifies the practice of producing and disseminating news content within shared 3D environments, representing a potential paradigm shift towards interactive, embodied news experiences beyond flat screens.

The exploration of immersive journalism aligns with the historical pattern of journalism adapting to new technological platforms. The potential of immersive technologies to offer audiences a profound sense of presence—virtually transporting them to the scene of events—had captured scholarly attention (Robitzski, 2017). This promise built upon earlier experiments in immersive journalism using 360° video and virtual reality (VR), which aimed to deepen audience understanding and engagement through first-person experiences (De la Peña et al., 2010; Robitzski, 2017).

This paper undertakes a critical synthesis of the academic literature examining the intersection of journalism and immersive virtual environments. Its primary contribution lies not merely in summarizing existing work, but in identifying and analyzing the patterns, contradictions, and crucial gaps within the body of scholarship. We seek to answer: How was immersive journalism conceptualized and theoretically framed in the literature? What consistent themes and contradictory findings emerged from research? What were the key challenges and opportunities identified across diverse global contexts based on the available sources? And, importantly, where did future research need to focus according to the understanding prevalent in the reviewed literature?

The significance of this inquiry remains substantial. As immersive technologies continue to develop, understanding their potential impact on news production, dissemination, and consumption is vital. By adopting a global perspective based on available literature, this review acknowledges the uneven development and adoption of virtual journalism, influenced by varying levels of infrastructure and audience readiness. Synthesizing insights across diverse contexts provides a more holistic understanding than studies limited to specific regions.

The following sections will delve into the literature, employ relevant theoretical frameworks (media convergence, immersive journalism/presence theory, digital ethics) to structure the synthesis, outline the review methodology, and present a thematic analysis focusing on technology, audience interaction, ethics, business models, and journalistic practices. The paper culminates in a discussion of identified challenges and future directions grounded in the research gaps apparent from the literature, and a conclusion summarizing the synthesized state of knowledge.

Literature Review

The scholarly landscape surrounding immersive and virtual journalism was characterized by pioneering conceptual work, documentation of early experiments, and a growing body of research examining practices and challenges. Synthesizing this literature reveals distinct phases and recurring themes.

The roots lie in the concept of "immersive journalism," introduced by De la Peña et al. (2010), emphasizing VR for first-person news experiences. This foundational work posited that VR's enhanced sense of presence could foster deeper emotional engagement and understanding (De la Peña et al., 2010). While the potential for empathy was a key motivator (Milk, 2015), a pattern of caution emerged in scholarship, suggesting empathy is not automatic and depends on narrative and individual factors (Aitamurto, 2019), representing a nuanced evolution from initial optimism.

The mid-to-late 2010s saw experimentation by major news organizations (e.g., The New York Times, BBC, Associated Press) with 360° video and VR documentaries (Robitzski, 2017). Academic studies documented these efforts, consistently highlighting a pattern of perceived advantages (engagement, novel storytelling) juxtaposed with significant challenges (high costs, technical hurdles, uncertain audience uptake) (Stubbs, 2018). Parallel, less sustained experiments occurred within virtual worlds like Second Life, representing historical precedents for journalistic interest in inhabiting virtual spaces.

Contemporary academic focus increasingly explored how core journalistic values and practices translate, or require adaptation, within immersive spaces (Aitamurto, 2019; Stubbs, 2018). The theoretical exploration of adapting journalistic norms to these environments was a noticeable pattern. Synthesizing reviews and expert perspectives consolidated findings on immersive journalism's benefits and drawbacks, confirming the persistent pattern of technical/financial barriers and the lack of established storytelling conventions (Stubbs, 2018). This highlighted a potential contradiction: while technological capabilities were advancing, the practical and normative frameworks for journalistic application seemed to lag.

Regarding global perspectives and gaps, while much documented experimentation originated in North America and Europe, the literature hinted at significant variations globally, underscoring a gap in understanding how cultural and infrastructural differences shape adoption patterns. Scholarship often pointed to digitally native younger generations as potential early adopters, but broad empirical data on audience acceptance across demographics and regions remained a significant gap.

A consistent pattern in the literature was the recognition of profound emerging ethical debates. Scholars grappled with the tension between immersive storytelling and factual accuracy (Aitamurto, 2019), the ethics of reconstructing events (Robitzski, 2017), and potential psychological harm from intense experiences (Aitamurto, 2019). While industry bodies and researchers had begun formulating guidelines (Aronson-Rath & Lahr, 2018), a gap existed in widely accepted, specific ethical codes for immersive journalism.

In synthesis, the literature charted a path from conceptual origins and early experiments towards explorations of immersive virtual environments for news. Key patterns included the perceived potential for enhanced engagement via immersion, persistent technical and economic challenges, and growing ethical scrutiny. Contradictions arose between technological potential and practical implementation, and between the drive for immersion and the demands of journalistic accuracy. Significant gaps remained in understanding global adoption dynamics, long-term audience effects, sustainable business models, and established ethical frameworks.

Theoretical Framework

Analyzing the phenomenon of immersive journalism necessitates drawing upon established theoretical frameworks from media and communication studies. This review employs three key lenses to synthesize the literature and interpret observed patterns and contradictions.

First, Henry Jenkins' (2006) theory of Media Convergence and Participatory Culture provides a powerful framework for understanding immersive platforms as an amalgamation of existing media and a catalyst for cultural shifts in media consumption. Immersive environments exemplify technological convergence by integrating multiple content formats within a single experiential space. More profoundly, they embody cultural convergence by fostering participatory culture, potentially transforming audiences from passive recipients into active participants (Jenkins, 2006). This lens helps interpret the observed pattern of increased audience agency discussed in the literature and highlights potential power shifts when journalism operates within interactive environments.

Second, theories explaining the effects of immersive media, particularly Immersive Journalism and Presence Theory, were crucial in the literature. Central is the concept of presence—the psychological feeling of "being there" in a mediated environment (Slater, 2009). Immersive journalism leverages technologies like VR to maximize presence, theoretically leading to greater engagement, emotional response, and understanding (De la Peña et al., 2010). The related, though debated, concept of VR as an "empathy machine" (Milk, 2015) informed many early immersive projects. While empirical validation of consistent empathy effects remained a noted gap, presence theory helps explain the underlying mechanism driving the perceived experiential power of immersive journalism. Furthermore, this framework encompasses the challenge of developing a unique "grammar" for immersive storytelling (Stubbs, 2018), distinct from traditional media, which connects directly to the ethical considerations of balancing immersion with accuracy (Aitamurto, 2019).

Third, established principles of Digital Journalism Ethics—truthfulness, accuracy, minimizing harm, independence, accountability—provided a normative baseline in discussions. Immersive environments introduce novel contexts testing these principles. Applying ethical theory often involved analogical reasoning, extending existing norms to virtual scenarios (e.g., transparency about reconstructions). This framework illuminates the ethical challenges identified as a recurring pattern in the literature, such as verifying information, mitigating potential psychological harm from intense immersion (Aitamurto, 2019), and ensuring privacy. The call for new, specific ethical guidelines (Stubbs, 2018; Aitamurto, 2019; Aronson-Rath & Lahr, 2018) reflected the recognition that while core values persist, their application requires adaptation, highlighting a gap between traditional frameworks and the unique affordances and risks of immersive platforms.

By integrating these theoretical perspectives, this paper moves beyond description towards a synthesized analysis, interpreting the developments in immersive journalism within broader scholarly contexts of media change, user experience, and ethical responsibility, based on the reviewed literature.

Methodology

This study utilizes a qualitative, synthesizing literature review methodology, focusing on the selected sources. The objective is the systematic analysis and integration of scholarly knowledge on immersive and virtual journalism available within that corpus. The approach focuses on identifying overarching patterns, points of contradiction or tension, and significant gaps within that specific body of research drawn from academic databases, institutional repositories, scholarly books, and credible industry/research center reports included in the review.

The search and selection process employed keywords like "virtual reality journalism," "immersive journalism," "XR journalism," and related terms, prioritizing peer-reviewed sources, while including foundational earlier works where relevant. A deliberate effort was made to incorporate sources reflecting diverse global perspectives, although limitations in published research from some regions were apparent in the available literature. Selection criteria favored scholarly rigor, but illustrative examples from reputable industry sources were included cautiously.

The analytical approach involved thematic analysis to categorize findings according to recurring themes aligned with the research objectives: technological factors, audience dynamics, ethical issues, business models, practice evolution, and challenges/future directions, as discussed in the literature. The analysis was guided by the theoretical frameworks (convergence, presence, ethics) to ensure interpretation remained grounded in established concepts. The core analytical task involved moving beyond summarization to actively synthesize findings from the reviewed literature—comparing and contrasting results across studies, explicitly identifying convergent patterns, highlighting divergent findings or contradictions, and pinpointing areas where evidence was thin or absent (gaps).

Limitations of this review include its basis on the selected body of literature. The nascent nature of the field means the review draws heavily from VR/AR journalism literature. The availability of published research was uneven globally. As a literature synthesis, conclusions are based on reported evidence and interpretations available in the reviewed sources. Despite these constraints, this methodology is appropriate for achieving the paper's aim: to provide a critically synthesized overview of the state of scholarship based on the included literature, clearly identifying patterns, contradictions, and gaps.

Analysis and Discussion: Synthesizing Patterns, Contradictions, and Gaps

This section synthesizes the findings from the reviewed literature across key thematic areas, explicitly highlighting the identified patterns, contradictions, and research gaps, interpreted through the theoretical lenses outlined previously.

Regarding Technological Advancements and Barriers, a consistent pattern in the literature is the acknowledgment that technological advancements (improving VR/AR hardware, game engines, capture techniques) were enabling more sophisticated immersive journalism experiences (De la Peña et al., 2010). However, this was juxtaposed with the persistent pattern of significant barriers: high production costs, the need for specialized skills and equipment, lack of device ubiquity, and platform fragmentation issues (Stubbs, 2018). This created a contradiction between the potential afforded by technology and the practical limitations hindering widespread adoption and accessibility. A critical gap identified in the literature was the disparity in infrastructure and access globally, raising concerns about immersive technologies potentially exacerbating the digital divide.

Concerning Audience Interaction and Participatory Culture, the literature identified a shift towards heightened audience interaction as a defining characteristic of immersive journalism, aligning with Jenkins' (2006) concept of participatory culture. Users were envisioned as active participants who could navigate and explore news experiences. This interactivity was seen as a potential strategy for engaging audiences. However, a contradiction emerged between the ideal of user agency and the journalistic imperative to ensure accuracy, context, and narrative coherence. Giving users complete freedom might lead them to miss crucial information, posing a challenge requiring sophisticated interaction design (Hardee & McMahan, 2017). Furthermore, a gap existed in empirical research understanding diverse audience responses: How did interaction affect comprehension and trust across different demographics?

Ethical Considerations revealed amplified dilemmas and normative gaps. Ethical concerns formed a dominant and recurring pattern in the literature. Issues of accuracy and potential deception in virtual reconstructions (Aitamurto, 2019; Robitzski, 2017), verification of information, minimizing psychological harm from visceral experiences (Aitamurto, 2019), ensuring user privacy, and maintaining editorial independence were consistently raised. This reflected the application of traditional journalistic ethics to new scenarios. A significant contradiction or tension highlighted by Aitamurto (2019) was the "normative paradox" where the drive for compelling immersion could conflict with the principles of accuracy and minimizing harm. While calls for transparency and new guidelines were frequent (Stubbs, 2018; Aronson-Rath & Lahr, 2018), a major gap remained in the form of established, universally accepted ethical protocols specifically tailored for immersive journalism.

Analysis of Business Models showed experimentation and uncertainty. The literature revealed a clear pattern of uncertainty and experimentation regarding sustainable business models for immersive journalism. Approaches often relied on adapting existing models (sponsorships, subscriptions) or depended heavily on external funding (grants, institutional budgets), particularly in public service media contexts. This reliance highlighted a potential contradiction with the long-term goal of commercial viability. The primary gap was the lack of proven, scalable monetization strategies. Demonstrating clear return on investment was challenging, hindering broader industry commitment beyond experimental phases.

Finally, the Evolution of Journalistic Practices indicated new skills, workflows, and gaps. A discernible pattern involved the evolution of journalistic practices, demanding new skills and workflows. Storytelling shifted towards designing explorable experiences, requiring collaboration between journalists, designers, and developers (Hardee & McMahan, 2017). News gathering might incorporate virtual observation, while verification extended to spatial details. This necessitated new competencies and potentially new newsroom roles. However, a contradiction existed between the need for these specialized skills and the capacity of many newsrooms to acquire them. This pointed to a gap in accessible training and the development of cost-effective tools or collaborative models to democratize adoption.

In synthesis, based on the reviewed literature, while the vision of engaging, interactive immersive journalism was a consistent pattern, its realization was fraught with contradictions related to accessibility, ethics, economics, and practical implementation. Addressing the identified gaps in empirical audience research, global adoption studies, business models, standardized ethics, and accessible training was crucial.

Challenges and Future Directions: Addressing the Gaps

The synthesis of scholarship clearly delineated significant challenges confronting immersive journalism, simultaneously pointing towards critical directions for future research and development aimed at filling the identified gaps.

One major challenge involves Bridging the Technical and Access Divide, stemming from the gap in global disparities and platform standards. Addressing this requires effort towards advocating for open standards and exploring low-bandwidth, accessible forms of immersive journalism. Research tracking device adoption and audience readiness globally was needed.

Another area is Understanding and Building Audiences, addressing the gap in empirical audience research. Moving beyond anecdotal evidence requires robust empirical research. Future studies needed to investigate audience responses across demographics, compare immersive versus traditional formats, and explore optimal integration strategies.

Developing ethical frameworks and best practices is crucial due to the gap in standardized ethics. The lack of established ethical guidelines necessitated proactive development. Future directions involved collaborative efforts to create specific, actionable ethical codes. Research needed to focus on testing approaches to transparency, mitigating harm, and verifying content (Aitamurto, 2019; Stubbs, 2018), while finding sustainable economic models remains a challenge linked to the gap in proven business models. Addressing the economic uncertainty required innovation and evidence. Future research needed to involve case studies analyzing financial performance and explore audience willingness-to-pay. Collaborative funding models also warranted investigation. Lastly, cultivating skills and inclusive practices must address the gap in accessible training and global practices. Closing the skills gap required scalable training solutions. Future directions included developing open-source tools, creating accessible courses, and fostering partnerships. Research documenting best practices from diverse global contexts was needed.

Addressing these challenges and pursuing these research directions was vital for moving immersive journalism from speculative potential to evidence-based practice, grounded in ethical integrity, economic sustainability, and global inclusivity.

Conclusion

This paper has synthesized the scholarly literature on immersive and virtual journalism, revealing a field rich with potential yet navigating significant complexities. The analysis identifies clear patterns: a consistent vision of immersive, interactive news experiences driven by technological advancements; a shift towards participatory audience roles aligning with convergence culture; the persistent emergence of novel ethical dilemmas demanding new frameworks; widespread experimentation with uncertain business models; and an ongoing evolution of journalistic skills and practices.

However, the synthesis also illuminates critical contradictions and gaps. Tensions existed between the potential for deep immersion and the imperatives of accuracy and minimizing harm; between the promise of global reach and the reality of digital divides; between the need for specialized resources and the capacities of diverse newsrooms. Crucial gaps remained in empirical understanding of audience effects, global adoption dynamics, economic sustainability, and widely accepted ethical standards.

By employing theories of media convergence, presence, and digital ethics, this review provides a structured understanding of these dynamics based on the reviewed literature. It argues that while the technological allure of immersive platforms was strong, successful integration into journalism depended fundamentally on addressing the challenges and research gaps identified. The future of immersive journalism required moving towards rigorous, ethical, and inclusive implementation.

The contribution of this paper lies in its focused synthesis of the reviewed literature, explicitly highlighting the patterns, contradictions, and gaps characterizing the state of knowledge. It underscores the need for future research that is empirical, globally conscious, ethically grounded, and practically oriented. If the journalism community could navigate this frontier thoughtfully—harnessing the unique affordances of immersive media while upholding core journalistic values and addressing accessibility—immersive journalism held the potential to significantly enrich public understanding and engagement. Neglecting these challenges risked creating new forms of exclusion and undermining trust.

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