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HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH

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About the Journal

Overview

Horizon Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research (JHSSR) is an open-access academic journal published by BP Services, independently owned, dependent upon donations and run on a non-profit basis for the benefit of the world-wide social science community. It neither accepts nor commissions third party content. It is an online scientific journal and does not impose any publication or page fee on authors intending to publish in the journal. It publishes the scientific outputs.

Recognized internationally as a leading peer-reviewed scholarly journal devoted to the publication of original papers, it serves as a forum for practical approaches to improving quality in issues pertaining to social and as well as the humanities.

JHSSR is currently a **bi-annual** (*July* and *December*) periodical that considers for publication original articles as per its scope. The journal publishes in **English** and it is open to authors around the world regardless of the nationality.

The Journal is available world-wide online.

Aim and scope

Horizon Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research aims to develop as a pioneer journal for the social sciences with a focus on emerging issues pertaining to the social sciences as well as the humanities.

JHSSR is a principal outlet for scholarly articles. The journal provides a unique forum for theoretical debates and empirical analyses that move away from narrow disciplinary focus. It is committed to comparative research and articles that speak to cases beyond the traditional concerns of area and single-country studies. JHSSR strongly encourages transdisciplinary analysis of contemporary and historical social change particularly in Asia, or beyond by offering a meeting space for international scholars across the social sciences.

Scope of the journal includes HUMANITIES– Field of Languages, Linguistics, Literature, and Education. SOCIAL SCIENCES–Anthropology, Economics, Law, psychology, Political Sciences, sociology, music, sport, and Technology Management.

History and Background

A premier journal in its field, JHSSR was established in 2019, and has been in circulation continuously since then. Horizon is an open access scholarly journal that currently publishes *semi-annually*. The journal uses a stringent **double-blind peer-review process** and follows code of conduct stipulated by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

It primarily publishes for dissemination of academic research meant for scholars and scientists worldwide. It publishes on non-profitable basis and does not have any income from subscription or other sources. The journal does not impose any publication or page fee on authors intending to publish in JHSSR.

JHSSR is distributed worldwide to more than 1000 institutions via *e-alerts*, in addition to authors upon request. To provide expert evaluation of the various segments of the broad spectrum of Humanities and Social Sciences research, the editorial office is assisted by scholars who serve as Associate Editors, editorial board members, Emeritus editors and international advisory board members from academic institutions across 35 countries, and ad-hoc reviewers chosen for their expertise. They provide constructive evaluation and, fair and rapid editorial processing. The frequency of citations to articles published in JHSSR by scientists, students, and others increases each year. It therefore aims to achieve its SCOPUS status within 2 years of publication.

To facilitate review, the Editor-in-Chief and the Chief Executive Editor previews all submitted manuscripts and independently or in consultation with an Associate Editor, decides if a manuscript is appropriate for review by members of JHSSR's editorial board and/or ad hoc reviewers. Manuscripts outside of the scope of JHSSR or those articles in poor English are returned without the delay of a full review, generally within a week of submission. Authors may contact the Chief Executive Editor in advance to inquire about the potential suitability of their research topic for review.

Manuscript submissions and inquiries are encouraged. Manuscript style and formatting are described in the "**Instructions to Authors**". Manuscript submissions should be made using JHSSR online manuscript submission system, or manuscripts should be mailed through email to the Chief Executive Editor. Direct inquiries to CEE.horizon@gmail.com

Goal

Our goal is to bring the highest quality research to the widest possible audience. Our objective is "**Today's research, tomorrow's impact**".

Quality

We aim for excellence, sustained by a responsible and professional approach to journal publishing. Submissions are guaranteed to receive a decision within 14 weeks. The elapsed time from submission to publication for the articles averages 3-4 months.

Editorial and International Advisory Board

The editorial and the advisory board of the Horizon has a presence of an international base of renowned scholars from various disciplines of research with diverse geographical background.

Our editorial team is engaged with **universities in 35 countries across the world** including **Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Fiji, Finland, Germany, India, Iran, Jordon, Lithuania, Malaysia, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sweden, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, USA**, and **Vietnam**.

Abstracting and indexing of *Horizon*

As is the case with any new journal, indexing in all prestigious relevant databases takes some time, and is heavily dependent upon citations the articles generate.

The Horizon Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research (Online ISSN 2682-9096) is a *high-quality, peer-reviewed* academic journal in its field.

It is a Gold Open Access journal and indexed in major academic databases to maximize article discoverability and citation. The journal follows best practices on publication ethics outlined in the COPE Code of Conduct. Editors work to ensure timely decisions after initial submission, as well as prompt publication online if a manuscript is accepted for publication.

Upon publication, articles are immediately and freely available to the public. The final version of articles can immediately be posted to an institutional repository or to the author's own website as long as the article includes a link back to the original article posted on JHSSR. All published articles are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

The journal has been indexed and abstracted in: SSRN, CrossRef, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Google Scholar, EBSCOhost, ProQuest. The journal has been listed in: CiteFactor, Cornel University Library, CrossCheck, DRJI, Journalseek, openaccessarticles.com, Open Access Library, Rubrig, Scirus, Ulrichs. In addition, the journal has been archived in: Academia.edu, National Library of Malaysia.

The journal editors and the publisher are doing their best for this journal to be included in the top abstracting and indexing databases; however, for the journal to be indexed in any indexing body is beyond the Journal's direct control. Nevertheless, the journal ensures that the papers published are of high quality. The publisher from time to time recommends the journal to the indexing and abstracting bodies.

The authors must also ensure that the manuscripts they submit to JHSSR are of top quality and are innovative.

Citing journal articles

The abbreviation for *Horizon* Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research is ***Horizon J. Hum. Soc. Sci. Res***.

Publication policy

Horizon publishes original work and its policy prohibits an author from submitting the same manuscript for concurrent consideration by two or more publications, and is not under concurrent consideration elsewhere at the time of submitting it to Horizon. It prohibits as well publication of any manuscript that has already been published either in whole or substantial part elsewhere in any language. It also does not permit publication of manuscript that has been published **in full** in Proceedings.

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The Horizon Journals takes seriously the responsibility of all of its journal publications to reflect the highest in publication ethics. Thus, all journals and journal editors abide by the Journal's codes of ethics. Refer to Horizon's **Code of Conduct** for full details at the Journal's web link https://horizon-jhssr.com/code-of-conduct.php

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In case of any queries, contact the Journal's Editorial office via email to info@horizon-jhssr.com

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Horizon JHSSR **does not impose** any submission fees, publication fees or page charges for those intending to publish their research in this journal. However, as JHSSR is an open access journal, in norms with all open access journals, the journal imposes an Article Processing Charge (APC). To publish in JHSSR, authors are currently required to pay an APC of **USD100 per article**. A waiver to this available for academics with a heavily subsidized fee of USD75 per accepted manuscript.

In addition, this journal offers discount on Article Processing Charges to authors based in any of the countries which were classified by the World Bank as Low-income economies or Lower-middle-income economies. All requests can be sent directly to the journal's Chief Executive Editor.

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However, in case of a print version, if it is necessary for the figures to be reproduced in color, a charge of USD50 per figure will apply.

International Standard Serial Number (ISSN)

An ISSN is an 8-digit code used to identify periodicals such as journals of all kinds and on all media–*print and electronic*. All Horizon journals have an e-ISSN.

Horizon Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research: **e-ISSN 2682-9096**.

Lag time

A decision on acceptance or rejection of a manuscript is reached in 3 to 4 months (average 12 weeks). The elapsed time from submission to publication for the articles averages 4-5 months.

Authorship

Authors are not permitted to add or remove any names from the authorship provided at the time of initial submission without the consent of the Journal's Chief Executive Editor. Requests for changes to authorship must be directed to the journal's chief executive editor. Changes in authorship will only be permitted where valid reasons are provided and all authors are in agreement with the change. Post-publication changes to authorship will typically be made via a published correction and authors may be charged for this additional service.

One author will need to be identified as the corresponding author, with their email address normally displayed in the article. Authors' affiliations are the affiliations where the research was conducted. If any of the named co-authors moves affiliation during the peer-review process, the new affiliation can be given as a footnote. Please note that no changes to affiliation can be made after your paper is accepted.

Manuscript preparation

Refer to Horizon's **Instructions to Authors** at the back of this journal or visit https://horizon-jhssr.com/manuscript-prepparation.php

A well-formatted manuscript follows all journal instruction. All elements of the manuscript are printed in English with 1-inch margins at top, bottom, and sides. Right margins are unjustified. Horizon journals accept manuscript submissions which uses any consistent text—Format-free Submission! This saves you time and ensures you can focus on your priority: the research.

However, citations/references must be formatted by you as per APA format.

Checklist for Manuscript Submission

- Cover letter
- Declaration form
- Referral form
- Manuscript structure

(Title, Author details and affiliation, Abstract, Keywords, etc. using the **IMRAD** style).

Each submission must fulfil the following criteria and documents listed below must be submitted along with the manuscript for intended publication.

1) Cover letter

Your cover letter should be complete and make a strong pitch. The cover letter should include all these details:

- Author(s): Full contact details (email, institutional address, telephone number, etc.) of all authors listed including who the corresponding author will be [full name(s) written as First Name then Last Name]. Understand the differences between lead author and co-author(s). Lead-author: who has done most of the research and writing; Co-author: Has collaborated with the lead author and contributed some parts.
- A brief explanation of your article's relevance and impact.
- Disclosure of whether you have published this study previously elsewhere or if it is in consideration by another journal.
- Disclosure of any commercial or financial relationship that may be viewed as any potential conflict of interest.
- A brief statement explaining why the journal should publish your study.

(Refer to sample available at https://horizon-jhssr.com/download.php).

2) Declaration form

Do not forget to complete the declaration form and submit it along with your manuscript. Sign the declaration that your manuscript is original, you have NOT published this study previously elsewhere in any language and is not under concurrent consideration elsewhere at the time of submitting it to Horizon.

3) Referral form

The authors are strongly recommended to complete the "Reviewers Suggestion" form along with the manuscript during submission. Authors should suggest up to 3 names of potential reviewers experts in the subject area of the

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manuscript, and are not the co-authors listed in the manuscript submitted. The suggested reviewers may be from any part of the world. The journal is not, however, bound by these suggestions.

4) Language and flow

A well-written manuscript has greater chances of acceptance. Some tips:

- Avoid long, complicated sentences; keep it simple. Your sentences should be understandable.
- Your ideas should flow smoothly.
- Use correct terminology, avoid excessive jargon and grandiose language.
- Make sure there are no grammatical mistakes.
- It is highly recommended to approach an editing service for help with polishing your manuscript. The journal has a long-term proven affiliation with a good certified editor at Beyond Proofreading Services PLC.

You may contact **Dr. Brown at Beyond Proofreading**, beyondproofreading@gmail.com at your own discretion.

Language Accuracy

JHSSR **emphasizes** on the linguistic accuracy of every manuscript published. Articles must be in **English** and they must be competently written and argued in clear and concise grammatical English. Contributors are strongly advised to have the manuscript checked by a colleague with ample experience in writing English manuscripts or a competent English language editor.

Author(s) **should provide a certificate** confirming that their manuscripts have been adequately edited. A proof from a certified editing service should be submitted together with the cover letter at the time of submitting a manuscript to Horizon**.**

All editing costs must be borne by the author(s). This step, taken by authors before submission, will greatly facilitate reviewing, and thus publication if the content is acceptable.

Refer to JHSSR's **Manuscript Format guide** at https://horizon-jhssr.com/online-submission.php

Editorial process

Authors are notified with an acknowledgement containing a *Manuscript ID* upon receipt of a manuscript, and upon the editorial decision regarding publication.

JHSSR follows a **double-blind peer-review** process. Authors are encouraged to suggest names of at least three potential reviewers at the time of submission of their manuscript to Horizon using the **Referral form**. The editors are not, however, bound by these suggestions.

The Journal's peer-review

In the peer-review process, three referees independently evaluate the scientific quality of the submitted manuscripts.

Peer reviewers are experts chosen by journal editors to provide written assessment of the **strengths** and **weaknesses** of written research, with the aim of improving the reporting of research and identifying the most appropriate and highest quality material for the journal.

The Review process

What happens to a manuscript once it is submitted to *Horizon*? Typically, there are seven steps to the editorial review process:

1. The Journal's chief executive editor and the editorial board examine the paper to determine whether it is appropriate for the journal and should be reviewed. If not appropriate, the manuscript is rejected outright and the author is informed. Linguistically hopeless manuscripts will be rejected straightaway (e.g., when the language is so poor that one cannot be sure of what the authors really mean).

2. The chief executive editor sends the article-identifying information having been removed, to three reviewers. Typically, one of these is from the Journal's editorial board. Others are external specialists in the subject matter represented by the article. The chief executive editor requests them to complete the review in three weeks.

   Comments to authors are about the appropriateness and adequacy of the theoretical or conceptual framework, literature review, method, results and discussion, and conclusions. Reviewers often include suggestions for strengthening of the manuscript. Comments to the editor are in the nature of the significance of the work and its potential contribution to the literature.

3. The chief executive editor, in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief, examines the reviews and decides whether to reject the manuscript, invite the author(s) to revise and resubmit the manuscript, or seek additional reviews. Final acceptance or rejection rests with the Editor-in-Chief, who reserves the right to refuse any material for publication. In rare instances, the manuscript is accepted with almost no revision. Almost without exception, reviewers' comments (to the author) are forwarded to the author. If a revision is indicated, the editor provides guidelines for attending to the reviewers' suggestions and perhaps additional advice about revising the manuscript.

4. The authors decide whether and how to address the reviewers' comments and criticisms and the editor's concerns. The authors return a revised version of the paper to the chief executive editor along with specific information describing how they have answered' the concerns of the reviewers and the editor, usually in a tabular form. The author(s) may also submit a rebuttal if there is a need especially when the author disagrees with certain comments provided by reviewer(s).

5. The chief executive editor sends the revised paper out for re-review. Typically, at least one of the original reviewers will be asked to examine the article.

6. When the reviewers have completed their work, the chief executive editor in consultation with the editorial board and the Editor-in-Chief examine their comments and decide whether the paper is ready to be published, needs another round of revisions, or should be rejected.

7. If the decision is to accept, an acceptance letter is sent to all the author(s), the paper is sent to the Press. The article should appear in print in approximately three months.

The Publisher ensures that the paper adheres to the correct style (in-text citations, the reference list, and tables are typical areas of concern, clarity, and grammar). The authors are asked to respond to any minor queries by the Publisher. Following these corrections, page proofs are mailed to the corresponding authors for their final approval. At this point, **only essential changes are accepted**. Finally, the article appears in the pages of the Journal and is posted on-line.

SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS

Owing to the volume of manuscripts we receive, we must insist that all submissions be made electronically using the **online submission system™**, a web-based portal. For more information, go to our web page and click "**Online Submission**".

Please do **not** submit manuscripts to the Editor-in-Chief or to any other office directly. All submissions or queries must be directed to the **Chief Executive Editor** via email to CEE.horizon@gmail.com

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ABSTRACTING/INDEXING

As is the case with any new journal, indexing in all prestigious relevant databases takes some time. Horizon inspires to be a member of: Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

The journal has been indexed and abstracted in EBSCO, DOAJ, Google Scholar, ISC, Rubriq, National Library of Malaysia and MyAIS.

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FOREWORD

I would like to welcome you to *Horizon Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research's* **concluding issue of 2022**. JHSSR is a peer-reviewed open-access and broad-scope scholarly journal that aims at bringing innovative research to both academics and practicing professionals. It is published rapidly by BP Services. The journal is independently owned, and runs on a ***not-for-profit*** basis for the benefit of the world-wide social science community.

Original articles of archival value covering research and development topics, which span all areas of humanities and social sciences, are published by this journal. In addition to new advances in traditional and more established areas of humanities and social sciences, we strive to include findings on both emerging and interdisciplinary issues.

Nayan Deep S. Kanwal, FRSA, ABIM, AMIS, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Editor; JHSSR

This issue Vol 4 (2) Dec. 2022 consists of **twenty-five articles** including two invited articles from our prestigious international advisory board members, Professor Dr. Claudia Zucca's article makes a contribution to both studies in the translingual and linguistic contact studies. The second paper is by one of our prominent and distinguished professors, Dr. Kirpal Singh. He shares his thoughts on "Re-thinking Leadership: Current and Future Challenges".

The Review article is significant because, "it discusses the matter concerned to every human to know what is consciousness which makes human to think about his environment around and inside of the body, how a person is declared dead, and if there is reincarnation and existence of soul in the body. The paper should be of interest to readers in the areas of philosophy, science, and to the Sikhs including other major religions. It indicates that *Sikhi* (philosophy of Guru Nanak composed about 552 years ago is somewhat comparable to science of today.

In addition, the issue has fifteen research articles, two opinion pieces and five concept papers. These articles are written by authors that come from **13 different countries**, such as **Canada, China, Germany, India, Iran, Italy, Jordan, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand** and **Vietnam**.

This remarkable statistic clearly shows that this journal is truly an international journal with diverse authorship as well as editorship. The articles in this issue span a wide range of topics, including issues of *Business and Finance, Financial Management, Human Resource Management, Literature, Comparative Literature, Linguistics, Music, Personal Development and Empowerment, Pragmatics, Psychology, Religion, Sex education, Sociology, Social Studies, Urban Studies, and also interdisciplinary studies*.

The first research paper investigates the service quality in the banking system in the European context. It discusses service quality, consumer retention and loyalty programs in the banks in Europe. The findings propose that banks should concentrate on enhancing the efficiency of their offerings in order to increase consumer retention and customer loyalty.

The next paper is significant as it intends to act as a resource to educate and empower today's youth to make better life choices for themselves. The researchers utilised the concept of self-love with the research data.

It provides information and materials to educate and empower today's youth to make better life choices for themselves, and that these choices ought to be guided by the principle of self-love and self-awareness providing valuable insights into raising awareness of social issues and application into the field of education and public health. It also seems to improve awareness amongst adolescents to prevent early pregnancy in Malaysia.

The third paper is significant because it focusses upon employee engagement. It suggests that employee engagement is impacted for a variety of reasons, including bullying, harassment, and undesirable behavior. Using organizational support and workplace interventions for well-being, it is possible to increase employee engagement.

The fourth paper of this issue is meaningful because, it discusses Du Ke theatre heritage of Khmer people in tourism development in Vietnam. The solutions mentioned in this article act as a resource for local leaders, scientists, Du Ke artists and companies to carry out tourism promotion or as a resource for travellers' and helping in maintaining the living land for Du Ke's theatrical art in Vietnam.

The fifth paper is a rich source of materials for management agencies and leaders on conceptual models to orient the renovation and development of alley spaces in the context of urbanization and adaptation to climate change based on real case studies with ethnographic surveys at a specific location. The paper should be of interest to readers in the area of Urban Studies.

The sixth focuses on the cruelty of colonization as represented in George Orwell's Burmese Days. It exposes the atrocities of colonialism in Burma and demonstrates the fallacies of colonial ideology. The study also shows the book's setbacks and inconsistencies in its anti-imperial discourse as evident in the use of racist language, and the stereotypical representation of the natives. The paper should be of interest to readers in the areas of Postcolonial literature.

The seventh research paper describes the natural symbolism as depicted in the hymns of the holy Sikh scripture *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. The poetic compositions of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* are notable for their usage of symbolism as a literary device. Herein, various images and symbols have been used to describe its authors' mystical and spiritual experiences. Moreover, as symbols can be timeless, culture-free, and language-free, these can bridge the barriers of communication that often exist between ages or cultures. Such understanding can play a significant role in finding apt solutions to the contemporary world's critical issues. With these facts in view, I believe the readers particularly in the areas of Sikh Philosophy or Sikh theological studies will be interested to read this research article.

The eight research paper reports that the speech act of responding to criticism is extremely under-researched. The Iranian celebrities' speech acts have not been brought under scrutiny so far. It is hoped that this paper will help us gain a clear understanding of the speech act in question. The paper also contributes to the field of pragmatics.

The next paper is significant because "COVID 19 has a great impact on almost every aspect of the society". The paper adds to the literature with regards to the efficiency of the microfinance institutions during COVID 19. The paper contributes to the body of knowledge with regards to the impact of covid on economic issues. In fact, the paper shows why pandemic reduces the economic efficiency of MFIs, while improving the social efficiency of MFIs. The paper should be of interest to readers in the areas of social science, and financial management.

The paper on tennis points out that Tennis Play-and-Stay can improve teaching methods, enrich teaching means and improve the learning atmosphere, which can effectively improve the teaching quality of university tennis general classes and promote the healthy development of tennis in China.

The eleventh research paper on music tackles the issues of Application of Chu Wanghua's Chinese Folk Song Arrangement in Piano Impromptu Accompaniment Teaching. This study discusses three representative impromptu accompaniment courses in normal universities in China, aiming to improve the lack of Chinese harmony and folk song accompaniment content in the current classroom. Its purpose is to enhance students' abilities of impromptu accompaniment for folk songs and better protect intangible cultural heritage.

The next paper of this issue discusses the perspective of course thinking politics, proposing strategies to strengthen the construction of course thinking politics, improve students' learning effect, innovate online teaching mode and build an emotional bridge between teachers and students. It is expected that this research will help improve the quality of online teaching.

Thirteenth research paper talks about the integrated curriculum of physical education in Chinese colleges. This kind of curriculum is in accordance with the rapid development of colleges and universities, which makes up for the insufficiency of the dimension of this research field and provides the feasible scheme and model for the management system and operation mechanism of integrated curriculum construction for Chinese college sports administrators.

Fourteenth paper elaborates Research on "Jiacuo Dance" form of Mosuo Ethnic Group in China. It discusses the humanistic culture of the Mosuo ethnic group, the dance form and cultural connotation of Jiacuo Dance through field investigation, observation, interviews, etc.

The last research paper in this issue shares classification and research of Dazu folk songs in Chongqing City, China.

The next two papers are opinion pieces; first paper is meaningful because of growing importance of human rights, which somehow remain unrealised in societies across countries due to declining human values. However, religious texts endorse human rights in true earnest and herein lies need to stress on understanding such text. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* manifests human rights profoundly. The paper should be of interest to readers in the areas of Religious Studies and Political Science. The second piece is a comparison of Chinese and foreign flower elements patterns. The difference between Chinese and Western aesthetics is only in their characteristics. Both are a part of the world culture. They have their own independent aesthetic system and rhyme direction, and also have some commonalities. Read to find out!

We conclude this issue with five concept papers. The first paper talks about the growing importance of human rights, which somehow remain unrealised in societies across countries due to declining human values. The paper attempts to search for possibility to introduce new tax scheme for social enterprise in Malaysia. The paper should be of interest to readers in the areas of commercial law and taxation. The second paper on literature attempts to analyse Mamet's play with the help of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy. The last three pieces are related to music; the history and inheritance of Qingyang Opera; the diversity of the spread and development of new folk songs in Guangxi, China. The concluding article in this issue examines and studies the display of cultural heritage elements in Salar music of Qinghai Province through the intangible cultural heritage perspective of 'Belt and Road'.

I believe this issue would be intriguing, thought-provoking and useful in reaching new milestones. I would be grateful if you recommend the journal to your peers and students to make this endeavour more meaningful.

I am glad to share with you that as of now JHSSR has surpassed a total of about **1,000 articles from across the globe** for intended publication in JHSSR, of which only 155 got accepted and published. Which also means an *acceptance rate of only about 16%*. The reasons for this high rejection rate are mainly the manuscript failing the technical screening, manuscript not falling within the journal's scope, weak hypothesis, poor methodology, and high Similarity Index.

Our Quality

All the papers published in this edition underwent the journal's **stringent double-blind peer-review process involving a minimum of three reviewers comprising internal as well as external referees**. This was to ensure that the quality of the papers justified the high ranking of the journal, which hopes to be one at par with one of the renowned and heavily-cited journals not only by authors and researchers in Malaysia and America but by those in other countries around the world as well.

While I hope this issue will have particular appeal to new readers across this region and beyond, I am confident that the articles published will raise interest among our regular readership of scholars and postgraduate students elsewhere, thanks to the relevance and diversity of contributions on a region whose future bears central importance to us all.

I would also like to express gratitude to all the contributing authors for their trust, patience, and timely revisions, who have made this issue possible, as well as the reviewers and editors for their professional contribution. Last but not least, the assistance of the journal's editorial office in Texas, particularly Jessica Whitsitt, Lucy Fernandez, and Judy Meester—my adorable assistants, is greatly appreciated.

We continue to welcome article submissions in all fields of humanities and social sciences. Horizon JHSSR is currently accepting manuscripts for its **first 2023 issue** based on original qualitative or quantitative research that opens new areas of inquiry and investigation. Empirical articles should demonstrate high rigor and quality. Original research collects and analyses data in systematic ways to present important new research that adds to and advances the debates within the journal's fields. The editors hope that the authors publishing in this journal can support the noble cause of JHSSR in reaching its goals.

Let me conclude by saying that with the publication of this issue, we are now leaping into the fifth year of publication and have completed four years of successful scholarly publication of Horizon JHSSR. Changing publishing norms and expectations have given rise to a new wave of publishing standards that we'll be riding into 2023 and beyond. I am confident that the upcoming year will bring yet another challenging year of emerging scholarly articles.

Only time will tell what the next decade has in store, but one thing for sure is we will likely see greater innovation in all areas of scholarly publishing. If you are observing other scholarly publishing trends, please do share your thoughts with the Chief Executive Editor!

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The Emergence of a Literary Translingual Practice in Contact Studies

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ABSTRACT

Translingualism is an emergent term, which is becoming widespread in academia, but is still in need of fuller definition and of being distinguished from other terms with which it overlaps. This article uses the term translingualism to refer to texts, which use more than one language in interactive ways, emphasising the dynamic, fluid and generative qualities in texts, which cross cultural and linguistic borders and boundaries. The methodological approach used in this article integrates literary studies with findings in linguistics and language contact, since its objective is to understand the way languages in situations of contact influence each other in texts in transformative and interactive ways, rather than merely co-existing in the same diglossic space. This approach involves a text-focused interpretive method, which I define as a literary translingual practice (LTP). It focuses on the ways linguistic elements are exchanged between or synthesised from two or more linguistic systems. It also explores the ways texts in contact create linguistic and aesthetic innovations that produce a new type of literary text, which defies homogenous language systems or dominant discourses. A tentative definition of the translingual, whose purpose is to make clear the differences to similar-sounding terms, which are often used indiscriminately, is followed by a wide range of examples of translingual writing from different genres, cultures and language combinations. Without claiming to provide definitive or final answers, this article's overall goal is to move forward an understanding of translingualism, its scope and its transformative force.

Keywords: translingualism, contact linguistics, bilingualism, interlanguage, code-switching and meshing.

Introduction: Translingualism

This article explores the prominence of the term translingualism as an emerging term in literary studies. The term translingualism has been used to refer to texts in which more than one language or a second language is used (cf. Canagarajah, 2013; Kellman, 2000). Technological developments and globalization, as well as migration, exile and border-crossing have all contributed to new developments in communication across cultures and languages. Because of these developments, there is a need to rethink language contact in communities and societies, as well as a need to question existing paradigms in order to ascertain their validity in describing situations of language contact. Paradigms are currently being constructed in relation to changing social, economic and political conditions, and in relation to "new communicative realities that demand suitable alternatives" (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 287). Evolving terminologies testify to the need to gain a more comprehensive understanding of communicative practices. The term 'translingualism', as an emerging paradigm, is gaining consensus, as well as criticism, in both literary, literacy and communicative studies (cf.

Canagarajah, 2013a; Canagarajah, 2013b; Edwards, 1994; Edwards, 2012; Won Lee, 2018).

Translingualism is now at the forefront of many discussions. A conference in London in 2019, entitled "Across Languages: Translingualism in Contemporary Women's Writing" has demonstrated this growing trend.[1] This strand is part of a wider research initiative into "Cross-Language Dynamics: Reshaping Community Translingual Strand".[2] This conference demonstrated emphatically the extent to which the notion of "translingualism" has been foregrounded in literary scholarship. The conference sought to bring together scholars who are working on translingual women's writing in a wide range of fields, "in order to explore the particular richness of texts produced by writers in languages that are not their mother tongue" (IMLR 2019[3]). The conference included around thirty-five speakers. Around ten papers invoked translingualism in their titles (excluding the plenary and final discussions). Many of the speakers tended to refer to bilingualism, multilingualism, the exophonic, translanguaging, transnationalism, transculturalism, translation and translingualism in ways that makes it clear that the terms are often overlapping, inconsistent, mutually or internally contradictory. This conceptual fuzziness has been manifest, for as long as the term has been present in the secondary literature. There is a need for tighter definitions and for the development of a particular notion of the translingual as a phenomenon in contact studies, in which more than one language is evident.

A Translingual Approach: Towards a Theory of a Literary Translingual Textual Practice

The methodological approach I have developed is a text-focused interpretative practice, which analyses linguistic interferences and processes and cultural features inherent in certain texts. This practice explores the strategies adopted in the text through a critical reading, where the underlying mechanisms of certain translingual elements can be identified and explained. This analysis enables valuable insights into the meaning of the term translingualism, as it today stands and may also add new understandings in the fields of contact studies, literary multilingualism and literary translingualism. This practice is an interdisciplinary one, which applies linguistics to literary studies. It aims to understand the linguistic structures within the texts, and to explain what occurs to languages in situations of contact. It is also concerned with what these texts generate in terms of a text's aesthetics and its literariness. This approach observes linguistic processes, such as code-switches, mixing and meshing, as well as borrowings and loan transfers. The advantage of this approach is to pinpoint distinctive and possible uses of translingualism that may help to provide a wider picture of the scope of literary translingualism in various fields of study.

Furthermore, this approach focuses on texts that use more than one language in more complex, enriching, generative and interactive ways. (Zucca, 2022, p.4). It aims at viewing texts that move beyond bounded communities, as prescribed by monolingual ideals and standards, towards theorizing language boundaries as fluid, dynamic, hybrid and mobile. Traditionally languages were viewed as a purported whole, whilst a translingual approach views heterogeneity as the norm (cf. Canagarajah, 2013, p. 192), and not as a deficiency or a lack, in any sense. A translingual approach counteracts the view that languages are distinct and indisputable entities that belong to established territories with set boundaries (Lu & Horner, 2013, p. 677). This view, as has been argued, has led, in a sense, to impoverished debates that aim "at pinning down the structure of individual languages and the social boundaries for their use" (Lu & Horner, 2013, p. 677). A translingual practice and approach also enables an understanding of the generative and emergent relationship between differing languages and the fluidity of language boundaries.

This practice, grounded and informed by insights from linguistics, helps gain insights into the underlying mechanisms and inherent processes involved in translingual texts. In this regard, it focuses on the way the different languages are used, to what extent, and for what aesthetic purposes. On a linguistic level, it attempts to understand if linguistic interferences, borrowing, code-switching and mixing have occurred, and to what degrees within the texts. Thus, it explores the ways linguistic elements have been used, transformed and transferred from one language system (L1) to a second (L2) or third language system (L3).

Linguistic interferences, also known as "transfers" or "negative transferences", occur when elements of one language are incorporated into another linguistic system; over time, they may become entrenched and embedded. (cf. Edwards, 1994, p. 72; Grosjean & Ping, 2013, pp. 130-131). Interferences or transfers may occur at a lexical, morphological, semantic, syntactic,

[1] Conference held at the Institute of Modern Languages Research, School of Advanced Study University of London, May 2019.

[2] cf. crosslanguagedynamics.blogs.sas.ac.uk

[3] Institute of Modern Language Research (IMLR). Conference brochure. *Across Language: Translingualism in Contemporary Women's Writing.*

phonological or prosodic level, as well as in conjunction. In fact, interferences may affect more than one element in a sentence. They may occur during second language acquisition (SLA), but can also result from "imperfect learning" strategies. During processes of interference, speakers, as well as writers make linguistic choices which may deviate from standard norms governing stable language systems. Interferences, have in the past been viewed as negative outcomes of language learning processes, which have often been considered as an inability or failure on the part of a speaker to fully acquire or produce the correct structures of the target language. Yaron Matras, in contrast, suggests that if inferences do not "result in incomprehensibility and a breakdown of the communication" they could be considered as features that enable "language users to create bridges among different subsets within their overall repertoire of linguistic forms, and to use these bridges to sustain communication" (Matras, 2009, p. 74), instead of being viewed as constituting errors in SLA. Below is an example, taken from the Caribbean author Linton Kwesi Johnson (1975) *Street 66,* which helps identify the way an author may use "imperfect learning" strategies for aesthetic purposes.

> "De room woz dark-dusk howlin softly
> Six-a-clack,
> Charcoal lite defying site woz
> Moving black;
> De soun woz muzik mellow steady flow,
> an man-son min jus mystic red,
> Green, red, green…. Pure scene" (Donnell & Welsh, 1996).

Johnson uses language in a particular way to create bridges between his linguistic and cultural repertoires. In this text, the linguistic interferences, such as "De", "woz" and "clack" emphasise the complex interrelationship between languages and language varieties. (Donnell & Welsh, 1996) They add new textures and resonances of the Caribbean culture to texts that avail of an English variety. These nuances affect the aesthetic qualities and sound system of the poem. The supposed deficiency, which might once have been viewed as a negative deviation from standard norms, instead valorises difference and highlights the creative innovations in translingual writing, where words create bridges between different cultures and languages. In this instance, we can also apply the term, "code-meshing" (Young, 2004), which is the use of a standard code alongside a language variety.[4]

The forms of linguistic borrowing[5] and code-switches in translingual texts are highly literary: they do not always comply with the actual speech patterns of a given community. The degree and frequency of code-switching in literary texts may appear more conflated and perhaps more artificial than real life contact situations, but not for this reason less significant. Rather, it is this peculiarity which becomes a focal point when analysing translingual texts, utterances and phenomenon. Compare for example the extract by Alfred Arteaga, *Small sea of Europe*, with an example of a conversation from a Chinese community in Manchester.

> "Verkehr,[6]
> from the Sanscrit (small sea).
> *vyavahara*:
> performance traffic,
> former act of transformation,
> and exchange.
> Ecos escritos: *Sruti, Smriti, Sastra*[7]
> three sisters in myth, very
> sources of Europe, Western Man,
> the very sound slipping: 3Ss, sans(é)ecrit
> 3Ss
> 3Ss: ecos escritos (S grito) "[8] (Arteaga, 1997 pp. 109-110).

In the second extract, mother and daughter have been looking at paint brochures and are discussing which paints to decorate their house with. This extract is in Cantonese and English. The mother (M) is of Singaporean extraction, the Father (F) is from Hong Kong and their daughter (D) was born in Britain (Matras, 2007, pp.193-94):

> "D: maami aa, when are you next going again?
> M: Nei man nei dedi laa (you ask your daddy)
> D: dedi nei geisi zoi heoi aa? (daddy you when again go)
> F: Heoi bindou aa? (go where aa?)

[4] More recently, the term code-meshing has been used in the studies of pedagogy, in contrast to the term code-switching in SLA (Canagarajah 2013b; Young, 2004, p. 713n8; Young 2007; Young in Canagarjah 2013a;). For Young code-meshing is the "blending, adjusting, playing, and dancing with standard English and academic discourse" (Young, 2013a p. 3284-3288). He refers to this blending of codes as "meshing", which he views as a "strategic, self-conscious and un-self-conscious blending of one's own accent, dialect" (Young, 2013a p. 3284-3288). For the purposes of this article, code-meshing focuses on the interrelationship between a standard English and a language variety, to explore the ways the two codes interact, in order to understand what impact this interaction generates in literary texts in contact.

[5] In the case of borrowing, lexical features are the first elements to be borrowed. Borrowed words may be treated as stems. Heath suggests that "these stems may really be words, including affixes, in the source language" (Heath 1988, p. 37). If the item has undergone full integration, the element that is integrated can be regarded as a borrowed item (McArthur et al.1992, p. 229). There are exceptions to these rules, which makes it difficult to distinguish between borrowing and code-switching (cf. McArthur et al. 1992, p. 229).

[6] Traffic.

[7] Written echoes: "the heard, the remembered, the learned-from-another" (Spivak, 1997 p.109).

[8] Grito means to shout.

D: B&Q.
I need to get some of these.
F: Get what?
D: This one. I need to get the pink one.
F: ngo. I see
D: I need it. (5 sec)
F: dai jat aa (another day)" (Matras, 2009, p.126).

Both extracts make use of a number of linguistic strategies. The latter conversation takes place in a familial setting, using both Cantonese and English, for meaning-making contexts. This type of communication requires a degree of competence or some knowledge of the languages used in the communicative act. However, not all the speakers have full bilingual competence. The language usage in the latter extract signals group identity. (cf. Matras, 2009, p. 127) The former extract is an example of a highly literary artefact. It represents a conflated type of linguistic contact, in that the switches between differing languages do not follow typical conversational modes of communication (as the latter conversation appears to do). The extract is taken from Arteaga's text *Cantos.* The dominant languages in this text are English and Spanish. However, the poet references Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak in an epigraph, from *Can the Subaltern speak*? In doing so, he also incorporates German, Spanish, English, Sanskrit and Hindi into *Small Sea of Europe*. The text questions subaltern languages (Hindi and Chicano) and their relationships to more dominant discourses. In the second extract, in contrast, English is used and modified to suit the context and the level of the proficiency of the speakers. The terms bilingual "competence" and "proficiency" are terms that are often utilized as parameters for discussing bilingual and multilingual situations and contexts. However, a translingual practice is more concerned with the ways languages are used, and for what aesthetic purposes, rather than solely focusing on competence and proficiency as benchmarks. This is an extract from Abelardo Delgado's (1982) epistolary novel, *Letters to Louise, via Air Mail,* where the focus is on the interaction between the languages, not the fact that the text is written in multiple languages.

> "I had a padrino[9] sort of on the crazy side. This was way back in Boquilla. He used to get drunk. Cuando se le pasaban las copas he used to be extra generous with his Godchild Santiago and I would get pesetas and tostones.[10] We had them un escusado de loyo[11] and the paper shortage to wipe our butts with was I've described it before" (Delgado, 1982, p. 49).

This extract shows similarities with the following conversational extract below, taken from S. Poplack (1981), "You didn't have to worry que somebody te iba a tirar con cerveza o una botella or something like that"[12] (Poplack, 1981, p.170). The last two extracts seem to have more in common than the previous two examples. The languages combine, generating the spoken language of a community. The differences, however, between the last two extracts, is that the former is situated in a literary context, and the latter is a transcript of a conversation. This does not signify that the latter utterance is less translingual. This article draws on speech utterances for reference and comparison[13] (cf. Canagarajah, 2013a&b). It also focuses to some extent on the interrelationship between orality and literacy. Written texts are related "somehow directly or indirectly to the world of sound, the natural habitat of language" (Ong, 1982, p. 8). Although the written word can be related to sounds, to the phonemes that they encode, they are nevertheless "isolated from a fuller context in which spoken words come into being" (Ong, 1982, p. 100). Written words, however, may be honed and refined for specific literary aesthetic effects.

Literate Arts of the Contact Zone: Translingual Texts

The translingual elements, such as linguistic interferences, borrowings and code-switching and mixing are viewed here as a consequence of language contact between differing languages and cultures. Translingualism is considered here as a product of contact, and in contemporary writing, it is perceived of as a product of global contact, occurring in contact sites – at specific points of contact between different languages. In J. Blommaert's view, "languages are intrinsically connected to processes of globalization" (Blommaert, 2010, p. 2). Literary constructs are artistic products of contact, but

[9] "godfather" (Delgado, 1982, 49).
[10] "When he was drinking he used to be extra generous with his Godchild Santiago and I would get small change, dimes and quarters" (Delgado, 1982, p.49).
[11] The sentence "un escusado de loyo" is a spoken view of a Spanish phrase, which means, a hole in the ground, either used as a toilet or an outhouse. In Corbella view's view, in spoken Spanish, there is a tendency to move the findal "l" in "del" to the next word when it begins with a vowel. In this way, "escusado del hoy" becomes "escusado de loyo." The "h" in "hoyo" becomes silent. This linguistic movement is an attempt to represent oral speech in a written text (Corbella 2005, p.275; Cutter, 2005).
[12] "You didn't have to worry that somebody would oblige you to go to throw with beer or a bottle or something like that" (Poplack, 1981, p.170).
[13] The text's main objective of this article is to explore translingual texts. However, it explores speech utterances for means of comparison. I refer the reader to studies provided by Canagarajah for an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon (cf. Canagarajah 2013a; Canagarajah 2013b). It is relevant to point out, that there is an element of overlap between communicative utterances (like the ones provided above) and literacy and literary practices in the field of translingual studies.

they can also be viewed in a sociological, linguistic, as well as in a literary light. "Contact zones" as defined by Pratt (1991) are viewed as social spaces where different cultures "meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power […]" (Pratt, 1991, p. 34).

Linguistic contamination may occur on various levels in certain linguistic and cultural texts and spaces. These linguistic spaces in texts entail different types of exchanges, where concepts, discourses, metaphors and cultural references are appropriated, transferred, transposed and translated, and it is also where relationships between languages and cultures may be mediated, to varying degrees. These linguistic and cultural encounters may also require negotiation, and in some instances, generate a struggle – linguistic, aesthetic, ethical, national and psychological – where cultures compete, and may be subjugated, and words, languages and discourses appropriated. Whilst Pratt sees contact sites as strained and conflictual, they may also be viewed as collaborative, generative and dynamic, as opposed to fixed and homogenous. Canagarajah suggests that "the new genres evolving in these zones are translingual, showing the meshing of different or competing norms" (Canagarajah, 2013b, p 30). Contact in literary contexts produces new "literate arts of the contact zone" (Pratt, 1991, p. 40).

The following extract emphasises the ways in which each language occupies and interacts in and within contact spaces in a literary context. It is taken from the Gujarati, English and German author Sujata Bhatt's (1997) poetry collection *Point No Point.* It also highlights the way languages compete with each other in situations of contact. The extract is from the poem *Search for My Tongue.* In the poem, English and Gujarati are incorporated within the same context. The two languages are juxtaposed to draw attention to their differences, emphasising the slippery boundaries between languages.

"મને હતું કે આખ્ખી જીભ આખ્ખી
(munay hutoo kay aakhee jeebh aakhee bhasha)
મેં થૂંકી નાખી છે
(may thoonky nakhi chay)
પરંતુ રાત્રે સ્વપ્નાંમાં મારી ભાષા પાછી આવે છે.
(parantoo rattray svupnama mari bhasha pachi aavay chay)
ફુલની જેમ મારી ભાષા મારી
(foolnee jaim mari bhasha nmari jeebh)
મોઢામાં ખીલે છે
(modhama kheelay chay)
ફુલની જેમ મારી ભાષા મારી
(fullnee jaim mari bhasha mari jeebh)
મોઢામાં પાકે છે
(modhama pakay chay)
it grows back, a stump of a shoot
[…]
it pushes the other tongue aside.
Every time I think I've forgotten,
I think I've lost the mother tongue,
it blossoms out of my mouth"[14] (Bhatt, 1997, p. 36).

The elements in each language are not integrated into the other language. Yet, they are presented in the same context and work together to convey new meaning. The phonetic transcription of the Gujaratian lines are shown below each sentence, as in "modhama kheelay chay/ fullnee jaim mari bhasha mari heebh". (Bhatt, 1997, p. 36) A translation of this sentence is, "my language, my language matures/ like a fruit in my mouth" (Bhatt, 1997, p. 36). The sentence does not continue in Gujarati, but code-switches into English. She writes, 'it grows back, a stump of a shoot' (Bhatt, 1997, p. 36). A feature of translingualism is its very capacity to incorporate different and diverse linguistic systems in the same context to create unique texts with different textures, nuances, features and resonances in new meaning-making contexts.

A literary translingual practice (LTP) is a critical approach to texts, which analyses the translingual linguistic processes and cultural features inherent in these texts. In *Search for my tongue*, feelings of linguistic and cultural alienation are at the forefront of the poem. The poet writes, "there was a little girl/who carried a black clay pitcher on her head/[…] but I can't think of her in English" (Bhatt, 1997, p.35). The poet feels a disconnect to the English language. She writes, "I can't hear my mother in English" (Bhatt, 1997, p.38). The figure of the mother is twofold. It symbolizes both the mother figure and the mother tongue. The speaker fears that her mother tongue, Gujarati, will "rot and die in [her] mouth/[…] but overnight while [she] dream[s], /[…] it grows back […]" [(Bhatt, 1997, pp.35-36) my additions]. It fights back, "it ties the other tongue in knots/it pushes the other tongue aside" (Bhatt, 1997, p.36). In this instance, the poem conveys experiences of bigamy and betrayal. It emphasises the darker side of living in-between [*entre/antre*] worlds and words, continuously translating words and self, trying to piece together a sense of identity. [15] Where is the centre?

[14] "I thought my whole tongue is my tongue/ I spat, but again the night/it comes in my dreams/My language, my language flowers/Like a flower in my mouth/My language, my language matures/Like a fruit in my mouth" (Bhatt, 2012, p.36).

[15] Leslie Adelson argues that the metaphor "between two worlds" is conceptually problematic. It implies "static logical relations among the elements [also, it refers to] a delimited space where two otherwise mutually

And where do the borders begin and end? One is stuck in some "betwixt and between place", writes Eva Hoffman in her memoir *Lost in Translation* (Hoffman, 1989, p. 216).

However, not all translingual texts emphasise disconnect and inner split. In another poem by Bhatt, *The Undertow*, three languages, English, Gujarati and German inhabit the same page and contact space. The poet juxtaposes the languages, dissects the words and syllables and phonological systems, to find some common ground between the languages.

> "But the waves keep us back,
> the undertow threatens;
> so we take one word at a time.
> Take 'dog' for example,
> કૂતરો (kootro) in Gujarati, Köter in Low German
> Hund in High German, Like hound in English.
> Dog કૂતરો (kootro) Köter Hund
>
> Hound dog Köter કૂતરો (Kootro)
>
> કૂતરો કૂતરો કૂતરો
> (Kootro kootro kootro)
>
> The waves come chasing
> the dogs on the beach
> the waves come flooding the streets
> listen to the seals swimming
> through the bookstores, listen
> the words spill together,
> the common sounds
> [...]
> kö kh ga" (Bhatt, 1997, p. 47).

Although the languages have different grammatical, syntactical, semantical and phonological systems, the poet attempts to find linguistic equivalences and typological and phonological similarities between the languages systems, rearranging them so that 'they spill together' (Bhatt, 1997, p. 32). "Hund" in high German is phonologically similar to "Hound" in English. The lower German "Köter" has similarities with the Gujaratian "(Kootro)". The phonemes of the words are also juxtaposed "kö", "kh" and "ga" (Bhatt, 1997, p.32). The poet comes to acknowledge that "the three languages are there/swimming like seals fat with fish and sun/they smile, the three languages/understand each other so well" (Bhatta, 1997, p. 46). Literary translingual texts bring languages together in unique ways that defy the laws of grammar and syntax. To an extent, translingual texts defy the very speech they attempt to emulate, by bypassing and surpassing the very boundaries of speech contexts.

Linguistic and literary innovations in translingual texts may reflect the authors' aesthetic aims, they are not always indicative of community practices outside of texts and may end with the text. Translingual writing is a unique case of language contact in a literary context. Recognizing the importance of language contact studies for the situatedness of translingualism will facilitate an understanding, not only of the development and propagation of English varieties, such as the rise of Pidgin and Creole, but also of the various types of linguistic interactions that may arise and occur between languages in many instances of situations of contact.

The Social Aspects of Language Contact in Translingual Con/texts

This section explores the social context of linguistic contact and the importance this has for the understanding of translingualism. Thomason and Kaufmann have advanced a framework which takes into consideration the importance of social elements in instances of language contact.[16] They argue that "it is the social context, not the structure of the language involved, that determines the direction and the degree of interference," in situations of language contact (Thomason & Kaufmann, 1988, p. 19). In the literary example below, social factors are a determining element in many of the linguistic switches that occur due to the social context. The extract below is an example of the way the Sardinian author, Salvatore Niffoi, avails of a language's social hierarchy, prestige and function in *La Vedova Scalza* (2006).[17]

> "Ohi Micheddu,*18* che hai lasciato moglie zovanedda e unu ofaneddu!"
> ***Ora pro nobis, misere nobis***. Cristo, ascoltaci. Cristo, esaudisci."
> "***O Deus****, Babbu Mannu*, consola con la forza del tuo amore [...]" (Niffoi, 2006, p. 15).[19]

exclusive worlds intersect [this denotes] the presumption of an originating essentially intact world […]" [(Adelson, 2005, pp.3-5) my additions]. For her, this concept suggests that the world as is "remains stable while unstable migrants are uncertainly suspended between them. [And it] does more to assuage anxieties about worlds […] in flux than it does to grasp the cultural innovations that migration engenders" (Adelson, 2005, p.3).

[16] They were not the first to suggest this correlation (cf. Coteanu, 1957, p.147; Kiparsky, 1938 p.176).
[17] *The Widow Without Shoes*. [my translation] Throughout this chapter all translations from Italian and Sardinian to English shall be mine, unless explicitly mentioned otherwise.
[18] *Micheddu* is the Sardinian for *Michele*, the Italian rendition.
[19] "Oh Michael, that has left a wife young and orphaned. Pray for us. Have mercy upon us. Christ, listen, Christ, hear us. Oh God, Great Father, console with the force of your love […]" (Niffoi, 2006, p. 16).

Niffoi adopts a triple register. He uses Italian, the Sardinian dialect (Barbaracina variety) combined with a hybrid form of Italian, which has roots in his dialect and Latin. I have italicized the words in the Sardinian language. The Latin words are also italicized and are highlighted in bold. The switches from one language to another highlight and emphasise certain words. They draw links between the themes and the language typically associated with that topic (Barrett, 2014, p. 29). For example, Latin here is used for liturgy. These switches "exploit the context-meaning associated with each language" (Barrett, 2014, p. 29). In fact, Niffoi makes use of the Sardinian adjective "zovanedda" [young] and the exclamation noun "*ofaneddu*!" (orphan), which adds to the despair and pathos. The Sardinian words elicit sympathy from the reader, and also from the characters within the text. They also add a sense of realism. The religious invocation: "*O Deus, Babbu Mannu"* is more intimate when it is uttered in the Sardinian language (Niffoi, 2006, p. 15). The word "Babbo" (dad) is more personal and affectionate than the Italian word "padre" (father). Each language in Niffoi's text plays a different role. On the one hand, the switches combine to create an overall aesthetic effect. On the other hand, the choice of language can also be seen in a political light. The use of a minor language in a standard Italian text could also be perceived as an act of defiance against hegemony. Latin, on the other hand, is used here for religious rituals. Latin is the language of prestige. The text respects, in this sense, the hierarchy of languages and the social positioning of each language.

Other contributing factors in social contact also regard the intensity and duration of contact in a given community. Language contact can be due to factors, such as immigration, colonization, exile, as well as the effects of globalization. The level of bilingualism can also play a significant role in certain language contact situations. If a community is not bilingual, then normally words will be borrowed (exceptions apply. cf. Thomason & Kaufmann, 1988, Chapter 3). If there is extensive bilingualism that has lasted over a considerable amount of time, then there may be substantial structural borrowing. Extensive bilingualism does not imply that every borrowing-language speaker is bilingual. However, the longer the bilingualism the more chance there is for structural features to be transferred from one language to another (Thomason & Kaufmann, 1988, p.41-48). The size of a group, the degree of access to the target language and the length of contact time will all play a considerable part in language change and variation, to varying degrees (Thomason & Kaufmann, 1988, pp. 41-48).

Interlanguage and "Imperfect Learning" Strategies in Translingual Writing

The concepts of "interlanguage", "imperfect learning", agency and attitudinal social factors in SLA, all contribute to the understanding of language development and language variety development. (cf. diagram below) The concepts of "ease of learning" and "imperfect learning", terms used in contact studies and linguistics, play an important aspect in social considerations of language contact, as they can impact negatively or positively in the speaking and writing process.

The diagram above highlights a transitional system that ranges from the initial stages of language contact to the

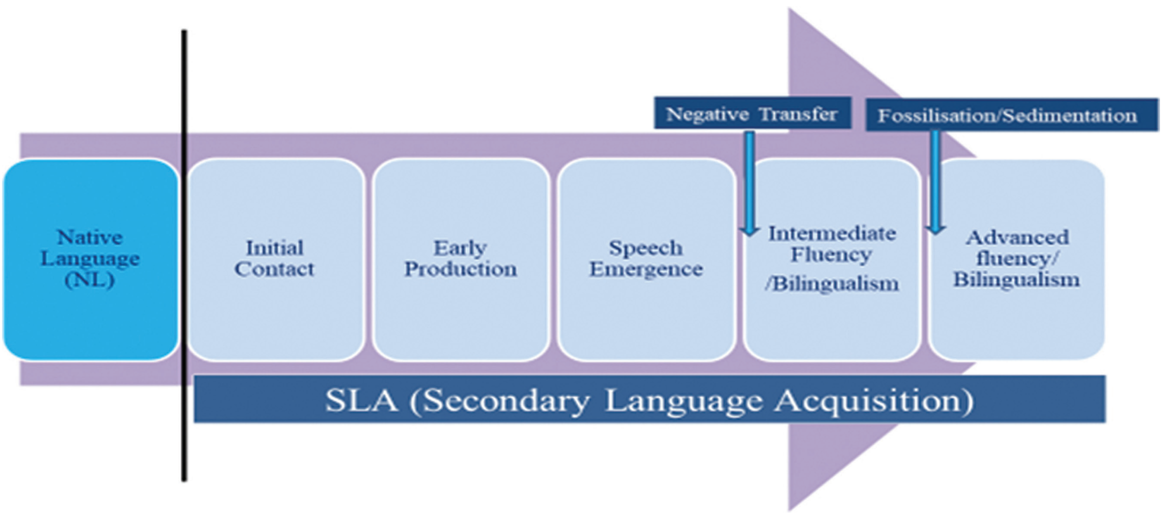

Figure 1. Interlanguage
Source: Claudia Zucca, 2020.

acquisition of language proficiency in a second language. It evidences, to some extent, a linear development, from a starting point of initial contact to full proficiency in L2. However, interlanguage does not always follow a linear trajectory, and does not always lead to full proficiency. I have included this diagram to highlight, firstly the use of terminology in interlanguage processes, and secondly, to emphasise the processes of language contact. The term "interlanguage"[20] (IL) was adopted by Selinker (1992) to describe an emerging linguistic system produced by an SLA learner during the acquisition of a TL (target language). Interlanguage is used to refer to deviations from the norms of either language (Weinreich, 1953, p.1). For Selinker, it also refers to error making in SLA (Selinker, 1992). This language system approximates the target language (TL), but at the same time, it preserves features of a second learner's first language. The diagram also highlights the process of sedimentation or fossilization, which refers to a cessation of progress towards the target language and full proficiency. All aspects of IL become entrenched and permanent (cf. Matras, 2009; Nemser 1971; Sridhar 1980; Tarone 1976). In the diagram, fossilization is situated between intermediate fluency and full proficiency. However, fossilization can occur at any stage of SLA and IL. Interlanguage and imperfect learning can produce creative literary innovations. An example of "imperfect learning strategies" can be found in the Nigerian Ken Saro-Wiwa's (1985) novel, *Sozaboy.*

> "So, although everyone was happy at first, after some time, everything begin to spoil small by small and they were saying that trouble have started. […] Radio begin dey hala[21] as 'e never hala before. Big grammar. Long words. Everytime. Before, the grammar was not plenty and everybody was happy. But now grammar begin to plenty and people were not happy. As grammar plenty, na so trouble plenty. And as trouble plenty, na so plenty people were dying" (Saro-Wiwa, 1985, p. 3).

The text is written in a blend of pidgin English (the lingua franca of the former British colonies in West Africa) and standard English. It also incorporates the prosody and rhythms of Nigerian speakers, "small by small" and "radio begin dey hala" (Saro-Wiwa, 1985, p. 3). Furthermore, it highlights aspects of imperfect learning in sentence constructions and verbal tenses, as in 'everything begin to spoil' (Saro-Wiwa, 1985, p. 3). It is relevant to point out that the text is an example of a literary construct, even if it attempts to mimic the speech of a certain community.

The text also emphasises attitudinal factors that are also present in interlanguage processes. Saro-Wiwa entitles his novel "Rotten English". By defying grammar and borders, the English language is defamiliarized, but in a creative and unique way. It is written "with delicate and consummate skill" (Boyd, 1994). Saro-Wiwa argues that the text "has no rules and no syntax", (Saro-Wiwa, 1985) however, this claim is exaggerated. In Boyd's view, "English has been skilfully hijacked – or perhaps "colonized" would be a better word." (Saro-Wiwa, 1985) In the context of attitudinal factors and imperfect learning strategies, the text can be viewed as an act of defiance. It can also be perceived as a highly creative literary invention.

The traditional view of interlanguage viewed the process of SLA as a linear sequence. However, this model does not capture the different contexts of each learner's experience. It also viewed interlanguage as an incomplete or a deficient version of the target language (Matras, 2009, p. 74). An alternative approach views interlanguage as a "composite matrix language" (Matras, 2009, p. 74). This model views language contact as a combination of three language systems. The first is the learner's L1 or N1. The second is a variety of the target language, and the third is "the developing learner variety" (Matras, 2009, p. 74) (cf. Jake, 1998; Jake & Myers-Scotton, 1997; Myers-Scotton & Jake 2000). The third learner variety differs for each speaker.

Many translingual texts also avail of imperfect learning strategies for aesthetic and literary purposes, producing innovative forms in contact situations. Gerald Durrell's (1960) travel novel, *A Zoo in My Luggage,* offers a different view on the use of imperfect learning strategies and the processes of interlanguage.

> "After breakfast, while we were attending to the animals, I happened to glance over the verandah rail and noticed on the road below a small group of men approaching the house. […]
> 'Iseeya, my friends,' I said.
> Morning, Masa', they chorused, grinning.
> Na beef, sah,' they said.
> 'But how you savvaydat I done come for Bafut for buy beef? I asked, greatly puzzled.
> 'Eh, Masa, de Fon 'e done tell us, said one of the hunters.'
> 'Good Lord, if the Fon's been spreading the news before we arrived, we'll be inundated in next to no time, said Jacquie. […]
> 'Oh well, I suppose we'll manage. Let's see what they've got.'
> I bent down, picked up a raffia bag and held it aloft.
> 'Which man bring dis? I asked" (Durrell, 1960, p.62).

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[20] However, the concept of interlanguage was first used by Uriel Weinreich (1953) in *Languages in Contact.*

[21] "holler, shout" (Wiwa-Saro, 1985, p.183).

In this particular case of contact, the speaker has learnt a form of pidgin English from the Cameroons in Western Africa. The main speaker's acquisition of a pidgin language differs to the way the African speakers have acquired an L2. According to interlanguage process, a speaker's aim is to approximate the target language L2 (cf. diagram above). However, the English speaker's point of origin, in the interlanguage diagram above, differs from that of the indigenous speakers point of origin. The speaker starts from a position of knowledge of L2, which is in actual fact his L1 (native language). In order to acquire the language, he has to deconstruct his L1, to understand where and how the language has sedimented. Furthermore, he also has to learn the local sayings and linguistic expressions, which have been integrated into the pidgin English, so that he can communicate more effectively. In a sense, the speaker also needs to go through a process of interlanguage to re-constitute the new language that has developed and emerged from a situation of contact between two cultures and languages. However, the diagram above is not fully representative of his learning curve and fails to account these unique experiences of language learning strategies. Durrell's text is an innovative example from translingual literature that demonstrates the inadequacy of models that assume a single, linear movement from L1, via an interlanguage to L2.

Of further significance, is the pivotal role that mimicry plays in discussions of interlanguage processes. Mimicry is often used in post-colonial settings to refer to the ambivalent relations between colonizer and the colonized subject. When the colonizing authority exerts expectations upon the colonized subject to learn and adopt the colonizers cultural values and language, this representation results in an imitation that can never be a faithful representation of an original copy or in the sense of the interlanguage model. Rather it resembles "a blurred copy" (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin et al. 2000, p. 124) or an obscured replica that cannot fully represent an original version. Furthermore, this new adaptation can be perceived as "quite threatening" (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin et al. 2000, p.124). The reason for this feeling of threat is that mimicry can become in turn a mockery of all that it attempts to emulate. This is because it appears to parody that which it mimics (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin et al. 2000, p.124). Furthermore, in Bhabha's view, not only does it contain a mockery, it also enhances a certain menace, "so that mimicry is at once resemblance and menace" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 86). Thus, this illusion of a faithful reproduction can be viewed as a failure of representation. In this sense, mimicry reveals the limitations of colonial discourse, what we have here is "a flawed colonial mimesis" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 87). However, this essential flaw/s is also what sets this writing apart, for it highlights the ways these texts engage with languages in situations of contact, in unique and creative ways. As a consequence, the "imperfect" rendering of what is mimicked is used as a literary aesthetic device.

Saro-Wiwa's novel is an example of the way the text critiques the colonizer's difficult grammar and "long words", by parodying the colonizers' speech. Furthermore, it includes words from Nigerian origin, such as "Yanga", "Kpuhu" and "Kotuma" (Saro-Wiwa, 1985, pp. 3, 4, 8). Thus, the relationship in the text is one of ambivalence in its form of mimicry. Saro-Wiwa uses English, but in a way that negates the very nature of the English language itself, by using language/s on his own terms. Furthermore, the text calls to the fore ambivalence, defiance and mockery in that the text moves beyond the control of colonial authority; for it disturbs the normality of dominant discourse (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin et al. 2000, p. 126). Mimicry, in this sense, is a destabilizing force, which produces innovative ways of writing that moves beyond the colonizer's language into a new terrain.

On the other hand, Durrell's passage above asks us to question how the discourse of mimicry actually works in reverse situations of contact, where the speaker in the context is the one learning a pidgin language (cf. Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2000, pp.124-17). What type of relationship is established? There is evidently a reversal in the mimicry relationship, with the speaker trying to adapt to the colonized subject's position. However, it is a dubious transference, specifically in the way the speaker is viewed by the locals. This is due to the fact that traces of colonial discourse remain, as is evidenced in the use of the words, such as 'masa' (master) and "sah" (sir) (Durrell, 1960, p. 62). The speaker has to obtain different species of animals. To do so, he must be able to communicate with the locals. He needs to emulate, thus mimic their speech patterns, to a certain extent, so that he is understood. Mimicking, in this sense, is also an act and a means of gaining trust. In contrast, Jacquie never talks pidgin English. This evidences resistance towards that which is "other" and "difference". It also highlights the role of hegemony. In this extract she talks to the Fon, the leader of the locals,

> "Did you like the Queen?' asked Jacquie
> 'Wah! Like? I like um too much" (Durrell, 1960, p.60).

However, even though the speaker has managed to learn how to emulate the speech forms and patterns of the locals, he still fails to understand all the subtle cultural nuances between races, he writes,

> "I underestimated the Fon's abilities. He had obviously realized that any publicity is better than none" (Durrell, 1960, p. 60).

Mimicry is not a straightforward process. It is complex and multi-layered on both ends of the spectrum. It reveals the limitations of colonial discourse, and also the limitations and failures of colonial appropriation of local speech,

Conclusion

This article has applied the term translingualism to refer to texts which use more than one language in interactive and generative ways, rather than referring to languages in an additive manner. It has availed of what I term, a "literary translingual practice" (LTP). This methodological approach is a text-focused interpretative evaluation of texts. It analyses the linguistic structures within the texts, and the linguistic processes that occur in situations of contact, such as linguistic interferences, borrowing, loan transfers, code-switching, code-mixing and code-meshing. In this regard, the approach adopted is interdisciplinary, for it avails of contact linguistics to explore literary translingual texts and speech utterances. Its objective is to understand the way translingual texts negotiate and foreground linguistic differences and cultural identities. My findings have suggested that a translingual approach to texts enables an understanding of the relationships between languages and cultures. A literary translingual practice enhances an understanding of languages as fluid, generative and interactive in situations of linguistic and cultural contact.

The linguistic findings in this article are also integrated with an investigation of the cultural, social, geographical, historical, and the political, which inform the texts, to varying degrees. My findings have also suggested that "imperfect learning" strategies are often viewed as negative elements in learning strategies (SLA). However, in a translingual context, these elements are considered in a creative light, generating new aesthetic literary works that further distinguish translingual texts. Translingual representations have a tendency to defy monolingual ideologies and expectations, as well as challenge language boundaries and ideas of homogenous language systems. Furthermore, my findings have highlighted the importance of viewing translingual texts and phenomena as products of contact, and in more contemporary contexts, to consider these as a result and effect of global contact.

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Re-Thinking Leadership: Current and Future Challenges

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ABSTRACT

The literature of LEADERSHIP (and Leaders, etc) is legion. From Plato's great work- The REPUBLIC to uncountable others such as several of Shakespeare's plays where the concept is explored through intense drama writers have put forward many ideas and views that suggest what Leadership connotes and just how puzzling and complex it can be. There are paradigms that also surface: for instance, one posits that God is the ultimate Leader and all subsequent follow HIM- either by expanding or by challenging and even negating HIS expectations and wishes. The discussion proceeds unabated!

Keywords: Leadership, Leaders, Expectations, Results, Challenges.

Future Leadership

In what follows I take liberty to state and share a few thoughts about what may broadly be termed **Future Leadership**.

Leadership is probably one of the oldest themes in most management literature. Indeed, even if we begin with Plato and his notion of the philosopher-king we are looking back more than two thousand years. Recent excavations around several different sites reveal that mankind have been considering the issues and challenges associated with Leadership for eons. One particular focus becomes clear: while the responses to good and bad leadership may differ the end-results were chiefly similar: continuity of good leaders and discontinuity -sometimes assured by death -of bad leaders. The late entry of so-called **democracy** and even parliamentary process(es) has not altered basic assumptions too much. The emphasis still remains on *efficient delivery of promises.*

Expectations naturally vary from time to time as well as specific locations where such leadership is executed. From appointments of leaders made and sanctioned by God Almighty to numerous forms of appointment by nomination and election, etc. The mandate eventually given and obtained by leaders does shed light on subtle ways of ensuring that bad leaders, in particular, were efficiently and presently, removed while those perceived to be good were enticed and encouraged to stay on. Of course, many nations evolved their own unique frameworks for leadership choice as well as tenure.

However, notwithstanding details- and observing broadly the more general and consensual patterns- certain expectations and associated behaviours emerged. I venture to list and describe a few key ones below, with the proviso that these are neither exhaustive nor limiting. I hope that readers will be able to utilise my categorizations as these inspire and/or upset them and come up with unique and better working frameworks.

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TRUST

From Day One TRUST has been paramount in terms of our expectations of good leaders. Without Trust nothing much seems achievable while given Trust the sky seems to be the limit (in common parlance). But this TRUST-word can be tricky and, indeed, problematic. For different cultures and individuals define TRUST in unique and even particularized manner. It is vital, therefore, to have the key players involved agree on the primary definitions.

POSITIVITY

We all know that the absence of POSITIVITY can be highly debilitating. Thus, we yearn for the positive in our leaders. It cannot be denied that when and where positivity exists and works as the operatus mundi plentiful gains are expected as well as frequently obtained. The challenge here is how properly to ascertain and use positivity.

COMMUNICATION

Especially in our current time most want to see that COMMUNICATION at all levels (from bottom up especially but also from different sides) operates in a happy but minimally in an efficient manner. When and where such communication channels are absent there is bound to be irked employees who may resort to unpleasant means to make themselves heard/known.

CULTURE

Good workplace CULTURE is increasingly another must. The challenge here is huge and daunting. But experience shows that the time and energies spent on arriving at a consensus pertaining to culture at the workplace results in constructive acceptance of decisions arrived at.

ADAPTABILITY

For organisations and teams to thrive it is crucial that they remain nimble and ready to adapt to changing circumstances. There will always be challenges and unforeseen interruptions disrupting set agendas, etc. The willingness to adapt and change without too much loss always gives a distinct advantage to organisations by keeping them nimble.

EXEMPELARY CONDUCT

This last element of good and positive Workplace Culture is never to be taken for granted no matter how compelling the reasons to do such may be. All organizations experience loss of staff and hiring of new. Habits die hard but some habits hinder rather than help progress. These can be insidious and must be nipped ASAP.

When the above enumerated six characteristics obtain an organisation may be said to be optimally directed. Of course, there will be CEOs that insist on doing things differently from their predecessors and even their other contemporaries. The point is to be consistent and not change just because someone else is.

At the end of the day though much is always dependent on circumstances -both within and without. With experience most leaders are able to manage expectations and also maintain their own unique positionings. This understanding provides the necessary confidence needed in trying times.

Biographical Statement of Author(s)

Prof. Kirpal Singh, a Colombo Plan scholar is an internationally respected poet, fictionist, and thinker. For over 20 years he taught English Language and Literature at the National University of Singapore and at the Nanyang Technological University, before being asked to join the Singapore Management University where he taught Creative Thinking.

He has many books to his credit, including the highly provocative Thinking Hats & Coloured Turbans: Creativity Across Cultures (2004) which contributed several original insights into the nature of creativity, especially in terms of language. Kirpal has written and published three collections of poetry and edited many literary journals and books. He was a founding member of the Centre for Research in New Literatures, Flinders University, Australia in 1977, the first Asian director for the Commonwealth Writers' Prize in 1993 and 1994, and chairman of the Singapore Writers' Festival in the 1990s.

Singh is an internationally recognised scholar whose core research areas include post-colonial literature, Singapore and Southeast Asian, literature and technology, and creativity thinking. He has won research awards and grants from local and foreign universities. His research articles and critical writings have been published in international journals such as Ariel, Diogene, Commonwealth Novel In English, Literary Criterion, Quadrant, Southern Review and Westerly. He has written three books of poetry and edited over 15 publications, including the prestigious literary journal, World Literature Written in English. He has attended international writers' festivals in Adelaide, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Toronto and Kent, to give readings of his works. He had the distinction of being the first Asian director of the prestigious Commonwealth Writers' Prize in 1993 and 1994. In addition, Singh is a member of several international literary journals and associations. Currently, he is involved in conceptualising and promoting creative thinking in Singapore's undergraduate education system at the Singapore Management University (SMU). In 2004, Singh became the first Asian and non-American to be made a director on the American Creativity Association's (ACA) board.

Kirpal is also the first non-American to be elected to the Board of Directors of the ACA-American Creativity Association where he has served as the Vice-President and Chairman of ACA since 2006. As the author of more than 150 articles and essays, Kirpal is an authority in several fields of literary endeavour. Currently, he is an esteemed Futurist invited to share his visions of the future with audiences worldwide.

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Consciousness, Death, Soul, and Sikhi: Scientifically Interconnected with each other

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ABSTRACT

For thousands of years, consciousness, death, and soul have been studied by philosophers. Consciousness refers to the awareness of unique thoughts, memories, feelings, sensations, and environments in humans. Stopping of heartbeat and breathing was considered the cause of death. On the other hand, it was considered that all functions of life are controlled by the soul so much so that thinking, and emotion are also controlled by it. Death was caused when the soul leaves the body. However, the latest research indicates that the irreversible loss of consciousness is the cause of death. Scientific discoveries indicate that consciousness, neuroscience, and death are interconnected with each other. However, the soul has got nothing to do with consciousness or death. This paper discusses that there are great similarities found between scientific knowledge and Sikhi (philosophy in the Sikh Holy scriptures) about consciousness, death, and soul. This indicates that the interconnectedness between consciousnesses and death has been long acknowledged in Sikhi even before the time of science.

Keywords: *Atma* (ਆਤਮਾ), awareness**,** brain, Jot**,** neuroscience, reincarnation.

INTRODUCTION

For thousands of years, the human consciousness was studied by philosophers. It was Rene Descartes's philosophy that mind and body are distinct—a thesis now called "mind-body dualism." He reached this conclusion by arguing that the nature of the mind (that is, a thinking, non-extended thing) is completely different from that of the body (that is, an extended, non-thinking thing), and therefore one can exist without the other (Skirry, n.d.) Consciousness refers to your awareness of your unique thoughts, memories, feelings, sensations, and environments. Essentially, your consciousness is your awareness of yourself and the world around you. This awareness is subjective and unique to you. Consciousness has intrigued philosophers and scientists for thousands of years, thus, researchers have to continue to explore the different bases of consciousness including the physical, social, cultural, and psychological influences that contribute to our conscious awareness. (Cherry, 2020)

Consciousness research has focused on understanding the neuroscience behind our conscious experiences and finding out specific neurons that might be linked to different conscious events. (Koch, 2018)

For many centuries, people were considered dead when they stopped breathing and when their hearts stopped beating. However, during the era of medical intensive research, the cessation of brain functions began to be considered the main clinical sign for diagnosing death, indicating its interconnection with consciousness.

According to ancient theories, the soul is responsible for mental or psychological functions like thought, perception, desire, and even for all the vital functions of living organisms. (Lorenz, 2009) Scientific studies about consciousness and death indicate that a soul has no interconnection with them at all. However, some phrases and stanzas from 'Sikhi' were collected which were interconnected with consciousness, death, and soul.

METHODOLOGY

Scientific literature on consciousness, death, soul, and Sikhi was collected to understand what they are and to discover if there is any interconnection with each other. For the effective presentation of this article, further concerned literature has been quoted along with discussion to make it easy to understand the interconnection among consciousness, death, soul, and Sikhi by the researchers and the readers. Some Sikh terms used in this article have been defined under Methodology.

Sikh Terms Defined

Some Sikh terms have been defined for the readers to understand their meanings in their real perspective:

"Sikhi" is being used as a replacement for "Sikhism" by many Sikh and non-Sikh writers. However, there is a great difference between "Sikhi" and "Sikhism". "Sikhi" has been defined by Guru Nanak as follows: (Chahal, 2002a) (Chahal, 2021)
ਸਿਖੀ[1] ਸਿਖਿਆ[2] ਗੁਰ[3] ਵੀਚਾਰਿ[4] ॥

Sikẖī sikẖi▫ā gur vīcẖār.

Sikhi[1] *is the teachings*[2] *which are based on the enlightening*[3] *philosophy*[4]*.*

AGGS, M 1, p 465.

Notes:

ਸਿਖੀ **(Sikhi):** This word is understood as a verb to "learn" by many theologians thus they go far away from the real theme while interpreting the above phrase. Here "Sikhi" is a noun.

ਸਿਖਿਆ *(Sikhia*/Teachings): something that is taught: philosophy.

ਵੀਚਾਰਿ (*Vicha)*/Philosophy: the branch of knowledge or academic study devoted to the systematic examination of basic concepts such as truth, existence, reality, causality, and freedom; a particular system of thought or doctrine.

This type of "**Sikhi"** has not been disseminated by the followers of Guru Nanak.

It becomes evident from the above definition that "SIKHI" is a "philosophy of Guru Nanak", embodied in his bani incorporated in the Holy Scripture of the Sikhs. Nevertheless, his followers converted "SIKHI" slowly and steadily into a highly institutionalized religion, "SIKHISM". Therefore, the simple difference between them is that "Sikhi" is the philosophy of Guru Nanak, and "Sikhism" is a religion based on the philosophy of Guru Nanak plus the philosophies of the next five Gurus, 15 Bhagats, 11 Bhatts, and 4 Sikhs. Besides the philosophies of *Dasam Granth* of Guru Gobind Singh, *Vaaran* of Bhai Gurdas, and many other writings are also included to formulate "Sikhism".

Nanakian Philosophy is defined as: *"A philosophy promulgated by Guru Nanak that was taught and enriched by other nine Sikh Gurus, who succeeded to the House of Nanak*." (Chahal, 2002c).

Title of the Sikh Holi Scripture: There is no standardized title for the Sikh Holy Scripture, instead every writer has their preference of using the title as *Adi Granth, Guru Granth, Guru Granth Sahib, Sri Guru Granth Sahib,* etc. However, the first copy scribed by Bhai Gurdas under the guidance of Guru Arjun was called "*pothi*". The current version of this "*pothi*" includes the bani of the 9th Guru, Teg Bahadur, which was added by Guru Gobind Singh. Guru Gobind Singh declared this version of "*Poth*i" as a *Guru Granth*. It is printed by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), Amritsar which carries the title *Aad Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.* Surprisingly, nobody uses this title. Chahal, after critical analysis of this issue, discovered that in this title "Shri" before "Guru" is redundant, as is "Ji" after "Sahib". Therefore, the right title for Sikh Holy Scripture is **"Aad Guru Granth Sahib"** (abbreviated as AGGS). (Chahal, 2002b) This title has been consistently used by the Institute for Understanding Sikhism in its journal, *Understanding Sikhism: The Research Journal.*

Referencing the Bani. Some writers use only the page number without indicating the source: a Granth, a book, or an article; they do not write the name of the author of the bani (it is academically incorrect), however, some write *Mahla* Number (M 1, M2, etc.). A few writers try to indicate reference as "Adi Granth and page number", "Guru Granth and page number", "Sri Guru Granth Sahib and page number", and some may add Mahla and the Name of the author of the bani. Chahal devised a standardized method of reference for bani as follows:

AGGS, M 5, p 663.

AGGS stands for the Aad Guru Granth Sahib, *M* stands for Mahal, *5* stands for the fifth succession to the House of Nanak (Guru Arjun), and *p* stands for the page of the AGGS. *M* is replaced with the name of a Bhagat or Bhatt for their bani. (Chahal, 1999)

Bani (words of Guru): Bani has been used in the singular as well as plural forms. I used the etymology of each word to find the most appropriate meanings for the main theme in that phrase. Each word is numbered as a superscript and the same number is used to indicate the meaning of that word in the interpretation so that the readers could easily understand the interpretation. Bani **q**uoted here has been interpreted by the application of logic and scientific information. Consequently, my interpretation is different from the traditional interpretation found in the literature.

LITERATURE AND DISCUSSION

1. CONSCIOUSNESS

a) Consciousness in science

Leisman & Koch (2009) say that technology reveals that brain activity is associated with consciousness and conventional explanations portray consciousness as an emergent property of classical computer-like activities in the brain's neural networks. But their views are that patterns of neural network activities correlate with mental states, that synchronous network oscillations in the thalamus and cerebral cortex temporally bind information, and that consciousness emerges as a novel property of computational complexity among neurons. Despite millions of analyses, consciousness remains puzzling and controversial. In the simplest definition, consciousness is considered as sentience or awareness. Today, it often includes any kind of cognition, experience, feeling or perception, awareness, and self-awareness. On the other hand, Searle says, "*that consciousness is a biological phenomenon like any other, then it can be investigated neurobiologically. Consciousness is entirely caused by neurobiological processes and is realized in brain structures.*" (Searle, 2000) Therefore, it becomes necessary to understand neurons.

Neurons

According to Brain Facts/Society for Neuroscience, each mammalian neuron consists of a cell, cell body, dendrites, and an axon. Figs. 1 and 2)

Neurons are cells within the nervous system that transmit information to other nerve cells, muscle, or gland cells. The cell body contains the nucleus and cytoplasm. The axon extends from the cell body and often gives rise to many smaller branches before ending at nerve terminals. Dendrites extend from the neuron cell body and receive messages from other neurons. Synapses are the contact points where one neuron communicates with another. The dendrites are covered with synapses formed by the ends of axons from other neurons. (Society for Neuroscience, 2012)

Newly developed techniques for measuring brain activity are enabling scientists to refine their theories about what consciousness is, how it forms in the brain, and where the

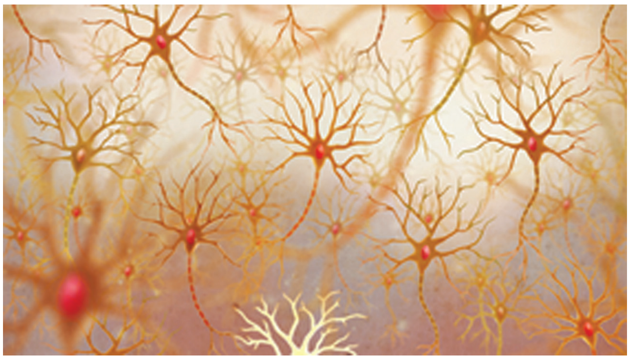

Figure 1. How Neurons Communicate. From Brain Facts.

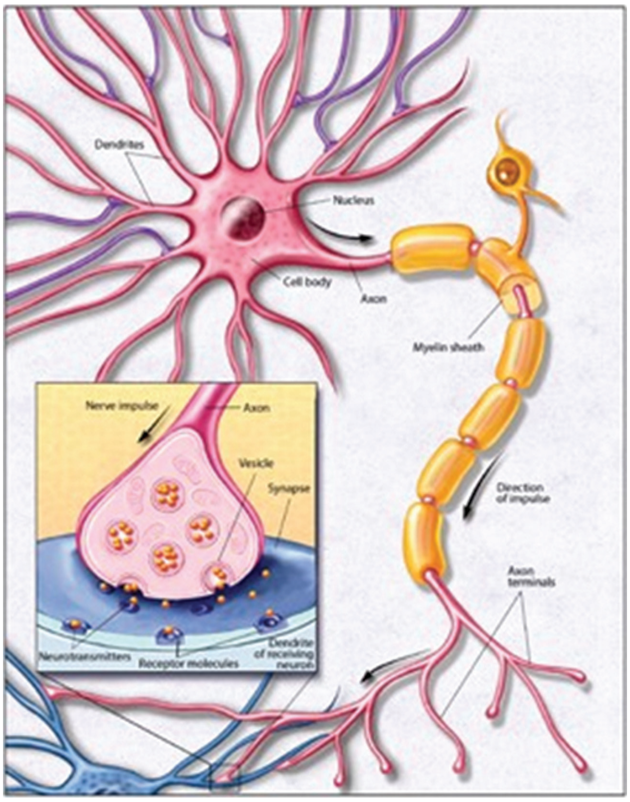

Figure 2. Illustration by Lydia V. Kibiuk, Baltimore, MD; Devon Stuart, Harrisburg, PA.

boundaries lie between being conscious and unconscious. Understanding consciousness can help researchers explore the possibility of treating brain injuries, phobias, mental health issues, and schizophrenia. (Sohn, 2019)

The seat of conscious awareness is closely related to the cerebral cortex. Each experience corresponds to a specific set of neural activity, called neural correlates consciousness (NCC) in a posterior hot zone of the brain, parietal, occipital, and temporal lobes of the cerebral cortex. Fig. 3.

The brain can be considered a Neuronal Correlates of Consciousness (NCC) since it generates experience, day in and day out. But the seat of consciousness can be further ring-fenced. Take the spinal cord, a foot-and-a-half-long flexible tube of nervous tissue inside the backbone with around a billion nerve cells. If the spinal cord is completely severed by trauma to the neck region, the body is paralyzed in the legs, arms, and torso, without bowel and bladder, and bodily sensations. Yet that person can see, hear, smell, feel emotions, and remember as much as before the incident that radically changed their life. (Koch, 2018)

CONSCIOUSNESS IN SIKHI

In ancient philosophy and according to many theologians of various religions, consciousness is considered the soul. They think that it is the soul that controls all the activities of the body. As soon as the soul, which is considered indestructible, leaves the body, the person dies. Let us discuss what sort of interconnection of consciousness is with Sikhi:

Guru Nanak explains that all living beings have the same consciousness without mentioning the soul as follows:

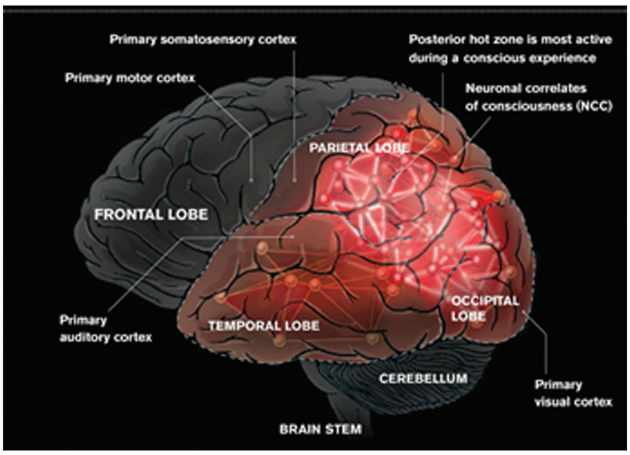

Figure 3. Illustration by Mesa Schumacher.

ਏਕਾ[1] ਸੁਰਤਿ[2] ਜੇਤੇ[3] ਹੈ ਜੀਅ[4] ॥
Ėkā suraṯ jeṯe hai jī▫a.
ਸੁਰਤਿ[5] ਵਿਹੂਣਾ[6] ਕੋਇ ਨ ਕੀਅ[7] ॥
Suraṯ vihūṇā ko▫e na kī▫a.
ਜੇਹੀ[8] ਸੁਰਤਿ[9] ਤੇਹਾ ਤਿਨ ਰਾਹੁ[10] ॥
Jehī suraṯ ṯehā ṯin rāhu.
ਲੇਖਾ[11] ਇਕੋ ਆਵਹੁ ਜਾਹੁ[12] ॥੧॥
Lekẖā iko āvhu jāhu. ||1||
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 24.

There is the same[1] consciousness[2] in all[3] living beings[4].
Since no living being is evolved[7] without[6] consciousness[5].
The living beings will follow the way of life[10] according to their level[8] of consciousness[9].
They come into existence (take birth) and go away (die)[12] according to the
Information written[11] (on their genes) and circumstances around them.
AGGS. M 1, p 24.

Guru Nanak's following verse explains that the seat of consciousness is in the brain, metaphorically named *Dasam duar*:

ਪਉਣੈ[1] ਪਾਣੀ[2] ਅਗਨੀ[3] ਕਾ ਮੇਲੁ[4] ॥
Pa▫uṇai pāṇī agnī kā mel.
ਚੰਚਲ[5] ਚਪਲ[6] ਬੁਧਿ[7] ਕਾ ਖੇਲੁ[8] ॥
Cẖancẖal cẖapal buḏẖ kā kẖel.
ਨਉ ਦਰਵਾਜੇ[9] *ਦਸਵਾ ਦੁਆਰੁ[10] ॥
Na▫o ḏarvāje ḏasvā ḏu▫ār.
ਬੁਝੁ[11] ਰੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ[12] ਏਹੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ[13] ॥੧॥
Bujẖ re gi▫ānī ehu bīcẖār. ||1||
ਕਥਤਾ[14] ਬਕਤਾ[15] ਸੁਨਤਾ[16] ਸੋਈ ॥
Kathṯā bakṯā sunṯā so▫ī.
ਆਪੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੇ[17] ਸੁ ਗਿਆਨੀ[18] ਹੋਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
Āp bīcẖāre so gi▫ānī ho▫ī. ||1|| rahā▫o.
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 152.

The combination[4] of air[1], water[2], and energy[3] (various elements) make the wonderful[5] body[6] and intellect[7] to work[8].
*There are nine openings[9] in this body (to outside) and the tenth is the (neuron system) brain[10] *(Dasam duar) without any opening (to outside).*
Reflect[13] upon and discover[11] this system, O wise[12] one. 1.
The one, who teaches[14], speaks[15], and listens[16], and contemplates[17] about this system is truly a wise[18] person.
1. Pause.
AGGS, M 1, p 152.

Note: *ਦਸਵਾ ਦੁਆਰੁ[10] (*Dasam duar – tenth door)*: It is a mythical term without any door (opening to outside) considered as a place where God or soul resides. However, according to Sikhi (Nanakian Philosophy), *Dasam duar* refers to the brain. There is no such place in the body or elsewhere for God to reside. God (Eternal Entity) pervades everywhere in the Universe. Prof Sahib Singh (Singh, 1972) also interprets Dasam *duar* as the brain. Although there are 10 openings, 2 eyes, 2 ears, 2 nostrils, 1 mouth, 1 annus, 1 urethra, and 1 vulva, there is no door to the ਦਸਵਾ ਦੁਆਰੁ (*Dasam duar*) which opens to outside. However, it has an opening inside the body through which the spinal card (composed of millions of nerves passes through the backbone and its nerves go to every part and organ of the body and interconnect the body and organs with the brain (*Dasam duar*). *Dasam duar* (brain) composed of millions of neurons and synopses is responsible for the creation of consciousness.

In the following phrase, Guru Nanak has clearly explained the *Dasam duar* as the brain:

ਚੰਦਨੁ[1] ਚੀਤਿ[2] ਵਸਾਇਆ[3] ਮੰਦਰੁ[4] ਦਸਵਾ[5] ਦੁਆਰੁ[6] ॥
Cẖanḏan cẖīṯ vasā▫i▫ā manḏar ḏasvā ḏu▫ār.
ਦੀਪਕੁ[7] ਸਬਦਿ[8] ਵਿਗਾਸਿਆ[9] ਰਾਮ[10] ਨਾਮੁ[11] ਉਰ[12] ਹਾਰੁ[13] ॥੫॥
Ḏīpak sabaḏ vigāsi▫ā rām nām ur hār. ||5||
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 54

Consciousness[2] is like the essence of sandal wood[1] in[3] the brain[5,6] (dasam[5] duar[6]), which is equated[5] to the place of a brain[4].
The Eternal Entity (God)[10] and the Laws of Nature/ Universe[11] were realized/understood[9] by the brain through the enlightening[7] Sabd[8] which is like a necklace[13] on my chest (in my mind)[1].
AGGS, M 1, p 54.

Note: ਚੰਦਨੁ (*Chandan*): Means the essence of sandalwood, but metaphorically it is considered God (Eternal Entity) by many theologians.
ਚੀਤਿ (*chit*): The consciousness that originates due to actions of millions of neurons and synapses in the brain.
ਮੰਦਰੁ[4] ਦਸਵਾ[5] ਦੁਆਰੁ[6] (*manḏar ḏasvā ḏu▫ār*): A temple is a metaphoric place for the brain where one's consciousness comprehends God.

Consciousness Interconnected with Death

The following verse explains the stages in humans, which lead to death because of senility of various organs:

ਨੈਨੀ[1] ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ[2] ਨਹੀ ਤਨੁ[3] ਹੀਨਾ[4] ਜਰਿ[5] ਜੀਤਿਆ[6] ਸਿਰਿ[7] ਕਾਲੋ[8] ॥
Nainī ḏarisat nahī ṯan hīnā jar jīṯi▫ā sir kālo.
ਰੂਪੁ[9] ਰੰਗੁ[10] ਰਹਸੁ[11] ਨਹੀ ਸਾਚਾ[12] ਕਿਉ ਛੋਡੈ[13] ਜਮ[14] ਜਾਲੋ[15] ॥੧॥
Rūp rang rahas nahī sācẖā ki▫o cẖẖodai jam jālo. ||1||
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 1125.

You have lost most of the power of seeing[2] from your eyes[1], your body[3] has become weak[4], the old age[5] has overcome[6] you and the death[8] of consciousness (real death) is approaching[7].
Although there is neither beauty[9, 10] on your face nor any sign of contentment[11] in your mind, even then why should you leave[13] the path of righteousness[12] although the death[14] is evident[15].
AGGS, M 1, p 1125.

The above phrase indicates that the senility of various organs and the body will lead to the senility of the brain and consciousness, and ultimately death. There is no information in the above stanza if the consciousness relates to the so-called soul as is accepted in many religions and cultures. It is the degeneration of integrative functions which leads to the death of consciousness, i.e., real death. The death of consciousness occurs due to the senility of the vital organs (heart and Lungs) since these cannot supply enough oxygen to the neurons in the brain. There is no mention of the loss of a soul. Similarly, nowhere has Machado mentioned any loss of a soul as the cause of death in his study. Death is the loss of consciousness (explained later). (Machado, 2010) Consciousness is the product of neurons in the brain and through the intensive nervous system of the body, the completely integrated physiological processes of life work together in an ordered manner.

There is extensive use of the words e.g., *Atma* (ਆਤਮਾ), *jio* (ਜੀਉ)*, and jot* (ਜੋਤਿ) in the AGGS. Many Sikh theologians interpret these words under the influence of Vedas and Vedanta philosophies in which the death of consciousness is compared with the loss of the soul which leaves the body either to enter the cycle of reincarnation, to heaven or hell. For example,

ਜੀਉ (**Jio**) is usually translated as 'soul' by many theologians but here Guru Nanak has used it as ਜੀਵਨ (*Jeevan*) 'Life:

ਸੁੰਞੀ[1] ਦੇਹ[2] ਡਰਾਵਣੀ[3] ਜਾ ਜੀਉ[4] ਵਿਚਹੁ[5] ਜਾਇ[6] ॥
Suñī ḏeh darāvaṇī jā jī▫o vicẖahu jā▫e.
The dead[1] body[2] looks frightening[3] when there are no[6] life[4] activities in it[5].
AGGS, M 1, p 19.

Now Guru Nanak explains real death as the death of consciousness as follows:

ਦੇਹੀ[1] ਮਾਟੀ[2] ਬੋਲੈ[3] ਪਉਣੁ[4] ॥
Ḏehī mātī bolai pa▫uṇ.
ਬੁਝੁ[5] ਰੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ[6] ਮੂਆ[7] ਹੈ ਕਉਣੁ[8] ॥
Bujẖ re gi▫ānī mū▫ā hai ka▫uṇ.
ਮੂਈ[9] ਸੁਰਤਿ[10] ਬਾਦੁ[11] ਅਹੰਕਾਰੁ[12] ॥
Mū▫ī suraṯ bāḏ aha'nkār.
ਓਹੁ ਨ ਮੂਆ[13] ਜੋ ਦੇਖਣਹਾਰੁ[14] ॥੨॥
Oh na mū▫ā jo ḏekẖaṇhār. ||2||
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 152.

The body[1] is made of soil[2] (various elements) and one speaks[3] with the vibration of wind[4].
Try to understand[5], O wise one[6], who[8] has died[7].
It is the death[9] of consciousness[10], which caused the failure of body functions and with the death of consciousness also died duality[11] and the egoistic[12] nature - the products of consciousness.
What you see[14] the body is not dead[13] it was the consciousness, the brain, which has stopped working. 2.
AGGS, M 1, p 152.

Medically, death means that the consciousness ceases to function. Consciousness is the product of millions of neurons and synapses interacting in the brain. Therefore, when the brain is dead then there is no more consciousness, thereby, the body's physiology stops. However, after the death of the brain, the body can be kept functional for some days or months with the life-supporting apparatus.

In the following stanza, Guru Nanak has not mentioned anything about the fate of the soul after death but questions? Does any special treatment of the body decide the future of the so-called soul after death? Guru Nanak has explained in the following verse that whatsoever respect or treatment is given to the corpse, it does not make any difference whether the so-called soul of that body will go to heaven, hell, or enters the cycle of birth-death:

ਇਕ ਦਝਹਿ[1] ਇਕ ਦਬੀਅਹਿ[2] ਇਕਨਾ ਕੁਤੇ[3] ਖਾਹਿ ॥
Ik ḏajẖėh ik ḏabī▫ah iknā kuṯe kẖāhi.
ਇਕਿ ਪਾਣੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਉਸਟੀਅਹਿ[4] ਇਕਿ ਭੀ ਫਿਰਿ ਹਸਣਿ[5] ਪਾਹਿ ॥
Ik pāṇī vicẖ ustī▫ah ik bẖī fir hasaṇ pāhi.
ਨਾਨਕ ਏਵ ਨ ਜਾਪਈ[6] ਕਿਥੈ ਜਾਇ ਸਮਾਇ[7] ॥੨॥
Nānak ev na jāp▫ī kithai jā▫e samāhi. ||2||
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 648.

Nanak Says:

After death, some bodies are burnt[1], some are buried[2] and some are left to be eaten by dogs[3] (and vultures).
Some are thrown[4] in water, while others are thrown into a dry well[5].
(Whatsoever the method of disposal may be.)
There is no evidence[6] where one (so-called soul) goes[7] after death.
AGGS, M 1, p 648.

Guru Nanak again states that there is no world after death where one will reap the benefits/punishments of the *karma* (deeds) performed during this life:

ਮਤੁ[1] ਕੋ ਜਾਣੈ[2] ਜਾਇ ਅਗੈ[3] ਪਾਇਸੀ[4] ॥
Maṯ ko jāṇai jā▫e agai pā▫isī.
ਜੇਹੇ ਕਰਮ[5] ਕਮਾਇ[6] ਤੇਹਾ ਹੋਇਸੀ[7] ॥
Jehe karam kamā▫e ṯehā ho▫isī.
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 730.

Nanak Says:

One must not[1] understand[2] that the *<u>karmas</u>* *(good or bad deeds) of the current life are rewarded[4] in the next world[3]. It is here in this world, what[5] (deeds[5]) you sow[6] so shall you reap[7].*
AGGS, M 1, p 730.

Guru Nanak further explains that it is not known wherefrom does one (a soul) come from at birth and where one (a soul) goes after death:

ਜਾਤੋ[1] ਜਾਇ[2] ਕਹਾ ਤੇ ਆਵੈ[3] ॥
Jāṯo jā▫e kahā ṯe āvai.
ਕਹ ਉਪਜੈ[4] ਕਹ ਜਾਇ ਸਮਾਵੈ[5] ॥
Kah upjai kah jā▫e samāvai.
ਕਿਉ ਬਾਧਿਓ[6] ਕਿਉ ਮੁਕਤੀ[7] ਪਾਵੈ ॥
Ki▫o bāḏẖi▫o ki▫o mukṯī pāvai.
ਕਿਉ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ[8] ਸਹਜਿ ਸਮਾਵੈ[9] ॥੧॥
Ki▫o abẖināsī sahj samāvai. ||1||

How can we know[1] where did we come from[3] and where will we go[2]?
Where did we originate[4], and where will we go or merge[5] into?
How are we bonded[6] and how are we liberated[7]?
How do we merge[9] with the indestructible[8] Entity with ease? 1.

ਨਾਮੁ[10] ਰਿਦੈ[11] ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ[12] ਮੁਖਿ[13] ਨਾਮੁ[14] ॥
Nām riḏai amriṯ mukẖ nām.
ਨਰਹਰ[15] ਨਾਮੁ[16] ਨਰਹਰ ਨਿਹਕਾਮੁ[17] ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
Narhar nām narhar nihkām. ||1|| rahā▫o.

Comprehending[11] working of Laws of Natures/Universe[10] is the elixir[12] (Amrit) of life and remembering[13] them[14] make *one to understand that the Eternal Entity[15] is the Laws of Nature/Universe[16] and make him selfless/desirefree[17].* 1. Pause

Note: ਨਾਮੁ (*Naam*): Here it means the Laws of Nature/Universe.

ਸਹਜੇ[18] ਆਵੈ ਸਹਜੇ ਜਾਇ ॥
Sėhje āvai sėhje jā▫e.
ਮਨ[19] ਤੇ ਉਪਜੈ[20] ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਸਮਾਇ[21] ॥
Man ṯe upjai man māhi samā▫e.
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮੁਕਤੋ[22] ਬੰਧੁ[23] ਨ ਪਾਇ ॥
Gurmukẖ mukṯo banḏẖ na pā▫e.
ਸਬਦੁ[24] ਬੀਚਾਰਿ[25] ਛੁਟੈ[26] ਹਰਿ ਨਾਇ[27] ॥੨॥
Sabaḏ bīcẖār cẖẖutai har nā▫e. ||2||
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 152.

Under the Laws of Nature[18], one comes (born) and under the same laws, one goes away (dies).
Consciousness arises[20] in the brain/mind[19] (by the interaction of neurons in the brain) and works[21].
Through[27] the comprehension[25] of sabd[24] and the Laws of Nature/Universe[27], the Guru-oriented (enlightened) person is liberated[22] and does not fall into any bondage[23]. 2.
AGGS, M 1, p 152.

Note:
ਸਹਜੇ[18], ਸਹਜਿ (*sejay, sehj)* has many meanings, depending on the context in which it has been used. It means easily, tranquility, etc. Prof Sahib Singh says: it means according to Laws of Nature/Universe on page 11, Volume II. (Singh, 1972) ਸਬਦੁ (sand) as described in *Pauri* (stanza) # 38 of JAP bani of Guru Nanak.

Finally, Guru Arjun sums up Nanakian Philosophy about death as follows:

ਪਵਨੈ[1] ਮਹਿ ਪਵਨੁ ਸਮਾਇਆ[2] ॥
Pavnai mėh pavan samā▫i▫ā.
ਜੋਤੀ[3] ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਰਲਿ ਜਾਇਆ ॥
Joṯī mėh joṯ ral jā▫i▫ā.
ਮਾਟੀ[4] ਮਾਟੀ ਹੋਈ ਏਕ ॥
Mātī mātī ho▫ī ek.
ਰੋਵਨਹਾਰੇ[5] ਕੀ ਕਵਨ ਟੇਕ ॥੧॥
Rovanhāre kī kavan tek. ||1||

The air[1] (gases) merges[2] into the air.
The energy[3] is amalgamated with energy.
The minerals[4] (of the body) become part of the soil.
Who will take care of those who are lamenting[5]? 1.
(Since the lamenting persons will also be dying.)

ਕਉਨੁ[6] ਮੂਆ[7] ਰੇ ਕਉਨੁ ਮੂਆ ॥
Ka▫un mū▫ā re ka▫un mū▫ā.
ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ[8] ਮਿਲਿ ਕਰਹੁ ਬੀਚਾਰਾ[9] ਇਹੁ ਤਉ ਚਲਤੁ[10] ਭਇਆ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
Barahm gi▫ānī mil karahu bīcẖārā ih ṯa▫o cẖalaṯ bẖa▫i▫ā. ||1|| rahā▫o.

Who[6] has died[7].
Oh! wise[8] men (who understand the Eternal Entity - God)! Sit together and comprehend[9] it is, in fact, a person who came and now that has gone[10] (back to its elemental form).1. (Pause)

ਅਗਲੀ[11] ਕਿਛੁ ਖਬਰਿ[12] ਨ ਪਾਈ ॥
Aglī kicẖẖ kẖabar na pā▫ī.
ਰੋਵਨਹਾਰੁ[13] ਭਿ ਊਠਿ ਸਿਧਾਈ[14] ॥
Rovanhār bẖė ūṯẖ siḏẖā▫ī.
ਭਰਮ[15] ਮੋਹ[16] ਕੇ ਬਾਂਧੇ[17] ਬੰਧ[18] ॥
Bẖaram moh ke bāʼnḏẖe banḏẖ.
ਸੁਪਨੁ ਭਇਆ ਭਖਲਾਏ[19] ਅੰਧ ॥੨॥
Supan bẖa▫i▫ā bẖakẖlā▫e anḏẖ. ||2||

(Actually) no one knows what will happen[12] next[11] after death.
The one who is lamenting[13] will also depart[14].
Mortal beings are bonded[17,18] by superstitions[15] and attachments[16].
*The ignorant person (blind) is baffled[19] as if it is a dream.*2.

ਇਹੁ ਤਉ ਰਚਨੁ[20] ਰਚਿਆ ਕਰਤਾਰਿ[21] ॥
Ih ṯa▫o racẖan racẖi▫ā karṯār.
ਆਵਤ[22] ਜਾਵਤ[23] ਹੁਕਮਿ[24] ਅਪਾਰਿ[25] ॥
Āvaṯ jāvaṯ hukam apār.
ਨਹ ਕੋ ਮੂਆ ਨ ਮਰਣੈ ਜੋਗੁ ॥
Nah ko mū▫ā na marṇai jog.
ਨਹ ਬਿਨਸੈ[26] ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ[27] ਹੋਗੁ ॥੩॥

Everybody is born and dies according to the Laws of Nature/Universe[20], the system developed by the Eternal Entity (ੴ)[21].
Being born[22] and dying[23] is under the great[25] Laws of Nature/Universe[24]. 3.
(In fact) No one dies, since the matter, with which, the being come into existence is indestructible[26,27]. 3.*

ਜੋ ਇਹੁ ਜਾਣਹੁ[28] ਸੋ ਇਹੁ ਨਾਹਿ ॥
Jo ih jāṇhu so ih nāhi.
ਜਾਨਣਹਾਰੇ[29] ਕਉ ਬਲਿ[30] ਜਾਉ ॥
Jānaṇhāre ka▫o bal jā▫o.
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਿ ਭਰਮੁ[31] ਚੁਕਾਇਆ[32] ॥
Kaho Nānak gur bẖaram cẖukā▫i▫ā.
ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਮਰੈ[33] ਨ ਆਵੈ[34] ਜਾਇਆ[35] ॥੪॥੧੦॥
Nā ko▫ī marai na āvai jā▫i▫ā. ||4||10|
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 5, ਪੰਨਾ 885.

What the people think[28] it is not like that.
I sacrifice[30] myself on the one, who knows[29] this.

Nanak says:

The enlightenment has dispelled[32] my superstition[31] no one dies[33] and no one is born[34] or dies[35].
(It is just the change of matter into different forms.) 4. 10.
AGGS, M 5, p 885.

Note: *Matter is considered as energy.

Guru Arjun finally sums up Nanakian Philosophy about life and death; since there is no life after death, one should endeavor to get the best out of this life:

ਆਗਾਹਾ[1] ਕੂ ਤ੍ਰਾਘਿ[2] ਪਿਛਾ[3] ਫੇਰਿ ਨ ਮੁਹਡੜਾ[4] ॥
Āgāhā kū ṯarāg̱ẖ picẖẖā fer na muhaḏṛā.
ਨਾਨਕ ਸਿਝਿ[5] ਇਵੇਹਾ[6] ਵਾਰ ਬਹੁੜਿ[7] ਨ ਹੋਵੀ ਜਨਮੜਾ[8] ॥੧॥
Nānak sijẖ ivehā vār bahuṛ na hovī janamṛā. ||1||
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 5, ਪੰਨਾ 1096.

Nanak says:

Think[2] about the future[1], look not on the past[3] over your shoulder~~s~~[4].
Make[5] the present life[6] a great success since there is no birth[8] or life again[7].
AGGS, M 5, p 1096.

DEATH

Death in Science

Historically, death was understood as when the body's breathing and heart-beating stopped, but advances in medical research began to consider the cessation of brain function to be an indication of death. Medical concern over making safe and appropriate diagnosis of death in respirator-supported patients led to the elaboration of criteria, which reliably established irreversible loss of brain function. This was an operational way of determining that death had occurred. (Machado, 2010) Machado has no doubts to affirm that consciousness characterizes human existence, and that the irreversible loss of consciousness defines human death (considering its two components: arousal and awareness). Moreover, he also considers that, at the same time, consciousness is the most integrative function of the body. No other function could integrate the functioning of the organism as does consciousness.

As it became possible to revive some people after a period without respiration, heartbeat, or other visible signs of life, as well as to maintain respiration and blood flow artificially using life support treatments, an alternative definition for death was needed. In recent decades, the concept of brain death has emerged. Using the brain-death criteria, a person can be pronounced legally dead even if the heart continues to beat due to life support measures. The first nation in the world to adopt brain death as the definition of legal death was Finland in 1971. In the United States, Kansas had enacted a similar law at an even earlier date. (Randell T, 2004)

A brain-dead individual has no electrical activities and no clinical evidence of brain function on neurological examination. It is important to distinguish between brain death and states that mimic brain death (e.g., barbiturate intoxication, alcohol intoxication, sedation overdose, hypothermia, hypoglycemia, coma, or chronic vegetative states.). Because some comatose patients and some patients with severe irreversible neurological dysfunction will nonetheless retain some brain functions, these conditions are generally not considered brain death; certainly, they are irreversible conditions in which it may be appropriate to withdraw life support.

Note that brain electrical activity can stop completely, or completely (a flat EEG) for some time in deep anesthesia or during cardiac arrest before being restored. Brain death refers only to the permanent cessation of electrical activity. Numerous people who have experienced such flat line conditions have reported near-death experiences, the nature of which is controversial. It is understood that a permanent cessation of electrical activity indicates the end of consciousness.

Instant Death

Many sudden and quick causes of death are processes lasting a noticeable length of time. For instance, a broken femur that severs the femoral artery and produces an open wound in the thigh is likely to cause death in less than a minute, since the virtually complete loss of blood would be rapid. Eventually, inadequate blood flow to the brain causes loss of consciousness. Some causes of death that occur without noticeable delay involve immediate disruption of brain function. Other types of sudden death are when the brain is destroyed at a speed faster than thought. It would include exposure to radiant energy so intense (in proximity to a nuclear explosion) that vaporization of the skull and brain occurs in a time far less than a second. Another rapid death involves crushing of the skull, which can occur in falls (especially headfirst) from sufficient heights, and horizontal impacts at typical speeds of motor vehicles. It is evident from the above discussion that death is the death of consciousness due to a lack of oxygen to the neurons or sudden crushing of the skull and neurons.

DEATH IN SIKHI

The description of death in Sikhi is different than that in Sikhism. The death in Sikhi is interconnected with the death of consciousness as discussed earlier:

ਦੇਹੀ[1] ਮਾਟੀ[2] ਬੋਲੈ[3] ਪਉਣੁ[4] ॥
Ḏehī māṯī bolai pa▫uṇ.
ਬੁਝੁ[5] ਰੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ[6] ਮੂਆ[7] ਹੈ ਕਉਣੁ[8] ॥
Bujẖ re gi▫ānī mū▫ā hai ka▫uṇ.
ਮੂਈ[9] ਸੁਰਤਿ[10] ਬਾਦੁ[11] ਅਹੰਕਾਰੁ[12] ॥
Mū▫ī suraṯ bāḏ aha'nkār.
ਓਹੁ ਨ ਮੂਆ[13] ਜੋ ਦੇਖਣਹਾਰੁ[14] ॥੨॥
Oh na mū▫ā jo ḏekẖaṇhār. ||2||
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 152.

The body[1] is made of soil[2] (various elements) and one speaks[3] with the vibration of wind[4].
Try to understand[5], O wise one[6], who[8] has died[7].
It is the death[9] of consciousness[10], which caused the failure of body functions and with the death of consciousness also died duality[11] and the egoistic[12] nature - the products of consciousness.
What you see[14] the body is not dead[13] it was the consciousness, the brain, which has stopped working. 2.
AGGS, M 1, p 152.

SOUL

Ancient Concept

According to the research of Lorenz, there are various ancient theories that the soul is not only responsible for mental or psychological functions like thought, perception, and desire, and is the bearer of moral qualities and even for all the vital functions of living organisms. This is clearly in close contact with ordinary Greek usage of that time, which finds its fullest articulation in Aristotle's theory. The theories of the Hellenistic period, by contrast, are interested more narrowly in the soul as something responsible specifically for mental or psychological functions. Lorenz further reported that Socrates launched his most elaborate and final argument that since life belongs to a soul, therefore, a soul must be deathless — that is, immortal. Lorenz further says on ancient views about the soul that according to the two dominant Hellenistic schools - Epicurus and Stoa, is the doctrine that the soul is corporeal. Besides, Epicurus is an atomist, thus according to him, a soul, like everything else, must be composed of atoms. However, Lorenz's sources are somewhat unclear as to exactly which kinds of materials Epicurus took to be involved in the composition of a soul. (Lorenz, 2009)

According to David the concept of a soul is as old as about 5,000 years in Hinduism and about 2,800 years old in Greek philosophers. The Ancient Greek word, *ψυχή,* is usually translated as 'soul'. With Homer (800-701 BCE), the presence or absence of the *ψυχή* meant the difference between the living and the dead. (David, 2012)

Cohen's study indicates that a soul according to Aristotle (384- 322 BCE), is anything that nourishes itself, that grows, decays, moves about (on its own, not just when moved by something else), perceives, or thinks it is alive. And the capacities of a thing in virtue of which it does these things constitute its soul. The soul is what is causally responsible for the animate behavior (the life activities) of a living thing. He further says:

". . . the soul neither exists without a body nor is a body of some sort. For it is not a body, but it belongs to a body, and for this reason, is present in a body, and in a body of such-and-such a sort." (Cohen, 2004)

A soul in many religious, philosophical, and mythological traditions, is the incorporeal essence of a living being. The soul or psyche comprises the mental abilities of a living being: reason, character, feeling, consciousness, qualia, memory, perception, thinking, etc. Depending on the philosophical system, a soul can either be mortal or immortal.

Brief Concept of Soul in Religions

In Christianity

Dr. Wayne Grudem reveals that some people believe that in addition to "body" and "soul" we have a third part, a "spirit" that relates to God. It is called **trichotomy**. However, others argue that "spirit" is to "soul," and both terms are used interchangeably in Scripture, and this is called dichotomy.

Some examples that a soul will go to the Lord (God):

Jesus told the dying thief, "*Today you will be with me in Paradise*" (Luke 23:43), even though, both, their physical bodies were soon to die. When Stephen was dying, he knew he would immediately pass into the presence of the Lord, for he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my *spirit*" (Acts 7:59). Paul does not fear death, for he says, "I desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better" (Philippians 1:23). (Grudem, 2018) This Christian philosophy of humans wanting to be with God is very similar to that of Hinduism and Sikhism.

In Hinduism

Atman in Hinduism is comparable to the soul and by "knowing *Atman*" one can achieve liberation from reincarnation. Some (monistic) Hindu schools think of *atman* as part of Brahman (God) while others (the dualistic schools) think of *atman* as separate from Brahman. In either case, there is a close connection between *atman* and Brahman. The Hindus think that through meditation one can join or understand one's connection with Brahman. The concept of *atman* was first proposed in Rigveda**.** (Rudy, 2019)

Professor Flood reports that in Hindu Concept of *Atman* means the real self beyond ego or false self is often referred to as 'spirit' or 'soul'. It is considered the self as an eternal servant of God to the self as being identified with God. (Flood, 2009).

In Islam

Dalhart reports that in Islam, *al-Ruh* primarily implies the animated breath of life blown into a living, which departs his physical body at the point of death. Allah the Exalted said: "*Then He fashioned him (man) in due proportion and breathed into him His Ruh (Soul created by Allah for that person); and He gave you hearings (ear) sights (eyes) and hearts. Little is the thanks you give*" (32: 9). Al-Ruh which departs the physical body is of two types, the first is called the lesser death (*al-Wafat al-Sugra*), happening during sleeping, and then the actual death (*al-Wafat al-Kubra*). (Dalhat, 2015)

Figure 4. In Christianity: Soul-carried-to-heaven.jpg William Bouguereau 1878.

In Sikhism

The concept of death in Sikhism is quite different than that in Sikhi. Dr. Neki says, "*In Sikhism, the universal fact of mortality is juxtaposed to immortality (amarapad) as the ultimate objective (paramartha) of life. As a biological reality is inevitable destiny of everyone.*" In this respect he quotes the following stanza:

"*Death will inevitably strike*
*Even in the land of Lord Indra**
*Nor is Brahma's*domain free from it.,*
Likewise, is the Lord Shiva's world Decreed*
to come naught."

*Three gods of the Hindu pantheon.

(GG, 237)

Neki describes another type, blessed dying, through sacrifice. He mentioned that the five Sikhs who stood one by one to sacrifice their head (life) at the call of Guru Gobind Singh during *Vaisakh* (April) 1999. They were told to die of their past to be born into the Guru's family.

The kindred spirits who
Served their Lord while they lived
Kept Him in mind while departing.

(GG 1000)

He continues to quote a few more phrases indicating a person who meditates gets union with God. (Neki, 1992b)

Dr. Virk, a famous writer on science and Sikhism, confirms that in Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS), "*the body, mind, and soul are three distinct and necessary components that make up a person; further, that these are all the product of God and together these three separate components function in unity to excel the human being to the highest spiritual heights."* He continues to say that the human soul (*Atma*) and the Cosmic Soul (*Parmatma*) are intertwined and indistinguishable one from the other. He has quoted some phrases and stanzas to indicate that the soul (*Atma*) in humans is part of the Cosmic Soul (*Parmatama* – God). (Virk, 2018) His article is a copy of that of Dr. Jaswant Singh Neki, published in the Encyclopaedia of Sikhism. (Neki, 1992a)

CONCEPT OF SOUL IN SCIENCE

Musolino (2015) discusses in his book, that many modern scientists hold the opinion that a mind is a complex machine that operates on the same physical laws as all other objects in the Universe. According to him, there is currently no scientific evidence whatsoever to support the existence of the soul. He further argues that we do not lose anything by letting go of our soul beliefs and that we even have something to gain. He also offers a timely rejoinder to recent claims by a scientist who supports the existence of the soul and the afterlife.

In Physics

Many people think about an immaterial soul that persists after death, they have in mind some sort of spirit energy that takes up residence near our brain and controls our body. According to Carrol, the laws of physics underlying everyday life are completely understood, and there's no way within those laws to allow for the information stored in our brains to persist after we die. (Carrol, 2011) The questions are: what form does that spirit energy take, and how does it interact with our ordinary atoms?

To answer these questions not only is new physics required, but dramatically new physics. Within quantum field theory (QFT), there cannot be a new collection of "spirit particles" and "spirit forces" that interact with our regular atoms, because we would have detected them in existing experiments.

In Neuroscience

Neuroscience as an interdisciplinary field, and its branch of cognitive neuroscience, particularly, operates under the ontological assumption of physicalism. In other words, it assumes that only the fundamental phenomena studied by physics exist. Thus, neuroscience seeks to understand mental phenomena within the framework according to which human thought and behavior are caused solely by physical processes taking place inside the brain, and it operates by the way of reductionism by seeking an explanation for the mind in terms of brain activity. (Sohn, 2019).

Understanding of Jot in Sikhi

The word, *Jot*, has been extensively used in Sikhi (in the bani of Guru Nanak). In general *jot* (ਜੋਤਿ) is misinterpreted as *Atma* or soul. Application of logic and science indicates that *Jot* (ਜੋਤਿ) in Sikhi does not mean *Atma* (ਆਤਮਾ) or soul but ENERGY as is apparent in the following phrases:

ਨਿਰਭਉ[1] ਆਪਿ[2] ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ[3] ਜੋਤਿ[4] ॥
Nirbẖa▫o āp niranṯar joṯ.

The Fearless[1] God[2](Eternal Entity) is Itsef[3] a jot[4] (Energy)
AGGS, M 1, p 413.

ਸਰਬ[1] ਜੋਤਿ[2] ਪੂਰਨ[3] ਭਗਵਾਨੁ[4] ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
Sarab joṯ pūran bẖagvān. ||1|| rahā▫o.

The whole[1] jot (energy in this Universe)[2] is the same as the whole[3] Bhagwan (Eternal Entity)[4]. Pause.
AGGS, M 1, p 352.

ਰਵਿ[1] ਸਸਿ[2] ਦੀਪ[3] ਅਨੂਪ ਜੋਤਿ[4] ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣਿ[5] ਜੋਤਿ[6] ਅਪਾਰ[7] ॥
Rav sas ḏīp anūp joṯ ṯaribẖavaṇ joṯ apār.

There is an infinite amount[4,7] of jot (energy)[6] in Sun[1], Moon[2] – the unique lamps (diva)[3] in the Universe (mythical three words)[5].
AGGS, M 1, p 57.

ਰਵਿ[1] ਸਸਿ[2] ਦੀਪਕ[3] ਜਾ ਕੇ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣਿ[3] ਏਕਾ[4] ਜੋਤਿ[5] ਮੁਰਾਰਿ[6] ॥
Rav sas ḏīpak jā ke ṯaribẖavaṇ ekā joṯ murār.

There is the same[4] jot (energy)[5] of the God (Eternal Entity)[6] in Sun[1], Moon[2] - lamp (diva)[3], and the whole Universe (mythical three worlds)[4].
AGGS, M 1, p 489.

ਸਭ[1] ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ[2] ਜੋਤਿ[2] ਹੈ ਸੋਇ[3] ॥
Sabẖ mėh joṯ joṯ hai so▫e.

The same[3] jot (energy)[2] is in everybody[1].
AGGS, M 1, p 663.

ਮਨ[1] ਤੂੰ ਜੋਤਿ[2] ਸਰੂਪੁ[3] ਹੈ ਆਪਣਾ ਮੂਲੁ[4] ਪਛਾਣੁ[5] ॥
Man ṯū'n joṯ sarūp hai āpṇā mūl pacẖẖāṇ
ਮਨ ਹਰਿ[6] ਜੀ ਤੇਰੈ ਨਾਲਿ ਹੈ ਗੁਰਮਤੀ[7] ਰੰਗੁ[8] ਮਾਣੁ[9] ॥
Man har jī ṯerai nāl hai gurmaṯī rang māṇ.

Keeping in view the above explanation and scientific information available and using logic, the above verse has been interpreted as follows:

Hey, mind[1] (man)! You are the embodiment[3] of energy[2], try to recognize[5] your roots[4] (origin); that is the Energy.
Hey, mind (man)! The God[6] (the Energy) is in you all the time, enjoy[9] and imbibe[8] the enlightening philosophy[7] (of the Guru (Nanak)).

ਮੂਲੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਤਾਂ ਸਹੁ[10] ਜਾਣਹਿ ਮਰਣ ਜੀਵਣ ਕੀ ਸੋਝੀ ਹੋਈ ॥
ਗੁਰ[11] ਪਰਸਾਦੀ[12] ਏਕੋ ਜਾਣਹਿ ਤਾਂ ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਉ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥
Mūl pacẖẖāṇėh ṯā'n saho jāṇėh maraṇ jīvaṇ kī sojẖī ho▫ī.
Gur parsādī eko jāṇėh ṯā'n ḏūjā bẖā▫o na ho▫ī.

As soon as you recognize your roots (origin) then you will understand God[10], life, and death.
You would also realize that there is no other than the One Enlightener[11] and Bounteous[12] (God).

Chahal has explained in detail that the Eternal Entitled (ੴ) means "Energy" later (Chahal, 2021)

ਮਨਿ ਸਾਂਤਿ ਆਈ ਵਜੀ ਵਧਾਈ[13] ਤਾ ਹੋਆ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ [14]॥
ਇਉ ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ[15] ਮਨ ਤੂੰ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪੁ ਹੈ ਅਪਣਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਪਛਾਣੁ ॥੫॥
Man sā'nṯ ā▫ī vajī vaḏẖā▫ī ṯā ho▫ā parvāṇ.
I▫o kahai Nānak man ṯū'n joṯ sarūp hai apṇā mūl pacẖẖāṇ.
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 3, ਪੰਨਾ 441.

Then the mind will attain peace (contentment) and success[14], (then everybody will) congratulate[13] you.

Guru Amar Das says:

***It is the Nanakian Philosophy**[15] **(Literal meaning = Nanak says this philosophy):** Hey mind (man)! You are the embodiment of energy. Try to recognize your roots (origin) from Energy."*
AGGS, M 3, p 441.

For proper interpretation of this verse, it is important to understand in which context allegories and metaphors have been used in this verse:

ਮਨ[1] (*Mann)* = in general means the 'mind' this is the brain, which is a place for the origin of conscience and consciousness, and all thoughts. *Mann* also represents 'man' itself.

ਜੋਤਿ[2] (*Jot)* = means **energy**, flame, light, spiritual illumination, enlightenment. Here *Jot* as **energy** is a more suitable meaning.

ਸਰੂਪੁ[3] (*Sarup)* = means embodiment.

ਮੂਲੁ[4] (*Mool)* = means the roots, origin.

ਇਉ ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ[15] (*Aeyoh kahae Nanak)* = Here 'Nanak' is not a pen name of Guru Amar Das as is for all the other Sikh Gurus. Here 'Nanak' is Guru Nanak himself, whose philosophy was preached and taught by the Sikh Gurus, who succeeded to the 'House of Nanak'. According to Prof Sahib Singh's grammar, 'Nanak' with '*onkar'* to *'kaka'* means Nanak himself not as a pen name (*Nom de Plume*), although in some cases the '*kaka*' is without '*Onkar*' in 'Nanak' even then it means Guru Nanak himself.

Therefore, ਇਉ ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ[15] (*Aeyoh kahae Nanak*) is interpreted as *'Guru Nanak says this philosophy'*. It means it is the philosophy of Guru Nanak, *Nanakian Philosophy,* being represented by Guru Amar Das. However, most of the interpreters, except Prof Sahib Singh, translate 'Nanak' as a pen name for Guru Amar Das (*Mahla* 3). If it is so, then it becomes the philosophy of Guru Amar Das. tt is the philosophy of Guru Nanak being represented by Guru Amar Das.

Most of the time, ਮਨ ਤੂੰ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪੁ ਹੈ ਅਪਣਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਪਛਾਣੁ ॥, is usually interpreted by many scholars as *"Oh my soul, you have emanated from the Divine light of God, know your true essence"*, which is quite far away from the real theme of Nanakian Philosophy. However, Prof Sahib Singh's interpretation accepts that God is ਨਿਰਿਾ ਨੂਰ ਹੀ ਨੂਰ ਹੈ (*only nur hee nur*) meaning 'Wholly Solely Light' as follows:

"ਹੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ! ਤੂੰ ਉਸ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਅੰਸ ਹੈਂ ਜੋ ਨਿਰਾ ਨੂਰ ਹੀ ਨੂਰ ਹੈ (ਹੇ ਮਨ!) ਆਪਣੇ ਉਸ ਅਸਲੇ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਂਝ ਬਣਾ। (*hey merai mann! Tun uss parmatama dee ans hai jo nira nur hee nur hai (hey mann) apanai uss aslai naal sanj bana*).
Logically and scientifically 'Wholly Solely Light' stands for 'Energy' – that Energy which is represented as $E = mc^2$. In the above verse, Guru Amar Das advises the man that he has originated from the primordial Energy, ੴ, which is called Singularity, Nothingness, or *Sunn*, from which everything appeared in this Universe. (Chahal, 2021) The above phrases indicate that the Energy in this Universe is the same which came from the main source of ENERGY - the Eternal Entity (ੴ - The God conceptualized by Guru Nanak). Since we are all made of Energy, therefore, this Energy goes back to that Energy – the Eternal Entity.
Do we know how much ENERGY is in a human body? (Szyk, 2021)

Let us calculate according to the equation of Einstein:

E = mc^2
E stands for ENERGY; **m** stands for MATTER, and **c** stands for the square of the speed of light (300,000,000 meters per second).
Therefore, One Kg of mass (matter) would give = 90,000,000,000,000,000 joules of energy.
Or
2,855,881,278.5 liters (more than2.8 billion of liters) of gasoline.
Or
21 500 kilotons of TNT-equivalent energy (≈ 21 Mt).

The average adult weight is 62 kg. Such a person, according to Einstein, has a rest energy of 5.6×10^{12} megajoules (MJ). You can check it with our E = mc^2 calculator. Just for comparison, the bomb dropped on Nagasaki had an energy of 8.4×10^7 MJ. In essence, if you managed to explode and set all your rest energy free (which is not achievable... yet), you would cause the same destruction as over 66,000 nuclear bombs. Saying it's a lot is an understatement. This much energy can only be obtained if we can break each atom as is done in an atomic bomb. However, when we cremate the body, it is reduced to ashes containing some minerals, and some gases are released into the air. And the water also evaporates in the air.

Reincarnation

Arenas reports that reincarnation (in Latin meaning "to be made into flesh again") in religion and philosophy refers to the belief soul survives death to be reborn in a new body (Arenas, n.d.) The reincarnated self carries with it some essence or identity of the past life into the next life. Socrates, Pythagoras, and Plato made reincarnation an integral part of their teachings. At the end of his life, Socrates said, "I am confident that there truly is such a thing as living again, and that the living spring from the dead."

However, Prabhavananda and Isherwood say that in *Bhagavad-Gita* the concept of reincarnation was first recorded in the Upanishads (800 BCE),i.e., *Śvetāśvatara Upanishad* 5.11 and *Kauśītāki Upanishad* 1.2., in India. (Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, 2002) According to Hinduism, the self (*atman*) is immortal, while the body is subject to birth and death. The *Bhagavad-Gita* states that: "*Worn-out garments are shed by the body; Worn-out bodies are shed by the dweller within the body. New bodies are donned by the dweller, like garments.*" The idea that the soul (of any living being including animals, humans, and plants) reincarnates is linked to

Figure 5. Reincarnation in Hinduism. Medium. (Medium, n.d.).

karma (literally: action) is the sum of one's actions and the force that determines one's next reincarnation.

CONCLUSIONS

Consciousness is the result of interaction between the neuron cells and their synapses. Consciousness includes all kinds of cognition, experience, feeling or perception, awareness, and self-awareness. Neural activity, called neural correlates consciousness (NCC), is in a posterior hot zone of the brain, parietal, occipital, and temporal lobes of the cerebral cortex.

Death: It has been well established that consciousness characterizes human existence, and that the irreversible loss of consciousness defines human death. It indicates that consciousness, neurons, and death are closely interconnected with each other.

Sikhi: Similarly, some phrases from the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) have direct interconnection with consciousness and death.

Soul: The concept of a soul in different religions (including Sikhism) is almost the same. *Jot* is another name for the soul in Hinduism and Sikhism. In Sikhi, Guru Nanak does not mention about the soul in his bani. However, the *Jot* in Sikhi is considered energy, and appropriate phrases from AGGS have been quoted to support this fact. In science, there is no evidence of the existence of the soul. Death is considered as the death of consciousness but not by leaving of the soul.

Reincarnation is a well-established concept in Hinduism. Although one may find many phrases in the AGGS indicating reincarnation, however, in Sikhi of Guru Nanak, reincarnation is rejected. In Islam reincarnation is not accepted. The mainstream Christian denominations reject the notion of reincarnation. However, many churches indirectly accept death and resurrection. Resurrection is reuniting of the spirit and body of a person meaning the raising of a person from death back to life. Almost all religions believe in union of humans with the God after the death.

Competing Interests Statement

The author declares that he has no significant competing financial, professional, or personal interests that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this manuscript.

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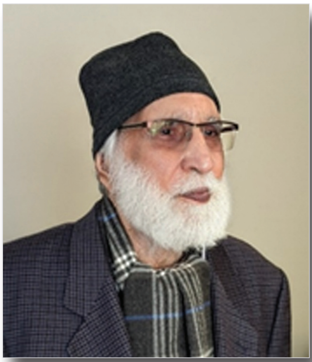

Professor Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal
Handicapped since July 26, 2018

Professor Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal was Professor and Head of Department of Microbiology at Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, India, Fulbright Fellowship in 1974 at the Department of Food Science and Chemical Engineering, at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA and then visiting scientist in the Department of Chemical Engineering at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

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Since 1999, he has been the Founder and the President of the Institute for Understanding Sikhism and the Editor-in-Chief of *Understanding Sikhism: The Research Journal,* a Member of Advisory Committee of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Study Centre at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar since 2011, and a member of World Sikh Council, UK.

He has been one of the 100 Top Most Influential Sikhs of the World from 2012 to 2016 as a writer. He was honored by Shiromani *Gurdwara Parbandhak* Committee (SGPC - "Supreme Gurdwara Management Committee"), Amritsar, India in 2004, and by the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC, New Delhi on Khalsa Fateh Divas on March 8-9, 2014. DSGMC is an autonomous organisation which manages Gurdwaras in the state of Delhi, India.

I am handicapped since July 26, 2018. However, after one year of occupational therapy and physiotherapy I am able walk a little distance with walker and write on computer for about 1-2 hours per day.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Impact of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty towards Flexible Management in the German Banking Sector

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ABSTRACT

Background: The introduction of advanced types of banking networks such as Online banking, Automated Teller Machines (ATM), telephone banking, as well as mature capital markets and global competition have prompted bankers to explore the value of consumer loyalty. Top companies know that the path to growth goes through their clients. Therefore, this research focuses on finding the impact of service quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty programs on customer's loyalty in banking sectors of Germany.

Methods: The questionnaire was developed and polled to gather data from 331 clients with bank accounts in various banks in Germany. The five-dimensional model of SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al., 1988, Kasiri et al., 2017) is used in this paper. Additionally, customer satisfaction was utilized to mediate the influence of service quality on customer loyalty among banking customers in Germany.

Results: We suggested a new model that incorporates the direct impact of technology on consumer satisfaction. Analysis concluded that service quality, consumer retention and loyalty programs are essential aspects that can boost customer loyalty. So banks must concentrate on offering loyalty programs to their loyal consumers.

Conclusion: Analysis suggests that banks should concentrate on enhancing the efficiency of their offerings in order to increase consumer retention and customer loyalty.

Keywords: Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Loyalty Programs, Customer's Loyalty, Banking Sector, Germany

Introduction

Effectiveness of a service provider relies on a high-quality relationship with customers that drives customer retention and loyalty (Slack and Singh, 2020, Siddiqui and Sharma, 2010, Jones, 2002, Panda, 2003, & Lymperopoulos et al., 2006). In today's world, the economy is one of the main issues for the growth of every society, and thus the financial sector plays a crucial role as money is transferred further into the banking sectors (Raju, 2021). Banking is an evolutionary phenomenon that is continually expanding in terms of its diverse operations and roles.

Germany's financial structure consists of three main components – commercial banks, public sector banks and cooperative banks – differentiated by management and business emphasis.

In comparison to past years, there has been little change in the top group of German savings banks. Hamburger Sparkasse (Haspa) is on top, followed by Sparkasse KölnBonn, Stadtsparkasse München, Frankfurter Sparkasse, Sparkasse Hannover, Mittelbrandenburgische Sparkasse, Sparkasse Pforzheim Calw, Ostsächsische Sparkasse Dresden, and Nassauische Sparkasse (DSGV, 2021).

The classification of German savings banks is only marginally correlated with regional economic dynamics, but it is highly correlated with the size of the population of the majority of metropolitan business districts (Kholiqov Firdavsi & Ramzani, 2017). If the list is expanded by three or four rankings, it almost precisely matches to the list of the biggest German cities (zeb.research 2019). Germany's number of banks has shrunk dramatically in recent years, falling by 52% since 1995. Consolidation has primarily occurred within the current pillars in order to obtain economies of scale. Consolidation has been the outcome of strain rather than proactive commercial reasons in the savings bank and cooperative sectors in contrast to mergers in the private sector (Torkayesh et. al. 2021).

The success of a service provider is dependent on a high-quality connection with consumers (Panda, 2003), which influences customer satisfaction and loyalty (Jones, 2002) as quoted by Lymperopoulos et al. (2006) and Kasiri et al. (2017). Service quality is an important component of service marketing (Kushwah and Bhargava, 2014). Due to the strong competition in the market, establishing long-term relationships has become a requirement, and customer loyalty has become a growing concern.

In 2018, Landesbanken performed a research to analyze customers' expectations and satisfaction with the quality of goods and services supplied by banking institutions, which was shared with the industry in order to enhance the sector's service quality. As a result, the objective of this study is to investigate the influence of service quality on customer relationship management and loyalty, to

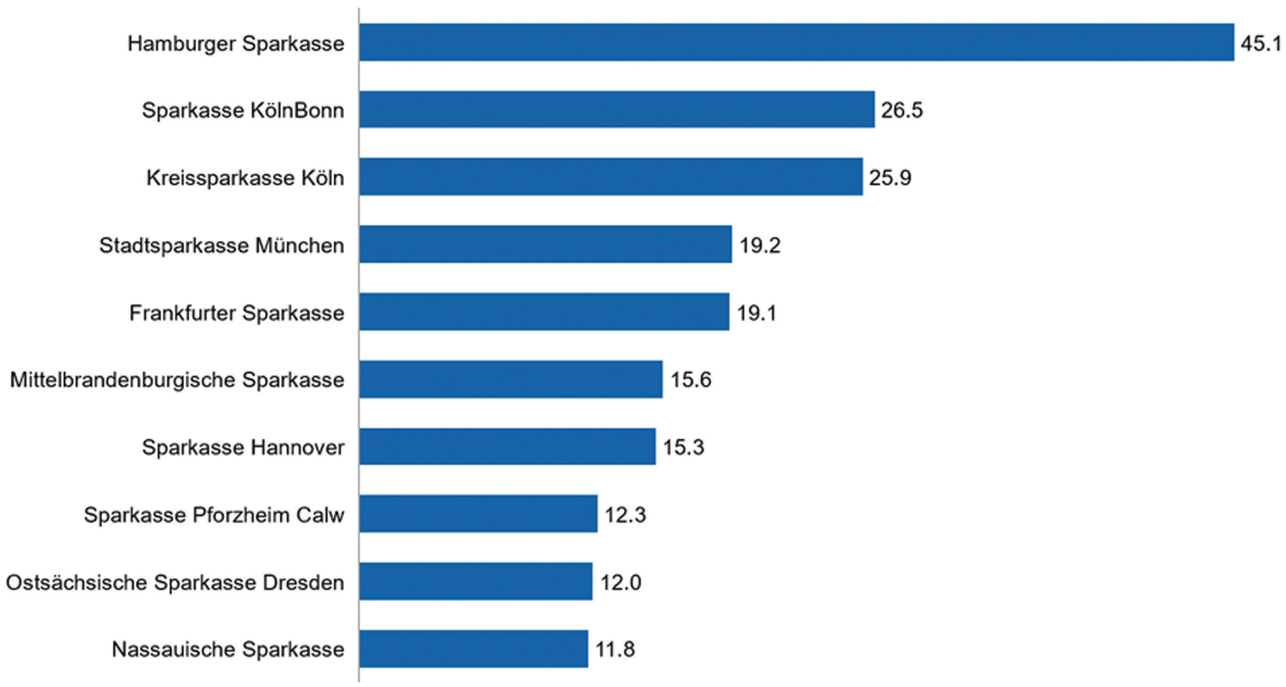

Figure 1. The ten largest savings banks in Germany as of December 31, 2019 (by total assets in EUR billion).

draw practitioners' attention to the need of improving service quality in order to decrease customer attrition, and to provide recommendations for improving service quality. The study's findings aid in determining which aspects of service quality (empathy, reliability, assurance, tangibility, and responsiveness) should be prioritized when developing customer relationship management strategies that persuade consumers to stay longer. This may also aid in the formulation of tactics to keep satisfied consumers (Slack and Singh, 2020).

Review of Literature

Once it comes to a dynamic environment, banks need to plan their policies to differentiate them from other industries. This can be done by providing a better quality of service (Kungu, Desta, & Ngui, 2014).

Throughout the twentieth century, banks controlled Germany's financial system. Furthermore, a series of steps have recently been launched to boost the role of markets within this bank-based financial system, including changes to the law, enhancements in corporate governance, and a pension system transformation (Sigurt , 2019). The greatest for-profit banks, including Deutsche Bank and Dresdner Bank. Throughout the post war period, these banks made the majority of their earnings from the interest rate gap, or the difference between the interest they charged on deposits (mainly from consumers) and the interest they received on loans (most of these were made to the company sector).

Although it is often assumed that reducing the employee-customer contact reduces service quality (Rexha et al, 2003), Mols (1999) discovered that many users of electronic (online) banking have grown even more happy overall with their bank, presumably owing to the availability of a new service delivery alternative. Others (Uppal 2006) claim that fully computerized banks provide superior customer service than partially or non-computerized banks.

Munari, Ielasi, & Bajetta (2013) analysed the organizational and operative evolution of the activities that oversee the customer satisfaction in the banks in Italy. A questionnaire was developed, and 92 banks responded in which they represent 92 percent of total assets of Italian Banks. The findings revealed that customer satisfaction is no longer a staff activity but instead a management activity. It in fact involves top management to define the satisfaction within the staff incentives schemes.

Powers and Jack (2008) examined how healthcare organizations deploy flexible strategies to respond to the demand fluctuations using interviews with hospital administrators and academic medical centers in USA. The results reveal a positive relationship between use of internal flexible strategies, customer satisfaction, and organizational performance.

As previously stated, the deceleration of economic expansion in the 1980s and 1990s (resulting in lower demand for bank loans from businesses) and more competitive pressure among banks led in a shortening of this rate fluctuation. Fee-based revenues, such as investment banking and asset management, is a major alternative to interest-based income for banks. However because these activities, are essentially market-based, and so require expanding financial markets to enhance revenue. As a result, inside the German financial system, these banks became the primary proponents of strengthening markets.; Customer satisfaction has a significant impact on customer loyalty, as demonstrated by the history of improved service efficiency (Sowlati & Paradi, 2004; Carwana, 2002; Caruana et al., 2000). To analyze customer loyalty, the current study utilizes the SERVQUAL indicator. Parasuraman et al (1988) have proposed many criteria for assessing service quality. This scale has undergone a few modifications throughout time, and the measuring instrument is now known as SERVQUAL.

The following are the five components: 1) Tangibles — Physical items such as equipment and other elements of existence. 2) Reliability - Providing consistent services. 3) Responsiveness - An interest in the needs of customers and prompt service delivery. 4) Assurance - The perception of courteous, security, and competence assurance offered by personnel. 5) Empathy — How companies and their staff show that they understand their consumers' requirements.

Customer Loyalty

The effect of satisfaction on loyalty is discussed and evaluated in broad aspects. Many research suggests that, if there is satisfaction, clients are loyal and if clients are disappointed, their loyalty is not assured. in the literature loyalty is defined as a behavioural desire (Heskett et al., 1994). Management should also pay particular attention to the satisfaction of the customer and play a critical role in ensuring the consistency of the service (Akbar and Parvez et al., 2009). Customer Loyalty and satisfaction are greatly influenced by the cooperation of the brand name, and customer loyalty and satisfaction are mutually related. If the client is satisfied, his loyalty will raise Colgate et al. (1996). Also, while Levesque and Mc Dougall (1993) suggested that "even if a problem is not solved, approximately half of the customers would remain with the firm". This might be due to switching costs, a lack of perceived distinction between options, location restrictions on choice, time or money constraints, habit or inertia, and other factors unrelated to loyalty (Bitner, 1990; Ennew & Binks, 1996; Slack and Singh, 2020; Tee, Gharleghi, Chan, 2013).

Service quality

As time progresses, Since the 1990s, many companies have incorporated quality concepts such as Total Quality Management (TQM) and New Public Management (NPM). The primary goal of NPM, for example, is to enhance service quality by using a customer-oriented approach (Yilmaz, Ari, & Gürbüz, 2018; Mwita, 2000). To investigate relative branch efficiency, Wu et al. (2006) uses a combination of data envelopment analysis (DEA) and neural networks (NNsThe DEA technique evolved from relative performance benchmarking in terms of transaction efficiency (service quality) and profitability to performance assessment of banking sector (Manandhar & Tang, 2002, Slack and Singh, 2020).

SERVQUAL, a well-known scale established by Parasuraman et al. (1985, 1988) is the most prominent model for evaluating service quality among general instruments. The following characteristics were mentioned by (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Murari 2018; Shams et al., 2020): "tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, competency, courtesy, assurance, credibility, security, access, and comprehension". Using a component analysis, Parasuraman et al. (1988) reduced these 10 dimensions to five. A 22-item survey instrument for assessing service quality has been designed based on the five aspects.

SERVQUAL's five dimensions are as follows:

Physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel are all tangibles.

Reliability - The capacity to deliver on a promise consistently and precisely.

Responsiveness - Ability to assist customers and offer fast service.

"**Assurance** (encompassing competence, courtesy, credibility, and security) - Employee **knowledge** and courtesy, as well as their capacity to inspire trust and confidence."

"**Empathy** (including access, communication, understanding the customer) - Caring and individualized attention that the firm provides to its customers. Although there has been criticism from some other researchers to SERVQUAL instrument (Johnston, 1995)", However, SERVQUAL is the most commonly used tool for its confirmatory factor analyses. As a result, SERVQUAL has shown to be a cost-effective model that has been used to assess service quality in a variety of service organizations and sectors, including financial institutions (Mc Alexander et al., 1994; Cowling & Newman, 1996; Levesque & Mc Dougall, 1996; Caruana et al., 2000; Caruana, 2002; Sureshchandar et al., 2002; Paswan et al., 2004; Seth et al., 2005; Lymperopoulos et al., 2006; Samadi, Gharleghi, & Syrymbetova, 2015).

Mediation of Customers' Satisfaction

When customers give priority to areas that encompass the fulfilment of their demands, such as responsiveness, and are less driven to tangible areas, they have a certain sort of action in numerous ways. Bank managers should establish lines of work on which the quality of service is improved to improve customer satisfaction in order to achieve a better rate of service quality (Islam et al., 2021 &Khalid et al., 2011). Perceived service quality is a global decision or mindset surrounding the superiority of the service, whereas satisfaction is linked to a particular transaction (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Customer satisfaction has repeatedly been proposed as the primary factor of loyalty (Lam & Burton, 2006). According to Ehigie (2006), consumer satisfaction and customer loyalty/retention have a substantial positive connection. As a result, in this study, customer pleasure serves as a mediator between service quality and customer loyalty.

Research theoretical model

The theoretical model directing the research is represented in the figure below, which was modified from Agus et al. (2007) and Caruana (2007). This study will look at five aspects of service quality, which were modified from Agus *et al*. (2007): tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and courtesy. This study's theoretical framework was developed from a number of previous research (Parasuraman *et al*., 1988; Agus *et al*.,

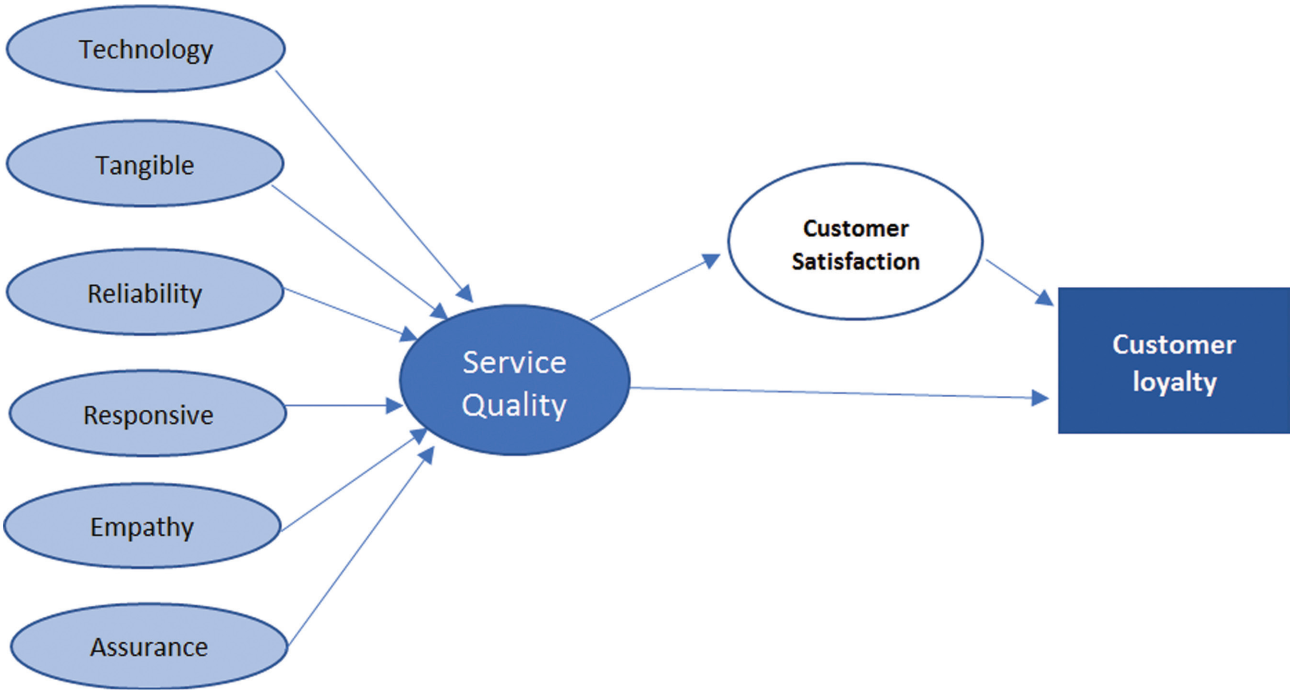

Figure 2. Theoretical model of the Impact of service quality on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

2007; Harridge March et al., 2008; Ganguli & Roy, 2011, Kasiri *et al*., 2017, Agrawal *et al.* ,2020). It is presented in Figure 2.

Hypotheses development

Tangibles have been defined as physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Issues related to the branches such as access to the facilities, safety and convenience are on tangible basis (Castro, 1997 as cited by Bellini et al., 2005, Pakurár et al., 2019). Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Tangibility is positively associated with customer satisfaction.

H2: Tangibility is positively linked to customer loyalty.

H3: Reliability is positively associated with customer satisfaction

H4: Reliability is positively linked to customer loyalty.

H5: Responsiveness is positively associated with customer satisfaction.

H6: Responsiveness is positively linked to customer loyalty

H7: Assurance is positively associated with customer satisfaction.

H8: Assurance is positively linked to customer loyalty.

H9: Empathy is positively related with customer satisfaction.

H10: Empathy is positively associated with customer loyalty.

H11: Technology is positively related with customer satisfaction.

H12: Technology is positively related with customer loyalty.

H13: Customer satisfaction predicts customer loyalty positively.

Research Methodology

The purpose of the study was to consider the impact of service quality on customer loyalty development, as well as the mediating role of customer satisfaction in this connection. To do so, convenience sampling was used, in which data was obtained from a variety of banks using self-administered questionnaires. In this research we use the convenience sampling in situations where additional inputs are not necessary for the principal research, that involves the participants being drawn from a close population group.

The questionnaire was developed and polled to gather data from 331 clients with the ten largest savings banks in Germany accounts in various branches in Germany. The banks were including; Hamburger Sparkasse (Haspa) leads the field, followed by Sparkasse KölnBonn, Stadtsparkasse München,Frankfurter Sparkasse, Sparkasse Hannover, Mittelbrandenburgische Sparkasse, Sparkasse Pforzheim Calw, Ostsächsische Sparkasse Dresden, and Nassauische Sparkasse. A survey was conducted to test the hypotheses generated for this research. The population frame is customers of various local banks in Germany. sample of 331 customers of different banks completed the questionnaires concerning the customer satisfaction and loyalty in banks in Germany. By doing so, this research methodology ensures that the objectives of the research is met and can be assessed.

Measurements

In this study, the unit of analysis was the individual, as a customer of the ten banks. SERVQUAL, developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988), was modified as the instrument for measuring service quality, and Caruana's method for measuring customer loyalty is being used (2002). All questionnaire items were graded using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = "Strongly disagree" to 5 = "Strongly agree." The survey questionnaire consisted of 33 items split into four sections. The first section contained six quality of service dimensions, of which five were derived according to prior research (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Wong et al., 2008, Hapsari et al., 2017), as well as an additional component, technologies, introduced to the underpinning theory (Ganguli and Roy, 2011, Pakurár et al., 2019).

The surveys were pre-tested with 10 chosen bank customers having branch banking experience. The participants were asked to comment on the questions' vagueness and organization. The original questions were improved and certain adjustments were made with the support of the pre-test. The questionnaire's second and third parts, adapted from Mohsan et al. (2011), Customer satisfaction and loyalty were both on the priorities (Vasiljeva, 2021 Grigoroudis *et al*., 2013). The final section of the questionnaire asked respondents for demographic information. Data was collected from various bank clients using a self-administered questionnaire. At the conclusion of the data gathering procedure, 331 answers were received.

Results

The data was verified for, multi-collinearity, autocorrelation, linearity, heteroskedasticity, outliers and normality, before hypothesis testing. The data were found to be linear, normally distributed, and devoid of multi-collinearity, heteroskedasticity, and outliers, all of which might affect the regression findings. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for consistency reliability of all variables utilized in the research questionnaire, and the questionnaire was then evaluated for validity and reliability.

The following are the Cronbach's alpha values: reliability (.85), tangibility (.82), empathy (.81), responsiveness (.81), technology (.89), assurance (.87), customer satisfaction (.87), and customer loyalty (.83). These values were determined to be acceptable, given the Cronbach's alpha lower limit is .70 (DeVellis, 2003; 2012, Pakurár et al., 2019). All values in our analysis exceeded this criterion, indicating that all items had strong internal consistency.

The regression tests were performed out from the technique indicated by Baron & Kenny (1986), with four different phases of analysis: Step 1: Use customer loyalty as a dependent variable and service quality characteristics as independent variables. Step 2: Using customer satisfaction as a dependent variable and service quality characteristics as independent variables, Steps 3 & 4: Customer loyalty is a dependent variable, whereas customer satisfaction and service quality dimensions are independent variables.

Respondents Profile

The questionnaire's final section gathered demographic data (age, gender, qualification, and occupation). Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The majority of the sampled individual bank customers are male undergraduate students aged 17 to 26 years old, according to respondent data.

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 2.

Table 4.1. Respondents Profile

Variables		Frequency (N=331)	Percentage (N=331)
Gender	Male Female	186.0 145.0	56.19 43.8
Age	17-26 27-38 39-50 51-60 More than 60	174.0 61.0 31.0 38.0 27.0	52.56 18.42 9.37 11.48 8.15
Education	Undergraduate Graduate Post graduate Others	185.0 88.0 48.0 10.0	55.89 26.58 14.50 3.02
occupation	Salaried Self employed Student Others	195.0 41.0 87.0 8.0	58.91 12.38 26.28 2.41

Table 4.2. Descriptive statistics

Variable	Mean	St Deviation	Variance
Tangibility	3.5321	0.78151	0.502
Reliability	3.6021	0.693542	0.514
Responsiveness	3.5644	0. 79352	0.622
Assurance	3.6872	0.80352	0.613
Empathy	3.7086	0.6986	0.538
Technology	3.8339	0.74428	0.588
Customer satisfaction	3.7899	0.66449	0. 453
Customer loyalty	3.73098	0. 78873	0. 663
N=331			

Table 4. 3. Direct effects

	Step 1	Step 2	Step3 +Step 4
Dependent variable	Loyalty	Satisfaction	Loyalty
In dependent Variable	Standardized	coefficients - b	
Tangible	0.26**	0.28**	0.11**
Reliability	0.23**	-0.02	0.25**
Responsiveness	0.01	0.11**	-0.09
Empathy	0.27**	0.23**	0.12* Partially mediated
Assurance	0.31**	0.48**	0.02 Fully mediated
Satisfaction			0.57**
Step summary	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3+ Step 4
R^2	0.689	0.727	0.843
Adjusted R^2	0.692	0.728	0.532
Durbin Watson	2.01	1.16	1.31
F value	174.35**	184.42**	189.41**

**p < 0.01, *p < 0.05

Hypotheses Testing

Impact of service quality on customer satisfaction and loyalty

The theoretical framework's hypothesized direct links were examined using regression analysis, and the findings of all suggested correlations are presented in Table 3. Overall, the regression data show that all service quality characteristics have a substantial positive and moderate to strong influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty. These findings give strong support for H1 through H13. Empathy, for example, has been proven to have a significant beneficial impact on customer satisfaction (pearson r value =0.61, p = .05). Customer satisfaction (r= 0.538, p = .05) and loyalty (r=.48, p.05) are both moderately influenced by technology. Customer loyalty is not influenced more by reliability than by quality. This is perhaps because the German banking system is itself reliable and therefore reliability is not the concern of customers.

According to the tested hypotheses, if a bank's workers in Germany provide high-quality service in each category, consumer satisfaction with that bank would be high. Customers are more loyal when the quality of service given by bank staff is improved. As a result, hypotheses H1, H2,H4,H5,H6,H7,H8,H9,H10,H11,H12 & H13 are statistically significant (p<.00).

Effect of satisfaction of customers on loyalty of customers

We examined the direct influence of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty before evaluating the data for a mediating effect of customer satisfaction. Table 4.3 shows the regression findings, which demonstrate that customer service satisfaction is a significant predictor of customer loyalty (r =.78, p=.01). It may be concluded that customers who find banking services pleasant are more likely to use them again. Repeated involvement is most often attributable to a customer's loyalty to a certain product or service. As a result, H13 (customer satisfaction has a positive and large impact on customer loyalty) is approved (Table 4.4).

Mediation of Customer Satisfaction

Following that, we investigated if consumer satisfaction with a product or service can have a mediating impact, which we assessed using Hayes' PROCESS method (2012;

Table 4.4. Summary of Hypothesis Analysis

Relationship (Direct effects)	Coefficient (done)	S.E (Done)	Hypotheses support
H1:Tangibility→customer satisfaction	0.586	0.127	Yes
H2:Tangibility →customer loyalty	0.473	0.022	Yes
H3:Reliability→customer satisfaction	0.541	0.029	Not Supported
H4:Reliability →customer loyalty	0.541	0.028	Supported
H5:Responsiveness→customer satisfaction	0.526	0.020	Yes
H6:Responsiveness→customer loyalty	0.508	0.026	Yes
H7:Assurance→customer satisfaction	0.593	0.019	Yes
H8:Assurance →customer loyalty	0.553	0.028	Yes
H9:Empathy →customer satisfaction	0.618	0.015	Yes
H10:Empathy →customer loyalty	0.510	0.028	Yes
H11:Technology→customer satisfaction	0.538	0.018	Yes
H12:Technology →customer loyalty	0.482	0.028	Yes
H13:Customer satisfaction → customer loyalty	0.673	0.026	Yes

2013). The findings (Table 4.4) show that customer satisfaction has a moderating impact on the connection between tangibility and loyalty (r =.10). Customer satisfaction was also shown to have a mediating impact on the connections between dependability and loyalty (r =.08), assurance and loyalty (r =.10), empathy and loyalty (r =.15), and technology and loyalty (r =.09). Reliability is positively linked to customer satisfaction has been rejected through these research.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that all components of service quality boost customer loyalty significantly. That is, the procedures of the service quality model enhance customer retention through tangibility, consistency, responsiveness, assurance, engagement, and technology (Sureshchandar et al, 2003, Pakurár et al., 2019, Zhuo , 2019). This inspired businesses (particularly banks) to focus on these characteristics in order to build loyalty. Additionally, customer satisfaction influences loyalty through the five aspects of service quality (tangibility, reliability, assurance, empathy, and technology). These findings are similar with earlier research findings (Glaveli et al., 2006; Ndubisi, 2006, Indimas & Fachira, 2017), which claimed that when these service quality attributes are adopted by employees, they immediately increase consumer loyalty and satisfaction, which leads to their loyalty towards a certain banks. In this research we proposed six dimensions effect on customer loyalty and we discovered customers with higher levels of satisfaction with various level of technology report higher levels of satisfaction with the banking sectors in Germany. These findings indicate that those dimensions continue to be important tools in terms of achieving and maintaining higher levels of customer satisfaction.

When bank employees provide customers with assurance, reliability, and tangibility of service, their experience and engagement with the bank improves, and exceptional experiences lead to customer satisfaction and loyalty. In addition, in line with prior research, this study found a substantial relationship between empathy, customer loyalty, and customer satisfaction (Ndubisi, 2006, Thai, 2016, Indimas & Fachira, 2017). Similarly, technological advancements have an impact on consumer satisfaction and loyalty. These findings are in line with previous research (Ganguli and Roy, 2011; Ehigie, 2006, Pakurár et al., 2019). Customer satisfaction does not mediate the link between responsiveness and customer loyalty, despite the fact that responsiveness directly promotes customer loyalty. When responding to consumer inquiries about goods or procedures, providing immediate responses and superior problem-solving solutions can enhance customer loyalty. Customer satisfaction, on the other hand, has no impact on their loyalty. This conclusion is in direct contradiction to Glaveli et al findings' (2006). It is critical that banks place a high priority on the establishment of service policies and procedures that respond to consumer demands for high-quality service (Ndikubwimana & Berndt 2016). This might result in better levels of consumer satisfaction and loyalty.

Conclusions

According to previous studies, service quality has a direct impact on consumer loyalty. However, there is still a lack in the research that examines various mediation processes in this interaction. Although customer service has been examined for a long time, banks must continue to undertake research in order to keep up with improvements in the banking sector. The goal of this study, which was based on expectation disconfirmation theory, was to see if customer satisfaction mediates the link between service quality and customer loyalty.

The search has highlighted the positive relationship between customer loyalty and the five service quality characteristics of tangibility, reliability, assurance, empathy, and technology in the banking operations of Germany. We had discovered the new model related to technology as a main component in evaluating service quality. We also discovered that Reliability is not positively associated with customer satisfaction (Hypothesis 3 has been rejected). Meanwhile the reliability is positively linked to customer loyalty (Hypothesis 4 has been accepted).

A deeper knowledge of the link between service quality, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty can help to assure better customer targeting with limited marketing resources. Future studies must include new technology as a component in evaluating service quality. According to this study, Customer satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between customer loyalty and the five service quality characteristics of tangibility, reliability, assurance, empathy, and technology in the banking operations of Germany. We discovered that responsiveness had a direct impact on customer loyalty, rather than being mediated through customer satisfaction.

Limitations

The authors tried to minimise the limitations of the study; however, it should be noted that this study is only bound to the scope of Germany and only in the banking sector. One should be careful in interpreting and generalising these findings to other countries in the region or other sectors. This is because the characteristics of each context is unique and different.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE
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Addressing the Issue of Teenage Pregnancy in Malaysia: Elevating Self-Love

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the issue of teenage pregnancy among Malay young women, who are suggested to have the highest proportion of teenage pregnancy rates in Malaysia. Due to limited access to sex education and a lack of provision of reproductive health services, this has contributed to a lack of self-love, knowledge of the self and the skills of managing emotions among young people. This paper proposes an application of a new reflective cycle on self-love and self-knowledge which could help young people in managing the emotional impact of their decision making. Following preliminary consultations with NGO's and experts familiar with the issues facing teenage pregnancy in Malaysia, semi structured interviews were held virtually with seven pregnant Malay teenagers. Thematic analysis of interview transcripts yielded critical insights into the needs and emotional welfare of these young women. Overall, our findings suggest that Malay young people could benefit from the provision of sex and relationships awareness raising programmes and educational and creative self-love empowerment trainings.

Keywords: Empowerment, Malaysia, Self-Knowledge, Self-Love, Teenage Pregnancy.

INTRODUCTION

Teenage Pregnancy in Malaysia

This study addresses the issue of teenage pregnancy in Malaysia. The latest figures on teenage pregnancy in Malaysia are from 2017 and suggest that around 18,000 teenage girls in Malaysia get pregnant each year (Nagandla and Kumar, 2020). Research from University of Malaysia suggests that this figure is on the rise. (Said, 2019). Although the issue of teenage pregnancy is found across all races in Malaysia, research suggests that the majority of hidden or unwanted pregnancies were from the Malay population (Hartini, 2020; Azmi, 2021; Sharizat, 2021).[1] Indian, Chinese and Orang Asli[2] families were found to be much more accepting of the new arrivals and tended to bring up the babies within the extended family. There appears to be embarrassment, religious concerns and legal implications within Malay families (Hartini, 2020). The main concern here regarding Malay teenagers appears to be pregnancy out of wedlock, which, in Malaysia, is statutory rape (Fatimah, 2022; Jamaludin, 2013; Mohamed, 1993), if still a minor.

The social and health implications of teenage pregnancies include increased exposure to domestic violence, mental health disorders, low self-esteem, substance misuse, sexually transmissible infections (STIs), relationship

[1] Personal communication

[2] Indigenous people of Malaysia

difficulties, financial stress and homelessness (Azri, Adibah, & Haliza 2015, Mann, Bateson, & Black 2020). While teenage mothers are often motivated to do the best for their babies and to continue to develop themselves as parents and into adult life, they may be particularly susceptible to breaches of their rights to healthcare and education (Mann, Bateson, & Black 2020).

This all, therefore, suggests that the high rates of teenage pregnancy are due to many factors including limited access to information, lack of access to sexual and reproductive health services, legal implications targeted at teenagers, religious and moral taboos, fear of family and society rejection, shame, knowledge of the self and the skills of managing emotions (Bakari, 2022), which all contribute to a lack of self-love.

The researchers suggest that to improve this state of affairs it is vital to build awareness among young people and their roles in society. In addition, parents, schools, the community, and other relevant parties need to help build a solid foundation amongst teenage boys and girls to learn about themselves along with skills of managing their emotions to enable them to experience happiness and fulfillment.

This study encompasses the principles of self-love and self-realisation. Hence, this research will provide an analytical base for self-love to help educate and empower young people to improve their life choices and to promote practicing self-love amongst adolescents and their parents.

The Two Journeys: Self-realisation & Self-love

Based on our investigation, and after close analysis of the issues of teenage pregnancy in Malaysia, we realise that self-knowledge and the practicing of self-love plays a vital role in teenage life.

The word 'love' seems to cover a wide variety of feelings, attitudes, and behavior. There are different types of love to consider such as charity, empathy, bliss, good-will, faith, respect, worship, devotion, understanding, amicability, passion, and compassion. Besides, love can be categorised in different forms that can cover from earthly love, to loving the nature followed by spiritual love. These categories could be mentioned as 1) Eros or Romantic love; 2) Philia or Friendship; 3) Storge: Familial love; 4) Agape: Universal love, or Divine love; 5) Ludus or Playful love; 6) Pragma or Practical love; 7) Philautia or Self-love.[3]

Although self-love is a type of love which can be hard to define, we will try to provide some practical elaboration of self-love and how to practice it. However, it is necessary to acknowledge that there is no one set meaning to self-love. Self-love may even vary from person to person and there is little academic literature regarding its impact on mental health, which is somewhat disappointing (Irvani, 2007).

Self-love does not require validation or a demand from others. It lies within oneself, the only person who validates this feeling is the person themself. Self-love means having trust, confidence, and pride in oneself and one's abilities. Practicing self-love means setting boundaries, being mindful, and removing toxic people from one's life. To develop self-love, seek a therapist, write in a journal, and listen to affirmations. (Fielding, Sarah; Mendez, Mayra, 2021). Self-love is about getting in touch with ourselves and our well-being. It is also about nurturing and growing the parts of ourselves that will lead to our happiness. Self-love is self-acceptance, self-forgiveness, self-care, self-control, self-discipline, self-awareness, self-compassion and having boundaries.

Self-Love is a lifelong journey, it is a dynamic process and it needs a life time of 'intention,' 'attention,' 'transformation,' 'action' and 'reflection'. This is why we define self-love as a journey. Reflection is important in this journey, it shows us the continual, never-ending cycle in the journey of self-love. Achieving self-love can provide us with happiness (Tajer, 2021).

The journeys of self-love and self-realisation, as previously discussed, are continuous. These journeys are a conscious set of steps for people to transform their lives from a negative place to a positive place (Hickson, 1997). For example, from unhappiness to happiness. The researchers are not suggesting that people are unable to love themselves, experience self-love or even achieve happiness without undergoing these conscious steps. These steps provide a five-step plan for making positive changes in one's life when faced with issues or difficulties that one is dealing with. When applying these five themes to the data the researchers made their own

[3] Sociologist Hendrick lists out six types of love in his Love theory which include eros (romantic), mania (possessive), ludus (game playing), storge (best friends), agape (unselfish), pragma (logical) (Hendrick and Hendrick, 1986). Although self-love was not included in Hendrick's theory, Underwood makes the point that self-love can be categorised as 'agape' or undemanding love (Underwood, 2020).

interpretations as to the existence of the themes and not from the conscious awareness of the participants. In other words, the authors did not check their interpretations of the data with the participants.

In the journey of the 'knowledge of the self' (self-realisation) the traveler needs to equip themselves with tools and means that help them elevate their state of being. Fig.1 shows a graphic demonstrating how the two journeys of self-knowledge and self-love are bound together in the roadmap journey of happiness. Although the participants had achieved and practiced certain elements of the five themes, none of them were consciously on the journeys of self-love or self-knowledge.

As we can see from the graphic below (Fig. 1) the first element in the discovery of self-love is a knowledge of the self. The three parts of this element are: position, weakness and strength. There now follows an examination of those parts in relation to our participants. The researchers will gauge the degree to which they find that they both have and recognise that the participants have a degree of self-knowledge.

Fig. 1 shows the reflective journey of self-love, which can lead to happiness and knowledge of the self. It starts with knowledge of self, then intention, attention, transformation, positive action, self-love, happiness, reflection and knowledge of self.

Self-knowledge

As discussed, self-knowledge is one of the first steps on the journey of self-love, it is a foundation stone of self-love. To practice self-love, we need to know ourselves, knowing ourselves is all about knowing one's weaknesses, strengths and one's positions in life. It is a lifelong journey. Through reflection, we become aware of these weaknesses, strengths and positions in life.

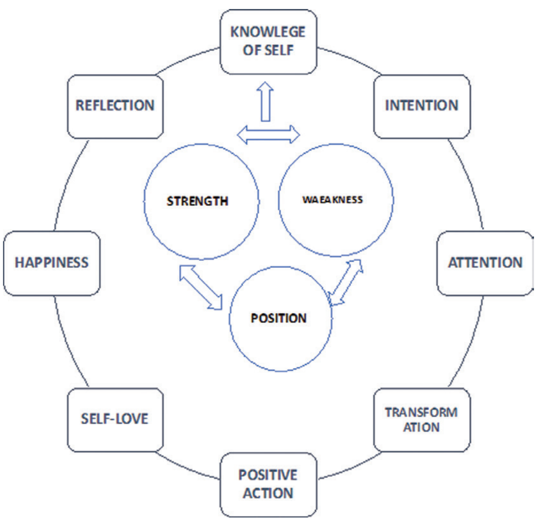

Fig 1. The Journey of Self-Love.

Based on the above, the path of love requires us to embark on a spiritual lifelong journey. This journey involves various stages and tests that will bring about maturity and growth. The first fundamental stage is this idea of self-knowledge or self-realisation. This is realising who one is, where one stands, and what is one's relation to one's surroundings. (Tajer, 2021)

Human beings can reach self-awareness at the end of this journey of self-knowledge. To clarify one needs knowledge of the self to become self-aware. Knowledge is the sum of what one has found out, while awareness is the ability to directly perceive, feel and therefore be able to act on one's self-knowledge. Before this, they stand at a distance from themselves, outside themselves, and as such their self-love is only partial. If the journey is to have some direction or some purpose, it is important that the seeker begin their struggle with some initial discovery of their identity. They need this awareness of who they are to have a conceptual knowledge of the goals towards which they are moving.

This is the first step in the journey of the self-love.

To assist us in this endeavour we have interpreted the interviews with our teenage participants in the categories of position, weakness and strength.

Position

Being aware of our circumstances in life such as our financial situation, legal situation, social status, age, and so on, provide us a framework from where we focus our energy. For example, if their position is that they have no money, they may be unable to pay fines or other financial obligations that are imposed on teenage mothers for getting pregnant. If we are in a country on a temporary visa, we may not be able to work. If we are a child or are an underage person, then it is usually the parents that would make decisions for us. If we are unemployed there may be certain things that we cannot afford. If we suffer from mental health problems, we may not have the ability to stand up for our well-being or access certain state provision. If we are shy, depressed, emotionally unstable or lack courage for example, we may not be in a position to deal with things that are affecting us. So, having knowledge of our position helps us in our journey of self-love and what we need to work on to achieve this. The process of acquiring this self-knowledge is not always easy and there are many ways for us to gain this knowledge including mind maps, self-reflection, talking with friends, counseling, searching the internet and reading self-help books.

Weakness

We all have different strengths and weaknesses. As part of our development not only do we need a knowledge of these, but also to transform and build on them. Having knowledge about weaknesses allows us to focus on developing them into strengths. Turning weaknesses into strengths it is an important part of our self-love process. There are many ways to strengthen our weaknesses including training, reading, reflecting on them, journaling, making new friends and other ways to build our knowledge and skills. Strengthening a weakness can be as simple as transforming a destructive emotion into a positive one, such as the ability to transform fear into courage.

Strength

Knowing what we are good at, where our strengths lie and what we already do well allows us not only to refine these attributes but also to focus our energies in more important directions. For example, if we are good at communicating, we can use the skill to express our needs in gaining the skills required to build our weaknesses. We may be physically strong but emotionally weak, therefore in this case we spend time strengthening our emotions rather than our bodies.

Intention (to act)

The intention to act is different from actually acting. The intention comes before the action, the action does not always follow the intention. So, the first step into doing something is having a desire to do that thing, the second step is either doing it or not doing it. For example, we may intend to ask our boss for a raise, when approaching him or her, due to lack of courage, we might change our mind and not ask. In the context of the self-love journey intention to act is not enough. For example, for a teenage mother to say that she will bring her children up differently than her parents brought her up, is an intention to behave in a particular way, it does not mean that she will actually do this.

Attention (self-awareness)

Self-awareness is about being present, paying attention. It is about how and why we are paying attention. Paying positive attention is achieved through an attitude of kindness and curiosity. It is action rather than passive resignation. Positive attention increases clarity and the effectiveness of how we deal with day-to-day life. This use of attention is similar to mindfulness stress management techniques. They enrich us in all our good, bad, big and small moments of life.

Transformation (negative to positive)

The ability to evolve, to change or to transform is an important human attribute. It allows us to adapt and deal with new circumstances, overcome difficulties we might face and find solutions to barriers that are put in our way. There are many ways to transform, what works for one person may not work for another, we have to find our own path. Some people when faced with a crisis, freeze and unable to act. In these situations, it is important to reduce the panic one is feeling. This can be as simple as taking some deep breathes, changing one’s attention, drinking a cup of sweet tea or talking through the problem with friend. Once we have broken the paralysis, we are then in a position to attempt positive change. It is important to remember that energy never dies, it is just transformed from one type of energy to another type of energy. So, in this context feelings are a type of energy that can be transformed from negative feelings to positive feelings.

Positive action (doing/courage to act/empowerment)

Not all actions are voluntary or even conscious but, in this context, as noted in the earlier section on intention, above action comes after intention. The courage to act on our intentions is a form of empowerment. For this to assist us in our journey of self-love the actions we undertake need to be of a positive nature. Having an intention to act in a negative way and then performing this negative action does not help us on the journey of self-love. For example, hiding away in a cave without food or water is a negative action and detrimental to our health. So not all actions are positive and assist us on the journey of self-love.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of Self-love and its need

As noted by Irvani in 1.2. above, there is no one set meaning to self-love, it may even vary from person to person and there is not much academic literature regarding in impact on mental health. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise the available theories or interpretations of its definition. Sociologist Hendrick lists out six types of love in his Love theory which include eros (romantic), mania (possessive), ludus (game playing), storge (best friends), agape (unselfish), pragma (logical)

(Hendrick, 1986). Although self-love was not included in this theory, Underwood makes the point that self-love can be categorised as ‘agape’ or undemanding love (Underwood, 2020). However, there are more Ancient Greek concepts for love such as: 1) Agape – love of God for person and of person for God; 2) Eros: sexual love or intimate love; 3) Philia: affectionate regard friendship; 4) Storge: Familial love; 5) Ludus or Playful love; 6) Pragma or Practical love; 7) Philautia: self-love. Self-love does not require validation or a demand from others. It lies within oneself, the only person who actually validates this feeling is the person itself (Boas, 1972).

On the contrary, psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud describes self-love as a form of narcissism, he goes on to argue that it has a direct negative correlation with love of others. He wrote in his book, on *Narcissism: An Introduction*, “the more of the one (ego-libido) is employed, the more the other (object-libido) becomes depleted” (Freud, 1914). While it is important to take into account Freud’s theory, it is also necessary to recognise that self-love and selfishness are not the same. This is why it is important to make a clear distinction between self-love and selfishness as it is a common misconception that selfishness lies within self-love when in reality self-love is a compassionate and empathic trait. Selfishness, on the other hand, is a trait that lies parallel to narcissism. Narcissists tend to use the people in their lives for their own benefit (Campbell et al., 2002).

As one delves into the meaning of self-love, it is also crucial to differentiate it from self-esteem, as they are two separate things despite being very similar to one another. To practice self-love is to love yourself despite your imperfections or flaws. It is to accept your failures and successes as part of life; to be proud of yourself despite your mundane failures, whereas self-esteem is its more conditional counterpart (Irvani, 2007). A person would put value into their self-esteem when they put positive or negative views towards it depending on the events that happen to them. Both the level of self-esteem and self-love in oneself can affect a person’s lives, whether it be in terms of their personal experiences or in their relationships with others.

A Delphi study on the consensus definition of self-love conducted by Jack E. Underwood found that self-love is both an individual and mutual experience in that certain aspects of a person’s self-love may be affected by his or her individual attitude and other aspects of it would be changed based on his or her relationship with others (Underwood, 2020). Some may argue that personal upbringing has a great effect on a person’s level of self-love as well (Garfield-Kabbara, 2014; Toomey, 2014; Underwood, 2020). Children often mirror their parents while growing up as they spend most of the time with them during these early stages. In many patriarchal societies which still exist today, fathers are often emphasised as the leaders in a household therefore they have a big influence over the children. Garfield-Kabbara suggests that this is the reason why fatherless children, daughters in particular, have less validation on their own self-worth because of their father’s absence (Garfield-Kabbara, 2014).

In a way, a low level of self-love can be related to teenage pregnancy, which may involve teenagers from broken homes or teenagers without fathers. Garfield-Kabbara also emphasises in the same paper on how a person’s low level of self-worth and self-love can greatly affect their lives as a whole when she writes, “My father’s rejection of me led to a deep unconscious sense of feeling unworthy of love and belonging that radiates throughout the rest of my life and my identity” (Garfield-Kabbara, 2014). Sometimes, teenage mothers experience a lack of self-love or self-esteem during their pregnancies because of the shame they feel, rooted in society’s stigma against unwed mothers. This stigma is particularly strong in Malaysia.

The question that arises now is, how does one cultivate a higher level of self-love? Fielding and Mendez write some ways to practice self-love including practicing self-care, becoming mindful, questioning negative thoughts, setting boundaries, avoiding comparisons between oneself and others and removing toxic people from your life (Fielding & Mendez, 2021). Toomey suggests that taking care of one’s well-being starts from the essentials in life such as nutrition, sleep, happiness, productivity and forgiveness (Toomey, 2017). All these simple steps can be a steppingstone to a greater level of self-love. It all starts with the act of self-acceptance and realisation (Garfield-Kabbara, 2014).

It is important to note that self-care is somewhat tied to self-love, as it entails nurturing oneself. In the Delphi study conducted by Jack E. Underwood, the research paper itself did not intend on focusing on the topic of self-care. Yet there was a notable amount of mentions regarding the topic from the panel in their findings, which gave emphasis on how much it relates to a person’s level of self-love (Underwood, 2020). In “Daring Greatly,”Brené Brown gives a description of ‘love’, “Love is not something we give or get; it is something that we nurture and grow, a connection that can only be cultivated between two people when it exists within each one of them—we can only love others as much as we love ourselves" (Brown, 2012). This can be applied to how a person can view his or her self-love. It is not something that is set in stone, stagnant. Self-love is something that is to be nurtured and most importantly, as Brown points out, we can only love others as much as we love ourselves. If we lack self-love, then how can we cultivate healthy relationships with those around us? As mentioned above, there is no sufficient explanation regarding self-love in the literature, however, this paper attempts to provide a practical explanation regarding the journey of self-love. Furthermore, this study investigates how much this concept applies among unmarried young women in Malaysia, for this purpose our target was teenage pregnant girls in Malaysia and exploring their experience and knowledge about self-love. To enable us to embark on this research it is important that we set the context of teenage pregnancy in Malaysia.

Teenage Pregnancy in Malaysia

A teenage pregnancy is defined as pregnancy occurring among teenagers aged nineteen years or younger (Malaysia: UNICEF Malaysia Communications, 2008). Pregnancies among teenagers have become a common issue in today's global society. In Malaysia, the numbers of teenage pregnancies are increasing. Statistics from the Department of National Registration of Malaysia show that in 2017 there were 4,992 illegitimate children born to teenage mothers aged eighteen and below (Joibi, 2018).

Marriage is very important in terms of women giving birth in Malaysia and when a pregnancy happens outside of wedlock it is considered to be against the social norms and brings shame and disgrace to the family (Saim, 2014). The unmarried mother is perceived as being an immoral and an ill-mannered person (Silverman et al, 2001), sinful and unacceptable (Macleod & Weaver, 2003).

Pregnancies among teenagers can lead to various negative consequences including: becoming a school dropout, undergoing abortions, infanticide, becoming a victim of child marriage, child sexual grooming and baby dumping. (Hartini, 2021)

Many people, young people in particular, appear to have little knowledge about safe sex and contraception in Malaysia. They live in world of ignorance showered with mixed adult messages about sex, leaving unanswered questions, embarrassment and silence. "The result is not less sex, but less protected sex" (Mawer, 1999).

This study is exploring a path that empowers people, promote the practice of self-love, assists in managing emotions and improving decision making of young people on the one side, while navigating the legal, political and religious implications on the other. This study is aiming to fill the gap and improve life chances, the quality of relationships, building of self-love, elevating knowledge of the self and improving skills to manage their emotions. In this context the study examined young people's reports of positive and negative emotions related to self-love and self-knowledge.

The authors believe that it is important to address self-love principals among young people and how they might practice it. As Bransen (2015) suggests, self-love is a precondition for self-knowledge and that self-knowledge is an ordinary practice of rationalising and appropriating actions. Exploring strategies in communication and learning skills in how to manage their emotions would assist parents and young people in understanding and assisting their children, while helping them to manage their emotional health and how to practice self-love. This research is a bridge to a theory of how young people can learn how to practice self-love.

The authors found no published studies on how to build the awareness of self-love, and the skills of managing emotions among young people, the role of parents, schools, the community, religious institutions and the media about teenage pregnancy in Malaysia, hence the importance of this research.

Ethical Approval

Ethical approval for this study was provided by HELP University. Essentially, we assured that all of our research participants were able to voluntarily participate and were able to leave at any time without having to provide any reasons. The research process sought to do no harm and to empower the participants. All the participant's names have been changed, including any traceable information to protect their identity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this qualitative exploration study, seven young unmarried girls (three of which were pregnant and four who had recently given birth), who were residents in a nongovernmental shelter based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, were interviewed. These residents were all aged over 17, two of them were aged 20 and 21 years respectively. The authors included the two elder girls as they were treated the same way as the younger ones by the shelter. They were all unmarried Muslims. They all had different life experiences and were at different trimesters. We interviewed these seven residents using a video call via the Zoom platform during the COVID pandemic lockdown (Hickson *et. al*, 2022). These interviews explored challenges faced by the institutionalised young unmarried women who had decided to continue their pregnancy. We examined the data using a thematic analysis and compared them across the seven cases. The themes we started with were position, weakness, strength, intention, attention, transformation, positive action and empowerment. After our initial pass of the categories, we took out empowerment as we felt this was too close to one of the other categories: positive action.

This presented us with our final five thematic categories of self-knowledge, (position, weakness and strength), intention, attention, transformation, and positive action to work with.

Selection of participants

The researchers opened up a general call for participants to be included in this research through existing contacts, web searches and posting on social media groups. We eventually chose to target a non-government shelter for Muslim young unmarried pregnant girls. The Director of the shelter gave the researchers open access to interview any of the shelter residents who were happy to be involved in the research.

The participants of this research lived in a non-government shelter for unmarried pregnant Muslim teenage girls. The shelter was set up and run by a social activist who found herself helping single mothers at her own house:

> "*I'm doing social activist work since 2009. But this house only 3 years, since 2019 January. Because I started from my own house. I kept 2 single mums one time, 2 single mums one time in my own apartment. Can't take too many requests. There's still requests to be with me, to stay with me, to help them. So, I decided to open this house, at least I can keep more than 15 persons at one time. We have so many waiting lists, I think about 7 to 9 waiting list, but we can't accept all because of the accommodation. I can show you. This is how it looks like. they have bed*" (Bainun, 2021).[4]

[4] Personal communication

The teenage residents of the shelter had basic living conditions provided. This included their own bed, their own clothes rack, and access to YouTube until 11 p.m. They also had to join their religious classes and basic educational classes. They had counselling sessions provided. The main rule for being allowed to enter the shelter was that the parents must be informed; they must know where their daughters are. The residents were allowed up to thirty minutes per month to speak to their parents, other than that they were not allowed to have their mobile phones or other communication devices on them. Following birth, to leave the shelter, their parents had to pick them up.

The researchers proceeded to interview seven of the young women who were pregnant and living in the shelter about their perceptions of self-love in relation to their feelings about their current situation.

All of the research participants had had at least one boyfriend in the past and most of them became pregnant by said boyfriend. Only one participant involved, revealed that her pregnancy was a result of rape, "I was a victim of rape but I didn't lodge any reports to the police…. it was a stranger." The event was described as traumatising for the participant, and when asked whether she would tell her child of the incident, she said, "I would probably tell her; it might take time for me to explain to her but I would try to slowly talk to her about it—I don't know how to tell her about the true incident." This inhibition and lack of communication, between everyone concerned, about the subject of sex and relationships appears to be a major contributing factor in the high rate of teenage pregnancy amongst Malay Muslim young women.

Data collection

We prepared in advance of our interviews an interview guide containing a list of questions covering the range of issues we were interested to explore with our participants. We used the guide to structure our interviews, but otherwise sought to keep the conversation free flowing, allowing for a degree of spontaneity.

The interviews were conducted virtually, over the video and audio-conferencing application Zoom. At the time of our interviews, a nationwide Movement Control Order, imposed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, prevented us from travelling to interview the participants in person.

Four of the interviews were conducted in English while the remaining two were conducted in *Bahasa*

Melayu (Malay language) as the participants were more conversant in that language. All interviews were recorded with the participants' permission and were transcribed and/or translated into English as necessary.

Data analysis

Transcripts were analysed collaboratively by both members of the research team.

It took the researchers several steps to analyse the data. Initially, we transcribed the recorded interviews, we then translated the interviews that were in Malay language to English. We then checked the interviews for accuracy. Following this we familiarised ourselves with the interviews, and then went through the transcripts looking for six themes that we had categorised. We put quotes from the transcripts into the categories related to the six themes after which we reflected on those six themes and brought them down to five themes. We then checked through and discussed our interpretations with each other. Finally, we applied the principles of self-love to the data.

As discussed in this paper, self-love is a journey that people undertake in their lifetimes. This can be a conscious or unconscious journey. It would appear that some people are naturally inclined towards self-love whereas the majority of us have to make conscious decisions about applying the principles of self-love to our lives. Indeed, some people, go through their lives without experiencing self-love at all. During the data analysis process, we looked for signs where we could see our research participants practicing self-love, whether that be consciously or unconsciously.

There can be many barriers to successfully practicing self-love. These barriers can include internalised oppression, external oppression from parents, colleagues, peers and the authorities. The authors believe that the way to overcome all of these oppressions is through the conscious awareness and practicing of the principles of self-love, which we have outlined in this study.

The researchers utilised the following five concepts in the data analysis:

1) Self-knowledge (of weaknesses, strengths and positions in life)
2) Intention (to act)
3) Attention (self-awareness)
4) Transformation (negative to positive)
5) Positive action (doing/courage to act/empowerment)

Results, Discussion and Recommendations

We start this section with an exploration of the degree of self-knowledge of the participants:

Sarah

Self-knowledge

<u>*Position*</u>
Sarah was a victim of rape, which caused her to suffer anxiety and depression. This was exacerbated as she had a difficult relationship with her friends and family. The only person she could go to for support was her grandmother.

"*I was a victim of rape … because I was scared and I didn't have anyone else … it totally scared me. Depression, anxiety … I'm not too close with my mother, even my father. Even my siblings too. I was only close with my grandmother … I bottle up my feelings. I don't even tell my friends because I don't trust anyone. They're all so toxic; family, friends*."

Sarah recognises her position of being raped and not very close with her parents. She demonstrates a degree of self-love by being able to get support from her grandmother.

<u>*Weakness*</u>
Despite Sarah recognising some of her emotional weaknesses, she is currently unable to turn these into strengths. She has difficulty with authority figures such as the police and even her parents. In addition, she tells us that she also has difficulty in managing her physical desires.

"*I didn't lodge any reports to the police … I considered like giving [my daughter] up for adoption but my family doesn't want me to do that." "However, as I said, once you start doing something like sex, you'll start getting that itch to do it more and more*."

<u>*Strength*</u>
Sarah understands the basic concept of self-love, can speak both Malay and English, tries to get support from her parents and take some steps in self-care.

"*Self-love is accepting yourself and forgiving yourself. To forget the past and to love yourself more than others …*

[I'm], bilingual … I told my parents that I was a victim of rape ... I always mark on a calendar my period dates."

Sarah recognizes her position in life and is thus able to get support. Although she recognizes some of her weaknesses, she is unable to turn them into strengths and continues to have difficulty with authority figures.

Intention (to act)

Sarah works best when she is given motivation and support from other people and not when she feels she has been judged by them. She has made decisions to bring up her own daughter differently than how her parents brought her up, giving more love and attention, so that her soon to be baby girl did not repeat the same mistakes as she did.

"*[I can talk to people] when someone had the same situation as me and don't judge my story. They give me motivation and support … of course I will teach [my daughter about sex and relationships] because I don't want it to happen to my future daughter. I don't want the same mistakes to be repeated … I think I will give more attention, give more love with my future daughter … I won't even do the same things my parents did with me because I know what I feel so I don't want my future daughter to feel the same way towards me*."

Sarah has not shown an ability to apply principles of self-knowledge in her life. Although she is able to act in variety of situations, generally she does it under guidance.

Attention (self-awareness)

Sarah is fully aware of her situation, pain, anxiety and depression. She also understood her lack of connection with God, parents and friends. There is evidence that she uses this self-awareness to make improvements in her life and follow the path of self-love.

"*I was a victim of rape but I didn't lodge any reports to the police … It totally scared me. [I suffered] depression [and] anxiety … They [her grandparents] gave me support, self-love, emotional love … I feel disappointed with myself because I think I wasn't really connecting with God and I didn't get much attention from my parents. I got most of the attention from my grandparents. I was in pain*."

Transformation (negative to positive)

Sarah's experiences of rape and pregnancy have had a transformative effect on her. She has built bridges with her parents and has a positive vision for her future. One could argue that she has learned from her experiences and manage to turn what was negative into a positive.

"*[In future I might better protect myself against rape] by not living in crowded share homes. I would probably find a place of my own or just opt to not move away from my hometown [and] just live on with my parents … I feel grateful because they [family] are accepting of me and my baby even though at first, I was trying to convince them to put the baby up for adoption … After the incident, my relationship with my whole family slowly became stronger, mainly with my mother. My relationship with my father improved a bit.*"

Positive action (doing/courage to act/empowerment)

Sarah demonstrated courage by telling her parents that she was a victim of rape. This was a risk as such communication is generally taboo in Malaysia.

"*I told my parents that I was a victim of rape*."

Philafah

Self-knowledge

<u>*Position*</u>

Philafah was from a broken home. She was brought up by her father and has not seen her mother since she was a small child. She was unable to share much with either of her own parents. Likewise, her own child's father has been absent and she does not feel that he wants to take any responsibility for it.

"*I felt sad that he didn't want to take up any responsibility [for the child] … I don't really share much about that with my father … I haven't been in contact with her [my mother] since I was a little kid*."

<u>*Weakness*</u>

Philafah understood the principles of safe sex. Despite this knowledge she still engaged in unprotected sex which cause her to get pregnant. Although risk taking can be seen as a sign of courage, she did not mitigate these risks which the authors feel is a sign of weakness.

"*I understood what [safe sex] was…[but] "I felt that I wanted to try out new things… "I knew that [I could get pregnant] but I still wanted to take the risk*."

Intention (to act)

The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to intention to act.

Attention (self-awareness)

The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to attention.

Transformation (negative to positive)

The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to transformation.

Positive action (doing/courage to act/empowerment)

The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to positive action.

Donna

Self-knowledge

<u>*Position*</u>

Donna was 17 years old when she became pregnant. Her mother reported her to the police and she was held in custody. Despite living with her boyfriend and not having relations with any other men, her boyfriend denied any responsibility for being the father of the child. She still wanted to marry him but her parents would not let them because they had different religions and she was underage. She was thus forced to separate from her boyfriend and was moved into the hostel.

"*When I was held at the police station, I still had my phone with me and I tried calling my boyfriend. I asked him to get me out of there. I was scared, I just wanted to go home. Then my boyfriend said to me that the baby was not his. He didn't claim it to be his child. This came out of the blue and I thought to myself, "Why doesn't he want to take responsibility for the child when I was living with him the whole time?" It was just so sudden. We have different religions and my mother didn't allow us to get married because of that reason as well as the fact that I'm underaged.*"

<u>*Weakness*</u>

Donna, once she became pregnant felt that she had lost control of her life and was forced to do things she did not want to do. As written in the 'position', Donna was forced down a particular path when her mother reported her to the police. It was at this point that the authorities and her parents took control of her life.

"*Actually, it wasn't my choice to break things off. I was forced to do so.*"

<u>*Strength*</u>

Before becoming pregnant Donna was an independent girl working and living on her own. She also demonstrated courage by initially telling her mother about her pregnancy and then forgiving her mother for reporting her to the police.

"*He [her boyfriend] first approached me while I was working [and living on my own], after I ran away from home. Then after the COVID-19 pandemic hit and stores had to close down, I didn't have anywhere to go so I asked for his help. At that point, we both had a mutual romantic interest for one another so we just lived together. [After the police came and I was arrested] I was sad because I had already made plans to—how do you say it—I was already planning on marrying him because I had that positive pregnancy test. I really didn't expect my mother to file the police report against me because I genuinely thought her intentions were to just come see me and my boyfriend. I have always accepted my mother. I think that she did the police report because she loves and cared for me.*"

Intention (to act)

The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to intention to act.

Attention (self-awareness)

The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to attention.

Transformation (negative to positive)

The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to transformation.

Positive action (doing/courage to act/empowerment)

Donna had the courage to leave home, get a job and her own place to live. She also found strength to tell her mother about her pregnancy despite the probable repercussions that this could bring. It was unfortunate for Donna that the result of her positive action was curtailed once her mother had reported her to the police.

"*I ran away from home [before I was pregnant, I wanted to earn money for myself and my family] and at the time, I was living with my boyfriend and my mother only found out because I called her.*"

Olivia

Self-knowledge

<u>*Position*</u>

It appears to the authors that Olivia feels that ignorance would have kept her away from indulging in sexual relations. She blames knowledge of sex as the cause of her pregnancy.

"*I feel like if I did know more, I wouldn't be in the situation right now [being pregnant] I'd rather just not know about sex at all. Because after I finish school, I started working.*

My knowledge about sex in general, threw me into this situation."

Olivia does not appear to have learned from her experience of pregnancy in that she still believes that people should not undertake any sex and relationship education before they engaged in it.

"*I won't teach my daughter about that [safe sex]. At least not until I'm getting married or old enough to get married. Because my mum accepts the baby and my mum agrees with the same thing that my daughter shouldn't be taught anything about sex and relationships until she's getting married*."

<u>*Weakness*</u>
The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to weakness.

<u>*Strength*</u>
The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to strength.

Intention (to act)
The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to intention to act.

Attention (self-awareness)
The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to attention.

Transformation (negative to positive)
The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to transformation.

Positive action (doing/courage to act/empowerment)
The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to positive action.

Andi

<u>*Position*</u>
Andi was still pregnant when we interviewed her. She did not communicate particularly well with her mother; her parents were divorced and she had lost contact with her biological father. Andi was the eldest of nine children and felt the responsibility of an adult, particularly in terms of not wanting to feel like she was a burden on the family. The researchers were unable to ascertain why Andi had been sent to the shelter, but she said her mother would accept the baby once she had given birth and returned home.

"*I don't really share [with my parents] because I'm the eldest daughter of 9 siblings … my mum's got a lot on her plate… I 'd rather keep it to myself … my mum's okay with my situation right now. I feel if I had had a closer relation with my mum in the beginning then I would not be pregnant right now*."

<u>*Weakness*</u>
It appears that Andi finds it difficult to ask for help or share her concerns to anyone in her life. The researchers regard this is as a weakness. It maybe possible to have a counter argument of this being strength but in the context of self-love the ability to seek assistance and communicate ones concerns in life with others is important.

"*I don't really share [with my parents] … I 'd rather keep it to myself … I don't want to tell the father because I'd rather take care of the baby on my own*."

<u>*Strength*</u>
The researchers could find no data regarding any specific strengths that Andi might have in relation to self-love.

Intention (to act)
Although her answers felt rather sterile, Andi's plan for her future was in her words to try and become a better person for everyone around her.

"*My plan for my child is to get a job, work … I become a better person as a whole and am able to take care of my mum, my siblings and also my daughter*."

Attention (self-awareness)
The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to attention.

Transformation (negative to positive)
The researchers did not find any data relating to transformation.

Positive action (doing/courage to act/empowerment)
She took action in her relationship by deciding to leave the father of her baby as she felt the father no longer understood her as a person.

"*I decided not to be with him anymore. Because I feel that he doesn't understand me as a person*."

Susana

Self-knowledge

<u>*Position*</u>
The data provided by Susana was possibly lacking due to the Director of the shelter observing the interview. Susana,

who was still at school, felt that pregnancy has now held her back in life with her education being to suffer.

"*My studies have kind of been held back … I can't really focus on school and all that I am still in high school form five.*"

<u>*Weakness*</u>
The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to weakness.

<u>*Strength*</u>
Despite, as already mentioned, Susana was speaking in front of the Director of the refuge, and felt strongly enough to speak about her future role as a mother. Unlike most of the other girls in the refuge she wants to teach her child about sex and relationships so that he does not repeat the same mistake that she made.

"*I don't want to repeat the same mistakes I've done in the past … when my son grows up, I'm going to teach him how to not make the same mistakes I did.*"

Intention (to act)
The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to intention to act.

Attention (self-awareness)
The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to attention.

Transformation (negative to positive)
The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to transformation action.

Positive action (doing/courage to act/empowerment)
The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to positive action.

Zeyni

<u>*Position*</u>
Zeyni left home when she found out she were pregnant. Despite this her mother forced her to attend the shelter by threatening to throw away her school certificates. This would have resulted in her not being able to go on to university. Zeyni's relationship with her mother is unsupportive and she relies on her grandmother for emotional support.

"*When I found I was pregnant, I actually lived on my own … I left home around five months … but at eight months pregnancy, my mum sent me to a shelter home because she was embarrassed by the baby... my mum and me have a problem so we don't talk that much. So She is not really supporting me 100%. everything I tell my grandmother she will give me emotional support and give me advice and everything … I don't want to go to a shelter home my mum sent me. I was forced to be here ... I'm currently studying as a degree student, so my mum said if I don't go to a shelter home, she will just throw all my certificates and stop me from studying.*"

<u>*Weakness*</u>
Zeyni was an ambitious woman who wanted to complete university degree and go on to work. She was unable to stand up to her mother to assert her rights or to live her life the way she wanted to. She allowed herself to be bullied and manipulated subject to her mother's own needs. Additionally, like all the other participants we spoke to, Zeyni stopped contact with the father of the baby

"*… I don't want to go to a shelter home my mum sent me. I was forced to be here ... I'm currently studying as a degree student, so my mum said if I don't go to a shelter home, she will just throw all my certificates and stop me from studying … He wanted [her boyfriend] to get married, but I decided to leave him because I don't think he can be responsible for the baby.*"

<u>*Strength*</u>
Before attending the shelter, Zeyni demonstrated a number of strengths including the ability to find and pay for her own apartment and to reflect on her own experiences, particularly in reference to educating one's children and finding ways to communicate with them.

"*In my opinion, parents should have the knowledge before they become parents, they should know the ways to communicate with their children, how to educate their children, to raise their children with love, and how to teach their children, so their children didn't get involved in the sex thing, to drop out or have social problems … at first, I didn't live with my parents when I was pregnant … I rented a house on my own and lived there with my friend.*"

Intention (to act)
The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to intention to act.

Attention (self-awareness)
Zeyni is aware of her own physical and mental health and the need to take care of these, so that she is able to look after her own child.

"*I am taking care of my health to take care of my son. So, I can be strong to raise my son.*"

Transformation (negative to positive)

The authors found no data they could interpret as to relating to transformation.

Positive action (doing/courage to act/ empowerment)

Although Zeyni is unhappy living at the shelter. She continues to endure it so that she can continue to study.

"*I don't want to go to a shelter home my mum sent me. I was forced to be* here … *I'm currently studying as a degree student. So, my mum said if I don't go to a shelter home, she will just throw all my certificates and stop me from studying. I don't want to stop studying*."

Conclusion

As discussed earlier in this paper, teenage pregnancy appears to be a bigger issue with the Malay population than the Indian, Chinese, or Orang Asli people of Malaysia. The authors believe that this is due to the following reasons: Firstly, the Muslim population are both embarrassed and lack knowledge about sex education. Secondly, the religion and laws relating to sex education amongst Malays is confusing to young people and their parents. Thirdly, due to the above there is a lack of communication and discussion about sex education. These points contribute towards higher rates of teenage pregnancy, and to concealing incidents when they happen. One of the common factors the authors found with the girls in the shelter is that they were encouraged to break ties with their children's father, all of the girls we interviewed had stopped contact with the children's father after they had entered shelter. For example, one of the girls the authors interviewed was in a relationship and living with her boyfriend, when she found out she was pregnant she contacted her mother as she was scared and unsure what to do. They wanted to get married, her mother said she would help but instead reported them to the police which ended in the girl being forced into the shelter and losing contact with the boyfriend. In fact, the girls lost all control over their lives once they had been admitted to the shelter, despite being offered a basic religious education and counseling, they were not allowed to leave the shelter until the baby was born and they had reconciled with their families, they had their mobile phones taken away from them, they had to submit to the shelters time keeping and schedule, they were not allowed any visitors and they were not allowed to leave the premises, fearing that may plan to escape from there.

As can be seen from the interviews, several of the girls prior to becoming pregnant and entering the shelter were strong willed, ambitious and empowered. There was also evidence of unconscious self-love. Some of the girls recognised their self-love but were unable to practice it in their lives. Indeed, the authors go further than this and suggest that the experiences the girls faced during their pregnancies appeared to suck out the self-love and confidence in them rebuilding their lives. The authors acknowledge that the shelter was being run with the best of intentions within a legal and social context, but still only one of the girls, the authors interviewed, had a positive transformation from the experience, it enabled her to build bridges with her parents, and helped to provide her a positive vision for her future.

Finally, the anecdotal evidence of the researchers and their sources for this paper suggests that the non-Muslim population of Malaysia appear to be more accepting of children born out of wedlock. Generally, parents of pregnant girls are happy to help bring up the children without too much embarrassment or controversy. Amongst all the races in Malaysia, research suggests, that the Orang Asli are the most accepting of raising children born out of wedlock, from rape or other similar situations.[5]

Recommendations

Sex education in Malaysia varies tremendously. Amongst the Malay population there is not only a lot of stigma but also a lot of prejudice and inhibition to talk about the subject at any level, especially with young people. The authors feel that learning strategies for communicating sex education would greatly assist in the lessening of this issue. For example, due to a lack of communication even the concept of sex education is misunderstood. Many Malays feel that sex education is about teaching people how to have sex rather than teaching people about relationships, health and building one's self-knowledge. This includes the ability to be able make decisions that will impact more positively on people's lives.

Contributions to field of study

The authors have made two significant contributions to this field of study. The first is designing and applying the

[5] Personal experience and communication from Orang Asli sources given to Hickson, one of the researchers. Hickson has lived on several occasions during the past fifty years.

new explanation for the concept of self-love. The second is the designing of a self-love reflective cycle that includes five categories.

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Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declare no conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article. This article is the sole work of the authors and has not been presented or published elsewhere.

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The Effect of Toxic Workplace Environments on Employee Engagement: Mediating Roles of Employee's Wellbeing and Organization Support

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Employee Engagement **(EE) is** a key priority in organizations. The main goals of this study are to analyze the effect of a toxic work environment (TWE) on employee engagement, to understand the mediating role of organizational support (OS) and employee wellbeing (EWB), and to find associated demographic data on EE.

Methods: The current study used a quantitative approach. The convenience sampling technique was chosen, and 151 employees participated. The instrument that the researcher used was robust, had been thoroughly tested for reliability, and had received written approval from researchers to be used as standard tool. Descriptive analysis, regression model, t- test and ANOVA test were used to assess the data.

Results: According to the findings of the present study, TWE has a negative impact on EE at work. OS and EWB are all terms used to describe a toxic workplace environment. Furthermore, EE is associated with demographic characteristics such as age, and experience.

Conclusion: The higher authorities should enhance and implement employee well-being systems and OS in order to boost EE and well-being.

Keywords: toxic workplace environments, employee engagement, employees' well-being, organization support

INTRODUCTION

The term "engagement" was coined in the 1990s by William Kahn and is becoming increasingly relevant and popular in today's research on the workplace and has resulted in more managerial intentions. The term "engagement" has been used by numerous researchers (Brunetto et al., 2013; Kou, 2012; Rasool, Wang, Tang, Saeed, & Iqbal, 2021; Saleem, Shenbei, & Hanif, 2020). A manager is someone who has an overview of overall responsibility at work for his or her unit/department, which includes work processes and employee welfare and progress. Therefore, they should be able to define the significance of workplace engagement for their units. Numerous studies have revealed that there is a significant relationship between employees' engagement and performance within organizations (Shrestha, 2019; Fulmer & Ployhart, 2014; Hanaysha, 2016; Rashidi Md. Dom & Murad Ahmad, 2019). EE is an important ingredient for managers (Seats & Cram, 2006), and employees are the greatest asset of any organization (Fulmer & Ploy Hart, 2014). EW and OS are shown to be significant in EE (Retool, Wang, Tang, Saied, & Irbil, 2021). It is undeniable that employees' physical, mental, and social well-being are jeopardized in toxic work environments. Toxic people tend to infect coworkers with their poor work culture and unpleasant feelings. Harassment, bullying, and ostracism, which are all symptoms of a toxic work environment, may lead to unnecessary burdens, burnout, depression, and anxiety among employees. All of these factors contribute to lower worker productivity. In this regard, there are potential solutions and mediating strategies, such as EW and OS, to enhance positive EE. A healthy workplace environment is important and beneficial to each employee as it enhances and improves employee performance and productivity, increases employee-manager trust, and reduces turnover and absenteeism. Evidence has suggested that a healthy workplace nurtures job satisfaction and contributes to the quality of service (Bai, 2016), and motivates workers, which ultimately, leads to employees' productivity and reduce health hazards, illness, and other unacceptable behavior. On the other hand, TWE, such as harassment, bullying, and ostracism, can be harmful to workers, causing unnecessary stress, burnout, despair, and anxiety (Rasool, Wang, Tang, Saeed, & Iqbal, 2021). Sexually harassed employees have lower job satisfaction and suffer from a range of psychological and physical health problems (Hersch, 2015). It can be assumed that if there is a high prevalence of bullying at work, employee performance could be directly impacted. The current study focuses on determining the relationship between TWE on employee engagement mediated by roles of employee's well-being and OS.

One out of every three women in the world will face violence from a partner or another individual (WHO, 2013; UN Women, 2019). Despite the fact that 53.84 percent of Nepali female employees reported being harassed, the issue is not openly addressed because it is a taboo subject, and Nepali women continue to hide their struggles from their friends and relatives for a variety of reasons (Bellig, 1993). There are a few examples of toxic workplace issues, such as bullying and sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a serious workplace issue. For example, in a survey conducted, more than half of the women polled stated (Bularzik, 2013) they have been harassed in some way. TWE has become an urgent and concerning issue in today's workplace as it can lead to depletion, decreased performance, and decreased engagement at work.

Fair organization, support, rewards, and job conditions are basic antecedents of perceived OS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Employees' stress, anxiety, burnout, and turnover are reduced when organizations provide instrumental social and emotional support. There is evidence that OS has a mediating effect on employee work performance (Chen et al., 2020), and that the organization benefits from employees' good treatment, which results in improving their attitudes towards their jobs, such as job satisfaction and lowering their desire to leave (Astuty & Udin, 2020; Duke, Goodman, Treadway, & Breland, 2009; Park, Newman, Zhang, Wu, & Hooke, 2016; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Shaheen & Krishnankutty, 2018) The Nepalese Company Act makes provision for effective corporate governance in Nepalese organizations. Nevertheless, institutional management in the spirit of existing requirements for effective governance is still in its early stages (Shrestha et al., 2019), and research carried out in Nepal about the topic is scarce.

When employees are happy, it is believed that they are more likely to develop a positive work culture, maintain it, and be productive (Salas-Vallina, Pozo-Hidalgo, & Gil-Monte, 2020). According to survey data from 5328 participants from workplaces in four countries, harassment and domestic violence are significant stressors that affect withdrawal from work, work attitude, and work quality, and the study highlighted a message to global brands and factory managers to foster worker well-being, which may improve factory performance (Wziak-Biaowolska, Biaowolski, & McNeely, 2020). EWB is positively associated with employee productivity and workplace productivity. The researchers in the present study, have made very strong recommendations on the significant relationship between employee well-being, productivity, and firm performance. The primary purpose of policymakers is to improve society's well-being (Krekel, Ward, & De Neve, 2019). EWB aspects, such as physical, psychological, and social well-being qualities, are becoming more important. In the workplace, safety and health are at the heart of the future of work (Dollard & Neser, 2019). According to the study, mental health issues like anxiety, depression, and insomnia were common among healthcare workers in Nepal during the early phases of COVID-19, and they were more likely to have mental health problems. Researchers have proposed that well-being packages could be a coping strategy for dealing with challenges (Khanal, Devkota, Dahal, Paudel, & Joshi, 2020). Further, it is recognized that the effectiveness of EWB within the organization helps to maintain strength and empower employees both mentally and physically, according to studies. It motivates and encourages people to work more efficiently and maintain a healthy work-life balance. Additionally, studies conducted by researchers have discovered a significant and strong positive. There is an association between employee satisfaction, employee productivity, and customer loyalty as well as a significant and strong negative correlation with staff turnover (Krekel, Ward, & De Neve, 2019). However, there has been less research on this topic in Nepal. EE receives less attention (Shrestha, 2019), but it is a crucial component that must be present at work. Leadership must develop enthusiasm, maintain employee trust, and excel in a favorable work environment in this regard. Whether an organization is small or huge, in general, they should aim to demonstrate that their employees are happy and engaged at work. If an organization keeps its EE, it may be possible to boost productivity and wellbeing at work, resulting in fewer employee absences, turnover, and preventive employee grouses. Accordingly, employee motivation and EE are essential aspects (Vance, 2006) to maintain the sustainability and profitability (Kazimoto, 2016) of organizations, and the authorities need to address essential EE by deploying appropriate people in the right designations. Research reveals that EE has an impact on organizational performance (Ahmed, Khan, Thirties, Siraphatthada, & Phumdara, 2020; Mulle, Smith, & Lillah, 2018; Paper, 2013; Smith & Markwick, n.d.; Shrestha, 2019). However, negative organizational characteristics such as aggressive behaviors, demotivation, and negative emotions can result in an unpleasant or TWE (Aktar & Pangil, 2017; Rasool, Wang, Tang, Saeed, & Iqbal, 2021), and the organization's outcome would be unsatisfactory. Furthermore, EW and OS are critical factors that play a positive role in achieving EE. The working environment of an OS is crucial in encouraging high EE (Aktar & Pangil, 2017; Rasool, Wang, Tang, Saeed, & Iqbal, 2021; Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014; J., 2014; Motyka, 2018). Studies have demonstrated a considerable positive influence of OS on EE (Bedarkar & Pandita, 2014; J., 2014; Motyka, 2018).

METHODS

The study was conducted utilizing a descriptive cross-sectional research design based on quantitative methodology. The survey method was used to collect participant data. Participants' formal consent was obtained before administering the survey instruments. According to a previous study; Cronbach's Alpha scale has a good internal consistency, Cronbach's Alpha: domain TWE (0.935), domain OF (0.784), domain EWB (0.843), domain EE (0.759) value (Rasool, Wang, Tang, Saeed, & Iqbal, 2021) are acceptable values and demonstrate good construct validity. In the first section, the socio-demographic characteristics included *Age, Work experience, Marital status, Gender, and Education level*. The second section consisted of [TWE = 7 questions, OS included = 4 questions, EWB included = 5 questions, and EE included = 4 questions] on a 7-point Likert-type scale, with 1 denoting strongly disagreeing and 7 denoting strongly agreeing. The population sample in the study are mostly from selected health institutions in the Kathmandu valley, where they worked as staff. A total of 151 employees in all, participated in the study. Data were gathered using purposive sampling. It is a non-random sampling strategy that applies a particular goal to chosen samples. Additionally, the researchers received consent from all participants, and data was collected using online social media such as WhatsApp, email, and Viber. Data analysis was carried out using descriptive analysis, regression analysis, T-test, and the ANOVA test.

Factor analysis makes it possible to understand the number of factors required to explain a common theme from a set of variables. In this current study researchers applied KMO and Bartlett's Test to analyze all available data for reliability and validity. With a KMO of.858, a Bartlett's Test of less than 0.05, and a KMO of higher than 0.5, the study was significant. The feasibility of utilizing factor analysis is demonstrated by the analysis between variables which validates Bartlett's test, and Kiaser-Mayer-Olkin indicator (KMO). The P-value is 0.000, and the result is greater than 0.05, it is significant (Bhakar, 2021; Vorina, Simonič, & Vlasova, 2017). The Communalities Extraction value is greater than 0.5, indicating a superior fit for the model in this study.

RESULTS

To examine the relationship of TWE on EE with mediating roles of EWB and OS, researchers administered the descriptive analysis, regression analysis, and ANOVA, and researchers tested for reliability and to meet the study aims.

Descriptive Analysis: Table 1. Shows that that; 39.1% were between the ages of 20 and 30. 32.0 % had 6 and10 years of work experiences, 54. 3 %were married, 68.9% were female, and 37.1 % had a master's degree.

Hypothesis Testing; Regression statistical tool was used to examine Hypothesis1 (H1): effect of a TWE on EE; Regression Model Summary demonstrates that; TWE has a negative relationship with EE, according to regression analysis (Pearson Correlation, MEAN _TWE = -.009a, R Square =.000, Adjusted R Square =-.007, P > 0.05). As a result, hypotheis1 (H1): This conclusion suggests that there is a negative relationship between TWE and EE and that one of the key elements affecting employee performance and engagement at work is a toxic work environment.

Hypothesis2 (H2): Impact of OS on EE; Regression Analysis of OS (Pearson Correlation, MEAN_ OS =.447, R =. 447a, R Square =.200, Adjusted R Square =.195, p>0.05). It has been proven that there is a relationship between OS and EE. As a result, it is established and demonstrated that OS has a significant impact on EE.

Table 1. Illustrates the data obtained of demographic variables

Mean	Frequency	Percent
Age(Years)		
20-30	59	39.1
30-40	44	29.1
40-50	29	19.2
50-60	13	8.6
>60	6	4
Work Experiences(Years)		
0-5	38	25.3
6-10	48	32.0
11-20	36	24
21-30	22	14.7
30-40	6	4
Marital Status		
Married	82	54.3
Unmarried	69	45.7
Gender		
Male	47	31.1
Female	104	68.9
Education Level		
Certificate degree	32	21.2
Bachelor degree	37	24.5
Master Degree	56	37.1
PhD	26	17.2

Hypothesis 3(H3): Impact of EWB on EE; Regression Model Summary; demonstrate that ;(Pearson Correlation, MEAN_ EWB =.4107, R.410a, RSquare.168, Adjusted R Square =.162, P > 0.05). It has been established that a EWB and EE have a significant relationship in this regard. As a result, EWB has a significant impact on EE.

Researchers applied to compare F distributions, using the ANOVA test program. It's a statistical method for comparing different sources of variance within a set of data. These are;

H4: Between the various age levels, there is considerable variance in EE. According to the findings, there is a significant difference between groups as established by one-way as shown in Table 2 ANOVA analysis shows that, Sig=.032, (F2, 146), F=2.715. As a result, hypothesis H4 is accepted.

H5: The EE varies significantly based on the level of work experience. Table 3. ANOVA analysis has shown that; there is a significant difference between groups as determined by one-way ANOVA (F2, 145) =4.111, Sig=.003. As a result, hypothesis H5 is accepted.

H6: There is a significant difference between males and females in terms of EE. Table: 4 Males and females differ in terms of EE, according to the analysis of the Independent Samples T- test. The independent sample t-assumption test of equal variance was examined in the independent t-test using Levene's test, and the results showed that F = 2.212, P value sig (2-tailed) =.665, and equal variance was assumed at df = 149. This outcome showed that the value is more than 0.05. As a result, the hypothesis cannot be accepted.

DISCUSSION

This study's goal is to investigate the effect of TWE on EE, which is a pertinent and significant research topic in the current workplace. In the current study with the utilization of regression, the model summary revealed that; TWE has a detrimental effect on EE. Healthcare professionals are more prone to experience violence at work. Previous research evidence suggested that;

Table 2. Analysis of variance (age-specific ANOVA)

MEAN_EE	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	10.216	4	2.554	2.715	.032
Within Groups	137.342	146	.941		
Total	**147.558**	**150**			

Table 3. Analysis of variance (work experiences- specific ANOVA)

MEAN_EE	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	15.017	4	3.754	4.111	.003
Within Groups	132.416	145	.913		
Total	**147.433**	**149**			

Table 4. Male and Female Independent Samples T- Tests

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
MEAN_EE	Equal variances assumed	2.212	.139	-.433	149	.665
	Equal variances not assumed			-.362	61.689	.718

violence and discrimination are frequent occurrences at work, particularly in the healthcare industry (Stahl-Gugger & Hämmig, 2022). Another research study also revealed that; TWE appears to negatively affect EE at work (Rasool, Wang, Tang, Saeed, & Iqbal, 2021). While in another empirical study, reported that; workplace violence has a significant direct adverse influence on EE (B=-.556) (Saleem, Shenbei, & Hanif, 2020). Additionally, it is a novel study topic that demands careful examination. If it is seriously occulting, it could have a major effect on staff productivity (Zhou, Rasool, & Ma, 2020) and the workplace. "Happy Workers" More Productive states (Natasha Fogaça & Francisco Antônio Coelho Junior, 2016.) Without happy employees, organizations are unable to function and fail to meet their intended objectives. (Natasha et.al, 2016), stated that; workplace well-being and job happiness influence individual job performance. While toxic work environments may be troublesome, the current research study argues that a variety of strategies may be used to increase engagement and performance. In order to investigate how toxic workplace environments might be reduced and boost employee engagement at work, researchers created hypotheses. In relation to this, the outcome showed that;

1. Organizational support may be a crucial and successful strategy to increase employee engagement because OS and EE have a clear relationship.
2. Organizations must not underestimate prospects in this regard.

The current study revealed that there is a positive relationship between OS and EE. However, everyone's overall well-being is a crucial tenet. People can exert more willpower and energy at work by being assertive. Making employees more productive and improving their performance is another crucial and pertinent approach. In this regard, the researchers applied the hypothesis to assess how EWB affects EE. The summary of the regression model revealed a favorable correlation between EWB and EE. This study also implies that improving EE is necessary and pertinent. However, there is the question that the well-being strategy is pertinent, and evidence from other studies reveal that there is a positive relationship between employee engagement and well-being (Sarwar, Ishaq, Amin, & Ahmed, 2020; Wieneke et al., 2019).The results show a strong relationship between EE, EWB, and OS in the present study. Researchers have revealed that there is a relationship between OS and EE, as well as EE and EWB. The toxic atmosphere at work is reduced by these independent variables. As a result, maintaining EWB and OS leads to a stronger high-level team and greater trust, as well as the ability to manage home and work life.

In this study, relationships between a few socio-demographic variables, including age, job experiences, and gender, were investigated. Study results show that the socio-demographic variable for age has exhibited relevance, although age has a positive impact. There are demographic factors affecting experience as another sign of rising EE at work. Employees with experience may make a big difference in the workplace. Even though the results showed there is no significant relationship between gender and increased EE at work, gender is not demonstrated as a main predictor in this current study.

The researchers maintain that the study's results support their hypothesis. Furthermore, they have developed recommendations for organizations and authorities. The present study findings suggest that the toxic workplace is a serious problem that negatively impact employee engagement. Although an assumptive result had been predicted prior to the study, the depth of negative correlation found in the study was surprising. It is established that the unacceptable work environment and culture are the main contributors to the issue. Organizational support and well-being are two essential tactics to mitigate TWE.

CONCLUSION

This study suggests that TWE may have an adverse effect on EE, which is undesirable for the workplace and impact on Employee' Performance (EE). However, there are ways to increase the importance of EE. Thus, OS and EWB, as well as experienced workers and greater age—both sociodemographic characteristics have been discovered to be favorable markers of enhanced EE—as they are more relevant and significant influencing factors. This study encourages employees to perform at a higher level, resulting in greater production. There are a few strategic needs to concentrate on in order to improve the progressive workplace environment, including improved training, suggesting curriculum inclusion in academic programs, and generating theoretical guidelines. In this study, employees at healthcare institutions were primarily selected for the study, however suggestions have been made for other industries, including business, tourism, and education based on available data from participants. Although the current study was quantitative in nature, a qualitative component is suggested for future research studies for a more in-depth analysis of the topic investigated. The current study's emphasis is on Kathmandu, which could be replicated in other parts of Nepal in future.

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Conflict of Interest

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Du Ke Theater Heritage of Khmer People in Tourism Development in Vietnam

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ABSTRACT

Du ke theater art of the Khmer people has been decided by the Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Vietnam to be recognized as a National Intangible Cultural Heritage, folk performing arts (according to Decision No.2684/QD-BVHTTDL, dated August 25. In 2014, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism announced a list of 19 national intangible cultural heritages, including Du ke theater art. We researched "Duke theatre heritage of Khmer people in tourism development in Vietnam" using ethnographic fieldwork as the main research method.'' We asked related subjects about: The role and value of Du Ke theater art and the advantages and disadvantages when applying Du Ke theater art in tourism development in Vietnam? Through the study, the role of Du Ke theater art in tourism development will be clear, thereby proposing some solutions to promote the value of this art form in association with tourism development in Vietnam, especially in the southern region.

Keywords: Du Ke, Vietnam, tourism, folk art, Khmer

Introduction

Vietnam is a multi-ethnic country. The diversity in ethnic cultures enriches the country's traditional cultural capital, which can be the foundation for developing an interest in cultural tourism. The Du Ke theater art of the Khmer people in South Vietnam is a typical case. Therefore, we study "Du Ke theatrical heritage of Khmer people in tourism development in Vietnam" to see the value of this type of heritage in tourism development, thereby highlighting some solutions to promote the value of this art form associated with tourism development in Vietnam, especially in the South.

Du Ke theater art of the Khmer people has been decided by the Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism in Vietnam to be recognized as a national intangible cultural heritage, folk performing arts *(according to Decision No. 2684/QD-BVHTTDL, dated August 25, 2014, of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism announcing a list of 19 national intangible cultural heritages, including Du Ke theater art).* This is one of the special ethnic art forms, an art form that has existed for over a hundred years in the hearts of the Khmer people and can become a unique cultural tourism resource. However, at present, this art form has not been fully recognized in terms of its application values in the economic, cultural and social life of the people. Therefore, it has not been properly preserved and developed and is also at risk of being lost over time.

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Many authors have been interested in understanding the value of the Du Ke cultural heritage art form, especially those in the South of Vietnam.

Author Sang Set (2019), in his work "Du Ke Khmer Theater in the South," has made important contributions when studying the process of formation and development of Du Ke theater art and, at the same time, introduced several theatrical scripts of Du Ke.. Thereby, readers understand the history of formation, as well as basic features of this art form, including: composition, plot themes, music, choreography and martial arts, decoration—costumes, ways of acting, performing with the audience and some typical scripts.

The work "On the traditional Khmer theater in the South" published by the Department of Culture and Information of Soc Trang province (1998) has collected articles on the types of traditional Khmer Southern theater, in which Du Ke is noticed and studied deeply for topics, stories, acting, music and fine arts. These articles affirm the unique traditional value of this art form, occupying an important position in the cultural and social life of the Khmer. Therefore, it is necessary to develop this art form in the right direction, so it does not disappear.

Other works such as "Southern Khmer Performing Arts" (Hoang, 2011) and "The image of Chan (Yak) in Southern Khmer culture" (Nguyen, 2015) are also valuable works in the study of Du Ke theater art type.

In addition, many articles are interested in preserving and promoting the value of Du Ke theater art such as: "Du Ke Khmer theater art in the South—problems and thoughts" (Pham, 2014)); "Tra Vinh Khmer Cultural Tourism—A case study of traditional craft villages of the Khmer Tra Vinh people" (Son & Nguyen, 2016); "Du Ke theater art of Soc Trang Khmer people—History and prospects" (Duong, 2020); "Preservation and development of Du Ke Khmer theater art in the South—Cultural heritage of the nation" (Le, 2014); "Preserving and promoting the value of Di Ke theater art of Khmer ethnic group in An Giang province" (Truong, 2014); "Theatrical art of Du Ke Khmer in the South—Origin, characteristics and solutions for conservation and development" (Tien & Duong, 2014) and "For the development of Du Ke stage in global exchanges and integration" (Ha, 2014). These articles are concerned with how to preserve and develop Du Ke theater art. Although Du Ke theater art has special cultural value, to survive in life, some problems need to be solved, especially economic problems and how to make an artist live with Du Ke's profession.

The above studies have thoroughly researched the history of formation and development, the content and artistic characteristics of Du Ke theater art and some proposals to preserve and develop this type of unique folk theater.. However, there has been limited in-depth research on the following issues: Role and value of Du Ke theater art; how the status quo develops; advantages and disadvantages in preserving and developing Du Ke theater art and contents and methods of applying Du Ke theater art values in tourism development in Vietnam. Therefore, this study discusses the above issues in depth, providing an application solution to "Du Ke theater heritage of Khmer people in tourism development in Vietnam".

Method

The article is approached in the direction of ethnography and cultural anthropology to understand the traditional cultural movements of the Khmer people, the cultural characteristics of Du Ke theater art and apply those things to tourism development and preservation of Du Ke's artistic identity for the Khmer people in Vietnam.

The article uses the main research methods:

Firstly, collect and research documents on Khmer ethnic group in the South, paying special attention to documents on Du Ke theater art. Secondly, ethnographic fieldwork: Visited many times by non-participants and observers to absorb the Khmer traditional Du Ke theater art form; thereby, it is possible to properly assess the existence and development of Du Ke theater art, taking that as a basis for proposing solutions in tourism development through this unique period. Third, interview a number of subjects such as indigenous people, tourists from outside the province, ethnic groups living in the same area etc., to get information about their level of understanding, interest and causes of the disappearance of the current Du Ke theater art form and propose solutions.

The time of survey and field interviews was between 2020 and 2021. We conducted surveys mainly at Khmer pagodas and some private houses. Sen Dolta Festival (Phchum Banh—Ancestor Worshiping Ceremony) (September–October), Kathina Ceremony (October–November), Ok Om Bok festival to worship the moon (November), Chol Chnam Thmay traditional festival (New Year's Eve) (April), Buddha's Birthday (May) and Sea blessing ceremony (May) are the main festivals of the Khmer people.

Survey and interview questions included the following main ideas:

- Are you knowledgeable about Du Ke theater art form of Khmer ethnic people?
- How do you feel when you watch Du Ke's performance?
- In your opinion, is Du Ke currently being properly maintained and developed, or is it fading over time? Why?
- In your opinion, what values does Du Ke have and can be applied in tourism development? If so, how should it be applied? What is the specific solution?
- After the survey and interview process, we made statistics of the opinions, saw the coincidences, processed the information, and saw the compatibility of the answers with practical activities related to the field of art. We analysed and synthesised opinions combined with secondary data, knowledge and experience to discuss the results.

Result and Discussion

Overview of Du Ke cultural heritage

The name Du Ke

Regarding the origin of the name, there is an explanation in folklore as follows: Some people believe that this word comes from the name of uncle Ke, a monk in Hieu Tu Pagoda, Tieu Can district (Tra Vinh). According to Khmer elders in Tra Vinh, in the 20s of the last century, this young man became very fond of watching and singing. After watching, he often invited his friends to the backyard of the temple to assign roles to perform, and watching that was funny. More and more people came to his concerts, and every time people came, they told each other to see Ke Vu, gradually turning the sound into Du Ke (Sangt, 2019, tr. 9-10).

In work "Folk Theater", the document was collected, translated and introduced by Dam Van Hien–Tran Van Bon–Le Ham. The word Du Ke (Duke) is due to reading the transliteration from Di ke (Dike). Di ke is an old Cambodian theater art form. This art form of the country Chua Thap was introduced into Vietnam through the border region of Tri Ton, A Giang (Dam Van Hien–Tran Van Bon–Le Ham, 2012).

Thus, the word Du Ke has no special meaning. It was formed just by reading a few words with similar sounds, gradually becoming familiar.

In addition, when Vietnam's Du Ke troupe toured the capital Phnom Penh (Cambodia), Cambodians warmly received it and called Vietnam's Du Ke theater art L'kôn Bassac, which means theater of the Hau River region (Trương, 2018).

The process of formation and development

Many authors have been interested in learning about the Du Ke theater art form in the South, where Tra Vinh is one of the cradles of formation and development.

Researchers have confirmed that: "*Duke was born by a group of Southern Khmer writers, artists and intellectuals, knowledgeable in art and fluent in poetry and literature, under the leadership of Mr. Thach Sua, former abbot of Kh'sach Kandal temple, Chau Thanh district, Tra Vinh province*" (Dam Van Hien–Tran Van Bon–Le Ham, 2012, tr.260). Many other documents also confirm: "Yuke was born by the Khmer people in the Mekong Delta (Southern Vietnam)" (Pham, 2011, tr.183).

The process of formation and development of Du Ke Khmer Southern theater art goes through three stages:

Regarding the formative stage, Du Ke appeared around the 20s of the twentieth century, a few years after the Vietnamese art of Cai Luong in the South, when Robam theater was out of vogue, less public and lasted until about the 30s. Du Ke gradually developed and reached its peak from the 30s to the 60s of the twentieth century, especially in the 50s. During the fierce war years, especially around the 60s and 70s, Du Ke fell into disrepair. Du Ke was restored and entered a stable development phase from 1975 until now. When the South was completely liberated, the country was unified and the country was reunited, many Du Ke theater art troupes have been established, existed and developed, such as Art troupe Khmer Soc Trang, Anh Binh Minh Khmer Art Troupe—Tra Vinh and Bac Lieu Khmer General Art troupe (Trương, 2018).

Thus, before a century of birth and rooting in the hearts of the Khmer people, nurtured by the folk, Du Ke theater art form experienced many ups and downs. However, today Du Ke still demonstrates a strong and persistent vitality, diligently serving the people and loved by the people.

In Vietnam, the Du Ke theater art form is still maintained in the Khmer community; the plays are being increasingly noticed to be conveyed on the professional stage, aiming to serve tourists to enjoy this unique type of folk theater.

The value of Du Ke theater art form

Du Ke theater art in the spiritual life of Khmer ethnic people

It can be said that Du Ke theater art is an indispensable spiritual part of the life of the Khmer ethnic group in Vietnam, in general, the Mekong Delta, in particular and especially in provinces where many Khmer people live.

Interviews with 20 Khmer households in Bac Lieu, Soc Trang, Tra Vinh and 20 monks at 10 Khmer pagodas confirmed the importance of Du Ke performance in Khmer life. Dancer Thach Si Phol in Bac Lieu, who has been with Du Ke stage for more than 50 years, said: "*Du Ke has become my flesh and blood, even though I don't have much money from the show, I am still passionate about it, because I know that the Khmer cannot be without this important spiritual food*" (Excerpt from Interview with Dance Artist Thach Si Phol, May 2020).

In general, Du Ke plays are often full of humanity, with high educational value, like a fairy tale with a happy ending, good people meet the sage and evil people meet retribution. For example, the plays: "Linh-Thôn", "Sac- Kinh-ni", "Thach Sanh slashes the dragon", "Tam Cam", "Tru Vuong loves Dac Ky", "The Tripitaka asks for sutras", "Phan Le Hue-Tiet Dinh San". It is possible to see the cultural exchange between ethnic groups through plays derived from the legends of all three ethnic groups: Khmer–Kinh–Hoa. Also, no matter what ethnicity's story comes from, the performance is still bold with the Khmer ethnicity, unchanged in character structure, fixed character lines and conventional character costumes high.

Ms. Thach Thi So Ry said: "*We don't know much about how the fairy tales are organized, the origin of the plays is compiled from Vietnam or abroad, it is only important that we sit and watch familiar characters, familiar plays, happy ending, make us believe in the good life. We also especially love the actors' colorful costumes"* (Interview with Ms. Thach Thi So Ry—Khmer in Tra Vinh).

Du Ke is often performed at Khmer temples during festivals or in cultural and artistic activities of the Khmer ethnic community. It can be seen that Du Ke's performances always attract a large number of people to participate. Everyone eagerly looks forward to familiar characters appearing in splendid and brilliant costumes, with bending movements from magical hands, like the roof of a national temple glowing in the sun. Du Ke theater art not only satisfies the needs of entertainment and enjoyment of the arts but also serves as the glue that connects the community in public nights and is one of the cultural symbols of the nation.

Du Ke theater art in tourism development in Vietnam

Cultural tourism is mainly based on cultural values such as traditional festivals, customs, beliefs, etc., to create attraction for domestic and foreign tourists. For visitors interested in researching and discovering indigenous cultures and customs, cultural tourism is an opportunity to satisfy the needs of the world. Most cultural tourism activities are associated with the locality, where many cultural festivals and cultural values occur. Attracting tourists to participate in cultural tourism creates a new influx of tourists, contributing to improving the lives of local people (Hoang, 2014).

Du Ke theater art is a traditional cultural value, completely capable of creating great attraction for visitors who are passionate about research and discovery and with various audiences and tourists, especially foreign tourists. Even the local people around the area who belong to other ethnic groups say that they do not know much about this unique art form, but when they see it for the first time, they always feel excited—looking forward to seeing more books.

Researcher Thach Doni, Bac Lieu said: *"The Khmer have a special cultural capital to develop tourism, of which Du Ke is an important highlight. However, sadly, so far this art form lacks living land and has not been properly exploited".* (Interview with Researcher Thach Doni, September 2021).

Surveys show that the millet has not been properly exploited to serve tourists in the current situation, and when not exploited, this art form is likely to fade away and rarely inherited. Therefore, promoting the value of Umbrella theater in tourism development brings economic value and preserves culture, and, at the same time, creates livelihoods for local people.

Solutions to promote the value of Du Ke theater art in tourism development in Vietnam

Building tourism products Du Ke

The first and most important step is constructing Du Ke tourism products. Usually, what we get are folktales that exist in folklore. If we want to develop these plays into tourist products, we have to rebuild the repertoire suitable for the audience to enjoy time.

Respondent from Bac Lieu Tourism Joint Stock Company: "*If the play Du Ke wants to serve tourism, it must have a suitable, professional, and unique excerpt, how to do it in a short period of time, which can convey the most important and core spirit of Du Ke theater art*". (Interview March 2020).

If when performing normally on the local stage, the play Du Ke takes place on all stages, performing the whole play. When serving tourism, we will cut it out according to specific conditions into product packages, such as 10, 15-to-20-minute exchange performances, a short excerpt or a real song and dance short but still showing Du Ke's soul; visitors can be invited to perform along. The performance is about 30–60 minutes, succinctly showing all stages of a Du Ke night, which is a perfect night like a normal stage but with high artistic quality.

In terms of fairy tales, it is necessary to have the practice of playing various fairy tales to be able to serve different audiences. For example, when serving a group of Kinh and Hoa people, they can perform scenes close to their traditional culture so that they can feel the typical cultural nuances of Du Ke and see the national soul they can express in each role.

Dancer Thach Si Phol said: *"To properly perform Du Ke theater art is not an easy thing, it requires a lot of practice, so actors need training support, money to live with profession"*. (Excerpt from interview with dancer Thach Si Phol, May 2020).

In order to have good plays and artistic performances, the training of actors is extremely important. Because not everyone can perform Du Ke, especially in the current situation when Du Ke has not brought economic benefits, it is quite difficult to find people to follow the profession or children of the Khmer ethnic group who are enthusiastic about the profession is also very limited. Therefore, it is necessary to find potential people, invest in them to study, train and foster deeply in Du Ke's theater art, how to make them both sing and dance and understand and introduce visitors to this art form. At the same time, they also need to train them on how to communicate with tourists, help tourists dance along and take photos with tourists. In addition, this team also needs to learn basic knowledge about tourism and about the region, as well as the Khmer people and their typical cultural values. It should also be added that foreign language ability, especially English, is more necessary than ever in the current period; they also need to learn basic communication and professional words in English to introduce tourists to foreigners.

Product promotion

Du Ke has not been able to reach the masses and especially has not served much for tourism development because the promotion of products has not been focused.

After building a tourism product from Du Ke's theatrical art suitable for many audiences and flexible in many performance spaces, the next thing is to promote the product. Because no matter how good and beautiful a tourism product is, without promotion, it still cannot reach many tourists near and far, both domestic and foreign.

Respondent from Tourism Department, Department of Culture–Sports–Tourism Bac Lieu: "*Currently, tourists and the people of Kinh and Hoa do not know much about Du Ke theater art, travel companies have not exploited this type, only the Center for Tourism Promotion and Promotion has tested to invite visitors. Guests watching a performance. Therefore, if this type of business wants to develop, it must have an appropriate product promotion strategy*". (Interview September 2021).

When promoting a product, the level of authenticity in advertising is important. It is to avoid the situation of exaggeration. When tourists come to experience it without the right level of promotion, they will be disappointed and spread word of mouth about the local Du Ke tourism product, thereby the locality losing economic, cultural and social value. At the same time, the possibility of tourists returning is very low, affecting other local tourism products.There are many ways to promote products, such as designing leaflets introducing products, compiling books, making promotional clips for Du Ke Vietnam to put on social networking sites, the performance of Du Ke at night fair spaces in cultural tourism weeks, setting up a space to display Du Ke cultural heritage associated with the space of famous Khmer pagodas, performing in service of festivals, New Year, Du Ke theater art exchanges between provinces, introducing Du Ke for fam trip groups, etc. At first, the troupes can perform for free with high quality; then, they could charge a fee for the program. However, the fee collection should be moderate for Vietnamese and foreign tourists so that a large number of tourists and even locals have conditions to contact and enjoy this art and culture, which will help spread word of mouth and promote to the public.

Method of connecting and maintaining the product

Connecting stakeholders is indispensable for tourism products from Du Ke theater art to work effectively.

The local government needs to support and help connect the stakeholders to promote and sell products as people and even artists of Du Ke troupe have limited reach to connect and keep the product working. The local government has strategic coverage and understands tourism planning and development policy from the provincial leaders, including holding programs for training and retraining in Du Ke theater art and proposing action programs to develop local tourism, including Du Ke. Therefore, local leaders are extremely important in helping shape, promote, connect, train, foster and introduce products.

Secondly, connecting with tourism promotion agencies at all levels to get information about the tourism situation of the province and the locality, and know about tourism promotion programs that Du Ke can participate in. At the same time, introduce Du Ke to ask for support from these units to help promote the product.

The third is to connect with companies and units that provide travel services, especially travel. When these companies and units know about Du Ke tourism products, they can design destinations on tourists' travel journeys. They will also help introduce other companies and units outside the province, even abroad. For companies and travel agencies, finding a new and unique tourism product for tourists will make them extremely excited because through that, they design a tour with content richer in cultural values, meeting the wishes of tourists when participating in tourism.

An indispensable connection is the connection between local and foreign Du Ke delegations. Connecting to support, help, exchange actors, perform all the shows, even the smallest or grandiose programs that need the participation of a large force of performing artists Du Ke.

Besides, in the South of Vietnam, for Du Ke tourism product to have a living land and maintain its operation, it is necessary to have a fixed performance venue to serve tourists. Du Ke performance site should be located in the space of a famous temple, to perform or reenact festival activities including Du Ke performance. When this place is built, whenever groups of tourists come, there will be a place to perform and introduce products.

Included products and services

One of the extremely important factors in tourism is the accompanying services, tourism-related services. Because tourism products are good and unique, tourists will find it boring if they go there to enjoy and then leave, and the locality will not gain anything from visitors.

Du Ke-related services can be: Renting costumes of performer Du Ke for guests to take photos in a Du Ke-style space and take pictures with the actor; souvenir products related to Du Ke theater art, such as keychains, wall stickers, pictures of Du Ke dancing girls, Champa flowers, musical instruments; temple symbols and Du Ke to display on the desk; wooden sculptures, imitations of wood or glass cages with the above symbols.

In addition, there are services about local cuisine, beautifully displayed stalls and waiters wearing national costumes, selling locally made products, especially rustic dishes. You can eat on the spot, and there are packaged products, beautiful labels, many sizes, weights and typical Khmer confectionery for visitors to buy as gifts.

In addition, a tourism product that accompanies not only Du Ke but also all other products is homestays. Homestay is not just a place for tourists to stay during the sightseeing journey, but more importantly, it must be a tourist product to serve tourists so that visitors can experience Khmer culture right in this house, from decoration and homestay design, to waiters, food services, tour introductions and presentations. The homestay here must be designed with a bold Du Ke space and Khmer culture for visitors to enjoy and feel this unique art form and ethnic Khmer culture.

Conclusion

Born from folklore and preserved by folk, Du Ke received the cultural interference between ethnic groups but never lost its identity. Over the past century, Du Ke has always been an indispensable spiritual dish of Khmer people in Vietnam, especially in provinces with a large number of Khmer people. In the current period, when tourism is identified as a spearhead economic sector, a "goose that lays golden eggs", along with preserving ethnic and cultural identities, Du Ke really is a tourism product worthy of respect. This is the cultural heritage of the Khmer people, showing Khmer identity, and can completely form unique tourism products of high human value. In order to do that, the solutions mentioned above in this article will be a resource for local leaders, scientists, Du Ke artists and companies and units to carry out the promotion of tourism or as a reference traveller, thereby both doing tourism, preserving the living land for Du Ke theater art.

Competing Interests Statement

The author(s) declare that they have no significant competing financial, professional or personal interests that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this manuscript.

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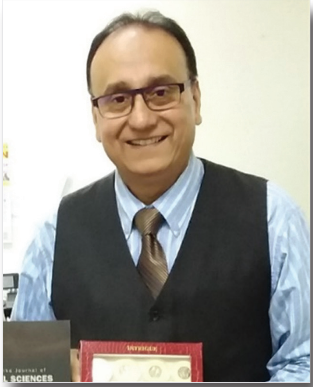

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Orientation of Alley Landscape Development in the Context of Urbanization and Climate Change in Gò Vấp, HCMC, Vietnam

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ABSTRACT

As the defining urban features of Hồ Chí Minh City, Việt Nam, the alleyway represents an important nexus of intervention for climate change adaptation as well as urban renovation to improve inhabitants' daily lives. This article aims to lay the theoretical groundwork for looking at the alley space as a concept belonging to structural-functional school in order to identify its features and functions with particular attention to its role in the context of climate change and rapid urbanization. The concept is examined through the study of the alley space via primary research consisting of a description of the alleyways in Gò Vấp District and interviews of inhabitants and users of these spaces on the condition of the alleyways. Additionally, secondary research on the renovation and adaptation of alleyways in other context was conducted in order to identify possible policy grafting to Vietnam. Results show that many alleyways have insufficient infrastructure, vegetation, and safety standards as shown through both observation and participants' responses. The planning of these spaces remain deficient in involving the local communities, especially when compared to international experience. It is concluded that the alley space is quintessential feature of the city's urban landscape but its adaptation to ongoing developmental pressures have been inadequate. Adapting these spaces to the modern context while incorporating community voices in planning and implementation is not only, it is essential to the survival of the city.

Keywords: Alley space, alley landscape, urbanization, climate change, Gò Vấp.

INTRODUCTION

Urbanization is considered an inevitable process in the course of development that changes all aspects of lives in society, from economics, politics, and culture to the environment. Along with economic growth and the reality that the people's cultural and spiritual life is improving, their related needs are also increasing accordingly. Before, when society was undeveloped, the basic human needs consisted of food, clothing, and shelter. With time, as society develops, people acquire the needs for better food, more socially-suitable modes of clothing, and wealth commensurate. The need for good urban planning and governance in Hồ Chí Minh City has also come into sharper focus as the demand for urban residents grows. This attention has also shone upon the alleys of the metropolis - a characteristic, historical economic-social-cultural space of the inner city. A host of scientific research methods were deployed to facilitate the study of alley landscape renewal and the planning of said projects in the context of rapid urbanization and climate change; these methods included field research, ethnographic survey in the alleys of Gò Vấp District, in-depth interviews

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with some related subjects. The aim was to determine the answers to the following research questions: Why is it necessary to develop alley spaces and landscapes? How will urbanization and climate change affect the physical space of people living in Gò Vấp's alleys? By referring to some international cases and experiences, some suggestions will be proposed to inform Vietnam's people-centric urban renovation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Conceptualization and Identifying Research Gap

Regarding any issues with widely understood but less explicitly defined components, it is exceedingly difficult to neatly separate scientifically relevant from their colloquial understanding due to the interrelated and organic nature of social problems; moreover, each concept possesses connotations that should and could only be understood and interpreted within a delineated research context. The alleyways could be considered one such issue. It is an immediately understandable concept yet lacks a clear theoretical conceptualization. However, this does not mean that it has not been the subject of study. For example, cities in the United States have created handbooks to guide the activation and revitalization of alleyways as a space for community building and economic growth (Department of Transportation, 2010; Fialko & Hampton, 2015). With its 13,000 alleys stretching over 1,900 miles, the city of Chicago and its handbook is an important reference for policy recommendations. Furneaux and Manaugh (2019) described the usage of alleyways in Toronto as a safe and shared space among households to allow for the socialization of children. In the Canadian context, the natural life within alleyways is also an important aspect of greening and conserving human-nature relationships in urban space (Newman & Dale, 2009). The studies of alleyways in Asia, and particularly Hồ chí Minh City, is equally interesting and diverse. In the context of Asia, Gilbert-Flurte and Imai (2020) extensively documented the usage and patterns of life in 8 Asian cities, clearly demonstrating the intimacy and cultural values which these often-overlooked spaces offer. They depicted alleys as a space of complex history and interaction, shaped not only by local inhabitants but also by governments and global forces, often threatened by the same. With regards to the threats face by alleys, Gilbert (2018), in a study of 6 different alleyway neighbourhoods in Hồ Chí Minh City, discusses the alleys in the context of materialisation and urban renewal and the relationships between inequality and urban political processes.

In spite of the variety of practical studies on the configuration and effects of alleyways on inhabitants' lives, we find a potential definitional gap regarding the conceptualization of alleyways which would facilitate theoretical examination. Thus, when it comes to the concept of "space" in relation to the orientation of renovation and development efforts of alleyways in Hồ Chí Minh City, or alley space and alley landscape for short, we defined it as consisting of the parallel existence of the visible, tangible and invisible life as manifested through the daily activities and interactions of the alleys' inhabitants. This concept is built upon the concept of "landscape" as defined by Phan (, p. 5): "Landscape is a territorial whole with gradations along the spatial and temporal dimensions. It is made up of many natural-social components and parts, and between these components and parts exist a highly close-knit and interactive relationship." Tangible life includes features such as landscapes, trees, people, houses, infrastructure... visible objects which could be counted. The invisible life is what we perceive through the senses that cannot be seen or touched, better captured through participant observation and qualitative interviews. Therefore, the alley space is not simply extant through its physical features, but rather it is shaped by the interactions between different actors and objects throughout its history. These interactions consist of those between inhabitants, between inhabitants and outsiders, between inhabitants and the physical and natural environment, and between the inhabitants, the physical environment, and the myriad of forces surrounding the alleyways such as urban planning and governmental financing. Nguyễn (2007) described this amalgamation as a "cultural space" in the sense that it possesses five dimensions: three dimensions of mechanical space, one dimension of time, and one dimension of spirituality

Adaptation is a very broad concept employed in many different fields. Especially in the area of climate change where it has become one of the most widely used terms in recent decades. This article uses the definition set out by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat (n.d, para. 2): "Adaptation refers to adjustments in ecological, social, or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects or impacts. It refers to changes in processes, practices, and structures to moderate potential damages or to benefit from opportunities associated with climate change." Similarly, the improvement and development of landscapes are two of the many ways to adapt to climate change in the direction of sustainable ecological development, with specific aims of minimizing flooding and the heat island effect in the modern metropolis.

The identification of the definitional gap for alley space led us to find that there are not many theoretical and practical studies of the functions of alleyways and the complex system that alley space represents, particularly in the context of Hồ Chí Minh City and with regard to climate change adaptation. Previous studies do not focus on the alley space as a system of interactions with components, tangible and intangible, which combine in their operation into a larger system. This might not be sufficient in cities such as Ho Chi Minh. The alleyway is a structural form that is inexplicably tied with the history and culture of Sài Gòn – Hồ Chí Minh City. In the process of urbanization, alleys have become a distinctive feature of urban space as they become embedded with cultural and historical values (Gilbert, 2018). The alley has become a site of memory and for the fostering of human connections, the spirit of village friendship, and the cohesion of many individuals using a common space. Therefore, in the context of urbanization and climate change, it is essential to pay attention to the renovation and development of alleys in ways that meaningfully improve people's lives. Therefore, the article aims to expand on the climate change adaptation potential of alleyways in Hồ Chí Minh City, laying a foundation through which future theoretical work regarding the alley space as a social system could be studied. As this will be a first step in a long process of building up this field of knowledge, the article also sets out future research directions and recommended methodologies.

2. Theoretical foundation for research

In order to orient the directions to improve and develop the alley landscape space to adapt to the context of urbanization and climate change, our research paper employs structural-functional theory as described by Garner (2019). This theoretical foundation was chosen as almost all physical configurations of objects and structures are utilized effectively only when we determine their correct function and task. This dictum applies equally in the planning, renovation, and development of the alley landscape whereby determining the full function of the alleys will allow for the proposal of ideas and strategies to improve the alleys within the studied areas. In the context of urbanization and climate change and utilizing the structural-functional theory, the main functions of alleys can be identified as the follows:

Firstly, urbanization affects aspects of social life in both positive and negative manners. The most obvious deleterious effect of this process is the supplantation of natural water bodies and drainage areas such as ponds, lakes, and canals, causing local flooding and poor drainage. Additionally, rapid urbanization deteriorated the alleyways of the city in terms of aesthetic values, hygiene, livability, as well as in terms of physical space to due encroachment. Thus, in considering the renovation and development of alleys, it is necessary to stress imperatives such as minimizing flooding, regenerating landscapes and spaces into not only aesthetically pleasing but also sustainable forms, as well as increasing community connectivity and cohesion.

Second, regarding the adaptation to climate change, it can be seen that in recent years natural disasters have occurred with higher frequency and intensity. In urban areas, the temperature is becoming untenable as the heat island effect intensifies while flooding has become a commonplace occurrence. The job of urban planners is only increasing in volume and complexity as time goes on. Therefore, the structure of the alleys, an important element of the city's residential life and experience must be designed, embellished, and renovated to minimize the intensifying climate of the city and at the same time reduce flooding and manage rainwater effectively.

The use of structural functional theory in the article helps us analyze scientific and objective designs and constructions in order to determine the appropriate location of the work, contribute to improving the physical and spiritual life of residents, and identify the most pressing objectives in the effort to develop the alley space landscape in the context of urbanization and climate change. This endeavor allows us to locate the functions of the landscape in relation to the lives of inhabitants to configure structures that meet the demands of their activities.

Structural Functionalism, then, will enable us to examine the alleyways within Hồ Chí Minh City by considering the behaviors of its myriads of tangible and intangible components in separation and unison, conceptualizing the alley as a system comprising of different parts. Thus, it enables us to see how the reduction of externalities from urbanization and the process of climate change adaptation are materialized or is possible within each aspect of the alley, and in turn, how the alley as a whole could contribute to the adaptation process of the city.

METHODOLOGY

In addition to the application of structural functionalist theory, and in part to respond to the common criticism lobbied against it which is that "functionalism strongly emphasizes the pre-eminence of the social world over its parts (i.e. its constituent actors, human subjects)" (Giddens, 1984, p. 1), the study also uses an adaptive approach with the participation of the community. We cannot design or propose any planning options that consider only one perspective, it is essential to understand the characteristics, context, and cultural characteristics of a community, as well as the factors integral to community cohesion. Therefore, the orientation and improvement of the alley landscape need to meet both prerequisites, which are to adapt to the specific context of each area and to involve the community. If the plans for developing the alley landscape do not meet the above two conditions, it will become detached and lifeless; a condition which will prove to be impractical and undesirable in the context of sustainable development. Architect Ralph Erskine in a 2000 interview shared that "being a good architect requires a heart of compassion because architecture is an applied art that involves frameworks that respond to the needs of human life" (Gehl, 2019, p. 229). It is clear that although cities around the world have unequal levels of economic development and distinct problems, they are similar in the integrated relationship between urban planning and the consideration of human beings. In Hồ Chí Minh City in particular and urban areas around the country in general, a human-centric design must become the paradigm.

When approaching any subject whether natural or man-made, instead of opposing it, we must seek harmony, adaptation towards sustainability, and close linkages with the area we want to redevelop or renovate. At the same time, adaptation with the participation of the community is a paramount condition because when the community participates, they can realize their roles and responsibilities to the landscape, take part in maintaining its sustainability as well as contribute to improving it in perpetuity. With this consideration in mind, we have devised a methodology based on the observation and quantitative description of the alley, qualitative interviews of the alleyways' inhabitants, and, finally, secondary research on the experience of renovating and adapting alley space to climate change in other countries.

1. Study area
The research team conducted an ethnographic study of the alleys in Gò Vấp District, specifically those in Ward 4, 5, and 7. The reason we chose Gò Vấp is because of its important geographical position on the map of Hồ Chí Minh City. Gò Vấp District is located within the proximity of the urban core while being near Tân Sơn Nhất international airport; it also possesses the role of being the northern gateway of Hồ Chí Minh City and maintaining the connection between the western and eastern regions. Despite having a favorable geographical position, in general, the urban landscape of the district has not been developed, leaving many existing potentials to be explored.

Gò Vấp District is the 3rd most populated administrative territory in the city with 676,899 inhabitants in 2019. Additionally, it is one of the most densely populated with a population density of 34,304 people/km2 (Statistics Office of Ho Chi Minh City, 2020).

2. Observation and Quantitative Description of Alleys
We took note of the length and width of each alleyway along with a photograph of that space in the morning (9 am – 12 pm). Additionally, we took note of three features in each alleyway, specifically the hygiene and cleanliness, the presence of vegetation, and the available infrastructure Specific features which were noted were the presence of waste storage equipment, light fixtures, communal spaces, and quality of roadways. The research team then observed the activities within each alleyway, ranging from residential to commercial activities.

3. Quantitative Questionnaires of Alleyways' Inhabitants
In addition to the description of the alley space's features in Gò Vấp District, the research team conducted a questionnaire with 150 inhabitants in the observed alleyways in Ward 4, 5, and 7 to gain insights into how they would personally rate the comfort, safety, and their overall satisfaction with the alley space. The results from these questionnaires could then be used to compare and contrast the objective observation in the previous section with the perceived condition of the alleyways by the people who actively use them every day.

The sample was determined in order to provide an exploratory view into the sentiments of inhabitants and users of the alley space in Gò Vấp District. Participants were identified through convenience sampling, consisting of those who the research team could approach during field observation of the alleyways. However, a screening question was asked to ensure that the respondent is or was an inhabitant of the relevant Wards. The interviewers conducted the questionnaires verbally and recorded the answers on paper question sheets for the respondents.

4. Secondary Research on the Experience of Other Locals
Aside from data collection on the characteristics of the alleys in Gò Vấp District, the research team actively

tapped on the experience of similar alley renovation projects in other cities around the world in the form of journal articles, city planning handbooks, and other relevant documents. This secondary research allows us to synthesize lessons that would be beneficial for potential application in Hồ Chí Minh City.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of "The Chicago Green Alley Handbook" prepared by the City of Chicago's Department of Transportation under Mayor Richard M. Daley in 2010. The handbook extensively documented Chicago's historical and practical experience with renovating and adapting their massive alleyway networks, synthesizing years of policies into practical lessons for other policymakers and researchers.

Care was taken to consider the differences in context between Hồ Chí Minh City's alley space and that of other urban spaces. As has been shown, the alley space is a unique "urban vernacular" in Asian cities, nowhere more so than in Hồ Chí Minh City where its organic and sprawling growth have made it the defining feature, rather than auxiliary ones, of the city.

RESULTS

Description of Gò Vấp's alleys

In terms of the overall landscape and architecture, the alley space has no outstanding features. In fact, there are many alleys with dimensions unsuitable for the movements of residents in the alley. The situation arises partly due to lax management, resulting in nebulous enforcement of the alleys' boundaries and width. Thus, the encroachment of the alleys' spaces incrementally narrows them year by year.

In the quantitative description, it was found that the alleys in Gò Vấp have widths ranging from 2 meters (m), 3m, 3.5m, 4m, 4.5m, 5m, and 8m to the largest being 12m (Figure 1, 2, and 3). For alleys with sizes from 2m – 4.5m, the usage of the alleys is spartan, mainly as a pathway for households inside to go in and out; the landscape on both sides of the alley consists of nondescript walls with no greenery.

For alleys with a width of 5m or more, in addition to facilitating mobility and circulation of people, the alleys are also used by people as a place of commerce and to park vehicles. In terms of landscape, the aesthetics of these alleys are similarly not remarkable, with a negligible amount of greenery.

For alleys with an area of 8m - 12m, the space and landscape are more open and aesthetically pleasing than alleys with an area of 5m or less. However, these alleys do not possess any outstanding features. The area is more open, but the green space, as well as the infrastructure, remain monotonous.

In general, most alleys lack important infrastructure and features such as sidewalks and vegetation. Furthermore, the state of the path leaves much to be desired due to the deteriorating state of most of the alleys. In alleyways within spaces of private ownership, the quality of the pathways is of much higher quality both in terms of aesthetics and materials. Despite efforts to upgrade them, it is clear that the alleyways would require much more investment.

Quantitative Questionnaire of Alleyways' Inhabitants

Table 1 contains the descriptive analysis of the 150 questionnaires concerning respondents' characteristics in terms of age and gender.

Due to the scope of this paper as an exploratory study of the concept of the alley space and inhabitants' perception of said space, only the results of two questions will be reported. These two questions concern the respondents' evaluation of the walkway and the path tilings in the alleyways. These evaluation included their level of satisfaction with its condition as well as its availability. The state of the walkway and the presence of path tilings are related to the ease, safety, and level of comfort in traversing and occupying the alley space, especially for daily motorists and merchants. As both of these measures concern one of the most important features of the alley way, the throughroute, they could roughly represent respondents' general satisfaction with the state of the alley way.

Through the analysis of the questionnaires, we found that inhabitants generally rate the infrastructure within the alleyways as unsatisfactory. Figures 4 and 5 show the proportion of respondents' ratings for the "**Respondents' Evaluation of the Walkway in the Alley**" and "State of the path tiles in the alley"

With regards to walkways in the alleys, 45 respondents, or 30% of the sample were Neutral regarding their satisfaction. However, the proportions who indicated Dissatisfied/Few and Very Dissatisfied/Few were 26%

Figure 1. Alleys' width from 2 to 4.5 meters in Go Vap District, Ho Chi Minh City.
(**Source:** Daley, 2010)

Figure 2. 5-meters-wide alleys in Go Vap District, Ho Chi Minh City.
(**Source:** The Research Team, taken on 12/01/2021)

Figure 3. 8-12 meters wide alleys in Go Vap District, Ho Chi Minh City.
(**Source:** The Research Team, taken on 12/01/2021)

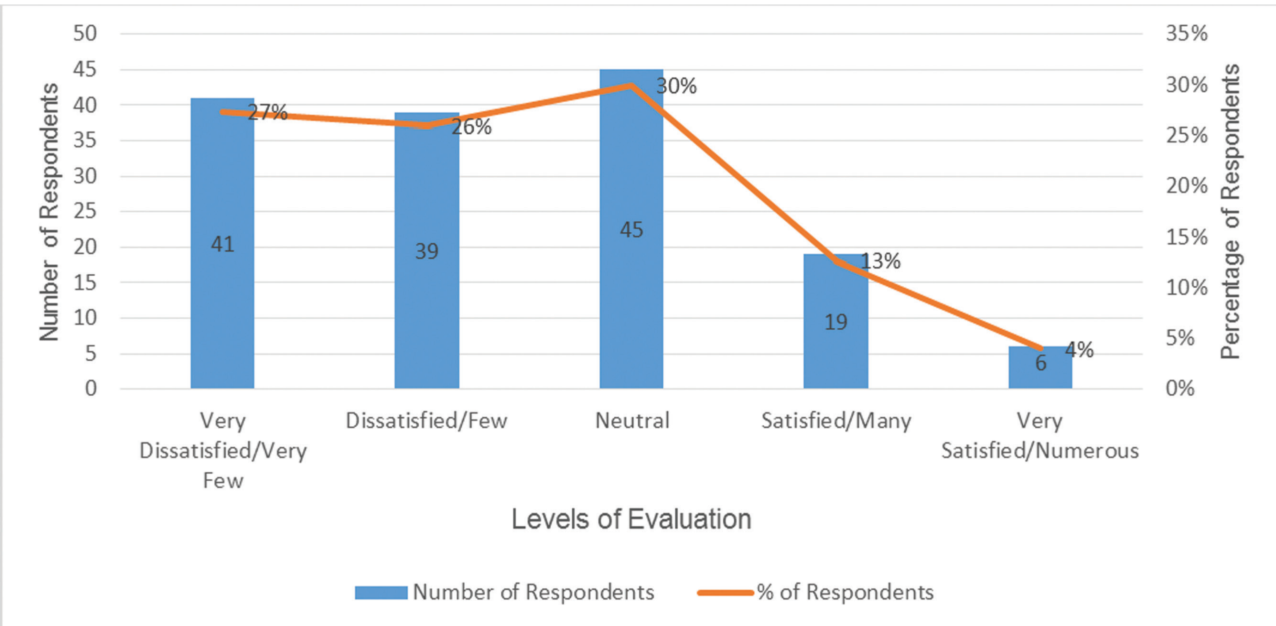

Figure 4. Respondents' Evaluation of the Walkway in the Alley – This figures reflects respondents' evaluation of the availability of walkways in the alleyways, representing their perception of the ease of walking in the alleys (availability and quality of pavements, linearity of routes).

and 27% respectively while the combined percentage of those who are Satisfied/Many or Very Satisfied/Numerous is only 117%. This is consistent with the researchers' description of the alley space, which often lack sufficient pavements, vegetation, and are circuitous to traverse.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Questionnaire Respondents

Age			**Gender**		
	#	**%**		**#**	**%**
20-30	16	*10.7%*	**Male**	82	*54.7%*
31-40	30	*20.0%*	**Female**	68	*45.3%*
41-50	38	*25.3%*			
51-60	35	*23.3%*			
>=60	31	*20.7%*			
Total	150	*100%*	**Total**	150	*100%*

Of the 150 respondents, 50 (33.3%) were Very Dissatisfied/Very Few with the state of path tiles in their alley while 46 (30.7%) were Dissatisfied/Few. The number of respondents who are Satisfied/Many or Very Satisfied/Numerous with the state of path tiles in their alleys is only 7% and 1.3% respectively. This is consistent with observation as many alleys lack any proper path tiling, resulting in uneven routes, pot holes, and stagnant puddles after rain.

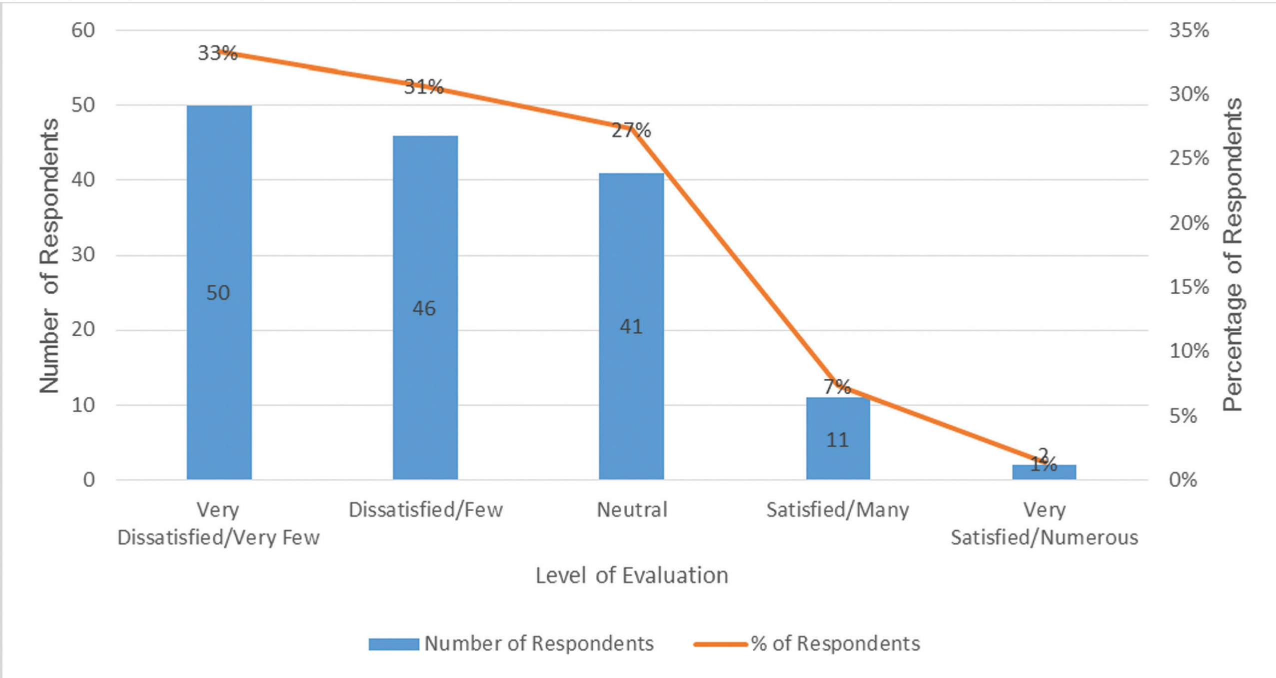

Figure 5: Respondents' Evaluation of the Path Tiles in the Alley – This figure reflects respondents' evaluation of the state of path tiles in the alleyways, representing the level of travel comfort as well as the aesthetic values of the alleyway.

(a) Chicago's alley before renovation

(b) Chicago's alley after renovation

Figure 6. Chicago's alley before and after renovation.

(**Source:** Daley, 2010)

Secondary Research on International Experience

The United States and the United Kingdom were identified as the two leading countries in the project of renovating alleys in sustainable ways. Since 2006, many major cities in the US have implemented variations of the "Green Alley" programs. By 2010, more than 100 "green alleys" had been completed (Lê, 2018). Starting with Chicago, then San Francisco, Los Angeles, Detroit, Seattle, Minneapolis, Denver, etc., the project has attracted attention and participation from both governments and communities alike (Figure 4). These cases illustrate that the core of alley renovation and development projects must be constructed on commitments to sustainability through the application of goals related to environmental protection, economic development, and social justice (Suratee et al., 2020).

Accordingly, the environmental goals of such "green alley" projects must focus on reducing carbon emissions, managing rainwater sustainably, saving and strengthening water supplies, lessening the urban heat island effect, and pursuing related environmental health goals. To achieve this goal, the renovation should use permeable materials, bio-tar, and suitable designs for sustainable rainwater management such as the nurturing of plant life and vegetation patches which would also effectively reduce urban heat by creating shade while expanding habitats and ecosystems for plants and animals. In addition, climate-friendly transportation of walkway networks for pedestrians and cyclists and convenient connections to public transport can be integrated into green alleys. Elements of the green alley can also be closely associated with green infrastructure; the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines green infrastructure as using "natural hydrological features to manage water and provide environmental and community benefits". Green infrastructure can also be used to mitigate problems related to air pollution, the urban heat island effect, wildlife conservation, and other recreational needs. A specific example of an environmental goal is the alleys in Chicago which have been renovated and designed to enhance rainwater management, reduce the runoff speed, and refresh the groundwater supply by using water-permeable bricks for alleys' structures.

For economic purposes, it is necessary to identify the potential of the alleys and then proceed to determine the function and exploit said values. For example, alleys located near commercial areas and entertainment centers with large square areas can be converted to support the surrounding economic activities. The transformation and identification of the function of the alleys will enhance their economic values by creating more entertainment, dining, and pedestrian connections in the community. Once renovated, alleyways can support economic development, become tourist attractions, and potentially increase the value of adjoining real estate. An oft-mentioned example is Bùi Viện Street where re-development has spurred economic activities, increasing the quality of life for inhabitants after determining its potential and function.

For social purposes, alleys can be designed to foster social cohesion. By reducing opportunities for illicit activities, creating a safe place for active and pedestrian recreation, and utilizing public spaces for recreational events and community gatherings such as concerts, and community activities on holidays, the alleys can become communal sites of gathering and interactions, forging new neighborhood bonds.

With the orientation to increase community participation in the renovation and development of the alley landscape and aesthetics to create responsibility and community attachment to the space, there are potential lessons to be learned from Singapore. As early as 60 years ago, Singapore implemented compact urban planning with the building of many high-rise apartments and recovering land to build roads and green parks (Việt Thành, 2021). Due to its small area and large population, the planning in Singapore is centered around high-rise apartment

Figure 7. Focus group discussions with local community members organized by CLC.
(**Source:** Surattee et al., 2020)

buildings. In Singapore, residential living concentrated around alleys does not exist in the same manner or scale as in Hồ Chí Minh City. But regardless of the organization model, the planning and development of climate change adaptation models with community participation remain extremely important in both contexts. In recent times, Singapore has begun paying greater attention to understanding and developing solutions at the micro-level and is endeavoring to incubate community solutions through surveys, interviews, and consultations with the community. A report published in 2020 by the Center for Liveable Cities (CLC) of Singapore's Ministry of National Development highlights the importance of sustainable urban development through a combination of measures from the community and the government (Surattee et al., 2020).

Through many interviews, consultations, and roadshows (Figures 7 and 8), CLC has recognized the interest of residents in developing community spaces to adapt to climate change, especially through planting trees, collecting rainwater, and public gardening (Figure 9) (Surattee et al., 2020). Based on the shared desire to work with the community to renovate the common space with artistic design and natural elements, international lessons help us rethink the alleys with respect to Hồ Chí Minh City, especially in identifying advantages and disadvantages, utilizing available resources to contribute to planning ideas, and renovating alley spaces while protecting the identity of each area in particular and the city in general.

DISCUSSION

In general, the alleys in Gò Vấp in terms of landscape and aesthetics are not outstanding. If the potentials of the alley space and landscape are not adequately considered and developed in accordance with the pace of societal growth and progression and with the looming threat of climate change, there is a risk of these spaces becoming sites for social evils while inhabitants' quality

Figure 8. Roadshows and consultations to demonstrate links between climate change and local inhabitants' lives and understand challenges faced by inhabitants.
(**Source:** Suratree et al., 2020)

Figure 9. Discussions by community champions to develop solutions appropriate to their community context in Singapore.
(**Source:** Centre for Liveable Cities, 2020)

of life deteriorates. Additionally, the alleys are also vessels containing the core living values of the urban soul, creating the connection between people. Without the appropriate development orientations, they will lose their inherent human values and the city will lose its distinct historical and cultural markers of urban growth and urban communities, failing its goal of sustainability and fostering fraternity.

The disappointing state of the alley space in Gò Vấp is further shown through the questionnaire's responses. With over 50% and 60% of respondents stating that they are Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied with the state of walkways and path tiles in the alleyway respectively, it can be seen that the objective observation is supported by the personal perceptions of inhabitants.

The renovation and development of alley space and landscape is a paramount objective in the context of urbanization and climate change. This requires a process of research, survey, and appraisal of the area to be rehabilitated as well as the consideration of experiences from developed countries. The learning process will help to save time while promoting creativity and iteration based on the available resources and methods. Based on international experience, we realize that two directions require further analysis. One is to renovate and develop based on existing resources, methods, and skills. The second is urban planning with the active participation of the community to foster a system of creative iteration for communal structures as well as imbuing the community with ownership to maintain their shared spaces sustainably in the long term.

From the lessons learned from the United States, the United Kingdom, and Singapore, we propose the following directions for advancing future research, and for renovating and developing alley spaces and landscapes in the context of Vietnam and Hồ Chí Minh City:

Firstly, it is necessary to conduct a more thorough survey of the alleys to identify and evaluate the actual situation of each alley and then offer appropriate development solutions. The features which must be identified include landscape, space, infrastructure, ownership, and SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). This would require the usage of more advanced technology on top of researchers' observation. For example, the usage of 3D scanning and the use of heat mapping to determine the usage of different spaces within the alleyways. Additionally, the state of legal ownership of different features within the alleyways would also help determine the delineation of activities between private and public spaces. Within the structural-functional theory framework, this would allow us to better determine the functions of the tangible aspects of the alleys.

Secondly, community participation in research should be considered. Researchers must try to connect with the community of alleyways to understand how they use the alley space and landscape as well as develop ideas they might have. On top of the 150-respondents questionnaire used in this article, focus group discussions are powerful as demonstrated in the case of Singapore. Aside from this, public roadshows would also allow for the active participation of other inhabitants as well as those who traverse through the alleyways. Finally, in-depth semi-structured interviews would help shed light on the intangible life within the alleys, clarifying the functions of said elements in the life of the alleys.

Thirdly, after surveying, analysing, and evaluating the current situation, and getting ideas from the community, draft plans and projects for each alley based on related goals such as environmental protection, economic development, and social justice can be formulated in terms of policy papers or research. Alleys will be designed to effectively meet each specific goals such that renovation or complete re-development might be required.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the questionnaires showing the high level of dissatisfaction from inhabitants and the experience of Singapore with community participation in urban planning, our recommendations for policymakers centre mostly on the encouragement of community participation in the renovation and adaptation of alley space.

We recommend that a joint urban planning process is organized between policymakers and community members, specifically in both the planning stage and implementation stage. This would allow policymakers to tap on the insights of inhabitants, form appropriate policies to address needs, and empower community members to take ownership of planning and revonation projects. Similarly, community members would gain a stake in the well-being of their alleyways and form commitments to the success of the plan to which they contribute. Additionally, the involvement of the community members helps create a surveillance mechanism through which community members would actively keep watch of errant behaviors and enforce rules, protecting the results of their labor and saving governmental resources. This process can and should be initiated by the government through mass movements that permeate the local levels in Ho Chi Minh City such as the Women's Association. Only when community members are actively encouraged, or in this case recruited through community champions and model citizens, can they feel empowered and included in the planning process and its outcomes.

CONCLUSION

It can be seen that over hundreds of years of establishment and development, alleys have gradually become a quintessential structure in urban Hồ Chí Minh City in particular and cities in the country in general (Gilbert, 2016). There is no material without value if we know how to explore and exploit its pot0ential. The alleys themselves have nurtured humane, historical, and cultural values throughout their existence. In other words, tangible and intangible values that few urban structures have. Despite this, the alley space has not been considered from a theoretical and practical perspectives. The research here lays a foundation for the development of this field of knowledge. Additionally, the current image of alleys is associated with more negative than positive factors: flooding, theft, addiction, waste, etc., clearly demonstrating the need for development planning and renovation of alleys in the context of urbanization and climate change. The preceding analysis and evaluation of functions and areas in specific urban areas will help avoid having to correct costly mistakes in the future. In the same vein, the designs and plans drafted should incorporate community participation. The article has also set out future research directions in order to deepen the theoretical understanding and conceptualization of alley space as a unique system of socio-physical interactions. Thus, the renovation of alleys cannot only consider the current situation of climate change and inadequate planning, but must also take into account historical, societal, conservation, and resilience values which could be inherited by future generations.

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Declaration of Conflicting Interests

All authors have read and approved the manuscript and take full responsibility for its contents. No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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RESEARCH ARTICLE
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Anti-Imperial Discourse and Fallacies of Colonial Ideology in *Burmese Days*

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ABSTRACT

This article surveys the representation of colonial practices and ideologies in George Orwell's *Burmese Days* (1934). The objective of this study is to investigate the frames in which the novel portrays imperialism and colonialism. It highlights the anti-imperial aspects of *Burmese Days* and exposes the atrocities of colonialism in Burma. Moreover, the study focuses on the fallacies of colonial ideology, a hypothesis which is the center of its investigation. It concludes that *Burmese Days* opposes colonialism, its methods, and mentality, yet there are major setbacks to this opposition as evident in the inconsistencies in its anti-imperial discourse, the use of racist language, and the stereotypical representation of the natives.

Keywords: Orwell, colonizer, colonized, British, empire, Burmese.

Introduction

Modern colonialism is a major driving force in the composition of the world we know today. This movement affected a large percentage of the world population. It started in the early modern era and spanned the twentieth century. Throughout this period, several European nations (Portugal, Spain, Britain, France, Netherland, Belgium, Italy, and Germany) had competed and, in some cases, coordinated the colonization and exploitation of massive areas of the world including the Americas, Oceania, Africa, and Asia.

This pursuit was rationalized to earn moral legitimacy. For example, when Napoleon arrived in Egypt in 1798, he claimed in his Proclamation to the Egyptians that he came to restore their rights and punish their oppressors (Crépeau and Sheppard, 2013, p. 20). However, the campaign on Egypt harvested the souls of thousands on each side. Comparably, advocates of the expansive efforts of colonization strived to earn a benevolent reputation, especially in Europe, which constituted the grounds from which they sailed towards the colonized world.

However, this historical movement revolved around misleading claims and coercive exploitation. This study focuses on the cruelty of colonization as represented in George Orwell's *Burmese Days*. Notably, the colonization of Burma was an extension of the British rule over India, which started with the rising influence of the East India Company which monopolized the traffic of goods from the East to England (Lloyd, 2001, p. 6). In the aftermath of the 1857's clash with the Indians, the British government took over and imposed its direct rule over India. The period between 1858 and 1947 had been significantly beneficial to Britain, which exhausted the Indian natural and human resources (Murphy, 2012, p. 50). Thus, India had been widely referred to as the jewel of the British crown.

During the colonial era, politics forced its presence on the daily lives of both the natives and the colonizers. It became central to the very existence of both parties since it caused an almost irreversible shift in their relative positions. Therefore, the socio-political aspect became fundamental to the analysis of the complicated relationships between the colonizers and the colonized. Inevitably, such analysis must indulge in the complications of colonialism as reflected in the politics, economy, and culture of the oppressed and the oppressor. Hence, the highly hegemonic nature (politically, economically, and culturally) of the history of modern colonialism necessitates a critical framework with a keen eye on the role of the colonial past in creating inescapable intricacies. Postcolonial theory arose as a countermeasure to the authoritarian influence of colonialism.

This research addresses George Orwell's *Burmese Days* ([1934], 2001)[1] through a descriptive-analytic methodology. The work is critically analyzed with emphasis on the treatment of colonial practices and ideologies. Thereafter, the presence of these elements and their possible reasons are assessed with reference to postcolonial literary theory. This work introduces the theme of colonialism in an untraditional manner; whereas the majority of the Western canon emboldens colonialism and embraces its rationalization, this novel treats it with evident criticism.

Discussion

Burmese Days reflects Orwell's humanism and condemns the British colonization of Burma. In this novel, he presents his liberal opinions regarding the exploitation of the Burman people and resources. Burma was fully annexed as a province of British India in 1886, after three wars and the annexing of Lower Burma in 1862. Between these dates and independence in 1948, "the colonial economy depended on the extraction, processing, and exporting rice, timber, and later, oil" (Stockwell, 1998, p. 391). Correspondingly, *Burmese Days* sheds light on how colonialism utilized racism and the socio-cultural boundaries to reinforce its power over the Burmans. The extent to which the colonizers would go to sustain their superiority over the locals is given account in this novel. Orwell criticizes the methods of the British Raj and protests against the intolerance of the British administration of the locals, the Eurocentric attitude of the Anglo-Burmans, and the exclusive atmosphere that colonization has founded in the land of the natives. The novel exposes the corruption of the imperial mentality and the violent nature of colonialists.

Several studies have critically addressed the colonial aspect of *Burmese Days*. However, few of them have chosen to isolate and analyze the anti-colonial aspects of this work, and fewer studies have combined the colonial practices and ideologies in their analysis, whether pro-imperial or anti-imperial, especially since it is a highly controversial work which lends itself to diverge interpretations.

Ralph Crane's article "Reading the Club as Colonial Island in E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India* and George Orwell's *Burmese Days"* (2011) discusses the segregation that the English clubs impose on the natives' societies. It shows the commonalities and differences among the English clubs in *A Passage to India* and *Burmese Days.* The article highlights the figurative significance of the clubs in the authors' representation of cross-cultural interaction. They constitute a separate exclusive culture within the boundaries of the colonized world. Crane refers to this culture as an "island". In *Racism in George Orwell's Burmese Days*, Isam Shihada examines the hegemonic aspect of the British-Burmese relationship as represented in George Orwell's *Burmese Days.* This study analyzes the power relations between the colonizer and the colonized and their destructive effects on each of them. It shows up how Orwell reveals the colonizers' hypocrisy, exploitation of the natives' land, and racism. It also draws on the social boundaries created in the natives' culture as represented in the English club in which one of the natives may enroll if they prove their worthiness. The study concludes that George Orwell's *Burmese Days* offers a sharp critique of the alleged civilizing mission of colonization.

The novel is set in a town called Kyauktada near the jungle in the country that is nowadays called Myanmar. It narrates the story of John Flory, a British timber extractor in Burma. The plot has two main interdependent axes; Flory's relationship with the English community in Kyauktada, and the conflict between Flory and his native friend, Dr Veraswami on the one hand, and U Po Kyin, the Burman Sub Divisional Magistrate, on the other.

Despite being one of the few English people in town, Flory bears a different mindset. He appreciates the natives and their culture whereas his fellow citizens despise them. This results in turmoil between Flory and the English community. In this sense, submission to the imperial conventions, which favor the Europeans against any other group, becomes the source of division. The theme of colonialism goes beyond this and is given an account in the disillusionments Flory expresses, the imperial allegations his compatriots hold, and the interactions between the English and the Burmans that eventually amount to violence.

Flory's approach to the natives mitigates the differentiation which separates the Europeans and the natives in the colonies. His approach constitutes the core of the struggle with his fellow Europeans who perceive the natives as degenerate and less than persons whatsoever position they hold. The novel draws on the potential of correcting the methods of the Empire in the hope of avoiding injustice and violence. In this sense, the novel criticizes the Europeans' condescension toward the natives in the colonies. Nonetheless, it exemplifies and contradicts this condescension in a variety of ways.

Flory's friendship with Dr Veraswami constitutes the main instrument of expressing his anti-imperial convictions although the doctor does not share the same views. The conversations between the two friends are utilized to express Orwell's protests against the injustices of the Empire. In these conversations, Flory unleashes his most collective criticism of the Empire. He reveals his agitation with the role England plays in Burma. He says: "how can you make out that we [the British] are in this country for any purpose except to steal? It's so simple. The official holds the Burman down while the businessman goes through his pockets" (*BD,* p. 38). Flory discourages the myth of the progressive Empire which considers that developing the less fortunate parts of the world is its duty. He breaks down the mechanism in which the exploitation of the colonized people takes place: the law enforcement imposes the Empire's domination and gives way to the tradesmen to rob the resources of the country.

The distinction Flory draws between the benefits of colonization and the false allegations his fellows adopt may be generalized as that he is eager to utilize colonialism, but is less taken into the imperial rhetoric. Yet it is impossible to separate the two. According to Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* (1994), colonialism is "almost always a consequence of imperialism" (p. 123). The paradox of Flory, who profits from colonialism, but opposes the very basis upon which it rests, may only be explained in light of what Homi Bhabha calls colonial ambivalence. He explains it as the duality in the attitude of the colonizers who view themselves as the antithesis of their colonial subjects, setting their landscape and culture into a similar opposition. At the same time, these colonizers eccentrically fancy their subjects; their landscape and culture. Bhabha's concept of ambivalence is especially relevant to the analysis of *Burmese Days* for it successfully describes the complicated relationship between the colonizer and the colonized.

Dr Veraswami is affiliated with the colonial discourse which indicates that it is the natural duty of the highly civilized nations to take control of the less civilized ones and improve them— the white man's burden. Yet despite the conflict of interest this matter poses to Flory, he chooses to refute the imperial allegations.

The work criticizes the praise of the achievements of the Empire in the colonized world as these achievements are not charity; they are meant to facilitate the exploitation of the colonies. Similarly, Flory continues to attack the disguised imperial intentions. Eventually, he states, "There's an everlasting sense of being a sneak and a liar that torments us and drives us to justify ourselves night and day" (*BD*, p. 37). In other words, Flory vilifies the theft of the colonies in the name of uplifting them.

Flory is aware of the potential consequences of maintaining the colonial policies in Burma. He understands the cultural implications of the British hegemonic rule; "In fact, before we've finished, we'll have wrecked the whole Burmese national culture. But we're not civilizing them, we're only rubbing our dirt on to them" (*BD*, p. 40). The British predominant existence in Burma will inevitably subdue the local culture-shifting its position into a subordinate one. According to Richard Price, "in the new imperial history, power is treated largely as a cultural artefact" (2006, p. 607). Therefore, the culture of Burma is irreversibly affected by the culture of the colonizer which revolves around power. U Po Kyin is a good example of the dynamics of power; it allows such a mischievous official to rise to the position of a Deputy Assistant Commissioner. Another example is Dr Veraswami who denounces his own culture and accepts the superiority of the European colonizers. Under colonial rule, only the natives who succumb to colonial hegemony can prosper or obtain the post of a high official in colonized Burma.

Flory is influenced by his assumption that Elizabeth will share his enthusiasm for the natives and their culture. However, Elizabeth is only interested in Flory when he scares a buffalo away, hunts birds and leopards, or takes charge of a large group of rioting locals. When they visit the bazaar, the only comforting aspect to her is the arrangement of a shop which resembles the British shops; "the European look of Li Yeik's shop-front—it was piled with Lancashire-made cotton shirts and almost incredibly cheap German clocks—comforted her somewhat after the barbarity of the bazaar" (*BD,* p. 131). Elizabeth's comfort when looking at the shop relates to the concept of colonial mimicry. To an English colonialist, a Chinese shop with a European front is more appealing than the authentic experience in the bazaar. The reason for this preference is that the Eurocentric mentality of Elizabeth favors the Eastern subject who shows a resemblance to the colonizer. However, Elizabeth still patronizes Ly Yeik and his people. According to *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, "Despite the 'imitation' and 'mimicry' with which colonized peoples cope with the imperial presence, the relationship becomes one of constant, if implicit, contestation and opposition" (Bill Ashcroft et al., 1995, p. 9). Therefore, the limitations that colonial mimicry forces upon the colonial subjects are given account in *Burmese Days*. By bringing such a significant notion into the spotlight, the criticism this work offers to the imperial mindset is hereby stressed.

Elizabeth's mentality and behaviour are a microcosm of the other Europeans in the novel. Except for Flory, the Anglo-Burmans share the typical prejudices of the Empire and support colonial violence in Burma, to varying extents. The European club where these people gather is an exclusive elitist club. The narrator explains, "In any town in India, the European Club is the spiritual citadel, the real seat of the British power, the Nirvana for which native officials and millionaires pine in vain" (*BD,* p. 14). The exclusivity of the European club and the powerful position which is associated with the Anglo-Burmans contribute to the cultural elimination of the Burmans in their land.

The moral standing of the Anglo-Burmans repels Flory, who impugns his citizens and their club. He refers to the clubs as, "Kipling-haunted little [c]lubs" (*BD,* p. 69). Rudyard Kipling is one of the most prominent advocates of imperialism. Generally, his works celebrate the British domination over the less civilized races. Flory's discontentment with his citizens comprises the ideological basis of their attitude as represented in Kipling, the perpetrator of the white man's burden bubble. It is worth mentioning that *Burmese Days* refer to the English clubs in British India as European clubs, although the only European nationality they include is the English. Their generalization into European clubs may stand for their racist nature. In addition, defining the clubs with their European nature suggests that imperialism is a European device. These clubs constitute a European elitist centre inside the colonized world according to Ralph Crane, who states that "while Forster and Orwell both carefully construct the Club as cut off from its Indian environment the stereotypical myth of an isolated island), they do so only to show that the very idea of a colonial edifice, complete within itself, is doomed to collapse" (2011, p. 20).

During the colonial era, small numbers of Europeans took control of millions of people in the colonies. Technology and weaponry were the tools for subjugating the population of the colonized world. This situation consolidates the imperial power. However, abusing the natives is a method of sustaining this authority over them. According to Anthony Stewart in *George Orwell, Doubleness and the Value of Decency* (2003),

> Not only do these societies operate despite the criticisms of their individual citizens, as was the case in *Burmese Days* and *Keep the Aspidistra Flying*, they actively dictate the behaviour of their citizens and severely punish even the slightest divergence from the extremely narrow precepts they set out. (p. 97).

As an oppressive system, imperialism maintains itself through a set of practices and ideologies. The devotion of the Anglo-Burmans sustains colonial violence and colonial discourse. This causes an immediate antagonism between the colonial institution and any voice of opposition, whether from inside or outside the European club.

The Anglo-Burmans form a class in Kyauktada, and they strive with all their power to preserve the exclusivity of their class. For a corrupt manipulative system to survive, it requires its members to defend it ideologically and practically. The European club members do live up to the task. Ideologically, they highly value and believe in the imperial justifications for colonizing Burma. They believe that their presence benefits the Burmans who cannot govern themselves. Besides, they believe that they are a superior race that is burdened with elevating the less civilized parts of the world.

In addition, the novel exhibits a shocking thirst for violence amongst its Anglo-Burman characters. The attitude of Westfield, who discloses that "eleven years of it, not counting the War, and [I] never killed a man. Depressing", adds to the commentary of the novel on the imperial manners (*BD,* p. 115). Since Westfield, the Superintendent of the Police, represents authority, the imperial authority in Burma is criticized for its eagerness for excessive violence. Another example of excessive colonial violence is Macgregor's orders when the natives riot over an incident in which Ellis blinds a schoolboy by beating him with a cane on his eye. MacGregor issues his orders to the military police: "aim low! No firing over their heads. Shoot to kill. In the guts for choice" (*BD,* p. 261). However, Flory alters the orders when he relays them to the army by asking them to shoot over the natives' heads. In this context, the work highlights the cruelty of colonialism when it comes to killing the natives. Besides, the narrative reveals: "Eight hundred people, possibly, are murdered every year in Burma, they matter nothing, but the murder of *a white man* is a monstrosity” (*BD,* pp. 247-248). Thus, colonial injustice and violence are exemplified in *Burmese Days*. In colonized Burma, the lives of the natives do not measure against the colonizers’.

The Anglo-Burmans are shown to be excessively violent. They emphasize the significance of racial distinction and division. Not only do they alienate themselves from the natives, but also they exclude the Eurasians, descendants of European fathers and Burmese mothers, from the English institutions and clubs. Moreover, they stand by each other as in the case of Maxwell’s death. Although Maxwell was killed by the relatives of a local man he murdered, none of the Anglo-Burmans acknowledges Maxwell’s guilt; they commonly agree that he must be avenged to preserve the supremacy of the whites. The Anglo-Burman community in Kyauktada shares a dreadful disregard for the natives’ lives.

Orwell delivers his criticism of imperialism through Flory’s remarks, the Anglo-Burmans’ attitude, and the inclusion of colonial violence. Nevertheless, the theme of colonialism is highly problematic, especially when it is conveyed through Orwell’s Western lens. Therefore, the socio-political nature of the work burdens the narrative with several paradoxes that include the highly criticized problem of representation. An assessment of Orwell’s representation shall take the following lines quoted from *Burmese Days* into consideration, “Now, at fifty-six, he [U Po Kyin] was a Sub-divisional Magistrate, and he would probably be promoted still further and made an acting Deputy Commissioner, with Englishmen as his equals and even his subordinates” (*BD,* p. 2). The representation in the novel is not single-sided. In a context that discusses representation and postcolonialism, H. L. Gates (1991) writes:

> You can empower discursively the native, and open yourself to charges of downplaying the epistemic (and literal) violence of colonialism; or play up the absolute nature of colonial domination, and be open to charges of negating the subjectivity and agency of the colonized, thus textually replicating the repressive operations of colonialism. In agency, so it seems, begins responsibility. (p. 462)

The anti-imperial discourse in this work is multi-angular; it is transmitted through Flory’s opinions, the exposition of colonial injustices, and the display of colonial excessive violence. Therefore, it can be established that both representation and anti-imperialism are not static devices; they vary, fluctuate, and overlap. Besides, *Burmese Days* significantly deviates from the early literary traditions in its representation of the natives.

The novel has been widely criticized for its reductive representation of the Burmans. Elleke Boehmer states in *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature*: “despite the attempt at counter-narrative, however, Orwell does not ultimately diverge significantly from a colonialist semiotic” (2005, p. 154). Thus, Orwell has been criticized for adopting the traditional views in his representations of the Europeans and the natives; the Europeans as saviors as in the case of Flory, who intervenes and saves the Empire during the riot, and the natives as a ridiculous nation that is incapable of producing national heroes. Besides, several critics interpret Orwell’s representation of women in *Burmese Days* in terms of a colonial masculinity worldview. Among these critics is Urmila Seshagiri (2001) whose essay, *Misogyny and Anti-Imperialism in George Orwell’s Burmese Days*, elaborates on the victimization of Elizabeth and Ma Hla May before it concludes that: “The sympathy meted out to the Empire’s men does not touch Empire’s abject women; the feminine condition of economic dependency becomes a cause rather than an effect of imperial banality” (p. 119). Moreover, Anthony Stewart comments on the attitudes of Flory and Gordon Comstock in *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (1936) in light of their duality. He writes:

> The individual’s resistance exposes itself in substantive ways as mere duplicity, falling well short of the men’s lofty pronouncements. John Flory is not above exploiting Burmese women and his special status as a European man when such exploitation suits him. (2003, p. 38).

Furthermore, Stewart’s book develops the duality to encompass the attitude of Orwell himself as the British author turns into an advocate of his nation’s power during World War II, thus betraying his opposition to violence (p. 18). This is not the only instance in which Orwell shifts positions. Although he elaborately criticizes Kipling and his concepts, he ends up praising Kipling in a tribute he writes on the occasion of the latter’s death: “For my own part I worshipped Kipling at thirteen, loathed him at seventeen, enjoyed him at twenty, despised him at twenty-five and now again rather admire him” (as cited in Quinn, 2003, p. 304).

The novel does not attempt to present Flory as a model. He is the vehicle for Orwell’s criticism of Empire, but this does not necessarily mean that Flory replicates every aspect of Orwell’s thought. An analytical study of Flory’s situation reveals that he is confined by his race and position to think in a certain way. As evident in his conversations with Veraswami and his aspirations to find a girl who does not intellectually belong to the Memsahib code, Flory constitutes a departure from the imperial conventional point of view. Nevertheless, this departure is not fully achieved. Flory still corresponds to some of the imperial conventions regarding one's self-perception and relationship with the others, especially women and the natives. Yet a notable moral rejection of imperial ideology and misconduct exists within the ambivalent attitudes of Flory. Therefore, it is arguable that even the downside of Flory can signify the weakness in the countermeasures of imperial fallacies and malpractices.

In *Why I write* (1946), Orwell accounts for his motives and intentions in writing on such a problematic topic as politics. He lists four reasons as the motives of any writer; sheer egoism, aesthetic enthusiasm, historical impulse, and political purpose. In this essay, Orwell discusses his biography and affiliations. In addition, he introduces the moral of his writing, "when I sit down to write a book, I do not say to myself, 'I am going to produce a work of art. I write it because there is some lie that I want to expose, some fact to which I want to draw attention" (p. 315). Orwell's essay adds to the interpretation which perceives *Burmese Days* as an anti-imperial work that stands as a moral statement against the misconducts of the Empire. Yet Orwell was not able to be completely neutral and could not detach from the European conventions of representing the "other" as apparent in several passages of the novel.

Conclusion

The novel constitutes an exposition of the moral corruption of the Empire. It lists and negates several imperial concepts such as positional superiority and the white man's burden. It fully details the logical and moral fallacies of colonial discourse. The disillusionments Flory expresses and the racist attitudes of the Anglo-Burmans contribute to the intellectual opposition this work poses to imperialism. It illustrates the vicious manner of European colonialism by depicting colonial violence. This attack on the colonial pretensions and practices constitutes the essence of the anti-imperial tone in *Burmese Days*.

The novel accounts for the theme of colonialism in an outspoken manner. It delivers its critique of the Empire, mainly through Flory's remarks which condemn the imperial ideology and the oppressive manner of colonialism. Besides, the Anglo-Burman community represents imperialism and demonstrates its ideological and practical failures. The novel expresses an uncompromising assessment of colonial violence; it is addressed as both a historical fact and an ongoing practice of the Empire. *Burmese Days* assigns itself as an anti-imperial work by exposing the fallacies of the Empire, the corruption of its agents, and the extent to which its violence adds up. However, there are two main setbacks to this approach; the models of representation employed in the work, and the inconsistency in Flory's opposition to the Empire. These two factors constitute the core of Orwell's paradox; the inability to fully abolish the colonial rhetoric in his endeavor to expose its fallacy. This research demonstrates the implications of the above-mentioned setbacks. They pose a limitation to the sympathy *Burmese Days* attempts to employ in its treatment of the natives, but they do not fully overshadow it. Eventually, *Burmese Days*, with its acknowledgeable weaknesses, attempts to deliver a counter-discourse against the injustices of the Empire.

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Notes

1. *Burmese Days* was published in 1934. The copy quoted in the article was published by Penguin, 2001. References to this edition in the article use the abbreviation *BD.*

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Natural Symbolism in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*

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ABSTRACT

Symbolism, as a literary device, is widely employed in scriptures of almost all religions. Understanding the use of symbolism in a scripture enables us to comprehend and appreciate the intended message of the scripture's author in a better way. The poetic compositions of Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS) are notable for their richness, and various images and symbols used to tell its authors' mystical and spiritual experiences. These compositions aptly use natural symbolism to describe humanity's diverse physical and spiritual needs and suggest innovative ways to tackle these issues. As SGGS's message is addressed to the ordinary person, the symbolism used to depict various facets and aspirations of human life has been taken from nature and Indian culture. This article reports on the usage of natural symbolism in SGGS.

Keywords: Symbolism, Scripture, Religion, Spiritual, Mystical, Guru Granth, Nature, Soul.

INTRODUCTION

Majestic peaks, white clouds across intense blue skies, gushing torrents of crystal-clear water, golden daffodils quivering and dancing, the refreshing shades of new leaves, newborn babies - all these images bring back to us the beauty and joy of nature ("Symbols in nature," n.d.). Images of mountains inspire the feelings of the might and majesty of nature and its creator. Likewise, the streams tumbling down the mountainsides symbolize the dynamic nature of things.

Symbolism is widely employed in scriptures of almost all religions. Understanding the use of symbolism ("Symbolism," 2021; "Lesson 13: Scriptural use of symbolism," n.d.) in a scripture enables us to comprehend and appreciate the intended message of the scripture's author in a better way. The poetic compositions of Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS) ("Sri Granth," n.d.; Gujral, 1999) are notable for their wealth and variety of images and symbols used to describe the mystical and spiritual experience of its authors ("Symbols," n.d.). Many similes, metaphors, and other forms of figurative expressions enrich the text (Singh, 2020; Chahal, 2021). Most of the imagery comes from the nature and Indian culture storehouse.

NATURE, MAN, AND GOD

SGGS proclaims that nature is a manifestation of God (Singh, 2019). In his hymns, Guru Nanak articulates:

> ਖੰਡ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡ ਪਾਤਾਲ ਅਰੰਭੇ ਗੁਪਤਹੁ ਪਰਗਟੀ ਆਇਦਾ ॥
> *He formed the planets, solar systems, and nether regions, and brought what was hidden to manifestation. (Guru Nanak, SGGS, p. 1036)*

A complete oneness or union between the two is often mentioned in several hymns of SGGS. For example, using the analogy that foam, bubbles, and water waves are alike water, Bhagat Namdev, a saint-poet of SGGS, describes that God is inherent in nature. This analogy has the potential to always convey precisely the same meaning to all people, without reference to a particular language, time, or people.

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> ਜਲ ਤਰੰਗ ਅਰੁ ਫੇਨ ਬੁਦਬੁਦਾ ਜਲ ਤੇ ਭਿੰਨ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥ ਇਹੁ ਪਰਪੰਚੁ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕੀ ਲੀਲਾ ਬਿਚਰਤ ਆਨ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥
> *The waves of the water, the foam, and bubbles are not distinct from the water. This manifested world is the playful game of God; reflecting upon it, we find that the creation is not different from God. (Bhagat Namdev, SGGS, p 485)*

Since humans are an inseparable part of nature (Chahal, 2022), an implicit union between humans and God is expressed. At the spiritual level, the relationship between a human being and God is like that of a part to the whole. But being engrossed in worldly passions, humans generally suffer a sense of separation from the Lord. Guru Nanak expresses the inter-relationship between a human being and God as:

> ਸਾਗਰ ਮਹਿ ਬੂੰਦ ਬੂੰਦ ਮਹਿ ਸਾਗਰੁ ਕਵਣੁ ਬੁਝੈ ਬਿਧਿ ਜਾਣੈ ॥
> *The drop is in the ocean, and the ocean is in the drop. Who understands and knows this? (Guru Nanak, SGGS, p 878)*

Here drop is not only a drop of water, but it is also the symbolic representation of a human being, and the ocean represents the Lord.

HUMAN MIND AND MAYA

The entire poetic diction of the Guru Granth Sahib is surcharged with symbolic meanings ("Symbols," n.d.). The metaphysical or mystical experiences have been made comprehensible in images taken from nature and everyday life (Singh, 2021). Guru Nanak describes the intoxication of the human mind with worldly passions, the ephemerality of material phenomena and the need to imbibe God's love in one's life in his hymns as:

> ਤੂੰ ਸੁਣਿ ਹਰਣਾ ਕਾਲਿਆ ਕੀ ਵਾੜੀਐ ਰਾਤਾ ਰਾਮ ॥ ਬਿਖੁ ਫਲੁ ਮੀਠਾ ਚਾਰਿ ਦਿਨ ਫਿਰਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਤਾਤਾ ਰਾਮ ॥ਫਿਰਿ ਹੋਇ ਤਾਤਾ ਖਰਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨੁ ਪਰਤਾਪਏ ॥ ਓਹੁ ਜੇਵ ਸਾਇਰ ਦੇਇ ਲਹਰੀ ਬਿਜੁਲ ਜਿਵੈ ਚਮਕਏ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਬਾਝੁ ਰਾਖਾ ਕੋਇ ਨਾਹੀ ਸੋਇ ਤੁਝਹਿ ਬਿਸਾਰਿਆ ॥ ਸਚੁ ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਚੇਤਿ ਰੇ ਮਨ ਮਰਹਿ ਹਰਣਾ ਕਾਲਆਿ ॥
> *Listen, O black deer: why are you so attached to the orchard of passion? The fruit of sin is sweet for only a few days, then it grows sour and bitter. That fruit which intoxicated you has now become acrid and painful without the Naam. It is temporary, like the waves on the sea and the flash of lightning. Without the Lord, no other protector exists, but you have forgotten Him. Nanak speaks the Truth. Reflect upon it, O mind; you shall die, O black deer. (Guru Nanak, SGGS, p 438).*

Here black deer is symbolic of the human mind, and the orchard is a metaphor for the vast world of earthly pleasures. *Rata* is also symbolic as it connotes imbued with or engrossed in (worldly affairs). Finally, fruits are symbolic of material gains.

Shaikh Farid, a Muslim Sufi poet of SGGS, uses the symbolism of bird, tank, and captor to describe the state of the human mind in the grip of worldly temptations as:

> ਸਰਵਰ ਪੰਖੀ ਹੇਕੜੋ ਫਾਹੀਵਾਲ ਪਚਾਸ ॥ ਇਹੁ ਤਨੁ ਲਹਰੀ ਗਡੁ ਥਿਆ ਸਚੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਆਸ ॥
> *There is only one bird in the lake, but there are fifty trappers. This body is caught in the waves of desire. O, my True Lord, you are my only hope! (Shaikh Farid, SGGS, p 1384)*

Here the tank (*sarvar*) is symbolic of the world, the bird (*pankhi*) is symbolic of the human mind, and the captor (*phahival*) is the temptations of worldly pleasures.

Using an analogy of a swan eating a carcass, Guru Nanak Dev describes the state of a person engrossed in worldly passions as:

> ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਲਾਹਣੁ ਛਡਿ ਕੈ ਕਰੰਗੀ ਲਗਾ ਹੰਸੁ ॥
> *The swan-soul has abandoned the contemplation on Lord and is chasing a rotting carcass. (Guru Nanak, SGGS, p 790).*

Here swan is the symbolic representation of the human soul, and the carcass stands for evil tendencies.

YEARNING FOR THE LOVE OF GOD

The longing for God is the breath of our souls! Yearning for God with our hearts opens our souls to breathe in the Spirit of God and live for IT alone. The lack of yearning has brought us to our current state of suffering at the hands of worldly passions. The rigidness of our religious lives results from our lack of earnest desire for God's love. Complacency is a fatal enemy to our spiritual growth (Slimm, 2021). An acute passion for God's love is crucial for God's manifestation to IT's people. Using symbolism from nature, such as deer, cuckoo, fish and snake for the human soul, Guru Nanak expresses their yearning for the love of the Lord as:

> ਹਰਣੀ ਹੋਵਾ ਬਨਿ ਬਸਾ ਕੰਦ ਮੂਲ ਚੁਣਿ ਖਾਉ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਹੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਵਾਰਿਵਾਰਿ ਹਉ ਜਾਉ ਜੀਉ ॥੧॥ ਮੈ ਬਨਜਾਰਨਿ ਰਾਮ ਕੀ ॥ ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਖਰੁ ਵਾਪਾਰੁ ਜੀ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਕੋਕਿਲ ਹੋਵਾ ਅੰਬਿ ਬਸਾ ਸਹਜਿ ਸਬਦ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਸਹਜਿ ਸੁਭਾਇ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਹੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਦਰਸਨਿ ਰੂਪਿ ਅਪਾਰੁ ॥੨॥ਮਛੁਲੀ ਹੋਵਾ ਜਲਿ ਬਸਾ ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਸਭਿ ਸਾਰਿ ॥ ਉਰਵਾਰਿ ਪਾਰਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਹੁ ਵਸੈ ਹਉ ਮਿਲਉਗੀ ਬਾਹ ਪਸਾਰਿ ॥੩॥ ਨਾ ਗਨਿ ਹੋਵਾ ਧਰ ਵਸਾ ਸਬਦੁ

ਵਸੈ ਭਉ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਦਾ ਸੋਹਾਗਣੀ ਜਿਨ ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮਾਇ ॥੪॥

What if I were to become a deer and live in the forest, picking and eating fruits and roots, yet by Guru's Grace, I meet my Master? Again and again, I am a sacrifice, a sacrifice. ||1|| I am a vendee of God's love. Your Name is my merchandise and trade. ||1||Pause||If I were to become a cuckoo living in a mango tree, I would still contemplate the Shabad (Word). I would still meet my Lord and Master intuitively; the Blessed Vision of IT's Form is incomparably beautiful. ||2|| If I were to become a fish living in water, I would still remember God, who watches over all beings and creatures. My Husband Lord (God) dwells on this shore and the shore beyond; I would still meet IT and hug IT close in my embrace. ||3|| If I were to become a snake living in the ground, the Shabad would still dwell in my mind, and my fears would be dispelled. O Nanak, they are forever the happy soul-brides, whose light merges into IT's Light. ||4|| (Guru Nanak, SGGS, p 157)

Due to a symbol's visual nature, it is generally remembered for a longer time than a description of a concept without a symbol. So, for example, Guru Nanak uses the analogies of love of lotus and marine life for water to imply that our yearning for the love of God should be as intense as that of the love of lotus or marine life for water, without which they die.

ਰੇ ਮਨ ਐਸੀ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਜੈਸੀ ਜਲ ਕਮਲੇਹਿ ॥ਲਹਰੀ ਨਾਲਿ ਪਛਾੜੀਐ ਭੀ ਵਿਗਸੈ ਅਸਨੇਹਿ॥ ਜਲ ਮਹਿਜੀਅ ਉਪਾਇ ਕੈ ਬਿਨੁ ਜਲ ਮਰਣੁ ਤਿਨੇਹਿ ॥

O mind, love God like the lotus loves water. Tossed about by the waves, it still blossoms with love. In the water, the creatures are created; outside of the water, they die. (Guru Nanak, SGGS, p 59)

THE WAY TO LOVE

People who try to fill their hunger for love, acceptance, security in relationships, material possessions, or success often don't find real or lasting satisfaction (Belzer et al., 2018). Their hunger is not a mere physical or emotional hunger. Instead, it is a hunger for everlasting love and acceptance - a holy hunger, a hunger for the love of God. Some may not know they long for God because they don't know IT. Some don't seek God because they don't know where or how to look for IT. Others look for God but aren't sure what IT "looks like." What helps you to cultivate a longing for God? What stokes the fires of your love for God? Contemplation on God is probably an essential thing to do. There are many ways to do this. Using several analogies from nature, such as the yearning of fish for water, the yearning of songbird for rain, the love of water and milk, and the yearning of the chakvee (Ruddy shelDuck) bird for the sun, Guru Nanak describes the way to imbibe the love of the Lord in our life as:

ਰੇ ਮਨ ਐਸੀ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਜੈਸੀ ਮਛੁਲੀ ਨੀਰ॥ ਜਿਉ ਅਧਿਕਉ ਤਿਉ ਸੁਖੁ ਘਣੋ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਸਾਂਤਿ ਸਰੀਰ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਜਲ ਘੜੀ ਨ ਜੀਵਈ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਜਾਣੈ ਅਭ ਪੀਰ ॥੨॥ ਰੇ ਮਨ ਐਸੀ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਜੈਸੀ ਚਾਤ੍ਰਿਕ ਮੇਹ॥ ਸਰ ਭਰਿ ਥਲ ਹਰੀਆਵਲੇ ਇਕ ਬੂੰਦ ਨ ਪਵਈ ਕੇਹ ॥ ਕਰਮਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਸੋ ਪਾਈਐ ਕਿਰਤੁ ਪਇਆ ਸਿਰਿ ਦੇਹ ॥੩॥ ਰੇ ਮਨ ਐਸੀ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਜੈਸੀ ਜਲ ਦੁਧ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਆਵਟਣੁ ਆਪੇ ਖਵੈ ਦੁਧ ਕਉ ਖਪਣਿ ਨ ਦੇਇ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਮੇਲਿ ਵਿਛੁੰਨਿਆ ਸਚਿ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਦੇਇ ॥੪॥ ਰੇ ਮਨ ਐਸੀ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਜੈਸੀ ਚਕਵੀ ਸੂਰ ॥ ਖਿਨੁ ਪਲੁ ਨੀਦ ਨ ਸੋਵਈ ਜਾਣੈ ਦੂਰਿ ਹਜੂਰਿ ॥ ਮਨਮੁਖਿ ਸੋਝੀ ਨਾ ਪਵੈ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਦਾ ਹਜੂਰਿ ॥੫॥

O mind, love God like a fish loves water. The more the water, the more the happiness, and the greater the peace of mind and body. Without water, she cannot live, even for an instant. God knows the suffering of her mind. ||2|| O mind, love the Lord, as the songbird loves the rain. The pools are overflowing with water, and the land is luxuriantly green, but they mean nothing to her if that single drop of rain does not fall into her mouth. By God's Grace, she receives it; otherwise, she reaps the rewards of her previous deeds because of her past actions. ||3|| O mind, love God, as water loves milk. The water added to the milk itself bears the heat and prevents the milk from burning. God unites the separated ones with Itself again and blesses them with true greatness. ||4|| O mind, love God, as the chakvee duck loves the sun. She does not sleep for an instant or a moment; the sun is so far away, but she thinks it is near. Understanding does not come to the self-willed Manmukh. But to the Gurmukh, the Lord is always close. ||5|| (Guru Nanak, SGGS, p 59-60)

LOVE OF GOD

The symbolism adopted in SGGS is more akin to the hymn's theme than mere embellishment. Most of the imagery in the text has been derived from the ordinary householder's life. For instance, bliss from the human soul's union with the Supreme Soul is expressed in terms of sweetness. Shaikh Farid, a Muslim Sufi poet of SGGS, describes it as:

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਸਕਰ ਖੰਡੁ ਨਿਵਾਤ ਗੁੜੁ ਮਾਖਿਉ ਮਾਂਝਾ ਦੁਧੁ ॥ ਸਭੇ ਵਸਤੂ ਮਿਠੀਆਂ ਰਬ ਨ ਪੁਜਨਿ ਤੁਧੁ ॥

Fareed: sugar cane, candy, sugar, molasses, honey, and buffalo's milk - all these things are sweet, but they are not equal to You (Oh, Allah!). (Shaikh Farid, SGGS, p 1379)

Using the symbolism of love of fish for water and love of rainbird (chatrik) for rain, Guru Arjan Dev points out that a devotee has such a loving relationship with God.

> ਜਿਉ ਮੀਨਾ ਜਲ ਸਿਉ ਉਰਝਾਨੋ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਸੰਗਿ ਲੀਵਨਿ ॥
> ਨਾਨਕ ਸੰਤ ਚਾਤ੍ਰਿਕ ਕੀ ਨਿਆਈ ਹਰਿ ਬੂੰਦ ਪਾਨ ਸੁਖ ਥੀਵਨਿ ॥
> *As fish are immersed in water, the holy men are absorbed in the love of God. Nanak says, thus, the Saints are like the rainbirds; they are comforted, drinking the drops of God's love. (Guru Arjan, SGGS, p 1222)*

GOD-CONSCIOUS BEING

The hymn writers used familiar, everyday objects to symbolize spiritual Truth. For example, Guru Arjan Dev uses the lotus symbol to describe the attributes of a God-conscious being, which grows and blooms in muddy water but remains unsullied. This symbolism has often been used to bring home the idea that to realize God, a person need not renounce the world. Instead, he should lead a life of detachment, living amid worldly temptations.

> ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਸਦਾ ਨਿਰਲੇਪ ॥ ਜੈਸੇ ਜਲ ਮਹਿ ਕਮਲ ਅਲੇਪ ॥
> *The God-conscious being is always unattached, as the lotus in the water remains detached. (Guru Arjan, SGGS, p 272)*

Water's spiritual symbolism (Shazi, 2021) can be best understood by knowing what can refresh and cleanse our inner spiritual world. And the simple answer is 'love of God' because when we become 'God-conscious' beings, our minds get imbued with His attributes of compassion and love for all. When we apply these ideas in our daily life, our inner self gets cleansed and rejuvenated. For example, while describing the attributes of a God-conscious being, Guru Arjan Dev uses the symbolism of water since the inherent nature of water is to remain unsullied, even when the dirt is washed with it. Similarly, despite the all-around dirt of worldly desires and passions, we should remain unsullied.

> ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਤੇ ਨਿਰਮਲਾ ॥ ਜੈਸੇ ਮੈਲੁ ਨ ਲਾਗੈ ਜਲਾ ॥
> *The God-conscious being is the purest of the pure; filth does not stick to water. (Guru Arjan, SGGS, p 272)*

Guru Arjan Dev uses extensive symbolism from nature to express the characteristics of a God-conscious being. Using the analogies such as: the sun providing comfort and warmth to all, without any distinction of caste, colour, or creed; air providing the breath of life to rich and poor without any difference; the earth being indifferent to the actions of people, be it good or bad; and fire providing benefit to all, Guru Arjan Dev emphasizes that a God-conscious being treats all beings with equality, love and compassion.

> ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਸਦਾ ਨਿਰਦੋਖ ॥ ਜੈਸੇ ਸੂਰੁ ਸਰਬ ਕਉ ਸੋਖ ॥ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕੈ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਸਮਾਨਿ ॥ ਜੈਸੇ ਰਾਜ ਰੰਕ ਕਉ ਲਾਗੈ ਤੁਲਿ ਪਵਾਨ ॥ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕੈ ਧੀਰਜੁ ਏਕ ॥ ਜਿਉ ਬਸੁਧਾ ਕੋਊ ਖੋਦੈ ਕੋਊ ਚੰਦਨ ਲੇਪ ॥ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਾ ਇਹੈ ਗੁਨਾਉ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਉ ਪਾਵਕ ਕਾ ਸਹਜ ਸੁਭਾਉ ॥੧॥
> *The God-conscious being is always unstained, like the sun, which provides comfort and warmth to all. The God-conscious being looks upon all alike, like the wind, which blows equally upon the king and the poor beggar. The God-conscious being has steady patience, like the earth, which remains unaffected even if a person digs it up or another anoints it with sandal paste. Such is the quality of the God-conscious being: O Nanak, his inherent nature is like an all-embracing warming fire. ||1|| (Guru Arjan, SGGS, p 272)*

GOOD COMPANY (SAT SANGAT)

In the natural world, trees ("Symbols in sacred scriptures," n.d.) are a beautiful part of a landscape, sometimes in new leaves (during spring), sometimes in the beautiful colours (in autumn), or sometimes in the silhouettes (amid winter). Despite its shape, size or spread, a tree always grows upwards towards the light, away from the earth. Almost all trees bring forth some form of flowers and fruit. Some trees, such as sandalwood, also make their surroundings fragrant. Trees provide a wonderful symbol of how our perception and understanding of what is excellent and authentic can grow, from being very down to earth to reaching lofty heights of spiritual insight. Using the symbolism of the sandalwood tree, which can affect its surroundings, Bhagat Kabir asserts that even an ordinary soul can get evolved in the company of the enlightened ones.

> ਚੰਦਨ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਤਰਵਰੁ ਬਿਗਰਿਓ ॥ ਸੋ ਤਰਵਰੁ ਚੰਦਨੁ ਹੋਇ ਨਿਬਰਿਓ ॥
> *The nearby tree gets changed by being associated with the sandalwood tree. Even that tree begins to smell just like sandalwood. (Bhagat Kabir, SGGS, p 1158)*

Using the analogy of sandalwood tree and caster-oil plant, Guru Ram Das proclaims that even a sinner can attain spiritual enlightenment in the company of holy persons.

> ਜਿਉ ਚੰਦਨ ਨਿਕਟਿ ਵਸੈ ਹਿਰਡੁ ਬਪੁੜਾ ਤਿਉ ਸਤਸੰਗਤਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਪਤਿਤ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥
> *The poor castor oil plant, growing near the sandalwood tree, becomes fragrant; in the same way, the sinner, associating with the Saints, becomes acceptable and approved. (Guru Ram Das, SGGS, p 861).*

LIBERATION (NIRVANA)

Many abstract concepts are hard to grasp without some symbolic association as a learning aid. Therefore, such ideas can best be taught symbolically. For instance, the principle of faith is difficult to understand based on a definition only. If, however, the doctrine of faith is associated with something in the realm of our experience, it can be better understood. For example, when Guru Nanak Dev articulated how to attain Nirvana (liberation), he compared the human body to a field, doing good deeds to the planting of a seed, watering the fields as the contemplation on God, and the flourishing of the Lord's love in one's mind as sprouting of a seed. He proclaims that this is the way to attain liberation.

> ਇਹੁ ਤਨੁ ਧਰਤੀ ਬੀਜੁ ਕਰਮਾ ਕਰੋ ਸਲਿਲ ਆਪਾਉ ਸਾਰਿੰਗਪਾਣੀ ॥ ਮਨੁ ਕਿਰਸਾਣੁ ਹਰਿ ਰਿਦੈ ਜੰਮਾਇ ਲੈ ਇਉ ਪਾਵਸਿ ਪਦੁ ਨਿਰਬਾਣੀ ॥
>
> *Make this body the field and plant the seed of good actions. Water it with the Name of the Lord, who holds all the world in His Hands. Let your mind be the farmer; the Lord shall sprout in your heart, and you shall attain the state of Nirvana (liberation). (Guru Nanak, SGGS, p 23)*

Similarly, when Guru Nanak taught us to cultivate faith in the Lord, he compared the acts: of doing good deeds to preparing the soil for plantation, contemplation on *Shabad* to the planting of a seed, imbibing the love of the Lord in one's mind as watering of the soil, and the flourishing of faith as the sprouting of a seed.

> ਅਮਲੁ ਕਰਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਬੀਜੁ ਸਬਦੋ ਕਰਿ ਸਚ ਕੀ ਆਬ ਨਿਤ ਦੇਹਿ ਪਾਣੀ॥ ਹੋਇ ਕਿਰਸਾਣੁ ਈਮਾਨੁ ਜੰਮਾਇ ਲੈ......॥
>
> *Make good deeds the soil and let the Word (Shabad) be the seed; irrigate it continually with the water of Truth. Become such a farmer, and faith will sprout. (Guru Nanak, SGGS, p 24)*

IMPERMANENCE OF NATURE

Symbols can be timeless, culture-free, and language-free. When such things as plants, animals, or natural manifestations are used to teach doctrines, these can be used without reference to a particular time, people, or language. They can bridge the barriers of communication that often exist between ages or cultures. When the analogy of the appearance and disappearance of a bubble in water represents the impermanence of worldly phenomena (nature), it can always communicate the same message to all people.

> ਜੈਸੇ ਜਲ ਤੇ ਬੁਦਬੁਦਾ ਉਪਜੈ ਬਿਨਸੈ ਨੀਤ ॥ ਜਗ ਰਚਨਾ ਤੈਸੇ ਰਚੀ ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੁਨਿ ਮੀਤ ॥
>
> As the bubbles in the water well up and disappear again, so is the universe created, says Nanak; listen, O my friend! (Guru Teg Bahdur, SGGS, p 1427)

CONCLUSION

Nature is a tremendous and diverse source of symbolic meanings. It is because it reflects so many of the emotions and activities of our minds. Emanuel Swedenborg ("Symbols in nature," n.d.) has rightly pointed out that there is a correspondence between everything in the spiritual world and the natural world. Swedenborg writes, *'There is nothing in the natural world which does not represent something in the spiritual world, or which has not something there to which it corresponds."* Therefore, natural symbolism is a helpful tool to depict spiritual issues, which holds deeper meaning about our existence and direction on our path of life in a simple and easily understandable way.

Symbolism, as a literary device, gives a writer freedom to add double meanings to his work: (i) a literal one that is self-evident and (ii) the symbolic one whose sense is much more profound than the literal one. Thus, the symbolism provides universality to the characters and the themes of a piece of literature. Also, the usage of symbolism contributes to an attitude of searching in learners of the scripture. A seeker who understands that there is more than just the obvious in scriptural passages is likely to be more inclined to explore, ponder and probe these, and fully comprehend and appreciate their spiritual or divine message.

As Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS)'s message is addressed to the ordinary person, the symbolism used to depict various facets and aspirations of human life has been taken from nature and Indian culture. The enlightened authors of SGGS made apt use of natural symbolism to describe humankind's various physical and spiritual needs. They also suggested innovative ways to tackle these issues, making them easily understandable to everyone, without reference to place, time, and culture. Thereby the message of SGGS has been highly relevant to the development, progress, and enrichment of humanistic culture. It is pertinent to add that SGGS, with its universal ethos, has the potential to play a major role in finding apt solutions to the significant issues facing the contemporary world.

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Responding to Criticism as Realized in a Press Conference: The Case of Iranian Celebrities

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ABSTRACT

A glimpse at the stock of pragmatics literature brings to light a serious lack of studies delving into the speech act of responding to criticism. Hence, with the view of broadening the scope of research, this study set out to probe into the strategies Iranian celebrities employ to respond to the criticisms leveled at them in a press conference. Using a qualitative method supplemented with quantitative analysis of the data, the present study selected Iran's largest annual film festival, Fajr International Film Festival, as the data collection source. 40 press conferences held within this festival were watched and the celebrities' responses were translated and transcribed. Drawing on a model proposed by El-Dakhs (2020), the responses were categorized into four broad categories of total acceptance, partial acceptance, total resistance, and digression. The result of the analyses revealed that the celebrities most frequently preferred total resistance strategies to unreservedly and straightforwardly wave away the criticisms they had received irrespective of the threat their responses may have posed to the face of the critics. The findings were interpreted in light of the celebrities' disinclination to adhere to Iran's conventional cultural norms regarding saving other people's face and the asymmetrical power relations that might have sanctioned the use of explicit and confrontational strategies.

Keywords: celebrity, face, pragmatics, press conference, responding to criticism, speech act

Introduction

Responding to criticism, as the term amply indicates, occurs in reaction to a criticism, which is defined as "an illocutionary act whose illocutionary point is to give negative evaluation of the hearer's actions, choice of words, and products for which he or she may be held responsible" (Nguyen, 2005, p.7). With this definition in mind, one can safely claim that this speech act is prone to raise conflict in interpersonal relationships. Through criticizing, the speakers try to explicitly or implicitly convey their sense of dissatisfaction with the hearer's actions or behavior, exhorting them to take the necessary measures to improve their criticized behavior in the future.

In their seminal work on Politeness, Brown and Levinson (1987) regarded the speech act of criticizing as face-threatening given that it poses a threat to the face wants of the interlocutor. To be more precise, the negative face of the addressee, the desire to be free from any impositions, is jeopardized. However, according to Cao (2005), criticizing can also be a potential threat to the positive face as it disregards the addressee's desire to be appreciated and approved. Therefore, as put forth by El-Dakhs (2020), responding to criticism should not be deemed an easy task because there are a number of factors at play, exerting their influence on the hearer's decision about how to react properly. Those factors include: the hearer's status with respect to the speaker, the history of the relationship, the severity and sincerity

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of the content of the criticism, the audience present in the situation, etc.

As a form of institutional talk, press conferences are highly ritualized communicative situations providing journalists with access to public figures and the events surrounding them. Normally, there are several interviewers present, which quite often results in a fierce competition to ask questions. To keep things under control, there is usually a moderator managing the speaking turns as well as making the participants aware of the routines and procedural information. Choosing this specific genre for investigating the strategies celebrities use to respond to criticisms is consistent with Hiraga and Turner's (1996) view that the location of a speech act in a particular genre plays an integral role in determining its occurrence and interpretation. Moreover, according to Araujo (2012), when engaged in an interaction, the participants' actions are typified by a specific genre, which leads to the assumption that the realization of speech acts varies from one genre to another.

Drawing upon El-Dakhs (2020) as the source of inspiration, this study will attempt to identify the criticism-response strategies the Iranian celebrities employ in a press conference. It is hoped that the present study will be able to make a considerable contribution to the literature based on the following reasons. First and foremost, the speech act in question has received verily scarce attention in the literature. Thus, this study can, to some extent, help fill the gap in that regard. Second, the speech acts produced by Iranian celebrities have been rarely brought under scrutiny. Although celebrity is rapidly becoming a "performative practice", pragmatically grounded research on celebrity discourse is still in its infancy and there is much to explore (Zhang & Wu, 2018, p. 180). Third, this study examines naturally occurring speech produced by celebrities in a press conference, which, unlike other studies that use questionnaires or discourse completion tests, ensures the authenticity of the language. Hence, this study can broaden the scope of research and add to our understanding of the under-researched speech act of responding to criticism in the genre of press conferences.

Literature Review

In comparison to other speech acts such as apologizing, complimenting, refusing, etc., the speech act of criticizing has not been exhaustively explored in the literature. A glance at the literature and the existing studies on criticizing indicates that two modes of communication, written and oral, have been targeted by researchers. With respect to writing, there are a number of studies that aimed to scrutinize the evaluative language of book reviews (Araujo, 2012; Hyland ,2004; Itakura & Tusi, 2011), teachers' and peer feedback on student's homework (Hyland & Hyland, 2001,2006; Lee, 2009) and also criticizing by means of electronic communication (Hosseinzade & Moqadam, 2019; Lu, 2018). Regarding oral communication, some studies investigated televised talent competitions (Chen & Rau, 2015; Tang ,2016) and teacher-student interaction (Cao,2005; El-Dakhs, et al., 2019; Riekkien ,2010). In Persian, there are a few studies delving into the speech act of criticizing (Farnia & Sattar, 2016; Hosseinizadeh & Moqadam, 2019; Don & Izadi, 2013). The natural and inevitable consequence of this scarce attention paid to criticizing is a serious lack of studies examining responding to criticism (Nguyen, 2005). The extremely limited number of studies centering on the speech act of responding to criticism are outlined below.

Hiraga and Turner (1996) pioneered the investigation of responding to criticism. Their study involved drawing a comparison between Japanese and British student-tutor interactions in academic settings. It was noted that cross-cultural discrepancies existing between the two contexts played a major role in the formulation of the responses. Responding to the criticisms voiced by their tutors, the British students took their own face wants into consideration while their Japanese counterparts expressed more concern for the positive face of their tutors. Furthermore, there seemed to be a mutual concern for the negative face between the British students and tutors. On the contrary, the Japanese students and tutors displayed no concern for each other's negative face wants. The findings being interpreted in light of cross-cultural differences, it was concluded that the responses produced by British students represented the egalitarian relationship that exists between teachers and students in British academic settings while those of the Japanese demonstrated a relationship based on authority and asymmetry in Japanese academic settings.

In an attempt to explore the speech act in question further, Tuan (2010) set out to study Americans' and Chinese's responses to criticisms. A variable whose effect the researcher wanted to examine in determining the responses was the gender of the speaker. However, the statistical analysis of the data did not show any significant influence exercised by the speaker's gender. Surprisingly, however, the addressee's gender seemed to be more influential. There was a strong likelihood that the participants would produce harsher and less mitigated responses in reaction to female critics whereas the male addressees, who represent more societal power and dominance, received much more mitigated and indirect responses. In addition, five broad categories of responding to criticism strategies were identified: apology, counterclaim, contradiction, challenge, and accusation.

In recent years, the institutional contexts of M.A. and Ph.D. viva sessions have triggered researchers' interest in examining criticism-criticism response sequences. Paying attention to a viva session as the context of study sheds light on "how criticism is accomplished in a speech event in which it is not only a common discourse function, but also a sanctionable form of behavior" (Don & Izadi, 2013, p.230). By way of example, Don and Izadi (2013) and Izadi (2013,2014,2017), showed that vivas consist of pre-allocated as well as negotiated turns. Furthermore, it was realized that there was a sort of smoothness down toning the criticisms expressed by the examiners in the beginning, however, the candidates' following responses to the criticisms in an attempt to defend their theses had an impact on the quality with which the subsequent turns took place. As the argumentation between the candidates and the examiners intensified, negotiating the turns in a collaborative manner faded, giving its place to a fierce and adversarial competition to take turns. It was also observed that this argumentation had an influence on the relational connection and separation between the examiners and the candidates. Establishing and strengthening the connection was obtained through employing mitigating strategies such as hedging, downgrading, and uncertainty. On the other hand, separation stemmed from using aggravating strategies like repetition, boosting, and emphasis.

To push the frontiers further, Hiraga et al. (2003) shifted the focus to interlanguage pragmatics. The study was designed to probe the pragmatic difficulties encountered by Japanese students studying in Britain with British tutors. The difficulties were accounted for by the cross-cultural variations that exist in tutor-student interactions in Japan and Britain. Regarding the students as full members of the discourse community, the British tutors encoded their face-threatening speech acts in implicit ways, expecting that the students would give voice to their own doubts and worries as well. However, their expectations were not lived up to as the Japanese students, accustomed to an authority-based academic setting, did not do much except submissively and carefully following the instructions. The study went further to bring to light another factor that might have played a part in the pragmatic difficulties hampering the Japanese students. The values based on which the students' performance and progress were gauged varied significantly between the Japanese and British contexts. As an example, the criterion of being analytical was associated with independent evaluation in Britain but with meticulous execution of assignments in Japan.

In a similar vein, Nguyen (2005) studied the L2 pragmatic development as evidenced in Vietnamese EFL learners' criticisms and responses to criticism. A huge difference was observed between L1 and L2 speakers in carrying out the two speech acts. It was also revealed that proficiency had a negligible effect on L2 speakers' pragmatic development. Drawing on Hiraga and Turner (1996), Nguyen (2005) also created a model of criticism-response strategies, which included the broad categories of total acceptance, partial acceptance, and total resistance.

Taking the speech act of responding to criticism to a new context, El-Dakhs (2020) examined the realization of responding to criticism strategies within Egyptian televised interviews. Having transcribed and thus analyzed a total of 146 female and male celebrities' responses to criticism, the study attempted to develop an adapted model of responding to criticism strategies suiting the context of media interviews. As the secondary aim of the study, the author intended to examine the role of gender in the celebrities' responses. The results revealed that the celebrities deployed explicit strategies to respond to the criticisms directed at them. The strategies included: disagreement, providing counter-evidence, and justifying the criticized action while steering clear of confrontation. Moreover, the result of the analyses failed to reveal any significant differences in the celebrities' responses across gender. As for the occurrence of considerably high percentage of explicit and total resistance strategies (92%), it was argued that the findings were at odds with the previously conceived notions about Arab culture favoring implicit messages as well as its being categorized as a collectivistic culture. Contrary to these notions, when placed in televised interviews, the Egyptian celebrities preferred to preserve their own positive public image through employing explicit strategies.

Inspired by the work of El-Dakhs (2020), the present study aims to examine the speech act of responding to criticism in the context of press conferences, a new and under-researched context for studying the speech act in question, especially when it comes to the Iranian context. As far as we managed to check, there hasn't been much focused research looking into how Iranian celebrities do this, which provides grounds and impetus for undertaking the current research. In line with El-Dakhs, it is the researcher's firm belief that a genre or an institutional context of a specific kind plays a major and vital role in typifying the participants' actions and behavior. Hence, it is recommended that speech acts be examined within specific genres. In light of this, the present study hopes to provide answers to the following questions:

(1): What are the criticism-response strategies Iranian celebrities employ in press conferences?

(2): What are the frequencies with which the strategies occur?

Methodology

Context of the study

As mentioned previously, the present study will, using a qualitative method supplemented with quantitative analysis of the data, examine responding to criticism strategies in the press conferences held within the largest annual film festival in Iran, Fajr International Film Festival, from 2018 to 2022. This Festival event was selected as the context of the study due to the fact that, by all folk and professional appraisals, it represents the most authentic and conventionally recognized platform for this genre and discourse community and, therefore, would have provided the most representative and reliable picture of discourse and pragmatic reality as intended in the current study. 40 press conferences held within this festival were watched on Aparat, the Iranain video-sharing service, and the celebrities' responses to criticisms were transcribed. The festival has been held every February and April in the capital city, Tehran, since 1982. Every year a number of feature films are submitted to the festival, competing for awards for several categories as outlined in the festivals' rules and regulations. After each film is displayed to the audience that mainly consists of the cast and crew and a litany of journalists from various news agencies, a press conference is held in which the director and their cast and crew respond to the journalists' questions, compliments, and criticisms with respect to the film that has been watched. As is the norm with press conferences, there is a moderator who initially introduces the film and its director. Afterward, he invites the director and their entourage to come onto the stage and have seats across from the journalists. Having exchanged pleasantries, the moderator asks the journalists to raise their questions and comments. It must be noted that in order to maintain discipline and order, the journalists have been assigned turns prior to the commencement of the conference. In some of the conferences, the questions and comments were written on a piece of paper and then given to the moderator to be read to the celebrities. In some other, however, the journalists were granted a microphone so that they could raise their questions and criticisms orally. It is noteworthy to mention that the conferences were always broadcast online, providing people with the opportunity to follow them on social networking sites and other relevant websites.

Data collection

Aiming to analyze the speech act of responding to criticism in a naturally occurring context, the present study drew upon press conferences to fulfill that aim. To this end, 40 press conferences held within the Iranian Fajr International Film Festival were watched on Aparat, an Iranian video-sharing service. The length of each conference ranged from 40 to 60 minutes depending on the number of questions and criticisms expressed by the journalists. While watching each conference, the criticisms expressed by the journalists and the responses given by the celebrities were properly translated into English and then transcribed. A total of 118 responses to the criticisms were observed in 40 conferences, which accounts for approximately 3 instances of criticism-criticism response sequences per a conference. It is crucial to mention that the recorded analysis underwent textual and content analysis.

Data coding

The celebrities' responses were subsequently coded according to a model proposed by El-Dakhs (2020), which was an adaptation of Nguyen's (2005) model of criticism-response strategies. The model consists of four broad categories: total acceptance, partial acceptance, total resistance, and digression. It is noteworthy to mention that El-Dakhs' (2020) proposed model was used since it is considerably convenient to use. Furthermore, it fits the context of criticism-response strategies that occur in a press conference. No modifications were needed to be applied to this model as the present study, similar to El-Dakhs (2020), examined natural and authentic language. While coding the responses, it was realized that in quite few cases more than one strategy was employed by the celebrities to shape a response to the criticism they had received. This being the case, the total of 118 responses yielded 154 criticism response strategies. The following section will shed light on these strategies.

Results

This section will proceed according to the research questions guiding the current study. As to the first question, what are the criticism-response strategies Iranian celebrities employ in press conferences, the responses were categorized into four broad categories. The first category, total acceptance, included 3 strategies: agreement, explanation, and offer to repair. When using agreement, the participants indicated their approval of the criticism. Explanation allowed the celebrities to justify their criticized action. Offer to repair entailed a promise on the part of the celebrities to alter their course of action in the future. The following examples are drawn from the data to help us have a clearer understanding of the strategies.

Example (1): agreement

Journalist: I think the film is too long and therefore a little bit boring.

Celebrity: Yes, you are right. We need to leave out some parts of it.

Example (2): explanation

Journalist: The ending of your film was too sudden and unpleasant.

Celebrity: If we had a clear and gradual ending, the film would lose its attraction and that would easily be considered a weak point of our film.

Example (3): offer to repair

Journalist: The movies that you direct never have a clear ending. You seem to enjoy confusing your audience!

Celebrity: I will do my best to see to it in my future works.

The second broad category, partial acceptance, was, in line with El-Dakhs (2020), realized through merely one strategy: agreement to only one part of the criticism. The following example illuminates the point.

Example (4): agreement to only one part of criticism

Journalist: The setting of the film was too flashy and unrealistic.

Celebrity: Only in some parts. We did our best to paint a more realistic picture throughout the rest of the film.

With regard to the third category, total resistance, 10 strategies were observed. The strategy of disagreement involved rejecting the criticism. Using the strategy of correction, the speaker was able to correct the erroneous information provided by the critic. Provision of counter-evidence entailed that the speaker provide evidence aimed at contradicting the critic's remarks. As another way of waving the criticism away, the strategy of indicating a standard involved the speaker in stating a principle, often accomplished through a common saying such as mentioning a proverb. The other strategies included criticizing the critic openly, justifying the critic's comments, justifying the speaker's actions, expressing irony to reject the criticism, expressing surprise at hearing the criticism, and seeking evidence. In the following, each strategy is illustrated using an example drawn from the data.

Example (5): disagreement

Journalist: I believe that the film was really vacuous and dull. It does not seem to be able to attract a large number of audiences in the future. Do you agree?

Celebrity: No, I do not. It is my firm conviction that it is exciting and has the potential to gain popularity.

Example (6): correction

Journalist: It appears that you have blatantly disregarded the Iranian life style in your film.

Celebrity: On the contrary, it was very Iranian. We tried to create the characters and their lives in a way that is tangible for our people.

Example (7): provision of counter-evidence

Journalist: Why do your films do not have a clear ending? They almost always leave the audience in the dark.

Celebrity: I think they do have a clear ending. For example, in today's film, the protagonist had the child released from the hospital and he adopted the child as his son.

Example (8): indicating a standard

Journalist: Why didn't you put more time and energy on the script? There was a notable lack of dialogues and communication between the actors.

Celebrity: If you watch action films made in different countries around the world, you will see that it is perfectly normal. Action films do not lay much emphasis on dialogues.

Example (9): criticizing the critic

Journalist: The film was based on a true story, but you seem to have distorted the real story.

Celebrity: You are ignorant of what has really happened. Watch it more carefully.

Example (10): justifying the critic's comment

Journalist: Your film does not deserve to be present in this festival. Even the TV channels that have few audiences would not deign to show this film. How did you manage to submit it to this grand festival?

Celebrity: It seems your soul motive is to belittle my work and my efforts. Therefore, I have no response for you.

Through this strategy the celebrity tries to reveal the true reason why the critic has attacked them.

Example (11): justifying the speaker's actions

Journalist: Your role in this film did not have anything new. It was all too cliched.

Celebrity: I'm an actor, and I play any roles offered to me. It doesn't matter If I have played a similar role before. If I happen to like the director and the script, I accept the role.

Example (12): expressing irony

Journalist: Did you have any reason for making this film other than wasting the audiences' time?!

Celebrity: No. That was exactly my main goal!

Example (13): expressing surprise

Journalist: The role of Parvaneh was really inferior to other characters. It seems not a good deal of thought has gone into creating this character.

Celebrity: Parvaneh being inferior to other characters? I really can't understand how you arrived to that conclusion!

Example (14): seeking evidence

Journalist: The quality of your film is too low to have required such a great amount of budget. It is definitely a low-budget work.

Celebrity: How do you know it is low-budget? Do you have any expertise in film-making industry?

In addition to the three broad categories outlined above, there was a fourth broad category of digression that the celebrities employed in few cases. This strategy allowed the speakers to digress from the criticism and evade

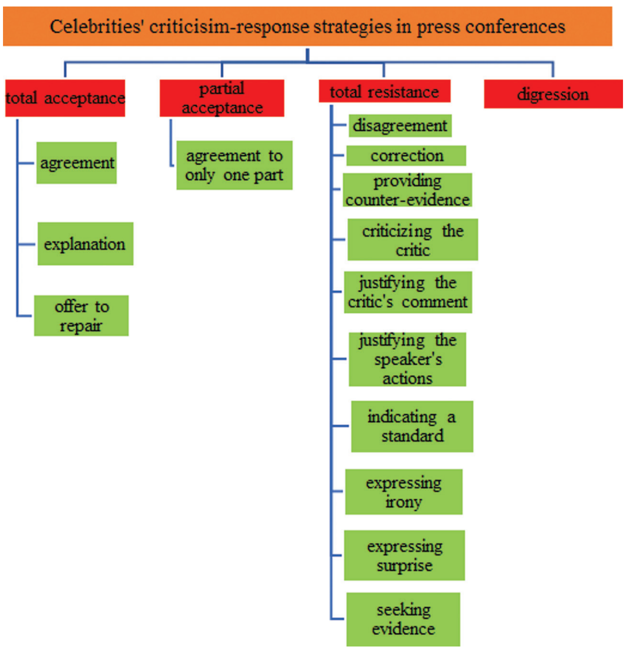

Figure 1. Celebrities' criticism-response strategies in press conferences
Source: *El-Dakhs(2020)*

the response to it. The following example illustrates the point.

Example (15): digression

Journalist: The final sequence was really meaningless and it left us totally baffled.

Celebrity: I really appreciate your attention and your efforts to help us hold this conference.

Figure 1 offers a graphic representation of the criticism-response strategies employed by the Iranian celebrities in press conferences.

As to the second research question, what are the frequencies with which the strategies occur, the number of employed strategies were respectively counted and the percentages were subsequently calculated. Table 1 represents each strategy with its frequency of occurrence. Akin to El-Dakhs (2020), the strategies belonging to the broad category of total resistance enjoyed the highest frequency in this study (73.07%). Total acceptance strategies accounted for 16.02 % of the whole data. The least frequently used broad category was partial acceptance with 1.28 %. The fourth broad category, digression, accounted for 9.61 % of the data. It is worth to mention that the strategy of 'disagreement', which belongs to the broad category of total resistance, was the most frequently employed strategy in the present study (26.28 %), followed by 'justifying the speaker's actions' with 13.46 % of all the strategies.

Table 1. Frequency of criticism-response strategies

Strategy	Number	Frequency
Total acceptance	**25**	**16.02 %**
agreement	3	1.92 %
explanation	20	12.82 %
offer to repair	2	1.28 %
Partial acceptance	**2**	**1.28 %**
agreement to only one part	2	1.28 %
Total resistance	**114**	**73.07 %**
disagreement	41	26.28 %
correction	16	10.25 %
indicating a standard	6	3.84 %
providing counter-evidence	9	5.76 %
criticizing the critic	9	5.76 %
justifying the critic's comment	1	0.64 %
justifying the speaker's actions	21	13.46 %
expressing irony	5	3.2 %
expressing surprise	3	1.92 %
seeking evidence	3	1.92 %
Digression	**15**	**9.61 %**
Total	**156**	**100 %**

Source: *El-Dakhs(2020)*

Discussion

The current study was designed to provide answers to two questions regarding the criticism-response strategies employed by Iranian celebrities in the context of press conferences. The first question concerned the identification of the strategies as evidenced in naturalistic data gathered from the press conferences held within Iran's largest annual film festival. Drawing upon the model proposed by El-Dakhs (2020) for criticism-response strategies, the celebrities' responses were categorized into four broad categories of total acceptance, partial acceptance, total resistance, and digression, with each category including one or more strategies. It is crucial to mention that El-Dakh's (2020) proposed model was selected given its versatility and strength in explaining the data here. Moreover, the present study was in line with El-Dakhs (2020) in terms of analyzing naturally occurring data. Typically, some modifications are applied when adopting a model to suit the context of the study. However, in the present study, no modifications were needed to apply to El-Dakhs' model as the genre of both studies was quite similar and they both involved celebrities responding to criticisms in naturally occurring speech situations.

The second question aimed to examine the frequency with which the observed strategies were put to use by the celebrities. It was found that the broad category of total resistance and its respective strategies dominated the scene with 73.07 % of occurrence. The strategy of 'disagreement' prevailed over all the other strategies (26.28 %). Through this often-occurring strategy, the celebrities chose to openly and straightly wave aside the criticism leveled at them. This unmistakable preference for explicitly and unreservedly rejecting a criticism is not consistent with the notion of Persian being categorized as a high-context culture (Hosseinizade & Moqadam, 2019). In an attempt to accentuate the role of contexts in shaping the nature of communication and behavior of the members of a particular community, Hall (1976) categorized cultures into high-context and low-context. With respect to the former, a great portion of the information lies in the physical context or is internalized in the person while the coded, explicit and transmitted part of the message conveys very little information. On the contrary, in the latter type of context, a considerable amount of information is carried in a direct and explicit way.

In addition, according to Hofstede (2011), cultures can also be compared on an individualistic-collectivistic continuum. As the term indicates, in individualistic cultures individuals and their desires and interests take precedence over those of a group. Conversely, in collectivistic cultures the interests of a group are given topmost priority. Furthermore, individualists prefer communicating in a direct and plain style while collectivists display a proclivity for being indirect. In line with many Eastern cultures, Persian is known to be a collectivistic culture with its people regarding each other as members of a community and relying on each other for support (Koutalki,2002; Eslami-Rasekh, et.al,2004). Nevertheless, the high frequency of 'disagreement' in the present study indicates the celebrities' disinclination to adhere to this conventional categorization.

The comparatively high frequency of total resistance strategies can be explicated through the following underlying reasons. First, it appears that the celebrities' responses were most likely driven by their need to maintain and enhance their positive public image. Followed and admired by thousands or even millions of fans, the celebrities are always striving to present a flawless sheen of themselves in all aspects of their lives, painstakingly superimposed and kept tacked on top at all times. Thus, when encountering a criticism before large audiences, they move to openly refute it so that this sheen of an image remains untarnished and they are rendered capable of achieving more "social and economic capital" (Gou & Ren, 2020, p.2). This does not come in line with Leary and Kowalski's (1990) argument that "the more public one's behavior, the more likely one is to be concerned with how it appears to others" (Leary & Kowalski, 1990, p. 38). Through another channel of comparison, however, this finding is congruent with El-Dakhs (2020) in which Egyptian celebrities most frequently opted for total resistance strategies to respond to criticisms (92%). However, in that study, the most confrontational strategy of 'disagreement' was used less frequently in comparison to less confrontational strategies such as 'providing counter-evidence' or 'justifying the speaker's actions'.

The second factor contributing to the high frequency of total resistance strategies is the asymmetrical power relationships existing between the celebrities and the journalists present in the conferences. Having a higher status, thus more power, relative to their addresses, the celebrities seemed to be willing to attack the hearer's face by explicitly and unreservedly rejecting their criticism without compunction. In fact, according to Austin (1987), the existence of power relations in all pragmatic exchange between individuals can never be written off or downplayed. It is the degree of power, Austin argues, not its presence or absence, that ought to be taken into account; its ubiquitous existence is undeniable. There are a number of studies that have examined the influence of power on native Persian speakers' choice of strategies through interactions. For instance, this study aligns with Farnia and Sattar's (2015) study in which it was found that Persian participants favored direct criticism strategies when placed in a position of higher status relative to the interlocutor. Other studies that focused on highlighting the same point include: Slamani Nodoushan (2008) Behnam and Niroomand (2011); Ghafar Samar, et al, (2013); Tamimi Sa'ad and Mohammadi (2014); Hadidi and Samandar (2022).

Conclusion

The present study aimed to explore Iranian celebrities' strategies in responding to public criticism in an under-researched genre of press conferences. To this end, Iran's largest annual film festival, Fajr International Film Festival, was selected as the data collection source. Drawing on El-Dakhs's (2020) model, the celebrities' responses were categorized into four broad categories: total acceptance, partial acceptance, total resistance, and digression. In terms of frequency of occurrence, it turned out that total resistance strategies were employed most frequently (73.07 %), a significant and important picture that speaks a lot about how the social structure impacts pragmatic real-life exchange all the time, moment to moment.

The hope is that the current study will go some way towards contributing to the literature on a few levels. First, the potentially culture and social structure-sensitive speech act of responding to criticism has not received adequate attention so far in the literature and is still in its infancy. This study was an attempt in the direction of partially broadening the scope of research on this speech act. Second, there is a marked dearth of research on the speech acts produced by Iranian celebrities, and a commensurate lack of enough insight into social and pragmatic structures of use in Persian, in different contexts and by different speech communities and participants. Finally, the present study examined naturally occurring speech in press conferences in order to extract the criticism-response strategies, which, unlike some other studies that draw upon questionnaires or discourse completion tests, would hopefully have been a better guarantee of linguistic, discursive and pragmatic authenticity.

The study, however, was not without its limitations. Firstly, caution must be exercised when taking the results into consideration. Focusing on only 40 press conferences due to practicality issues means that the generalizability of the results must be taken with a pinch of salt, as is the case with any similar study in actual rough-and-tumble of language use. Second, given its scope, the study did not attempt to balance or consider the gender issue, for the primary focus was only identifying the strategies. As a result, future studies could take the gender variable into account and see if it exerts any influence on shaping the celebrities' responses to criticism. As another line of inquiry, and as implicitly suggested by the tenor of this work, follow-up research could also examine the speech act of responding to criticism in a cross-cultural light. By way of example, the similarities and differences between Iranian and American celebrities' responses would yield interesting results

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on the Microfinance Institutions Growth in the EU

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ABSTRACT

Background: This study examines the social and financial implications of EU Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) in response to the decline in economic activity caused by COVID-19.

Method: The Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) technique is used to evaluate such impacts.

Results: The empirical results suggest that the pandemic affects MFI's financial efficiency adversely and increases MFI's social efficiency. MFI lending rates show the impact of COVID-19 on MFI efficiency, but the contribution of refinancing rates is negligible.

Conclusion: It is found that the pandemic reduces the economic efficiency of MFIs, while improving the social efficiency of MFIs.

Keywords: COVID-19, EU, financial efficiency, MFIs, social efficiency, **JEL** classifications: G21, G51

Introduction

In December 2019, a plague of coronavirus (also referred to as COVID-19) broke call and has since spread around the world (Idris, 2020; Jain, Mohanan, 2020). The health and economic implications were severe thanks to blockading measures to contain the spread of the coronavirus to the population and rising health care costs. The closure of virtually all businesses as a result of the blockade has had a big impact on individuals and institutions. Microfinance institutions (MFIs) were consequently impacted and are in crisis. Microfinance is gaining popularity as a technique to combat unemployment while promoting entrepreneurship and social inclusion. Funding and support from various institutions are aimed toward micro-enterprises and underprivileged people that don't have access to traditional sources of funding (Hartarska and Nadolnyak, 2007; Ahlin and colleagues, 2011). Each country has its own regulations and policies that determine how quickly MFIs can emerge from the

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crisis. The return and long-term development of the microfinance sector to its pre-COVID state depend on the extent of the damage done to MFI and therefore the sort of economic activity it supports.

Low- and middle-income individuals and small businesses may get short-term loans from microfinance institutions (MFIs), which do not need collateral. MFIs play a critical role in relieving poverty in developing nations by providing financial services to hundreds of millions of low-income and vulnerable borrowers (Khan et. al, 2021; Chomen, 2021). Anecdotal data suggests that macroeconomic circumstances have a significant influence on the performance of financial institutions (MFIs). In this context, we look at the consequences of the COVID-induced economic downturn on MFI's social and financial performance in the EU. We quantify GDP and employment reduction.

MFIs were disproportionately hit by the economic shock that the pandemic imposed on Europe beginning in March 2020. In-person interactions were made difficult or impossible due to travel and other government limitations. Since MFIs could no longer disburse or collect loans, they were forced to adapt their internal processes in order to function properly under new circumstances.

Figure 1 depicts how the COVID-19 shock impacted nonfinancial enterprises' and families' liquidity and solvency, as well as the policy actions are taken to alleviate it and the financial system's influence. It also shows the policy actions that directly influence the financial sector, as well as the potential for negative feedback if the financial system gets strained. Cross-sectoral and cross-border transmission pathways can amplify these impacts. When enterprises and families' loss absorption capacity is exhausted, the graphic distinguishes between the direct impact on firms and households and the indirect impact on the financial sector.

The figure shows that there are three distinct sectors in the figure: nonfinancial private enterprises and households, financial firms and households (banks and nonfinancial intermediaries), and public.

Figure 2 illustrates the headline indicator, which corresponds to the total number of people who are at risk of poverty or who are extremely materially disadvantaged, or who are living in households with a very low level of labor force participation (i.e. a combination of the three sub-indicators). Although the gap between the EU15 and EU27 figures is minor, Eastern Europe has the highest rate of poverty or social exclusion. In the majority of the nations for which 2010 data is available, the situation worsened between 2009 and 2010. Lithuania and Spain experienced the most severe deterioration inside the EU. Significant improvements have been seen in Bulgaria, Romania and Estonia, but remain on the right side of the chart, as in most parts of Eastern Europe and the most affected countries of Western and Southern Europe (poverty and It shows a

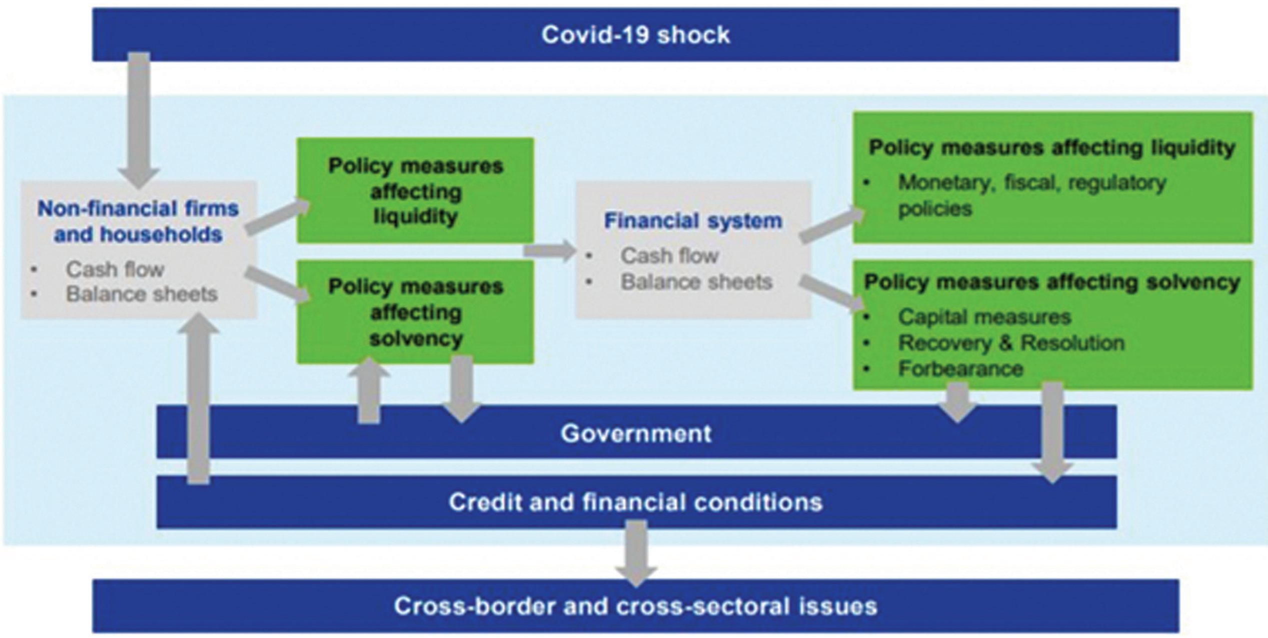

Figure 1. transmission mechanism of financial stability implications of fiscal measures.
Source: European Systemic Risk Board (ESRB)

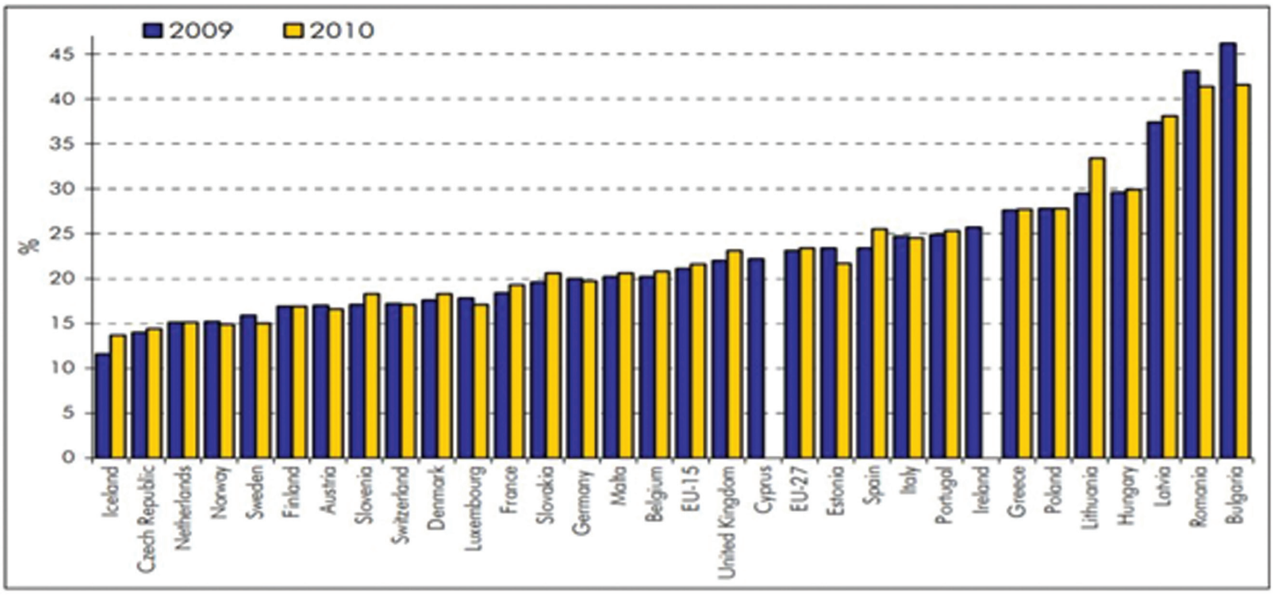

Figure 2. People at risk of poverty or social exclusion.
Source: data from Eurostat

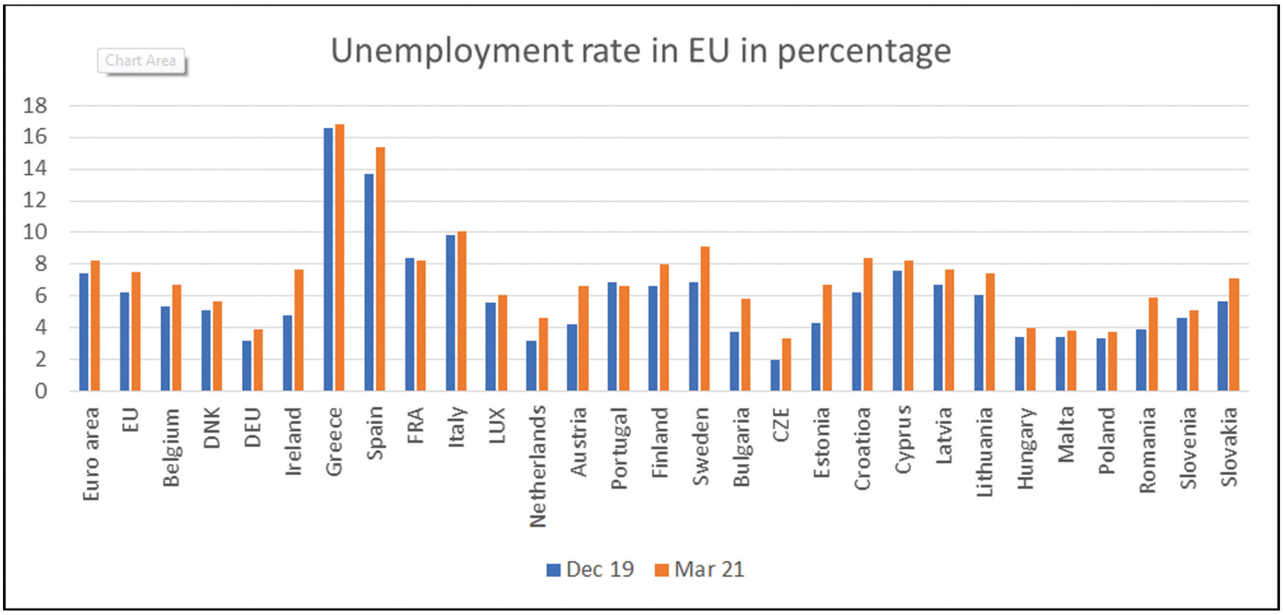

Figure 3. Unemployment rate (annual average) – Dec 2019 & Mar 2021.
Source: Eurostat Euroindicators 2021

high risk of social exclusion). Current sovereign debt crisis (Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Italy).

Unemployment is another indicator of social welfare which is depicted in Figure 3 and Figure 4. Based on Figure 3, almost all Eastern and western European countries are suffering from unemployment. One explanation for the large market for commercial microfinance in the region is the relatively poor performance of Eastern European EU member states in the social welfare index, coupled with the low penetration of banks (citation required). Due to the large share of the informal economy in general and the low use of social benefits, unemployment rates can be imbalanced in certain countries, and as a result, people are less likely to claim job less.

In this study we advocate the subsequent speculation primarily based totally on the conflicting motives supplied above. Therefore, our research is a great complement to the existing literature by examining the social and financial efficiency of MFIs during the recent Pandemic. The next section depicts a general overview of the recent

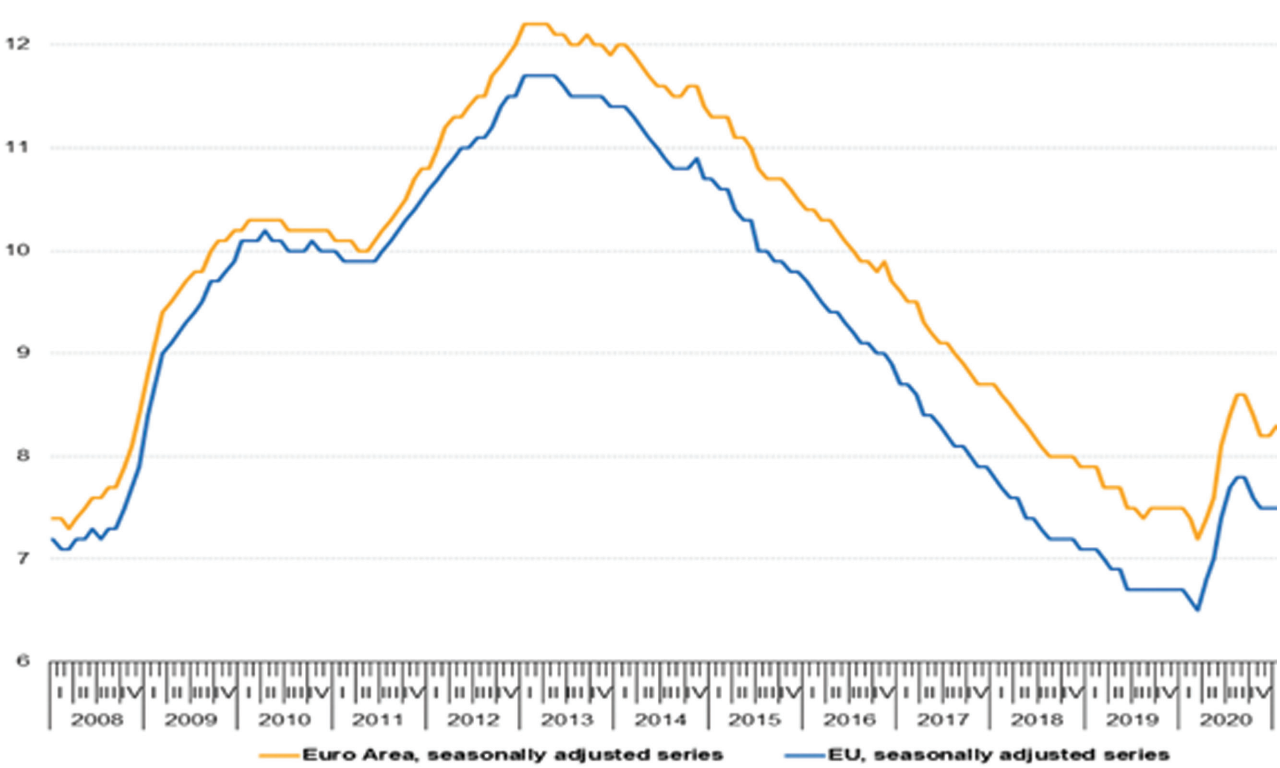

Figure 4. Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted, %).
Source: based on the data from Eurostat

scholarly activities with regard to the impact of COVID-19 on MFIs.

Literature Review

MFIs financing changed into the primary precise financing scheme for the European microfinance commercial enterprise that was released throughout the entire EU. Progress microfinance created the institutional shape that allowed it to soak up several smaller microfinance pilot initiatives and evolve into the much-desired "one-forestall shop" for EU-supported financing tasks that were envisioned. Because of this, they will permit loans to enter default and endure losses that allow society to be aware of the social aim in instances of financial difficulty (Ahlin et al., 2011).

Because of the revolutionary commercial enterprise strategies like organization lending, microfinance establishments are much less susceptible to financial fluctuations and therefore extra cost-powerful than traditional banks (Schulte & Winkler, 2019; Zamore et al., 2019). During a recession, MFIs can be capable of supplying smaller loans to extra underserved micro-entrepreneurs. MFIs' attain will probably be elevated in different ways: with the aid of using growing the range of energetic debtors in addition to with the aid of using growing quantity they lend.

Widiarto and Emrouznejad (2015) argued that the goal of microfinance development is to combat poverty in the past decades. The main features of the MFIs are the outreach to the poor and their contributions to financial sustainability. Using DEA, they compared the Islamic MFIs against conventional MFIs and found that Islamic MFIs outperform conventional MFIs in social efficiency, while, conventional MFIs outperform Islamic MFIs in financial efficiency. In their study, the inputs of financial efficiency were assets, Operation expenses, portfolio risk, and employees, and the output was financial revenue. The inputs of social efficiency were the same as financial efficiency but the output was "Average loan balance per Borrower" and "Number of borrowers".

Chauhan (2021) examined the social and financial performance of NGO-MFIs in the Indian microfinance sector. Based on the Chauhan definition, social efficiency indicates the willingness to support poorer consumers and financial efficiency indicates how long financial services can be offered to financial organizations. Using DEA and Tobit regression and the data from Microfinance Information Exchange (2009 – 2015), the study found that NGO-MFIs are financially more efficient than socially. Tobit regression results show that the crucial variable for social and financial efficiency is operational self-sufficiency.

Zheng and Zhang (2021) investigated the impact of COVID-19 on the financial and social efficiency of MFIs. They found that the Pandemic decreased the financial efficiency of MFIs but the social efficiency has increased. In addition, to find the root cause of such impact, the supply and demand of MFIs are examined, and the results show that lending rate mediates the association between COVID, and MFI efficiency and the mediating impact of funding rate is negligible.

Zaneta et al (2021) analyzed the financial performance of MFIs' outreach and portfolio quality before and after COVID-19 in South India. The results of the survey among 120 female respondents show that COVID has caused a decline in loan portfolio and clientele, and increased the portfolio risk due to clients overdue, a rise in outstanding loans, and a rise in number of delinquent clients. Similarly, Kizza and Samali (2022) investigated the association between MFIs risk management, and social and financial performance during COVID-19 in Uganda using a cross-sectional study of 53 respondents from six MFIs. A questionnaire has been developed and data have been collected during the late period of 2021. The empirical findings revealed a significant relationship between risk management and MFIs' financial performance and between the social mission and financial performance of MFIs.

Data and Methodology

In this study, we use a Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) methodology to evaluate MFI's performance in terms of financial and social efficiency. DEA is a nonparametric linear programming approach that determines the amount of output generated given a collection of homogenous input levels and allows for repeated comparisons between them (Gutiérrez Nieto et al., 2007).

Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) assesses how efficient each decision-making unit (DMU) is compared to the best practice, utilising a nonparametric linear programming approach. As a general principle, DEA assumes that if a DMU is capable of producing a certain level of output with a certain amount of inputs, a majority of units would also be capable of producing that level (Ling et. al, 2018).

In previous studies (e.g. Gutiérrez Nieto et al., 2009; Ling et al, 2018), DEA has been shown to be a suitable method for efficiency measurements as well as for assessing MFI performance. The benefit of utilizing DEA to assess MFI efficiency is that it may combine both social impact and financial viability outputs, as well as other inputs, into a unified framework without making any assumptions about data distribution (Basharat et al., 2015). The input and output data for the DEA framework are derived from the MIX Market information platform's worldwide database of MFIs. This database offers the finest cross-country statistics on MFI specific social and financial metrics that are publicly accessible. It has been frequently utilized in the microfinance literature (see, for example, Assefa et al., 2013; Ahlin et al., 2011).

According to Basharat et al. (2015), using AOP_IFO as a broad specification of key empirical estimates of financial efficiency, (A) assets, (O) operating expenses (P), and staff (I) inputs and gross loan portfolio (F) and financial income as output (O). Similarly, use AOP_IFB as a broad specification of social efficiency. The ACE input (refers to social specification: assets (a), operating expense (c), and personnel (e) are taken as inputs) is the same as the financial efficiency, and the output is the number of active female borrowers (F), which shows the benefit to the poorest (B).

To address the concerns that input, and output choices can affect outcomes, the robustness checks are applied to replace social and financial efficiency based on different input and output choices. The European Development Bank (EDB) has released information on the economic impact of COVID-19. To address concerns that our findings may be influenced by the COVID-19-induced economic downturn, the percentage decline in 2018 GDP and employment across all sectors is calculated. EDB predicts four scenarios based on tourism and travel bans impacted by COVID-19 situation – "best case," "moderate case," "worst case," and "hypothetical worst case," and analyses the impact of these scenarios are realized.

The projected impact of COVID-19 on GDP and employment depends on the duration of the travel ban and the extent of domestic demand loss in Europe. For example, in the "best case", travel bans in Europe are expected to be two months, with outbound tourism increasing by 50% within two months and countries adopting travel bans not receiving tourism revenue. As a result of the SARS outbreak, we anticipate a decline in visitors and profits from China, as well as tourism from outside Europe to East Asia and Southeast Asia outside China. As a result, ADB predicts that EU consumption in the "best case" scenario will decrease by 12% compared to the scenario without breakouts. In contrast, the "worst case hypothesis" scenario involves a six-month travel ban, a shrinking domestic demand within the EU, and an economy with a three-month COVID-19 outbreak.

As a result, German outbound tourism is expected to decline by 61% during the travel restriction period, with incoming European tourists reducing by an additional 46 percent compared to the best-case scenario. Tourism from outside Europe to European nations is also expected to decline by four months over the best-case scenario. As a result of these effects, the EDB predicts a 12% loss in Europe`s consumption and investment, as well as a 4% drop in domestic consumption in selected nations. Throughout our study, pe effect 1, pe effect 2, pe effect 3, and pe effect 4 reflect the absolute values of the Gross domestic product impacts owing to the possible economic impact of the COVID-19 epidemic in the "ideal scenario," "mild scenario," "awful scenario," and "hypothetical horrible scenario" scenarios, represented as a percentage decline in total 2021 nominal GDP. The magnitudes of IM effects 1, 2, 3, and 4 represent the absolute values of the impacts on employment induced by the projected financial impact of the COVID-19 infection in the "best case," "moderate case," "worst case," and "hypothetical worst case" scenarios, calculated as a percentage decline in employment within all sectors in 2021. In addition, consider MFI-specific macroeconomic drivers that have been shown to impact MFI performance in previous studies. Our key empirical estimates are assets (a), operating expenses (c), staff (e) as inputs, total loan portfolio (l), and financial income (r), abbreviated by ace_lr as a broad specification of financial efficiency. This definition is based on the Basharat et al (2015) study. Another common specification of social efficiency, called "ace_wp", is the number of active borrowers ("w") and the measure of profit to the poorest ("p") as inputs and outputs, respectively. As our results will be influenced by the inputs and results we choose, we will carry out a robustness check of alternative indicators for social and financial efficiency.

Empirical Findings

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive data for the variables included in our study are presented in Table 1. In terms of aopifb and aopifo, the median and mean values, respectively, are 0.213 (0.096) and 0.710 (0.801) for financial and social efficiency. When it comes to the economic impact of COVID-19, the impact on nominal gross domestic product and employment grows as the intensity of travel restrictions increases from the "best case" to the "hypothetical worst case," from "best case" to "hypothetical worst case." Gdp-1, gdp-2, gdp-3, and gdp-4 have mean (median) values of -432 (-0.221), -0.519 (-0.371), -0.1460 (-0.820), and -2.128 (-1.722, respectively. IM effect 1, 2, 3, and 4 have mean (median) values of- 0.328 (-0.243), -0.422 (-0.366), -0.763 (-0.673), and -1.923 (-1.821), respectively.

The Pearson correlations between our variables are shown in Table 2. It demonstrates that the correlations between our dependent variables and other factors are often below 0.7. There are also no very strong correlations between variables that might raise concerns about multicollinearity issues. As a result, we can ensure that these variables are not threatened by multicollinearity.

Table 1. Summary statistics

	Mean	SD	P25	Median	P75	N
aop_ifo	0.312	0.328	0.021	0.096	0.398	72
aop_ifb	0.710	0.368	0.253	0.801	0.989	73
gdp_ 1	-0. 432	0.521	-0.412	-0. 221	0.052	73
gdp_2	-0.519	0.648	-0.826	-0.371	-0.074	73
gdp_3	-1.460	1.098	-1.980	-0.820	-0.193	73
gdp_4	- 2.128	1.110	-1.968	-1.722	-1.410	73
IM_effect_1	-0.328	0.248	-0.567	-0.243	-0.038	73
IM_effect_2	-0.422	0.378	-0.810	-0.366	-0.056	73
IM_effect_3	-0.763	0.643	-1. 761	-0.673	-0. 123	73
IM_effect_4	-1. 923	0. 711	-1.986	-1. 821	-1. 410	73

Note: aop_ifo is: financial efficiency, (A) assets, (O) operating expenses (P), staff (I) inputs , gross loan portfolio (F) and financial income as output (O) . While aop_ifb is: financial efficiency, (A) assets, (O) operating expenses (P), staff (I) inputs, number of active female borrowers (F), and benefit to the poorest (B). gdp is the gross domestic products. IM_effect is the absolute values of the impacts on employment induced by the projected financial impact of the COVID-19 infection.

Table 2. Multicollinearity diagnostics

	AOP-IFO	ACE-FB	GDP 1	GDP 2	GDP3	GDP4	IM-effect 1	IM-effect 2	IM-effect 3	IM-effect 4
AOP-IFO	–									
ACE-FB	−0.28*	–								
GDP 1	−0.34**	0.61***	–							
GDP 2	−0.32**	0.62***	0.99***	–						
GDP3	−0.32**	0.60***	0.97***	0.97***	–					
GDP4	−0.41***	0.64***	0.96***	0.98***	0.94***	–				
IM-effect 1	−0.31**	0.41***	0.91***	0.92***	0.94***	0.88***	–			
IM-effect 2	−0.28*	0.32***	0.84***	0.89***	0.90***	0.79***	0.98***	–		
IM-effect 3	−0.24*	0.35***	0.84***	0.89***	0.92***	0.79***	0.97***	0.97***	–	
IM-effect 4	−0.41***	0.53***	0.97***	0.95***	0.95***	0.98***	0.89***	0.87***	0.86***	–

Note: aop_ifo is: financial efficiency, (A) assets, (O) operating expenses (P), staff (I) inputs , gross loan portfolio (F) and financial income as output (O) . While ACE_FB is: assets (a), operating expense (c), and personnel (e), number of active female borrowers (F), and benefit to the poorest (B). gdp is the gross domestic products. IM_effect is the absolute values of the impacts on employment induced by the projected financial impact of the COVID-19 infection.

Table 3. Financial efficiency and change in macroeconomic conditions due to COVID-19

VARIABLES	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
	AOP-IFO	AOP-IFO	AOP-IFO	AOP-IFO	AOP-IFO	AOP-IFO	AOP-IFO	AOP-IFO
gdp_chg_1 GDP 1	−0.410***							
	(-2.68)							
gdp_chg_2 GDP 2		−0.356***						
		(-4.78)						
gdp_chg_3 GDP 3			−0.214***					
			(-4.92)					
gdp_chg_4 GDP 4				−0.186***				
				(-4.78)				
IM-effect 1					−0.963***			
					(-3.83)			
IM-effect 2						−0.676***		
						(-3.78)		
IM-effect 3							−0.387***	
							(-4.10)	
IM-effect 4								−0.398***
								(-4.78)
Observations	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81
R-squared	0.503	0.528	0.538	0.526	0.469	0.506	0.511	0.559

Notes:
[a]The estimated coefficient is shown by the first row (number), and the t-value of significance is represented by the second row (number in parentheses).
[b]To mitigate the effects of severe outliers, we minorized all continuous variables between the 1st and 99th percentiles.
[c]if p 0.10; if p 0.05; if p 0.01. Every test is two-tailed.

Impact of COVID-19 on MFI financial efficiency

To examine the impact of COVID on MFI's financial efficiency, we develop the following model to investigate the association between the impact of COVID-19 on MFI financial efficiency:

$$ace\_lr = \beta 0 + \beta 1COVIDi + \sum Controlsi + \varepsilon i$$

AOP-IFO I is our financial efficiency measure for company a; COVID I is a vector that comprises eight measures of the influence of COVID-19 on firm a, including *gdp 1 a*, gdp2 a, gdp3 a, gdp4 a, IM effect 1 a, IM effect 2 a, IM

Table 4. The funding rate's impact on social efficiency

COVID-19 impact on GDP

Dep. Var.	**GDP-1**			**GDP2**			**GDP 3**			**GDP4**		
	AOPI-FB (1)	Funding rate (2)	AOPI_FB (3)	AOPI_FB (4)	Funding rate (5)	AOPI_FB (6)	AOPI_FB (7)	Funding rate (8)	AOPI_FB (9)	AOPI_FB (10)	Fundingrate (11)	AOPI_FB (12)
COVID	0.478*** (5.86)	−0.003	0.475**	0.368***	0.000	0.358***	0.192***	0.001	0.186***	0.198***	0.003	0.193***
		(-0.15)	(5.77)	(5.72)	(0.069)	(5.46)	(5.46)	(0.15)	(5.32)	(5.64)	(0.44)	(5.561)
fundingrate			−0.546 (−0.78)			−0.606 -(−0.91)			−0.632 (−0.91)			−0.683 (−1.12)
Sobel test	β1=0.490 ***α1=−0.003, β2=−0.513, β'1=0.484*** Sobel test z-stat = |0.126 | < |0.97|			β1=0.376***			β1=0.182***			β1=0.199***		
				α1=0.000, β2=−0.587			α1=0.001,β2=−0.634			α1=0.002,β2=−0.768		
				β'1=0.311***			β'1=0.182***			β'1= 0.189***		
				Sobel test z-stat = |-0.061| < |0.97|			Sobel test z-stat = |-0.111| < |0.97|			Sobel test z-stat = |-0.370| < |0.97|		
Mediation effect	No mediation			No mediation			No mediation			No mediation		
N	73			73			73			73		

[a]The first row (number) represents the estimated coefficient, the second row (number in parentheses) represents the t-value of significance.
[b]We winsorized all continuous variables at the 1st and 99th percentiles to moderate the possible effects of extreme outliers.
[c]*if p < 0.10; **if p < 0.05; *** if p < 0.01. All tests are two-tailed.

effect 3 a, and IM effect 4 a. The results of the estimation of the above equation are shown in Table 4. MFI financial efficiency is reduced by COVID-19's nominal GDP effect on gdp chg 1 in Column 1 (1 = -0.397, p less than 0.01) in the "best scenario"

The results are consistent across Columns (2), (3) and (4) for gdp- 2 (β 1 = −0.356, $p < 0.01$), gdp_ 3 (β 1 = −0.214, $p < 0.01$), and gdp_ 4 (β 1 = −0.184, $p < 0.01$), respectively, suggesting that the potential GDP impact of COVID-19 generally lowers MFI financial efficiency in all scenarios. Likewise, for the impact of COVID-19 on employment, Column (5) shows that under the "best case", IM_ effect_1 significantly lowers AOP-IFO (β 1 = −0.963, $p < 0.01$). The results remain consistent across Columns (6), (7) and (8), where they show that financial efficiency is decreased by IM-effect 2 (β 1 = −0.676, $p < 0.01$), IM_ effect 3 (β 1 = −0.387, $p < 0.01$) and IM-effect 4 (β 1 = −0.398, $p < 0.01$).

This is interesting, since as a scenario progresses from the best to the worst, the marginal effect of the anticipated GDP and employment impact from COVID-19 on financial efficiency continues to diminish. For example, in the "best case," the marginal effect of gdp 1 on AOP-IFO is 0.410, which decreases steadily as the situation deteriorates. Among the effects on employment, a similar effect is seen. The findings in Table 3 suggest that the COVID-19-induced economic slowdown has a negative impact on MFI financial performance.

Impact of COVID-19 on social efficiency of MFI

We investigate the role of the funding rate in mediating the effect of COVID-19 on social efficiency. Table 4 shows the outcomes. The following equation is estimated to find the results:

$$ace\_wp = \beta 0 + \beta 1COVIDi + \sum Controlsi + \varepsilon i$$

We see that funding grate has a minor indirect influence on AOPI-FB, but the direct effect from gdp_ 1 ($\beta'1$ = 0.490, $p < 0.01$), gdp_chg_2 ($\beta'1$ = 0.311, $p < 0.01$), gdp_3 ($\beta'1$ = 0.182, $p < 0.01$), and gdp- 4 ($\beta'1$ = 0.189, $p < 0.01$).

This is interesting, since as a scenario progresses from the best to the worst, the marginal effect of the anticipated GDP and employment impact from COVID-19 on financial efficiency continues to diminish. For example, in the "best case," the marginal effect of gdp 1 on AOP-IFO is 0.410, which decreases steadily as the situation deteriorates. Among the effects on employment, a similar effect is seen. The findings in Table 4 suggest that the COVID-19-induced economic slowdown and therefore has a negative impact on MFI financial performance.

Conclusion

This study examines whether and how the potential economic impact of the recent outbreak of COVID-19 will affect the financial and social efficiency of MFI using DEA analysis. In terms of financial efficiency, we found that COVID-19 had a negative impact on MFI but had a positive impact on MFI's social efficiency. Our results are resilient to various scenarios of potential impacts of COVID-19. In other words, the higher the MFI interest rate at the time of occurrence, the more likely a vulnerable borrower will fail to repay the loan. As a result, higher interest rates are expected to reduce financial efficiency. Our research is increasing evidence of the impact of macroeconomic conditions on MFI performance. We will use new evidence from recent and ongoing COVID-19 epidemics to specifically investigate the relationship between pandemics and MFI efficiency.

It should be noted that the estimated economic impact of COVID-19 is based solely on 2021 GDP and employment data, so the results of this study need to be interpreted in the light of limits. Future research may include testing assumptions on a larger scale as new data become available and disagree with the results.

Practical implications: The findings of this research have important implications for MFI trying to control efficiency during a pandemic. It sheds light to the policy makers when making decision in recession times. One must be careful with economic efficiency of MFI as it has an important role in reducing poverty.

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Experimental Study on Tennis Play-and-Stay Teaching Method in University Sports Course

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ABSTRACT

Tennis Play-and-Stay is a new tennis teaching method explored by the International Tennis Federation based on the research of tennis teaching experience, which overcomes the passive state in the process of tennis teaching through fun and practicality. Comparing Tennis Play-and-Stay and traditional tennis teaching methods and the analysis of experiments and questionnaires on the teaching status of college tennis classes, the application of Tennis Play-and-Stay in college tennis teaching is discussed. It is pointed out that Tennis Play-and-Stay can improve teaching methods, enrich teaching means and improve the learning atmosphere, which can effectively improve the teaching quality of college tennis general classes and promote the healthy development of tennis in China.

Keywords: Tennis Play-and-Stay; colleges and universities; physical education; experiments; countermeasures

Introduction

Tennis Play-and-Stay is a new concept of tennis teaching to achieve fun and practicality by enjoying sports and life to overcome the passive state of learners in the learning process. Tennis Play-and-Stay can solve the problem of inadequate space in the process of tennis teaching in colleges and universities and help teachers teach according to students' abilities. It is mainly used to help learners learn to control the ball by using three kinds of low-pressure balls: red, green and yellow, in order to stimulate learners' interest, and its application to small-court tennis teaching can help learners control the force of tennis strokes and achieve the goal of ball control in tennis teaching (Yuan, 2021).

Tennis Play-and-Stay originated in England and is among the four noble sports. Since Li Na won the championship in the French Open in 2011, tennis has attracted much attention in China, and more tennis tournaments have been set up in China so that Chinese people have the opportunity to know tennis and get in touch with tennis at a close distance. After that, the universities also started to focus on improving tennis teaching methods, and the corresponding teaching reform was carried out to improve students' tennis skills and tactics (Zhu, 2020).

Tennis Play-and-Stay is a new method of tennis teaching proposed by the International Tennis Federation in 2007, a summary of the previous 20 years of tennis teaching experience. It is a simple and easy-to-understand method to teach tennis with red, green and yellow balls, improving the students' motivation and making them integrate into the tennis learning process quickly. As the Chinese people pay more attention to tennis, the Tennis Play-and-Stay teaching method has been introduced to Chinese universities, which is applicable to all tennis lovers and learners without considering the learners' age so they can experience the rich fun of tennis (Chen & Wu, 2019).

The combination of Tennis Play-and-Stay and modern teaching concepts has improved the problem of inadequate tennis teaching venues and equipment while increasing students' interest in learning tennis. Students can choose the most suitable equipment in the process of tennis learning, which helps them to improve their self-confidence and makes them more willing to devote their time and energy to tennis learning, which improves the timeliness of tennis teaching (Li, & Liu, 2019).

Purpose of the Study

In this paper, we applied the Tennis Play-and-Stay teaching method to the optional tennis course of Xinxiang Medical College; divided the experimental group into experimental and control groups; compared the "Play-and-Stay" and "traditional" tennis teaching methods with each other, and analysed their test results to explore the practicality of the method. The teaching organization was enriched so that the beginners could master the basic skills of tennis quickly in a short time. After the experimental analysis, the teaching effect is significant, and the overall quality of the class is improved for the teacher in the tennis elective course.

Comparison Between Tennis Play-and-Stay and Traditional Tennis Teaching Methods

The difference in teaching philosophy: Tennis Play-and-Stay is mainly to guide students to enjoy tennis from the heart; to help students master tennis skills and tactics quickly and enjoy the game of tennis (Du, 2022). Tennis Play-and-Stay discards the traditional teaching of tennis in stages with the purpose of technical movements. It takes the student's ball sense as the standard of learning so the new tennis learner can quickly enjoy and master tennis skills, participate in the game and adjust their movements according to their own characteristics.

The difference in teaching role: Traditional tennis teaching is fill-in-the-blank teaching, where students passively observe and learn in the learning process, but Tennis Play-and-Stay is different from this. It emphasises the main position of students in the learning process and the leading role of teachers. The process of teaching tennis is an interactive process between teachers and students. It can stimulate students' initiative and enthusiasm in learning tennis; students think more about how to play tennis well in the learning process, which is conducive to the sound development of tennis (Wu, 2022).

The difference in teaching equipment: The traditional tennis teaching is mostly is that the university provides the venue, and the students buy the racket, ball and other related equipment. The teaching equipment of Tennis Play-and-Stay is diversified and rich. There are different sizes of tennis balls, markers, marker lines and other auxiliary equipment, which are conducive to stimulating students' interests and promoting the efficient achievement of teaching objectives.

Research Subjects

Fifty-six students in the general tennis class of 2018 at Xinxiang Medical College were used as the study subjects.

Research Methods

Method of questionnaires: 56 questionnaires were distributed in the general tennis class of 2018, of which 56 questionnaires were returned, including 54 valid questionnaires with an efficiency rate of 96.5%.

Method of teaching experiment: Among 56 tennis students in the general education class, the traditional tennis teaching method and the Tennis Play-and-Stay teaching method were used, respectively, and statistics were conducted according to the effect of students' mastering and using tennis skills and tactics under the guidance of the two different teaching methods.

Method of mathematical statistics: SPSS13.0 statistical software was used to obtain data and statistics before and after the experiment.

Experimental Design and Implementation

Experimental Procedures

Firstly, 56 tennis students were tested and processed for physical index and technical level before the experiment.

Secondly, 28 students learned by the traditional approach of teacher's demonstration, where the teacher organised students' practice, corrected their mistakes and summarised the problems. Twenty-eight students learned by the Tennis Play-and-Stay approach, where the teacher introduced main tennis techniques and students played creatively for entertainment. The teacher and students analysed the technical essentials together, and the students played after the teacher summarised the problems. Also, the teacher and students summarised the Tennis Play-and-Stay teaching method.

Thirdly, the experimental component: forehand and backhand stroke techniques.

Finally, 56 tennis students were tested and processed for physical index and tennis technical level.

Test Index

Firstly, the physical fitness test included the standing long jump, the 50-meter running and the 1-minute rope skipping.

Secondly, the tennis technique test included forehand and backhand stroke technique.

Finally, 56 students' basic tennis skills were tested and processed.

Experimental Measurement Method

The experiment was conducted without the knowledge of 56 students to avoid psychological implication of students that would influence the experimental results. At the end of the semester, 56 students in two groups were tested without their knowledge during the final exam, and the test was completed within three days after the experiment to avoid changes in students' physical quality that could affect the results.

Analysis of Experimental Results

Comparison and analysis of the physical test between the two groups of students before and after the experiment

The physical test results of the two groups before and after the experiment are shown in Table 1. Before the experiment, the difference between the physical tests of 56 students in the two groups was not obvious; however, after one semester of tennis study, the physical quality of both groups was strengthened. It can be seen that tennis learning can improve students' physical fitness greatly. The comparison and analysis of the physical test of the two groups of students after the experiment is shown in Table 2. After the experiment, we can find that the use of Tennis Play-and-Stay teaching method can cultivate students' interest, promote their active participation in tennis learning, and improve their physical fitness significantly while they actively learn tennis skills and tactics.

The Effect of Tennis Play-and-Stay on the Technical Level of College Tennis Students

The tennis technical level test of the two groups of students before the experiment is shown in Table 3. The tennis technique test was conducted for the two

Table 1. Comparison of physical test index results between the two groups of students before and after the experiment

Test Items	Experimental Group		Traditional Group	
	Before the experiment	After the experiment	Before the experiment	After the experiment
Standing long jump (m)	2.01+1.0	2.5+1.1	2.1+1.1	2.4+1.05
50-meter running (s)	9.40+1.1	8.3+0.96	9.38+1.2	8.37+1.05
1-minute rope skipping	106+12	121+12	107+13	120+12
P value	<0.05		<0.05	

Table 2. Comparison of physical test index results between the two groups of students after the experiment

Test Items	Experimental Group	Traditional Group	*P* Value
Standing long jump (m)	2.5+1.1	2.4+1.05	<0.05
50-meter running(s)	8.3+0.96	8.37+1.05	<0.05
1-minute rope skipping	121+12	120+12	<0.05

Table 3. Tennis technical level test of the two groups of students before the experiment

Gender	Group	Number of participants	X	S	*P* Value
Male students	Experimental group	18	70.24	2.48	> **0 . 05**
	Traditional group	16	71.7		> **0 . 05**
Female students	Experimental group	12	66.7	1.46	> **0 . 05**
	Traditional group	10	65.6		> **0 . 05**

Table 4 Tennis technical level test of the two groups of students after the experiment

Gender	Group	Number of participants	X	S	*P* Value
Male students	Experimental group	18	82.24	7.84	> **0 . 01**
	Traditional group	16	76.8		> **0 . 01**
Female students	Experimental group	12	79.6	6.25	> **0 . 01**
	Traditional group	10	71.2		> **0 . 01**

groups of students before the experiment, and the main techniques included forehand and backhand strokes. According to the data in the table, the difference between the two groups of students' tennis skills before the experiment was small.

Table 4 shows the tennis technical level test of the two groups of students after the experiment. The tennis technique level test was conducted for both groups of students before the experiment, and the main techniques included forehand and backhand strokes. According to the data in the table, the tennis skills of the 28 students who learned tennis with the Tennis Play-and-Stay teaching method were significantly higher than those of the 28 students who learned tennis with the traditional teaching method.

Conclusion

Fifty-six tennis students in the general tennis class selected for the experiment were all beginners in tennis. They were interested in tennis when they chose this program. After one semester of study, we could show through the questionnaire that the interest of the students in the experimental group increased by 95.7% on average for the Tennis Play-and-Stay method and 78.6% for the students in the traditional method. It could be seen that the Tennis Play-and-Stay teaching method made students more interested in learning tennis. The students who learned tennis using the Tennis Play-and-Stay method and the traditional method improved in the 60s rope skipping, standing long jump and 50-meter running. It was clear that after one semester of tennis instruction, students' physical fitness improved regardless of the method used. However, the students who used the Tennis Play-and-Stay teaching method improved their physical fitness significantly, and their tennis skills were higher than those who used the traditional teaching method.

The Tennis Play-and-Stay teaching method is more conducive to stimulating students' interest in tennis learning, making students think during tennis practice and making tennis practice less boring. Tennis is one of the most popular sports activities for students. The quality of tennis teaching is common after the introduction of general tennis classes in colleges and universities, but the interest of students in tennis learning is increased through the Tennis Play-and-Stay teaching method. The students could also form a good atmosphere of friendly communication with teachers in the learning process, and the encouragement of teachers strengthens students' self-confidence.

Suggestions

Although site conditions do not restrict Tennis Play-and-Stay, it is necessary to improve college tennis courts, balls and equipment according to the teaching concept of Tennis Play-and-Stay to improve the application of Tennis Play-and-Stay in college tennis teaching. First, buy the low-pressure ball used in the Tennis Play-and-Stay teaching method. Reduce the difficulty of hitting the ball based on reducing the bouncing speed of the ball so that students can focus on the surface of the striking ball flexibly and freely when practising to stimulate students' interest in learning tennis. Second, upgrade the tennis court. The original tennis court is divided into four small tennis training courts, and the student's participation and training time are improved based on the full use of the resources of the court.

The main target of the Tennis Play-and-Stay teaching method is beginners. It allows beginners to master the basic tennis skills quickly, but there are limitations in improving tennis skills. It is hoped that teachers interested in this approach will investigate it further.

The Tennis Play-and-Stay teaching method emphasises the student as the main body in the teaching process and improves the students' motivation and initiative. In the teaching of the optional tennis courses in colleges and universities, it is reasonable to cite the advantages of Tennis Play-and-Stay, make more use of the cooperation and competition mechanism in the teaching of Tennis Play-and-Stay, and use games to improve the tactical level of students to increase the interest of beginners in tennis effectively. The form of game competition for teaching Tennis Play-and-Stay can keep students in an excited state, improve the coordination of students' hands and feet during tennis matches based on mobilizing their thinking, make them judge whether the application of tactics and skills are reasonable and correct the problems that arise in time to improve the competitive level of tennis.

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Application of Chu Wanghua's Chinese Folk Song Arrangement in Piano Impromptu Accompaniment Teaching

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ABSTRACT

Piano impromptu accompaniment is a core course in music education major programs at Chinese universities. This study discusses three representative impromptu accompaniment courses in normal universities in China, aiming to improve the lack of Chinese harmony and folk song accompaniment content in the current classroom. Qualitative research methods are used in this paper. Data are obtained from interviews and surveys of three teachers and their students. All data are validated by methodological triangulation and combined with research objectives through typological analysis. This paper holds that the lack of Chinese harmony and folk songs in impromptu accompaniment lessons is a serious problem. It proposes applying Chu Wanghua's folk song adaptation to piano impromptu accompaniment teaching in order to solve this blind area of students' abilities. Its purpose is to enhance students' abilities of impromptu accompaniment for folk songs and better protect intangible cultural heritage.

Keywords: impromptu accompaniment, folksong arrangements, Chinese harmony, higher education, folksong, Chu Wanghua

Introduction

Piano impromptu accompaniment is a core course in the music education curriculum in Chinese universities. In the teaching and practice of impromptu accompaniment, the accompaniment of folk songs is a very important part. In order to provide suitable accompaniment for folk songs, a very effective learning method is to learn the arrangement method from the piano music adapted from classical Chinese folk songs (Wu, 2020).

Chu Wanghua, as one of the most important Chinese composers who compose folk songs for the piano, has made important contributions to the spread and development of Chinese-style piano music. Chu Wanghua's adaptation of folk songs is an artistic achievement in the practice of composition and improvisation. His works represent the highest level of piano adaptations in China. In classical folk melody, colourful harmonies and various accompaniment textures in his adaptations provide reference music examples for impromptu accompaniment teaching (Liang, M.C., 2021).

By introducing the content of folk song arrangement into a piano impromptu accompaniment class, students can not only learn the skills of accompaniment arrangement but also understand the characteristics of Chinese folk music and feel the charm of Chinese harmony. Inheriting and developing China's national cultural heritage is an important function of university education. Chinese folk music is an important spiritual heritage of Chinese culture and should be inherited and developed through education (Wang, 2021).

However, in the teaching of impromptu accompaniment in Chinese universities, the western composition theory system dominates the classroom content, and harmony knowledge accepted by Chinese teachers is derived from the content of the western harmony system. Due to the lack of Chinese harmonic theory, these teachers have had to exclude or ignore the harmonic writing and practice training of the Chinese pentatonic mode of configuration. This phenomenon is especially reflected in the teaching content of piano impromptu accompaniment. The ability of students to accompany folk songs has been greatly neglected, which needs to be solved urgently (Shi, 2014).

Taking Chu Wang Hua's arrangements of folk songs as the object of observation, this study proposes to analyse Chu WangHua's Chinese folk song piano transcriptions of melody, harmony and texture characteristics. Also, its purpose is to summarise the following: 1) Characteristics of his music and orchestration of his work method, 2) the adaptation of the classic folk song orchestration practice applied to the piano impromptu orchestration teaching and 3) the hope of impromptu accompaniment teaching course content and methods of innovation. Thus, students will gain a practical ability in folk song improvisation accompaniment orchestration. In addition, some reference information can be provided for teaching improvisation accompaniment.

Literature Review

In the music education major curriculum of Chinese universities, impromptu accompaniment is a core course. The purpose of the course is to cultivate students' abilities in impromptu composition and accompaniment (Sun, 2003). Piano impromptu accompaniment requires knowledge and ability in harmony, solfeggio and piano performance, all of which have high requirements for the accompanist's theoretical level, musical creativity and practical performance ability (Chen, 2020).

The earliest practice of impromptu accompaniment appeared in school music after western music was introduced into China in the 1920s. Accordion and organ were the accompaniment instruments at this time. Later, the accompaniment instruments were gradually replaced by the piano. In the mid-1970s, except for Chu Wanghua (a teacher from the Piano Department of the Central Conservatory of Music who once taught piano impromptu accompaniment), impromptu accompaniment courses were rarely offered in colleges and universities (Wu, 2005).

After the 1980s, music education majors in Chinese universities began to set up piano impromptu accompaniment courses (Yan, 2020). After the first National Seminar on Impromptu Accompaniment in 1993 held courses in Shanghai, music education majors across the country included the impromptu accompaniment courses in the syllabus, while standardising the course. It thus ended the long-term chaotic teaching state of this material (He, 2021). In the 21st century, teaching piano impromptu accompaniment in Chinese universities has gradually developed towards a systematic and standardised direction.

Impromptu accompaniment courses require teachers to have good abilities in playing and harmony arrangement, but in Normal universities in China, there are very few teachers with both abilities, while always have greater proficiency in just one of them (Sun, 2003). It is noteworthy that most of the impromptu accompaniment teachers in Chinese universities are piano teachers (Hai, 2022). The existing theoretical and composition levels of teachers cannot meet the current actual needs of teaching. Because these teachers have received western harmony theory education, they are deficient in the knowledge of national harmony (Xu, 2013). As a result, the accompaniment arrangement of Chinese pentatonic songs is either understated, neglected or completely ignored. Teachers dominate the teaching content and completely dominate the teaching process, so students cannot acquire knowledge of Chinese harmony (Shi, 2014).

In Chinese universities, students majoring in music education have been taught the basics of piano performance; but because they don't have keyboard practice in harmony classes, they are, thus, unable to apply piano skills to the accompaniment of songs. Even some students with good piano skills become helpless when they face the accompaniment of folk songs.

A very important reason for this is that these students are lazy in thinking, lack innovation and do not understand the connection between piano music and impromptu accompaniment. In fact, the vast majority of piano pieces are homophonic music, and the composer arranges these melodies skilfully so that the music explicitly fits only piano accompaniment. In a sense, piano music provides the best accompaniment style, from which the improviser can learn much about improvisation (Xu, M., 2013).

Many students only treat impromptu accompaniment as a course and finish the teacher's homework without developing practical training ability outside the classroom. Thus, they eventually fail to acquire impromptu accompaniment ability (Custodero, 2007). This is just like harmony classes where students only focus on the written homework, not combined with keyboard practice, resulting in their weak perception with a lack of training in multi-voice thinking. These problems are common in music education majors in Chinese universities (Sun, 2003).

The improper selection of textbooks and the neglect of Chinese harmony content are the prominent problems in teaching impromptu accompaniment in Chinese universities. At present, because harmony teaching completely follows the teaching content of western composition techniques, impromptu accompaniment teaching materials are seriously inadequate in terms of harmony arrangement of national songs (Chen, 2020). In addition, teachers choose textbooks according to their professional preferences and seldom pay attention to the differences in students' levels, personal interests and actual needs. They regard the accompaniment of major and minor songs as the main teaching content and ignore the accompaniment arrangement skills of pentatonic songs. It is difficult for teachers to include Chinese folk songs in their teaching content when analysing a music score, so they seriously ignore the accompaniment content of Chinese folk songs in impromptu accompaniment classes (Zhang, 2016).

Chinese universities are generally relatively short of impromptu accompaniment teachers, many of whom are piano majors and take impromptu accompaniment courses. As a result, these teachers do not pay enough attention to the accompaniment teaching of folk songs due to their weak foundation in Chinese harmony theory. However, in reality, this need accounts for a large proportion of the impromptu accompaniment of folk songs, made up of five-mode music harmony and the western harmonic style not being produced in greater quantities. Therefore, impromptu piano accompaniment teaching, introduced by analysing the adaptation of folk songs and performing practice, is a very effective way to learn (Wu, J., 2020). In impromptu accompaniment teaching, classical folk songs are introduced into the teaching content for music analysis so that students and teachers can easily find common ground and can deeply analyse the harmony arrangement. Thus, students' enthusiasm will be greatly improved. Therefore, Chinese folk song adaptation has great application value in impromptu accompaniment, and these works are the most intuitive and classic examples of allocation (Wang, H., 2021).

A piano impromptu accompaniment course plays a core role in the curriculum system of the music education major program at China Normal University. Although students' impromptu accompaniment performances seem satisfactory, their actual ability in accompaniment arrangement is quite worrying. The following survey aims to explore the nature of music education in order to understand the actual state of impromptu teaching and considers whether it is necessary to make some changes.

Research Methodology

This study chooses the research destination three representative music colleges of Normal universities in China. They are Capital Normal University, Shanxi Normal University and South China Normal University. The sites were chosen because they have more than 60 years of history, and they are all universities directly under China's Ministry of Education. A three-month literature review began in June 2021, followed by six months of field research and data collection. The main sources of information for this study are Wang Li, Li Han and Wan Jiang, teachers of impromptu accompaniment courses in three music schools at these universities. All three interviewees fully agreed to use their names for the research project. Wang Li, a professor of music education at Capital Normal University, has 30 years of piano accompaniment experience and cooperated with many students. Li Han, a piano professor at Shaanxi Normal University, has long been teaching piano improvisation accompaniment. Wan Jiang is an improvisational accompaniment teacher at East China Normal University. In addition, the three teachers' students were interviewed.

The data of this paper are all from interviews, observations and document reviews of the three teachers and their students. All data were validated by methodological triangulation and combined with research objectives through typological analysis.

Results

In view of these three Normal universities, the author carries on the investigation from two aspects: One is the literature survey, while the other is the questionnaire survey. According to the survey results, regarding the practicality of piano impromptu accompaniment, the overwhelming majority of music majors in the three universities believe that piano impromptu accompaniment is a professional skill that music majors must possess.

The researchers found that the main problems of impromptu accompaniment lessons are that the students are not proficient in piano performance techniques, not skilled in the application of harmony function, the piano accompaniment patterns are single and they do not master the theoretical knowledge of keyboard harmony and form, especially the understanding of national harmony. There are too few examples of folk songs given by teachers in teaching, and most of which are songs in major or minor keys. In addition, students lack accompaniment practice, resulting in insufficient experience in improvisation (Hou, 2011).

At present, there is little research on the impromptu accompaniment of Chinese folk songs. This shows that, in the practice of impromptu accompaniment, people pay less attention to the arrangement of national songs, which greatly contrasts with reality's needs.

It is worth noting that the students of China Normal University have not realised the practical value of piano impromptu accompaniment, and there is an imbalanced phenomenon of emphasising performance skills, light accompaniment, major/minor and neglecting folk songs. As a result, although students get high scores, their practical ability is seriously inadequate and their skills do not satisfy recruitment agencies; thus, the agencies find it hard to meet the needs of future job markets in this field (Jiang, 2014), which is shown in Table 1.

The data in the above table shows that students have a low mastery of both major and minor and pentatonic songs. Further, a large number of students have not mastered nor understood the musical score examples analysed by teachers. The same is true for the use of harmony. When the understanding of both is low, students' understanding and mastery of pentatonic songs are far less than those of major and minor songs. In addition, students' art practice links are quite weak as most have not participated in the practice of improvisation accompaniment. This shows that in terms of teaching content, although several teachers can train students in the accompaniment of songs of different styles, they pay too little attention to the analysis and arrangement of songs in the national style, and students' mastery is not optimal. These figures are very worrying.

The author also investigated the current situation of the harmony course, and found that the 'written harmony' of the current harmony course is not combined with the keyboard, resulting in the lack of multi-part thinking of most students, which is a widespread problem. There is no harmony knowledge of pentatonic melody in existing harmony lessons. This not only reflects the lack of the theory of improvised accompaniment and harmony in folk songs but also reflects that music education in Chinese colleges and universities lags behind that of the West (Wang, 2011).

From the above investigation, the outstanding problems in the current impromptu accompaniment are the lack of teaching content for teachers and the insufficiency of students' artistic practice. In terms of teaching content, teachers explain too little about Chinese-style harmony, and the proportion of Chinese pentatonic songs is too small. This leads to the lack of theoretical knowledge structure of Chinese style harmony and the lack of analysis of specific pentatonic songs.

In terms of art practice, many students have never been engaged in the practice of impromptu accompaniment. They only complete the teacher's homework in class, which is very limited and far from enough practice of impromptu accompaniment. Without these artistic practices and experience, it is difficult for students to improve

Table 1: *Investigation of Content Mastery for Degrees Related to Impromptu Accompaniment Lessons*

Impromptu Accompaniment Lesson Content	Program Content	Sample Size	Understanding	Basic Understanding	Failure to Understand
Music analysis	Songs in major and minor	30	20%	47%	33%
	Pentatonic songs		8%	36%	56%
Harmony application	Western harmony		22%	46%	32%
	Pentatonic harmony		3%	25%	62%
Artistic practice	Practice of improvisation		12%	40	48%

their studies. Even if the teachers teach the knowledge and theory of Chinese harmony, the students lack the experience of accompaniment, and it is not easy to understand these harmony theories. The learning process of impromptu accompaniment is applying harmonic knowledge from theory to practice. The richer the art practice is, the better the students' musical perception will be, their understanding of the works will be deeper and the harmony arrangement will be more appropriate (Zavadska & Davidova, 2019). Table 2 shows the teaching contents and methods of the three teachers.

According to the survey results shown in the Table 3, it can be found that all three teachers can teach according to the conventional teaching links. But each teacher has a slightly different approach to teaching. Wang Li requires students to accompany their peers in her teaching. This method can be applied to test students' learning effects immediately. Li Mei introduces western classical piano music for music analysis, and students' homework includes piano music analysis and playing. Wan Jiang analyses classical Western art songs as examples.

However, it is worth noting that none of the three teachers assign homework for the students with Chinese art songs or Chinese piano music as playing examples. The proportion of Chinese harmony knowledge of the three teachers in the total course hours is too low. This deficiency is bound to lead to the lack of students' knowledge of accompaniment for folk songs. Table3 shows the teaching effect scores of the three teachers.

As shown in the figure above, the typical application of the three teachers' cases is not highly evaluated, the teaching content lacks practical consideration, and the teaching effect is unsatisfactory. This verifies the three teachers' lack of teaching content in Table 3.

In view of the problems existing in the impromptu accompaniment teaching of the three teachers, the

Table 2: *Similarities, Differences and Deficiencies Among Three Teachers' Teaching Links and Steps*

Program	Similarities	Specific Pedagogic Steps China Harmony Ratio of total class hours	Chinese Harmony	Western Harmony	Same Missing
WangLi	Basis theoretical The music score analysis Harmony configuration Accompaniment configuration	Improvise for a companion	10%	35%	Analysis of Chinese art songs Analysis of folk song adaptation
LiHan		Inquisitive research Harmonic analysis of classical Western piano music	15%	30%	
WanJiang		Analysis of Western art songs	20%	30%	

Source: Lian Kaikai, Phiphat Sornyai

Table 3: *Evaluation Results from Lesson Observations with the Three Chinese Teachers*

Criterion		Description	Available Score	Wang Li	Li Han	Wan Jiang
Teaching objectives	1	Promote students' awareness of the beauty of music	10	8	8	9
	2	Master the basic techniques of song accompaniment	10	7	6	6
Content	1	The content is practical and easy to use, and the case is typical	10	6	5	6
	2	The content is comprehensive and focused	10	7	8	8
	3	The depth of knowledge is moderate and easy to understand	8	8	8	8
Teaching strategies	1	Be able to teach students according to their characteristics	8	7	6	7
	2	The content is logical and hierarchical	8	9	9	9
Teaching method	1	Strong ability to interact with teachers and students	8	9	9	9
	2	Teaching is innovative	8	8	9	8
Attainment	1	Students get the feeling and experience of beauty	10	6	6	7
	2	Students acquire improvisation skills	10	7	6	6
Overall merit	Excellent = above 90; Good = 75–89; Satisfactory = 60–74; Unsatisfactory = below 60		Evaluation Score 100	82	80	83

Source: Lian Kaikai, Phiphat Sornyai

researcher thinks that the teaching content should add the theoretical content of Chinese harmony and music analysis. This study of Chu Wanghua's arrangement for impromptu piano accompaniment of music analysis shows that the contents of these classic adaptation piano accompaniments in the teaching application are directly related to the impromptu piano accompaniment teaching. This is done through case-study teaching, the instant orchestration of folk music accompaniment for teaching purposes, solving students' blind spots as to ability in folk song impromptu accompaniment, thus improving the students' abilities in impromptu accompaniment orchestration.

Solution: The Application of Folk Song Arrangement

In view of the above outstanding problems, this researcher proposes that music analysis and training for playing piano adaptations of folk songs, represented by composer Chu Wanghua, should be incorporated into the teaching of impromptu accompaniment, so as to solve the problems of students' insufficient understanding and ability of impromptu accompaniment of Chinese folk songs. Therefore, this paper employs Chu Wanghua's piano compositions as examples to introduce how to use these compositions in impromptu accompaniment teaching.

Application of folk song melodies

Most of the melodies of Chu Wanghua's piano arrangements come from Chinese folk songs, which are a crystallisation of the wisdom of the working people and are constantly evolving through oral transmission. Therefore, folk songs have beautiful and smooth melodic forms, which are easy to remember and cultivate good sense of music. As a kind of cultural gene, Chinese people have a certain affinity to folk songs by nature, especially to their hometown folk songs with strong emotional resonance. In the teaching of piano impromptu accompaniment, it is easy for students to have a profound emotional experience and sense of identity by analysing folk songs as examples.

Chu Wanghua wrote more than 20 folk song arrangements that are very famous, such as the Jiangsu folk song 'Jasmine Flower', the Sichuan folk song 'Happy Sun Comes Out' and the Yunnan folk song '*Chaodao'.* Among them, 'Jasmine' has been used by Italian composers in the opera Turandot and has gained worldwide exposure. In impromptu accompaniment teaching, teachers can

Figure 1: Alternate chord.
Source: Lian Kaikai, Phiphat Sornyai

Figure 2: Add-on chord.
Source: Lian Kaikai, Phiphat Sornyai

Figure 3: Variation No. 1.
Source: (Chu, 2010)

Figure 4: In That Distant Place (39–42).
Source: (Chu, 2010)

Figure 5: New Year's Day.
Source: (Chu, 2010)

ask students to recite these melodies skilfully to broaden their vision, become familiar with the pentatonic style of Chinese folk music, and accumulate materials for the accompaniment of folk songs.

Application of arrangement harmony

The three-degree superimposed chord is based on the major and minor scales, and in the harmonic arrangement of Chinese pentatonic songs, there will be conflicts with the pentatonic music style in many cases. Therefore, paying attention to the relationship between chord formation and melody tone is necessary.. Chu Wanghua's piano arrangement cleverly changes the chord of triple overlap to adapt to the style of Chinese pentatonic songs (Wu, 2020).

On the premise of maintaining the overall structure of the third, Chu Wanghua modified the triad by omitting the third note, replacing the third note and adding notes to achieve harmony and melody integration. This is shown in Figures 1 and 2 below.

The chromatic chords of bars 39–42 in the Distant Place is shown in Figures 3 and 4.

During the New Year, there is an add-on chord with the F tone, which softens the triad's edge and the smooth pentatonic structure, which is shown in Figure 5.

The composer uses high chords in this love song to make the melody more colourful, which can be seen in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Love Song.
Source: (Chu, 2010)

Figure 7: New Year's Day.
Source: (Chu, 2010)

Figure 8: Liu Yang River.
Source: (Chu, 2010)

The pentatonic scale is superimposed to form a special structure called a pentatonic chord. In the Lunar New Year, the composer uses this chord structure to make the melody more stable and thicker, and it also highlights the national music tastes. This is shown in Figure 7.

At the end of Liu Yang River, the composer replaced the third note with the fourth and fifth note, firmly locking the national music tastes of harmony. This is shown in Figure 8.

Chu was very good at adapting Western chords to Chinese melodies. This provides a good reference for the impromptu accompaniment of folk songs (Zavadska & Davidova, 2019). If teachers can analyse these adaptations for students and draw inferences, they will understand more ingenious arranging skills and methods (Wang, 2011).

Application of adaptation texture

In impromptu accompaniment teaching, important content selects suitable accompaniment texture according to different genres and styles. Most of Chu Wanghua's piano adaptations are program music, so the music has a clear meaning. His choice of textures is rich and varied, and these varied textures are a profound musical interpretation of the title.

Teachers can lead students to analyse the accompaniment texture of these folk songs and provide diversified samples for students to arrange accompaniment patterns, which will greatly broaden students' imaginations and creativity.

Structure arrangement and climax design of folk songs

The structural technique is the foundation of musical architecture. Whether the structure is reasonable or not directly affects the tension and cohesion of the work. Chu used the structural development technique of 'steadiness and change' advocated by Chinese music, making music both repeat and change and finally achieving unity at the end. This technique is prevalent in the structural development of Chinese folk music, which not only follows the law of music development but also conforms to the law of things. It is also a significant mark that distinguishes Chinese music from Western music (Guo, 2019).

Chu Wanghua uses this structural technique to add different accompaniments and harmonies to the repeated melodies through variations so that the repeated folk melodies take on a new look, which is the basic method of folk song adaptation. In teaching impromptu accompaniment, this kind of texture variation can be used to refresh the melody for the repeated passages of songs.

This study now turns the reader's focus on Chu Wanghua's accompaniment for Yunnan folk song chords. He repeated the same melody in two keys, both of which used the B-flat *shang* mode, but the texture of the accompaniment was completely different. This variation allows the repetition of the melody to acquire a new style, making the music more fluid and opening up new possibilities for development.

This is shown in Figures 9 and 10, below.

Chu Wanghua's design of accompaniment patterns for folk song melodies provides rich and sensible information for impromptu accompaniment teaching. In teaching impromptu accompaniment, teachers can lead students to analyse these piano pieces and the design methods of accompaniment patterns in these piano pieces. Meanwhile, students can learn various accompaniment styles by playing these successful examples of adapted music (Cai, 2014).

Figure 9: Guessing Riddles.
Source: (Chu, 2010)

Figure 10: Guessing Riddles.
Source: (Chu, 2010)

Application of interlude, prelude and epilogue

Chu Wanghua has elaborate designs and conceptions dealing with the prelude, interlude and end of folk songs. As an accessory part of the song, the use of prelude, interlude and epilogue will make the structure of the song more complete and fuller. In the study of impromptu accompaniment, Chu Wanghua's approach to the attachment structure of songs provides ideas and techniques for reference in impromptu accompaniment, which is of great significance to impromptu accompaniment learning. One can be inspired by his folk songs such as 'The Day of Liberation', 'Jasmine Flower' and 'South Sea Fishing Children'.

Results and Discussion

According to existing research, it is found that in the impromptu accompaniment teaching at these three Normal universities in China, most of the music samples prepared for students are songs in major or minor keys. This puts too much emphasis on the accompaniment ability of songs in major or minor keys and ignores the accompaniment content of national harmony and folk songs.

Students' abilities in impromptu accompaniment then tend to decline. It is far from enough to focus only on the ability of major and minor songs in impromptu accompaniment teaching. In artistic practice, a large number of folk songs written in the national mode need to be played for accompaniment. This will lead to a disconnection between the effect of education and actual artistic practice.

Obviously, impromptu accompaniment, as a way of teaching combined with the practical needs of social art practice, can best improve students' application ability (Zhang, 2016). Students can not only be competent in the practice of song accompaniment in any style but also gain a sense of achievement and realise their self-value, which is the highest purpose of education: To awaken their talent, shape independent personality and innovative spirit and make their lives blossom with maximum brilliance (Huang & Hu, 2014).

Currently, the teaching system of impromptu accompaniment must be improved. The current teaching content is not perfect enough, which affects the overall development of students' piano improvisation ability (Zhang, 2016). If the music educational establishment does not pay attention to the impromptu accompaniment of Chinese folk songs, it is difficult to cultivate graduates with strong practical abilities.

Folk songs are an important part of Chinese culture as well as the very fibre of national culture. If the accompaniment of folk songs is ignored in teaching, more than the content of impromptu accompaniment will be lost (Yang, 2012). From the perspective of inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, the inheritance of Chinese folk songs will lose an important way of transmission, and the development of Chinese folk songs will be significantly affected. Therefore, Chinese music educators should innovate teaching methods and content and combine Chinese folk songs with impromptu accompaniment in classroom teaching.

As emphasised in the survey, one should pay attention to the teaching content of impromptu accompaniment in folk songs. Chu Wanghua's piano adaptation of folk songs provides rich samples of folk songs for impromptu accompaniment practice. In impromptu accompaniment teaching, teachers can guide students to pay attention to the accompaniment of folk songs. By analysing the musical characteristics of Chu Wanghua's folk song adaptations, they can absorb more accompaniment patterns in those adaptations, so that teachers and students can interact in the class and enable students to accompany others in the class, thus improving the teaching effect (Shan, 2017).

No matter the student's level, the teaching of impromptu accompaniment must pay attention to Chinese folk music accompaniment techniques. Compared with the accompaniment arrangement of Western major and minor songs, the arrangement of Chinese folk songs is more difficult and challenging. Teachers need to lead students to transform harmony in accordance with the Chinese style. In view of the difficult emotions students encounter in learning, teachers must patiently help students to master the skills of accompaniment orchestration by playing the adapted music and analysing the music.

In the teaching process, overcoming students' inferiority and increasing their self-confidence are very important. Teachers' encouragement and affirmation play an important role in students' persistence (Han, 2016). Teachers should give full recognition and encouragement as long as students' progress. When students' progress in impromptu accompaniment, teachers should give appropriate praise, making students more enthusiastic about their studies. When students repeatedly have problems, the teacher should also give some assurance so that students will not be discouraged and can strive for further progress.

In addition, modern teaching concepts and scientific methods are used to standardise and improve the curriculum standards of impromptu accompaniment courses in Normal university. Further, Chu Wanghua's innovative thinking regarding Chinese folk song arrangement is learned with the help of the techniques and accompaniment styles of his folk songs so that the curriculum content can better meet the actual needs. This not only helps to improve students' accompaniment skills but is also conducive to the inheritance and dissemination of Chinese culture.

Conclusion and Further Research

Through the investigation of the teaching contents of impromptu accompaniment in three Normal universities in China, the researchers found that the teaching content of impromptu accompaniment in Chinese folk songs is too little, the student's knowledge of Chinese harmony is insufficient and the ability to compose impromptu accompaniment for folk songs is weak, thus needing improvement.

As agents of change, teachers from the three teachers' universities surveyed expressed their full support for curriculum reform. Based on the positive reform attitude of the three teachers, more and more students will love the restructured impromptu accompaniment class and learn application skills from the class. Although Chinese teachers' acceptance of reform suggestions is positive, more teachers should support this action to support and promote the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of reform.

For future study, researchers can continue the research, expanding the scope to more provinces and universities. At the same time, they can track these college students after graduation as they move on to primary and secondary school teacher posts. After their improved condition of impromptu accompaniment ability, they can play an important role in future teaching reform. It is hoped that more teachers and students will participate in this research, which will help promote the reform of the impromptu accompaniment curriculum.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Research on Online Teaching Reform from the Perspective of Course Thinking Politics in China: Taking Shougang Institute of Technology as an Example

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ABSTRACT

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a wave of global online teaching reform. Nowadays, online teaching has become the natural trend of future teaching development. Therefore, it is of great practical significance and research value to innovate online teaching reform strategies and improve the quality of online teaching from the circumstance of course thinking politics. Taking Shougang Institute of Technology as an example, we use in-depth interviews and participatory observation to conduct research and to find that online teaching has problems, such as insufficient penetration of course thinking politics, poor learning effect of students, lack of innovation in teaching reform and diluted emotional relationship between teachers and students. From the perspective of course thinking politics, targeted strategies are proposed to strengthen the construction of course thinking politics, improve students' learning effect, innovate online teaching mode and build an emotional bridge between teachers and students. It is expected that this research will help improve the quality of online teaching.

Keywords: course thinking politics, online teaching, teaching reform, learning effect, innovative teaching.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a substantial impact on global education and a significant impact on the original teaching model. Countries have been reforming their teaching models to better adapt to the changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. A global education model reform has been officially launched since then, and the "Internet+" online classroom has become an important carrier of today's education and teaching reform. The online teaching initiative meets the needs of education development under the normalisation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevention and control situation and responds to the inherent development needs of each country to reform the education and teaching model with the changing times. This large-scale online teaching reform is called an unprecedented world feat, which not only highlights the scientific, intelligent and informatisation of modern education technology tools in the new era but also encourages schools to deepen education teaching reform and improve the level of teaching informatisation. Online teaching, also known as online learning, is a method in which teachers and students are separated in time and space but participate together to interact and communicate with the help of the Internet, which is a form of distance education. Teachers need to adjust course teaching resources and content time-to-time according to students' online learning content, progress, feedback and evaluation. Online teaching aims to strengthen students' correct view of health and life, ensure they can maintain a normal and smooth learning status regardless of the situation, and develop their independent learning ability,

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lifelong development awareness and patriotism (Agustina & Cheng, 2020). Therefore, optimising the online teaching reform strategy better to integrate the mature educational achievements in each online classroom is a hot issue that the global education community is now paying close attention to and urgently needs to solve.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, China's Ministry of Education has made a strategic educational decision to 'suspend classes without stopping school' and 'suspend classes without stopping teaching,' and has opened an online cloud classroom that is free for teachers, students, parents and learners to use. It calls on teachers nationwide to take the initiative to carry out online teaching reforms, actively try out new teaching methods, and improve teaching resilience and innovation to ensure better the smooth implementation of various educational and teaching work in schools and the best learning results for students. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented opportunities and challenges to China's education system, giving rise to more diversified education methods and models on the one hand, and hindering the normal progress of offline education in China on the other.

Literature Review

Research on the Concept of Online Teaching at Home and Abroad

(1) Foreign definition of the concept of online teaching

Hiltz (1994) first put forward the concept of online teaching in 1994. He believed that online teaching is a two-way process in which teachers and students interact through space to build a 'shared knowledge space', that is, teachers upload learning resources to the corresponding learning platform through the Internet for students to access in time, and students complete effective online learning through the Internet. Zane Berge (1999) and Harris and Parrish (2006) hold similar views. They believe that online teaching is a method that uses technology as a tool, the Internet as a medium, the teaching resources uploaded by teachers in advance as learning materials and students' independent learning as a learning path to realize students' lifelong learning.

(2) Domestic definition of the concept of online teaching

Cheng Zhi (1998) found that teachers teaching through the Internet can achieve timely feedback on professional knowledge and personal insights even though they are separated from the screen. Yang Sujuan (2009) suggested that the rich learning resources of the Internet provide students with a wider perspective on learning, stimulate their curiosity and desire to learn and facilitate student-centred online teaching activities. Sun Shuhui (2016), on the other hand, argues that online teaching has the advantages of diversified and rich teaching content, convenient interaction and communication between teachers and students and relies on the Internet to realize the teaching and learning between teachers and students, which has the superiority that traditional teaching cannot surpass.

Some scholars believe that online teaching refers to online or distance education, while others believe that online teaching refers to online learning. The common denominator is that online teaching is dedicated to the regular 'teaching' and 'learning' under the separation of time and space between teachers and students and has the characteristics of 'student-centred' and 'supported by a stable network'. It is 'student-centred', 'supported by a stable network' and 'supported by good network facilities and equipment'. The concept of online teaching in this study is a way of education and teaching that relies on the Internet and rich online resources and adopts live, recorded or 'live+recorded' teaching methods with the help of diversified platforms.

Domestic and Foreign Research on the Concept of Curriculum Thinking Politics

Regarding the conceptual definition of curriculum thinking politics, there is no unified and patterned definitive conclusion in the academic field. The first perspective is the viewpoint theory, that is, it is a new view of curriculum. Lin Quanling (2019) pointed out that curriculum thinking is a kind of educational concept under the big thinking pattern, aiming at using the thinking elements of each course to achieve the synergistic effect of educating people in the same direction. The second perspective is methodological; he believes that curriculum thinking politics is a method that effectively integrates explicit and implicit education, as well as a method that effectively integrates civics and all other courses, and can promote the formation of students' knowledge, ability, emotion, moral quality and correct three views. He and Yu. (2021) pointed out that curriculum thinking politics is a teaching method that implements ideological and political education in other courses, such as professional courses and can maximize the educational value of both explicit and implicit courses! The third perspective is paradigm theory, that is, it is believed that curriculum thinking politics takes knowledge transfer and skill leading as the starting point, and the implicit values, humanistic spirit, responsibility and commitment, and patriotic beliefs in the curriculum as the paradigm to promote the harmonious unification of students' knowledge, emotion, and action. The fourth perspective is the integration theory, that is, it is believed that the curriculum thinking politics is the integration of thinking politics elements in other courses such as humanities and social sciences and natural sciences. Lu Daokun (2021) pointed out that the curriculum thinking politics is the integration of the content and value of thinking politics education into the development of teaching materials, syllabus development, teaching plan writing and teaching implementation of all other courses to achieve the goal of thinking politics of all-round education of the whole curriculum.

The above perspective reveals that the definition of the concept of curriculum thinking politics in this study is based on the commonality of the definition of curriculum thinking politics in the present, and curriculum thinking politics is an educational concept that comes into being in response to the new era of the big thinking politics pattern to achieve the educational goal of inculcating people with moral character and socialist builders of Chinese characteristics with moral and talent!

Domestic and International Studies Related to Online Teaching and Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic

At the end of 2019, with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the global education community began a massive reform of online teaching and learning to protect every student's right to education and the right to learn. The focus of online teaching and learning research in this period has shifted from addressing normal communication exchange in the early 20th century to enhancing the effectiveness of communication.

Overseas research on online teaching during the new crown pneumonia epidemic

Through combing the existing research results, we found that the research on online teaching during the epidemic mainly focused on teachers' and students' attitudes toward online teaching strategies, the effectiveness of online teaching and the impact of online teaching. Regarding teachers' and students' attitudes toward online teaching, Rome Moralista Ryan and Michael Oducado (2020) confirmed that factors such as age, education level and family life influence attitudes toward online teaching. In terms of strategies for online teaching, Samreen Mahmood (2021) proposed ten effective online teaching strategies that guide teachers for online teaching in Pakistani colleges and universities. Lapitan et al. (2020), on the other hand, proposed five blended learning strategies that provide efficient online learning at St. Thomas University. In terms of the effectiveness of online teaching, Markus and Javes Arooj (2020) used an interview study and found that learners agreed the online learning model (they can study online anytime and anywhere, reduce close contact with people, and save on transportation costs) yielded better learning outcomes. Regarding the impact of online teaching, Markus and Arooj e (2020), Ciprian Obrad (2020) and others found that online teaching brings unrestricted freedom and comfort to teachers and students in terms of teaching and learning venues, which results in ineffective supervision of students' learning content and greatly affects teachers' teaching performance and resilience.

In summary, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an important impact on foreign education, and the level of economic development of a country has a significant impact on the development of online teaching. Developed countries have well-equipped online teaching software and hardware facilities, smooth and good network operation, and teachers have more experience in online teaching. On the contrary, online teaching in developing countries is delayed and disadvantaged.

Research on online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic in China

By combing the existing research results, it was found that the relevant research on online teaching after the epidemic in China mainly focused on the current situation of online teaching, the problems and solution strategies of online teaching, the mode of online teaching, the satisfaction of online teaching and the future development direction of online teaching. Regarding the current situation of online teaching, Wang Jixin et al. (2020) found that teachers using intelligent cell phones for online teaching can enhance teaching emotions and relieve teaching pressure. In addition, they conducted an in-depth study on the teaching methods, quality supervision, teaching feedback and evaluation of online teaching, which put forward strategies to support the in-depth promotion of online teaching reform. On the side of problems and solution strategies of online teaching, Zheng Qinhua et al. (2020) found that online teaching brought new problems in teaching and learning to teachers, students and parents, etc., and targeted different suggestions from different subjects (government, schools and teachers), respectively. Regarding the model of online teaching, Zou Yuanyuan et al. (2020) carefully investigated the salient features of the 'online teaching Bay Area model', which opened up a new perspective for online teaching reform in China. Regarding the satisfaction of online teaching, Jia Wenjun et al. (2020) investigated the feedback and evaluated online teaching by college students during the COVID-19 pandemic and found that college students were satisfied with online teaching, but most of them hoped to return to school as soon as possible. Regarding the research on the future development direction of online teaching, Huang Ronghuai et al. (2020) proposed that online teaching provides a brand-new opportunity for the great change of education in the new era, and flexible teaching, online live teaching and hybrid teaching will become the new model of teaching.

In summary, the existing research results of online teaching in China mainly focus on the technology, mode, problems and strategies of online teaching in terms of content, and the research perspective is mainly studied from a pedagogical perspective.

Review of Domestic and International Research on Online Teaching and Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic

In summary, educational scholars at home and abroad have researched online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic from different aspects. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided lasting power to deepen the teaching revolution and given schools the characteristics of the times of information, intelligence, digitalization and scientific development. Therefore, it is the mission and responsibility of the school to make full use of the new modern teaching technology brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, to carry out in-depth online teaching reform and continuously optimize online teaching strategies necessary for the school to 'develop based on the new era'! Combing the existing research results, it is found that domestic and foreign research focuses on online teaching strategies, but the research from the perspective of curriculum thinking politics is slightly insufficient. Therefore, the study takes the perspective of curriculum thinking politics to study the problems of online teaching in the COVID-19 pandemic and propose strategies to improve the quality of online teaching, which is expected to be beneficial to the online teaching reform in other institutions during the epidemic.

Methodology

Literature Method

We thoroughly use our university library, Chinese and English electronic databases to collect a large number of books, Chinese and English journals and excellent masters and doctoral dissertations on online teaching reform and curriculum thinking politics at home and abroad. We fully study and carefully analyse the existing research results on online teaching and curriculum thinking politics theory during the COVID-19 pandemic at home and abroad and sort out the shortcomings in the existing research to lay a theoretical foundation for the formulation of research questions.

In-depth Interview Method

In order to deeply understand the actual situation of online teaching reform during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the requirements of epidemic prevention and control, Shougang Institute of Technology was taken as an example. In-depth interviews were conducted with the administrators and teachers of Shougang Institute of Technology to obtain teachers' opinions on online teaching strategies for the COVID-19 pandemic, seriously understand the current situation of online teaching development and implementation during the COVID-19 pandemic prevention and control, comprehensively investigate the teachers' attitudes and needs for online teaching, analyse the existing problems of online teaching according to the course thinking politics theory and propose strategies that can improve the quality of online teaching.

Participant Observation Method

Participant observation is an important method with typical significance in social surveys and qualitative research. Taking Shougang Institute of Technology as an example, we adopted direct observation to collect, organize and analyse system data and information to obtain the current situation of online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, and then analyse the existing problems and obtain research conclusions with universal and generalized values.

Results of Online Teaching Reform

Insufficient Penetration of Course Thinking Politics and Poor Learning Effect of Students

Online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic affected the smooth development of cooperative group inquiry learning. Students exchanged and discussed with the help of WeChat group chat, voice and video, and without teacher supervision, the central content of the discussion often deviated from the focus of learning, and the learning effect was very little. Through participatory observation, it is found that students' ideology is in a slack state during online teaching at Shougang Institute of Technology, and most of them cannot correct their attitude toward online learning, lack self-control and independent learning ability and have insufficient enthusiasm and initiative for learning, which makes the learning effect poor. Teachers focus most of their attention on the transmission of knowledge during online teaching, and cannot grasp the learning status of all students at all times, resulting in individual students taking advantage of the opportunity to 'hang up' in class so that the input of teachers' knowledge and students' learning output is in a 'disconnected' state. Some students are driven by similar 'bad behaviour' and blindly follow, causing polarisation in the online classroom. Online teaching largely tests students' sense of self-control and requires teachers to establish students' ideology of 'knowledge and action', 'moral education first' and 'respect for teachers. We need teachers to build up students' ideology of 'knowledge and action', 'moral education first' and 'respect for teachers' and strengthen students' ideological awareness. The content of the interview is as follows.

Teacher D: During the online teaching period of the COVID-19 pandemic, how is the construction of Shougang Institute of Technology's online teaching course on thinking politics? What is the effect on students' learning?

Teacher C: 'The reason is that there is very little penetration of the online teaching courses in terms of thinking politics because there are already many teaching contents that need to be carried out at the level of course knowledge and ability, so there is no time to design the course thinking politics objectives. However, I have observed that students often do many irrelevant things during the course of listening, and even if the camera is turned on, it does not show the best mental outlook, and the learning effect is very unsatisfactory. Therefore, I can also realize that curriculum thinking is important, but it is not clear how to implement it into the curriculum.'

Teacher B: 'I think thinking politics education is something that the professional teachers in the College of Marxism should teach, and I, as a professional teacher, am not sure what the content of curriculum thinking politics is. Students' learning attention is very easily distracted, and the learning effect is rather poor.'

Manager A: 'As the head of the Academic Affairs Office of Shougang Institute of Technology, I found that the awareness of course thinking politics among professional teachers is relatively weak, and they seldom deliver thinking politics elements in the process of professional teaching and some students show bad behaviours such as disrespecting teachers and hanging up on classes, and the learning effect is poor.'

Therefore, the research found that most teachers pay too much attention to teaching course knowledge content and do not dig deep enough into the course's thinking politics elements, which affects the moral education, patriotic education and education of core socialist values for students. Students are also not aware of the importance of 'skills for the country' and 'moral education first' and cannot consciously show their high learning spirit and active learning status! This core issue needs to be addressed in online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Increasingly Formalized and Un-innovative Pedagogical Reforms

The interview survey found that although online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic advocated large-scale teaching reform, it was often formal (Zhao, Jia, & Wang, 2020). In the actual online teaching process, most teachers could not really practice the teaching reform but still followed the mode of offline classroom teaching and implemented 'duck-fill' teaching, focusing too much on the one-way transmission of single knowledge and neglecting the comprehensive cultivation of students' ability, literacy and thinking and political awareness, which directly affected students' learning effect. In the process of online teaching, teachers cannot effectively monitor the learning status of students due to the distance between them and time and space, which greatly affects the enthusiasm of teachers to take the initiative to innovate the teaching mode. In the process of implementing online teaching at Shougang Institute of Technology, the school's Academic Affairs Office has issued corresponding policy documents to encourage teachers to adjust and refine the design according to the characteristics of the courses, actively promote the reform of teaching methods, stimulate the subjective initiative of students' learning and ensure the quality of online teaching operation. Through participatory observation, it was found that most teachers did not implement the document vigorously enough, followed the PPT and other audio and video teaching resources of offline classes, failed to design teaching contents and forms according to the 'situation' and lacked ideas and practices for innovative reform of online teaching. The content of the interviews is as follows.

Teacher D: How did the online teaching reform of the Shougang Institute of Technology develop and operate during the online teaching period of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Teacher C: 'Online teaching requires the submission of a lot of online teaching preparation materials, such as screenshots of the course, WeChat group and teaching platform for building classes, uploading of resources, such as PPT, audio and video, and the arrangement of online testing activities. Compared with offline teaching, it adds a lot of extra workloads for us teachers, which makes us unable to concentrate on online teaching reform research.'

Teacher B: 'Online teaching requires us to invest more time and energy. From the moment we set up the WeChat group and the teaching platform, we have to be ready to answer students' questions all the time, and the time for innovative online teaching strategies cannot be guaranteed.'

Administrator A: 'As the Dean of Academic Affairs of Shougang Institute of Technology, I often enter the online classroom to listen to the classes. I found that the teachers are very committed and hardworking, often taking out their precious time to educate and guide students because of the poor learning status of a particular student. Through communication, I found that teachers were also able to realize the importance of innovative teaching reforms but were often unable to put the reforms into practice due to the behavioural manifestations of students' lack of self-control.'

Thus, through the above research, it was found that online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic had the real problem of formal teaching reforms and lack of innovation.

Insufficient Teacher–Student Interaction and Diluted Emotional Relationship Between Teachers and Students

An important evaluation criterion to determine the success of a course teaching is whether teachers and students can always maintain good interaction with each other. Online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic was conducted through modern devices such as computers and cell phones, which widened the distance between teachers and students in time and space and affected the interaction between teachers and students. The research found that teachers have to often prepare for lessons, affecting the time for timely feedback on students' learning. Inadequate teacher-student interaction in online teaching directly affects students' sense of learning achievement and is not conducive to stimulating students' interest in learning and desire to learn, causing students to lose motivation to learn gradually. In the process of online teaching of the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers deliver knowledge by means of PPT, online tests and online discussions with the help of information-based teaching methods, and the interaction with students usually relies on the WeChat group. Therefore, text, various emoticons and images and other symbols have become the new medium for online teacher-student interaction and communication in the new era. Because of the lack of 'proximity' in time and space, online teacher-student interaction and communication rely on the virtual space of the Internet to establish teacher-student emotions. The ego, the mirror self, the ego and the guest self all interact online in various symbolic forms, which greatly affects the establishment of positive emotions among teachers and students (Chen, 2020). In contrast, in the traditional classroom, teachers can effectively stimulate students' curiosity through gestural language, such as tone of voice, mannerisms and eyes, to reach emotional resonance with them.

The online teaching mode during the COVID-19 pandemic reinforces the transfer of students' professional knowledge and weakens the cultivation of students' professional skills, comprehensive literacy and ideological awareness. Students and teachers interacted and communicated across the screen. Students could not intuitively feel the teachers' words, actions and grooming, so they could not be infected by the teachers' teaching posture, which invariably added a layer of barrier to the teachers' and students' emotional communication. Therefore, the online teaching mode hinders the smooth realization of the 'ability goal', 'literacy goal' and 'political goal' in the course and affects the active construction of positive emotional relationships between teachers and students. The online mode of teaching, thus, hinders the achievement of the 'competency,' 'literacy'' and 'ideology' goals in the course and affects the active construction of positive emotional relationships between teachers and students.

Discussion

The COVID-19 pandemic has provided lasting power to deepen the teaching revolution, giving schools the characteristics of the times of information, intelligence, digitalization and science to keep pace with the development of the times. Therefore, it is the mission and responsibility of the school to make full use of the new modern teaching technology brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, carry out in-depth online teaching reform and optimize online teaching strategies continuously. Combing the existing research results, it is found that domestic and foreign research focuses on online teaching strategies, but the research from the perspective of curriculum thinking politics is slightly insufficient. Therefore, this study takes the perspective of course thinking politics to study the problems of online teaching of the COVID-19 pandemic and propose strategies to help improve the quality of online teaching.

Conclusions of the Path to Improve the Quality of Online Teaching Reform

Strengthen the Construction of Course Thinking Politics, and the Learning Effect of Students Needs to be Improved

Teachers should strengthen the construction of course thinking politics, optimize the assessment and evaluation standards of course thinking politics, realize the whole process of evaluation and improve the learning effect of students. In the process of online teaching, teachers should always 'take students as the main body'. On the one hand, teachers should adopt flexible and diverse teaching methods to enhance student's participation and deliver the right combination of thinking politics elements in the teaching process to make it silent. On the other hand, teachers should actively infiltrate socialist core values education, adopt process assessment, innovate course assessment mechanisms, adhere to the principle of diversified evaluation subjects (including teachers, students, supervisors, enterprise experts, etc.), regularly evaluate students' learning performance in cognition, ability, emotion, thinking and politics and other multi-dimensional evaluation and carefully analyse the effectiveness of the course thinking politics education. The purpose of this study is to promote the harmonious unification of students' knowledge, emotion and action, and achieve the educational goal of 'establishing moral education for people' (Zheng et al. 2020). Regular and scientific assessment is important in improving students' online learning effectiveness. In each online course, teachers should first prepare rich teaching cases, exercise students' professional thinking and language expression and improve students' comprehensive professional ability.

Secondly, teachers should adhere to the teaching concept of 'learning by doing' and design flexible online assessment methods for students, such as online platform tests, question and answer and mind maps, to better ensure students' online learning effect and improve the quality of online teaching. Finally, teachers should regularly conduct stage assessments for students, which are based on the real tasks of the positions, and exercise students' ability to analyse and solve practical problems by applying what they have learned, which truly connects theory with practice. Through participatory observation, it was found that Ms Liu of Shougang Institute of Technology ''prompted students to improve their time awareness by teaching the first chapter of 'Kindergarten Class Management'. She made them realize more clearly that in the future, if they want to become a qualified early childhood teacher, they must first set a good example for their children to better promote their overall development of moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic and social skills. The ideological education permeated by the first class really played a spring breeze and silent educational effect.

Strengthen the Construction of Course Thinking Politics, and the Online Teaching Mode Needs to be Innovative

The online teaching should strengthen the construction of course thinking politics, deeply explore the thinking politics elements of the course, actively cultivate students' good moral quality and sound personality, promote the reform and innovation of teaching mode and create a new pattern of three-wide education. First of all, teachers should optimize the teaching design according to the characteristics of the curriculum, specifically refine the design of the teaching objectives of the professional content of each lesson, and actively change the three-dimensional objectives of ‘cognition, ability and emotion’ to ‘cognition, ability, emotion and thought politics. The four-dimensional goal is to guide students to develop good professional habits and noble moral sentiments, find a responsible choice to realize the value of life, form a correct world view, outlook on life and values and realize the harmonious unity of knowledge internalization and character enhancement (Zhang et al., 2021). Through participatory observation, it was found that Ms Liu from the School of Nursing and Preschool Education of Shougang Institute of Technology took the lead in changing curriculum thinking politics. The teaching objectives she formulated when teaching ‘‘Overview of Kindergarten Class Management’ are shown in Figure 1.

Secondly, teachers should improve their ability of hybrid education, adopt a flipped classroom teaching method combining online and offline, make full use of diversified teaching platforms, such as cloud class, WeChat group, TronClass, nail, Tencent conference, etc., combine the advantages of different teaching platforms to achieve complementarity and optimize the quality of online teaching. For example, nail conference has automatic playback function, cloud class has powerful interactive functions (such as brainstorming, polling/questionnaire, test, discussion, etc.) and TronClass platform can directly research and judge whether students are online through radar roll call, thus helping teachers improve teaching effectiveness. With flexible online and offline hybrid methods and diversified teaching platforms, teachers can achieve innovative teaching formats, meet students’ learning interests and create a relaxed and enjoyable learning atmosphere for students. Finally, teachers should also actively explore changes in course structure, course content and course system to ensure the appropriateness and scientific nature of the online courses, and mobilize the teaching team to create a ‘benchmark course’ with a ‘flexible and adaptable course structure, appropriate and open course content and sound and complete course system’. This will enable us to better adapt to the acceptable level of students and improve the quality of online teaching.

Strengthen the Construction of Course Thinking Politics, Teachers and Students Need to Build Emotional Bridges Together

Teachers should strengthen the construction of course ideology, use the first class of online teaching to strengthen students’ ideological education, correct students’ learning attitude and make students clearly understand that online teaching is a new initiative made by schools in the COVID-19 pandemic situation, which aims to guarantee every student’s right to learn and good learning effect. Online teaching requires teachers to spend more time and energy on uploading and developing teaching resources, and students are expected to respect teachers’ educational behaviour, always maintain the most active learning state and take the initiative to maintain a good emotional relationship with teachers. The prevention and control of the epidemic is a protracted war, and only if all people join hands and work with one heart will we be able to overcome this battle as soon as possible and obtain a comprehensive victory for our country. By infiltrating ideological and political education elements in professional courses, students will be inspired to take the initiative to learn and to be able to enjoy dialogue with teachers, thus constructing a positive teacher and student relationship. Students’ enthusiasm and initiative provide teachers with favourable support for better online teaching, stimulate teachers’ identification with students and contribute to a good situation of teachers and students working together to build positive emotions.

No.	Teaching Objectives	Content
	Professional Knowledge objectives	Understand the structure, characteristics and functions of the kindergarten class. Understand the meaning, significance, elements, principles and methods of kindergarten classroom management.
	Professional Competence Objectives	Be able to effectively use various methods of classroom management in educational practice to carry out classroom management. Be able to develop detailed work plans for kindergarten classroom management.
	Quality Attitude Affective Objectives	To establish the correct professional ethics of early childhood teachers, to clarify the role of early childhood teachers, to develop a love for the cause of early childhood education and To develop love, patience and responsibility for young children.
	Thinking Political Objectives	To shape a correct world view, outlook on life and values and to realize the harmonious unity of knowledge internalization and character enhancement.

Figure 1: Four-dimensional Teaching Objectives of ‘Overview of Kindergarten Classroom Management’.

Specifically, teachers can take the following educational measures: First, let students draw up their learning plans, learning goals and learning outcomes for the course, so that they can clearly grasp the connection between the courses they are taking now and their future job career development, ensure that they have an accurate learning direction and strengthen their sense of mission to keep striving to achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Secondly, the principle of combining homogeneity between groups, differences within groups and respecting students' individual wishes, organizing students to study in groups, encouraging students to form a good atmosphere of 'learning from each other, complementing each other's strengths and weaknesses' and striving to achieve academic goals! Thirdly, we design a handbook for students' growth in course learning, set time points for learning contents, record students' learning progress and achievements in time, cultivate students' sense of academic achievement and promote students' continuous efforts! By strengthening the construction of course thinking politics, teachers and students work together to implement every learning task, achieve concentric resonance and build a good emotional bridge!

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Research on the Management System and Operation Mechanism of Chinese College P.E. Integrated Curriculum Construction

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ABSTRACT

The integrated curriculum of physical education is a kind of diversified curriculum on the grounds of epidemic prevention, and control normalization and interdisciplinary research.

Background: At present, the construction of an integrated physical education curriculum in colleges and universities in China is still in its infancy. In this paper, the author tries to solve this problem, there is a lack of a perfect management system and implementation standard in curriculum construction, operation mechanism and teaching paradigm.

Methods: In this paper, methodology such as literature as literature research, interviews, surveys, observation and other research methods are adopted.

Results: Based on the teaching effect and social practice, this paper puts forward the standard operating model of classroom teaching and assessment mechanism, the construction of a curriculum team, the management advantage of building an information platform and the innovation model of an integrated curriculum.

Conclusion: Undoubtedly, this kind of curriculum is in accordance with the rapid development of colleges and universities, which makes up for the insufficiency of the dimension of this research field and provides the feasible scheme and model for the management system and operation mechanism of integrated curriculum construction for Chinese college sports administrators.

Keywords: Chinese colleges and universities, college physical education, integrated curriculum, curriculum construction, management system, operating mechanism.

1. Introduction

The core of the integrated curriculum of physical education in colleges and universities in China is to adopt multi-dimensional teaching forms according to the characteristics of physical education. In the actual process of physical education in colleges and universities, physical and mental training is regarded as the focus of education, and a variety of relative concepts are applied comprehensively. Traditional teaching mode, modern teaching mode, in-class training, out-class training, theoretical guidance, practical application, etc., join in the teaching content and method of other subjects selectively, in order to realize the connected teaching, stimulate students' interest in learning, and promote students to master sports knowledge and skills. The integrated curriculum of physical education is diversified on the grounds of epidemic prevention, control normalization and interdisciplinary research. With the development and needs of the time, it will play a unique function and effective role.

However, at present, the construction of an integrated physical education curriculum in colleges and universities in China is still in its infancy. There is a lack of a perfect management system and implementation standard in curriculum construction, operation mechanism and teaching paradigm. The status quo of colleges and universities varies, and the relevant research is relatively weak.

Professor Algis (2021) addresses the development and implementation issues of the integrated curriculum with the aim to provide the concept of an integrated study program and discuss the opportunities for its application in educational institutions. Professor VanTassel-Baska (2017) explores the various facets of the model in conceptualizing curriculum, instruction, and assessment for advanced learners. The integrated curriculum model has been translated into a curriculum framework and sets of teaching units, as well as supplementary materials, in the areas of science, language arts, mathematics and social studies. Malcolm Thorburn (2006) analysis the consequences of teachers' curriculum decision-making on students' learning and assessment experiences, and on the development of their analytical abilities. And also reveal that the need for the inclusion of students' achievement evidence in subsequent evaluations of curriculum integration and teacher effectiveness. Professor He, et al. (2010) believes that colleges and universities should establish the necessary management mechanism for physical education curriculum development, and take this as a platform to establish a scientific and reasonable curriculum management system so that the physical education curriculum reform can really take root in colleges and universities, and schools can truly achieve development in curriculum reform. Professor Wei (2011) thinks colleges and universities should actively innovate the management system and operation mechanism and construct the management system with efficiency and supervision. Professor Wang (2013) believes that the scientific and humanistic sports management methods of colleges and universities shall meet the following four conditions: improving the scientific sports management of colleges and universities; reforming physical education courses to serve students' fitness; strengthening the construction of teachers' ethics and style of study; adapting to the development of the socialist market economy.

On the basis of the previous research, the problems in the development of the sports integration curriculum are as follows: (1) There is a lack of scientific paradigm for the operating procedures and norms of the integrated curriculum. (2) How to build a team for curriculum construction and clarify the division of responsibilities to ensure the efficient and orderly operation of the curriculum. (3) How to set up the integrated information management platform of classroom teaching and examination reform with curriculum as the centre, and effectively improve the course operation effect and information management level. (4) How to innovate and develop the form of the integrated curriculum. Focusing on the above problems, this paper probes into the contents and methods of integrative curriculum reform of physical education in Chinese universities from two aspects: classroom teaching evolution and examination reform. This paper probes into the contents and methods of teaching reform of physical education in colleges and universities in China, probes into flexible and efficient innovative classroom teaching mode and scientific and reasonable management means of information-based examination, and in combination with social practice, ensures that high-quality courses can achieve better teaching effects.

2. Methodology

2.1 Literature Research Method

This method obtains data by investigating literature according to certain research purposes or topics to comprehensively and correctly understand and master the problems to be studied.

2.2 Interview

In this method, the interviewer investigates social phenomena by interviewing the interviewee.

2.3 Observational Method

Observational method is where the researcher directly observes the object of study with his senses and auxiliary tools according to a certain research aim, research outline or observation table.

2.4 Method of Investigation

Method of investigation is collecting materials about the realistic or historical situation of the research objects in a purposeful, planned and systematic way.

2.5 Interdisciplinary Research Method

Interdisciplinary research method is the use of multi-disciplinary theories, methods and results in the overall study of a topic in a comprehensive way.

3. Results

Through the field investigation of the management system and operation mechanism of sports integrated curriculum construction in more than 20 universities in China and interviews with 30 management personnel and teachers, the preliminary results of the management system and operation mechanism of sports integrated curriculum construction are formed.

3.1 Standard Paradigm for Establishing Classroom Teaching and Examination System

The classroom teaching is divided into 'before class, in class, after class' three links, and the classroom teaching and the examination system standard pattern covers the entire teaching process. Teaching materials, interactive data in class, formative achievement and final achievement form a link. According to the changes in students' body functions in different links, the three links provide the objective and reliable scientific basis for students to master sports skills. Concrete analysis of the situation before class makes teaching design and program actively: Apply teaching methods flexibly and adjust the teaching objectives in the class, according to the student learning effect and mastery of sport skills. Check the teaching effect after class, assign the task, reflect on the teaching and summarize the experience.

Taking classroom teaching and examination reform as the core, formative assessment runs through the whole process. Classroom teaching is the core of teaching. Curriculum assessment is important to test teachers' teaching and students' learning results and to master the core link of classroom instruction and examination reform, as well as establish the classroom instruction and the examination system model standard. In order to solve the problems, such as insufficient interaction between teachers and students, insufficient participation of students and difficult implementation of process assessment, we should set up the standard and paradigm for implementation. In order to solve the problems of insufficient teacher–student interaction in large class lack of class participation, process assessment execution and so on, effective measurements should be established based on three aspects of teacher and student: 1. to formulate an integrative teaching mode of online-to-offline, curriculum and extra curriculum, on campus to off campus. 2. to set up executive standard and normal form served before class in class and after class. 3. to build up student grouping team leader rotation system and so on.

Construct examination system standards and paradigms. According to the nature, type and teaching goal of the course, the course conducts process assessment by divided projects into 4 categories (physical leading class, skill leading class, skill and mind leading class, skill and war leading class) and 9 subclasses projects (speed and strength, speed, endurance, difficulty and beauty, accuracy, partition resistance, field resistance, fighting resistance, rotation attack and defense resistance). Process assessment includes physical quality, extracurricular exercise, theoretical and technical skills. If the process assessment reaches 60 points, that is qualified to participate in the final examination. The performance of process assessment shall account for 60% of the final score, and the management system of process assessment shall be further standardized. Considering the student study effect as the guidance, we can improve students' physical fitness and give feedback of learning effect promptly to promote their all-round development.

3.2 Build Curriculum Building Team

Make the links of curriculum construction clear, and set up 7 teams, including curriculum design, lecturer, curriculum recording, teaching research, and training, teaching assistant and curriculum quality control. Provide precise service for the course construction, application, study and management. Each team divides the work clearly and performs its own duties, forming the resultant force. The curriculum design team is responsible for learning situation analysis, textbook analysis, focus on difficult analysis, determining teaching ideas, teaching design, co-ordinating the entire teaching process according to student characteristics and curriculum objectives. The lecturer team is responsible for developing and creating provincial and national quality courses and first-class courses, forming a unique teaching style and highlighting the role of the lecturer team. The curriculum recording team is responsible for the external publicity of the integrated curriculum and the construction of online courses. They are also responsible for developing new recording forms, keeping up with the needs of the times and the cognitive characteristics of students and serving the integration of curriculum construction by combining the current hotspots. Teaching and research teams in various fields of research and analysis actively promote teaching reform according to the needs of the times and the direction of teaching reform. The training team actively creates a brand of integrated courses, cooperates with social institutions and functional departments, helps the masses improve their enthusiasm for exercise and fulfils the social service function of courses. The curriculum quality monitoring team develops a reasonable evaluation program for implementing curriculum results, teacher-student, student-student and social-student evaluation of the new concepts and models to ensure the steady improvement of teaching quality.

Seven teams have innovatively constructed the online and offline teaching assistant teams, and established the corresponding management system, assessment standards, incentive measures, operating mechanism, security system, clarified the content of teaching assistant work and standardized the management of teaching assistant work. Assistant team management covers the personnel selection, job responsibilities, skills training, job evaluation, subsidies and other aspects. The online assistant team is responsible for guiding students to complete online learning, online bulletin, Q&A, discussion, homework, testing and other work, and strengthening the management of students' process assessment. Offline assistant team is responsible for organizing and implementing large class teaching, small class turnover, correcting student homework, experience and reports. It forms an innovative integrated curriculum with the curriculum as the centre, the goal of cultivating students' autonomous learning ability, the basis of the classroom, the core of small class teaching, mixed teaching and overturning class.

3.3 Build an Information-Based Platform for Classroom Teaching and Examination

The informationisation as the handgrip makes the curriculum service platform. The curriculum service platform shall be developed around the pre-class, in-class and after-class links of classroom teaching, and the links of curriculum teaching materials, online formative grades, offline process evaluation, offline summative evaluation and teaching feedback shall be connected by creating an information platform to break down the barriers of teaching data independence in various links of teaching activities and form a course-centred information management platform for classroom teaching and examination reform. In the practice of the reform, it is necessary to use information technology to complete the examination management and examination affairs scientifically and efficiently, and standardize the management of online and offline course evaluation and final score management. To save human, material and financial resources, the level of information technology in schools has to be enhanced and the teaching quality in schools has to be improved, providing a strong guarantee.

3.4. Innovate Integrated Curriculum Development Forms

Four teaching methods, such as a combination of invisibility and dominance, teacher-student interaction, student-student interaction and social-student interaction, are adopted to guide students to integrate into society and improve their social practice ability. Various attractive and flexible teaching activities will be carried out through the combination of classroom teaching, online and offline communication and internal and external resources. Advanced teaching methods, such as team listing, team creation, case teaching, guided teaching and students' explanation and demonstration are adopted to increase students' interaction and participation. Enlarge the student study investment, increase study burden scientifically, arrange student to complete the study challenge reasonably to aim at promoting the teaching effect.

4. Discussion

The management system and operation mechanism of the integrated curriculum construction of physical education in colleges and universities in China have realized the standardized management of teaching and examination. Considering the curriculum as the main line, omni-directional, the three-dimensional, the multi-latitude should be implemented, controlling the entire teaching activity process and strictly standardising the teaching activity of each link. To reduce human intervention, each teaching activity link data flow into a closed loop, which greatly enhance the level of information technology and work efficiency.

Under the guidance of the integration of sports activities concept, the scope of the integration of sports teaching will become wider, and with the help of the integration, the connection between sports and other disciplines of life will be established better. For example, the background of sports and other disciplines can be combined to make sports teaching richer and more interesting, and the characteristics of sports technology can be explained with the help of the principles of other disciplines to achieve the complementary effect of learning.

5. Conclusion

Integrated Teaching of Physical Education in Chinese Universities not only includes the superposition of theory and practice, the integration of classroom teaching and assessment mechanism and the construction of teaching team but also emphasizes the construction of information platform, the innovation of teaching mode and the comprehensive utilization of disciplines to make the physical education courses organically combined with the professional courses of universities.

There is no doubt that this kind of curriculum is consistent with the rapid development of colleges and universities. It solves the problem of how to make the students master more sports knowledge and skills in the shortest time, strong adaptability and pertinence of the students' group, and maximize the function of the integrated curriculum teaching. It provides a feasible scheme and a model for the management system and operation mechanism of the integrated curriculum construction for the sports administrators of colleges and universities in China.

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Lively Image of Matriarchal Society—Research on "Jiacuo Dance" Form of Mosuo Ethnic Group

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ABSTRACT

The Mosuo ethnic group is known as "The Last Land of Ladies in the East", which is one of the few matriarchal social tribes on Earth, and is regarded as "a lively image of matriarchal society" by scholars at home and abroad. The Mosuo people lived around Lugu Lake for generations, and its original cultural dance art—Jiacuo Dance—was created thousands of years ago, which is a business card, a rare treasure of tourism resources, and the second batch of Chinese National intangible cultural heritage projects for the Mosuo ethnic group. Jiacuo Dance shows the industriousness and kindness of Mosuo women and the diligence and perseverance of men, including its history and humanistic customs, which provides valuable information for studying ethnic dance with great significance. In its long history, Jiacuo Dance has formed 72 tunes and 72 dance steps. At present, fewer than 30 species have been recorded, and only more than 10 species are widely spread. This paper discusses the humanistic culture of the Mosuo ethnic group, the dance form and cultural connotation of Jiacuo Dance through field investigation, observation, interviews, etc.

Keywords: Dance form, Jiacuo Dance, Humanistic culture, Mosuo ethnic group, Intangible cultural heritage, Matriarchal society.

Introduction

Lugu Lake is located at the junction of Yanyuan County and Muli County in Liangshan, Sichuan Province, and Ninglang County in Lijiang, Yunnan Province, which has attractive, beautiful, fairyland lakes and mountains. The lake is populated by the Mosuo ethnic group, a branch of the Naxi and Mongolian ethnic. Mosuo people, a farming and pastoral ethnic group on the plateau, retain the original matriarchal society and the unique custom of walking marriage. The Mosuo people like to sing and dance. At grand festivals, weddings, funerals and other important ceremonies, they will dress up and dance the traditional folk dance—Jiacuo Dance—which has been handed down on the banks of Lugu Lake for thousands of years.

Jiacuo Dance is characterised by its entertainment and performance, which contains the rich primitive culture and ancient civilization of clan tribes and reflects the history and living habits of ancient ancestors with entertainment, fun, viewing, participation and so on. Every year, hundreds of thousands of tourists come to Lugu Lake to enjoy and participate in the Jiacuo Dance (Lai & Chen, 2014). Jiacuo Dance is of great significance for promoting the national culture of the Mosuo ethnic group and developing tourism resources. Judging from the development of Jiacuo Dance, many of its tunes were slowly forgotten as time passed by, and only a few were preserved (Wang & Lv, 2013).

At present, there are less than ten pieces of literature on Jiacuo Dance in academic circles, which all focus on two points: first, from the perspective of sports science, the value of Jiacuo Dance sports and fitness is discussed; second, from the perspective of tourism, the current tourism development of Jiacuo Dance and values are discussed, which provides information on the origin of Jiacuo Dance, but there is still a lack of literature on Jiacuo Dance. Based on this situation, this paper summarises the characteristics, style, music rhythm, structure and cultural connotation of Jiacuo Dance based on the culture and customs of the Mosuo ethnic group. There are many theoretical materials about Jiacuo Dance to inherit and protect a dance art full of primitive culture.

Methods

In this paper, the methods of interview and recording as well as the citations of the viewpoints of relevant articles are adopted. The interview and the research conclusion of the use of pictures in the article will not cause any legal disputes. This paper mainly uses the following research methods:

Population and Sample

- Inheritors of "Jiacuo Dance"
- Scholars who have studied "Jiacuo Dance"

Instrument

- Interview table
- Field survey records
- A tool for recording audio and video, namely camera and camcorder

Data Collection

- Informal interview
- Research on audiovisual materials
- Documents and records

Results

"Jiacuo Dance" origin in a matriarchal society

In the mountains at the junction of Yunnan and Guizhou, we will see a gleaming jasper from the sky, which is Lugu Lake. For thousands of years, the Mosuo ethnic group has lived around Lugu Lake. The beautiful lakes and mountains give birth to the splendid Mosuo culture, which attracts countless tourists, who will enjoy the Jiacuo Dance—the favourite dance of the Mosuo ethnic group.

The Mosuo ethnic group has lived around Lugu Lake for generations. According to the latest statistics, their population is 51,000, of which 90% of the Mosuo ethnic group live within 20 km of Lugu Lake. The Mosuo people are an unidentified ethnic group. The Mosuo ethnic group in Yunnan (about 15,500 people, accounting for about 30%) is regarded as a branch of the Naxi ethnic group, whereas the Mosuo ethnic group in Sichuan (about 35,500 people, accounting for about 60%) is regarded as the Mongolian branch. Whether it is a Mosuo ethnic group in Yunnan or Sichuan, there is no clear distinction. The two communicate with each other, and their cultural concepts and living customs are basically the same, so they can be regarded as a whole. The Mosuo ethnic group has rich cultural customs. This paper mainly introduces the following six points, including the family system, marriage customs, entertainment, festivals, the philosophy of life and death, and music and dance art.

Matriarchal society and walking marriage

The Mosuo ethnic group is known as the "Daughter Country of the East", which is one of the few matriarchal social tribes on Earth, and is regarded as a "lively image of matriarchal society" by scholars at home and abroad. In its long history, the Mosuo ethnic group has had one or more grandmothers in the family. In most cases, daughters do not get married, and men do not marry wives. All members of the extended family are related to the grandmothers. Women have a higher status in the family, and women live with their mothers all their lives. This unique matrilineal system also contributes to the unique walking marriage custom in the world.

The Mosuo ethnic group has various forms of marriage, including walking marriage, cohabitation, marriage (son-in-law lived in) and marriage. Among them, walking marriage customs are the main ones. In the Mosuo language, a walking marriage is called "Sese", which means coming and going, vividly showing the unique marriage relationship. Men call each other "Axia" and women call each other "Azhu". A fixed marriage relationship is formed after a man and a woman fall in love. Even today, only a small number of Mosuo ethnic groups still follow walking marriage customs. They only hold weddings or obtain marriage certificates when they intermarry with foreigners. Of course, most people in the Mosuo ethnic group have obtained marriage certificates and follow the modern monogamy system, but most people will not hold a modern wedding, but declare their marriage through Jiacuo Dance. Walking marriage has become a national memory.

Folk festivals

Lugu Lake is the holy place in the minds of the Mosuo ethnic group "Mother Lake", and the locals also call it "the sea". On the first, fifth, fifteenth, and twenty-fifth days of each lunar month, the Mosuo ethnic group will put on bright clothes, bring dry food, make colourful dragons, and hold activities by the lake, including walking, horse riding, boating and cycling. The shoreline of Lugu Lake is 44 km. It takes more than 10 h a day to tour the lake. People sing cheerful folk songs while walking near the lake. Young men and women will date and exchange love items here to express their love for each other (see Picture 1).

The Mosuo people regard the Gemu by the Lugu Lake as a "goddess". Every year on the twenty-fifth day of the seventh lunar month, people will worship the goddess. It is the grandest festival for the Mosuo ethnic group—Zhuanshan Festival. People go to the Gemu Goddess Mountain for worship, prayer, bonfire party and picnic. In the evening, they will hold a party and dance the local traditional Jiacuo Dance.

The origin and development of Jiacuo Dance

Mosuo songs and dances include love songs, songs of praise for Mother, Jiacuo Dance, dance of driving away ghosts, Ge'e Dance and Ba'e Dance. Among them, Jiacuo Dance appears frequently in the daily life of the Mosuo ethnic group, which includes production, life, war, hunting, harvest, sacrifice and courtship in ancient times (Zheng, 2018). In festivals and religious activities, Mosuo people dance Jiacuo Dance to express their love for life; young single men and women also invite their ideal mates to dance Jiacuo Dance for mutual affection and fall in love.

Picture 1. Jiacuo Dance at the Zhuanshan Festival Gala.
Source: from the Internet.

Jiacuo Dance is commonly known as "Guozhuang Dance", "Cuojia Dance", "Datiao Dance", etc. "Jia" means beautiful, "Jia" means dance, and "Jiacuo" means dancing at a beautiful time. Jiacuo Dance originates from the production, lifestyle and walking marriage customs of the Mosuo people on the shore of Lugu Lake, with unique original features. The origins of Jiacuo Dance are dynamic and diverse. Some originate from the reverence and prayer for the gods, some originate from the celebration of victory in war, some originate from the carnival during the harvest and some originate from fishing and grazing, farming, hunting, etc., and some originated from romantic stories between men and women.

There are many origins of the Jiacuo Dance, among which the most important and the most recognised is the war. The origin of the war is recorded in the classics of the Mosuo primitive religion, the Daba religion. There are also primitive dance murals from the Stone Age on the cliffs of the caves around Lugu Lake, which record wars, hunting, and life. According to religious records, in ancient times, the ancestors of the Mosuo ethnic group occupied a superior geographical location and were often invaded by surrounding tribes, so the leader let the tribesmen light a bonfire at the entrance of the village, and people danced around the bonfire to confuse the enemy. After fighting back the enemy, they danced around the bonfire to celebrate the victory of the war. Later, the custom of collective dancing around the bonfire was handed down and became Jiacuo Dance.

During the development of Jiacuo Dance, the content of dance has been continuously enriched. People also dance around bonfires during festivals, harvest celebrations and sacrifices to gods, so Jiacuo Dance has more and more tunes and corresponding dances. According to legend, Jiacuo Dance has 72 tunes, corresponding to 72 dances, but most of them have been lost or have disappeared. Nearly 30 species have been recorded and collected, of which only a few have been preserved, including Dejie, Jiacuoyou (inviting guests), Gemujie (dance to the goddess of Geum), Ashsar rub (dance to celebrate war), and Kezanza (reflecting the love of young men and women).

Nowadays, Jiacuo Dance is an indispensable daily life of the Mosuo people. On major days such as festivals, new house building, adult ceremonies, visits from distant guests, family members or nearby villagers will gather to dance Jiacuo Dance. The villagers set up a bonfire, and the lead dancer played the flute, leading everyone to Jiacuo Dance. In addition, young men and women also choose to confess to each other on the occasion of Jiacuo Dance, believing that only in this way can they be recognised and blessed by the gods and the public. Jiacuo Dance and the marriage and love customs of the Mosuo ethnic group have been deeply linked.

Dance form and tune of Jiacuo Dance

Jiacuo Dance combines song and dance. Mosuo people generally believe that Jiacuo Dance has 72 tunes (there are also 72 folk songs), corresponding to 72 dances or dance steps. On the one hand, to study Jiacuo Dance is to discuss movements, costumes, props, music rhythms, venues, etc. On the other hand, it is studied to analyse tunes.

Dance form of Jiacuo Dance

Jiacuo Dance is a group entertaining dance with performance characteristics. It does not require a specific site, people can dance on lawns, courtyards and fields. Jiacuo Dance combines lyrics, tunes and dance steps. The lyrics are rich in content, the melody is beautiful and the dance steps are diverse. With the change of the tune, the dance steps will also change correspondingly, either being bright and light, or violent and wild. With different themes and rhythms, dance steps are constantly changing, and they are gradually getting more exciting. Every dance step of Jiacuo Dance expresses a clear theme, content and emotion, with ornamental, dynamic, interesting, lyrical and other characteristics, as well as life, art and history.

Jiacuo Dance requires from a dozen to hundreds of people, which on the whole has significant characteristics that are just the typical original dance. Primitives strengthen their connection with each other by doing the same actions and taking the same steps, thereby being recognised by the group and enhancing their sense of belonging. When dancing, the participants always dance and sing or scream, which is so joyous and exciting that onlookers cannot help but join in because it is so much fun.

The formation of men's and women's teams

Group dancing requires a larger number of people and specific formations to keep the dance in order. The origin of primitive dances for many ethnic groups in China is closely related to sacrifice. During the sacrificial activities, people will form a circle to create a field that is different from reality. The circle seems to be another world to communicate with the gods (please see Picture 2).

The Jiacuo Dance of the Mosuo ethnic group also follows the "circle" rule for formation. Men and women form a circle or several circles, but they do not stand randomly and have certain laws. Jiacuo Dance requires men and women to be divided into groups. The lead dancers are usually men who are good at playing tunes. Men and women are divided into groups. The first group of men is followed by the first group of women, followed by the second group of men, the second group of women, the third group of men, the third group of women and so on. When the number of people is small, men will be at the front and rear ends of the team, and the women will stand in the middle.

The Mosuo ethnic group has a unique shy culture, which is not as open as the outside world imagines. It is considered indecent for a man and a woman to dance alone, so people of the same gender often form a team.

Bright costumes

In terms of costumes, most of the ethnic minorities in China prefer brightly coloured costumes, especially the ethnic minorities in the southwest. The Mosuo people believe that dancing the Jiacuo Dance is great and sacred, so they all wear costumes, and the brighter the colour, the more eye-catching it is. Women's tops are mainly

Picture 2. The formation of men's and women's teams of Jiacuo Dance.
Source: from the Internet.

red, blue, yellow, and green having bright colours with woven vertical striped wide belts; various colours look very dynamic. They wear a pleated skirt, which is mainly white, with green or blue, with turquoise, pearls and other headgear; the overall look is beautiful and pure (please see Picture 3) (Li, 2019).

Men wear sheepskin felt hats, young people wear white shirts, and middle-aged people wear white or dark red. They are good at playing Jiacuo Dance tunes. They wear yellow or dark red tops, bloomers with colourful leggings and riding boots, with a cowboy-like demeanour.

Dance dominated by limb movement

The main steps of Jiacuo Dance are: "first three steps, last three steps" and "big jump", which are mainly composed of hand movements and leg movements. The characteristics of the hand movements can be summed up as: "swing, ride, flirt, turn sway, shake, akimbo", and the leg movements can be summed up as: "take a step, step back, and turn". Most of the tunes are from slow to fast, and then slow down to take on the next tune. Jiacuo Dance will also go from slow to fast and then slow again, with another dance craze by the campfire.

During Jiacuo Dance, the arms need to swing up and down rhythmically when taking steps, the upper body is straight, generous and natural, showing a positive and optimistic attitude. Each step should not be higher than the knee, and the stride should be slightly shorter than normal walking. According to the beat, turn the upper body slightly and look back. Jiacuo Dance also pays great attention to the coordination of hands and feet. When moving, the arms need to swing back and forth with the footsteps, and some dance steps require high fives when the feet are lifted.

Picture 3. Wearing bright costumes during the Jiacuo Dance.
Source: from the Internet.

The dance steps of Jiacuo Dance reflect life scenes such as sacrifice, hunting, farming, and weaving. Some movements, such as "high five" and "stomp foot", can make a louder sound, which improves morale and confuses the enemy. At the same time, Jiacuo Dance also pays great attention to the beauty of the movements; the women do gentle movements, wearing pleated skirts, like a fairy dancing gracefully. The man turned quickly, stomped his feet neatly and powerfully, and keep firm and natural when he stepped on the ground. Men and women are full of joy, and at the same time, they shout such as "Aiyohei", "Jiongbala" and "Anuonuo", with dance movements, tunes and shouts intertwined, and a magnificent dance scene is formed.

Preservation of Jiacuo Dance tunes

"As soon as the flute is sounded, the feet itch." When the melodious and beautiful flute sounds are sounded, the Mosuo people will soon join the Jiacuo Dance and start stomping their feet to the music. Each tune has a corresponding dance. When changing the accompaniment tune, dance steps also change.

The 62-year-old La Wengji is the cultural heritage inheritor of Jiacuo Dance. Since 2008, he has gone to various villages many times to listen to Jiacuo Dance tunes or communicate with local elders. He records the tunes that are unfamiliar to him, validates them and sorts them out. In Doshe Village and Jiutong Village, Agoro Awaza, an old man in his 70s, collected 5 tunes that were on lost, including ancient tunes such as hemp rope and laundry dance, and finally found more than 20 tunes. Therefore, Jiacuo Dance tune with the record has been expanded from 10 to more than 34. La Wengji learned to play Jiacuo Dance tunes from his elder brother and grandfather when he was a child. At the age of 16, he learned 13 tunes. On important occasions, he will play the Jiacuo Dance tune and lead the dance.

A complete Mosuo dance usually has 6–12 tunes, and there are no fixed tunes. The first tune for the opening dance usually has two kinds, one of which is named "Cuzhi" in the Mosuo language, which means beginning. With the rise of tourism in Lugu Lake, people named Mosuo dance music in Chinese, and the first tune was called: "My hometown is really beautiful". The tune "Cuzhi" requires the participants to have high consistency in their steps and movements, every two steps forward, mainly for warm-up, creating an atmosphere to attract more people to join the dance.

Another tune "Jiede" is more common for Jiacuo Dance performances in tourist attractions, also known as Big Jump. Start with the right foot, take eight steps forward, step back with the right foot, follow up with the left foot, go further with the left foot, and follow up with the right foot. Then, the right foot takes a step back, the left foot goes forward and the right foot follows up, thus jumping forward. It is also called "My hometown is really beautiful".

The tune reflecting ancestors' playing hemp rope is called "Sabo" in the Mosuo language, that is, hemp dance. This tune imitates the way the ancestors dance like what they do for hemp rope. Their hands sometimes do high fives, sometimes they wave in the air, and their feet touch the ground with the tune, which is a big movement and the waist draws like a figure 8 shape with the waving of the arms.

There is also a dance called "Kezegugu" in the Mosuo language, which means "touch the foot", and "Kezegu" means "foot pain". The image of "Kezegugu" shows that this dance requires a lot of strength. This dance requires two people. During the entire process, they all jumped on one foot for a certain beat, and the other foot quickly collided in the air. Movements must be fast and accurate, and they must cooperate with tacit understanding to make a sound as a whole.

As the rhythm of the tune quickened and the feet jumped faster, the movements were bold, fully demonstrating the character of Mosuo's male character. After the tune was over, the team also marched in a circle. At this time, the scene was already lively, and bystanders could not help but join in.

Discussion

The dance form is the aesthetic form, including history, culture and artistic creation, specifically the aesthetic principles of dance, culture, classification, structure, objective effect (visual aesthetics) and cultural heritage. This paper mainly discusses the dance form of Jiacuo Dance from the following aspects.

Diverse origins and cultural heritage

Mosuo dance has various origins. There are many legends about its origin. In addition to the origin of war, there is also a saying in some villages that it originated from sacrificial activities. According to legend, Hamadami, the first female ancestor of Mosuo, went to heaven to steal fire to help the tribe have a better life, and finally brought warmth and light to the tribe. To appreciate the dedication of the female ancestor, the Mosuo people will hold sacrifices. Primitive sacrificial activities are usually inseparable from dance, which is the Jiacuo Dance's origin. There is also the saying that it originated from the harvest.

The diverse origins allow Jiacuo Dance to have a variety of dance steps, melodies and lyrics. The lyrics tell many legends and anecdotes, reflecting the history and life of the Mosuo ancestors, including religion, war, spinning ropes, hunting and farming, which almost cover the daily life of the Mosuo ethnic group, including sacrifices, new house building and adult ceremonies. At the same time, its diversity of origins also determines its dance style. When a man performs Jiacuo Dance, he should be strong and wild, with quick movements, like a brave warrior, whereas the woman should be graceful and gentle, like a lady who is spinning ropes.

Jiacuo Dance style in the new era

Jiacuo Dance, as an original dance, is not static. In total, 72 melodies and corresponding 72 dance steps are formed in the continuous development and evolution, and some dance steps also absorb the dance elements of Tibetan, Mongolian and Naxi people. In addition, in the current tourist attractions, the Mosuo people have also adapted the Jiacuo Dance to create six melodies, which is easy for tourists to participate in. These all show that Jiacuo Dance is highly compatible. This paper describes the six-tune Jiacuo Dance, which is currently popular in tourist attractions. These tunes are named in Chinese and have been adapted to make them easier for tourists to understand.

The first tune "My hometown is really beautiful" has two tunes. The Jiacuo Dance performance team in Yunnan usually uses the "Cuode" tune, whereas in Sichuan, the "Cuzhi" tune is mainly used. The dance steps are described above.

The second tune "When the bamboo flute is sounded, the feet itch" is the same dance method as the first tune, which mainly invites tourists to join the Jiacuo Dance.

The third tune "You can choose any beautiful landscape in the world" has eight beats, in the first four beats, people take three steps forward, and in the last four beats, people take steps back. In the first to the third rows, lift your right foot and take three steps forward, on the fourth beat, lift your left foot, on the fifth to seventh beats, your left foot takes three steps back, and on the eighth beat, your right foot is raised.

Repeat this nine times. Then, it becomes four beats. The dancer puts his left hand on his hips and his right hand on the right shoulder of the person in front and takes the left foot. With the first three beats, they move three steps forward according to the rhythm of left and right, and the left foot is halfway back in the fourth row. At the same time, turn your upper body to the left about 30° and turn back slightly. The pace of tune three is relatively simple, and tourists can quickly master the pace and rhythm with the traditional costumes of the Mosuo ethnic group, showing the graceful dance of the Mosuo people.

The fourth tune "Never cross the Magan bridge" means to advise single young men and women to take walking marriage seriously, choose their lovers carefully and avoid falling into wrong relationships. In this tune, the left and right feet are moved closer to each other, and the right foot is first stepped forward, then the left foot is closer to the right foot, the left foot is half-step forward, and the right foot is brought closer to the left. On the tenth landing with the right foot, take four steps back. When the music changes, step forward with the left foot first, and the rest of the action is the same.

The fifth tune "Phoenixes flying in the sky, there must be happy events in the world" has six beats, the left foot starts to step first, takes three steps forward, the left foot is lifted on the third beat, and the left foot lands on the fifth beat, stomping feet. The foot direction of the front and people behind is opposite, that is, the person in front must step out the left foot, and the person behind must put out the right foot.

The sixth tune "Welcome distant guest" requires the hands to be released, and the arms swing back and forth in accordance with the music. There are four beats. The first three beats start from the right foot and take three small steps towards the inner circle. The pace is light and natural. On the fourth beat, lift your left foot, swing your arms back and forth while walking, and make a high five. The second four beats move backwards, and the action is the same as the first four beats but in the opposite direction. The dance method of this tune is basically the same as that of the Naxi people's "Helili".

In addition, a small number of Jiacuo Dance teams from villages joined the seventh tune "Mosuo Digao" after the sixth tune, which is a newly created tune. The rhythm is intense, pushing the whole performance to a climax. Whether it is a Mosuo ethnic group or a foreigner, they walked together at a hurried and orderly pace and felt the enthusiasm of the locals in the whistles and cheers.

Current Situation and Influencing Factors of Jiacuo Dance

The social economy promotes the development of tourism and culture.

Today, with the rapid development of China's social economy, there is perfect transportation to Lugu Lake. At the same time, the Lugu Lake Ring Road has also been built, and Lugu Lake has become a popular attraction for many years. More and more tourists are going to Lugu Lake to experience the humanistic customs and taste the local specialties of the Mosuo ethnic group.

Many villages by Lugu Lake have Jiacuo Dance performance teams for tourists. Each village has one to eight dance teams. Each dance team has about 20–40 people, mostly young men and women aged 18–30. During the day, the team members work, and at night, they gather to perform Jiacuo Dance for tourists. Their monthly income from dancing is about 3000–5000 yuan. The dance steps of Jiacuo Dance are relatively fixed. Most dance teams in villages use six or seven more popular tunes, adapt and simplify the steps, and add a lot of repetitive steps, which is convenient for tourists to master quickly, with a very poetic name. It is about 16 min, so people will not be exhausted by the dance, and they can enjoy and participate in the dance (Jin & Jin, 2015).

Changes in traffic

Lugu Lake in Yunnan was developed earlier and became commercialized. Mosuo people only perform Jiacuo Dance when they receive tourists with adaption. Many villages hardly organise non-profit, entertaining Jiacuo Dance bonfires. In Lugu Lake, Sichuan, the poverty in Liangshan Prefecture is the most prominent, mainly because the transportation is very inconvenient. Even if a high-quality road directly to Lugu Lake is built, the geographical conditions along the road are dangerous. It takes 7 h to drive, and the transportation is still inconvenient. In recent years, with the rise of self-driving tours and group tours, Lugu Lake has also ushered in a wave of a tourism boom, and more and more villages organise Jiacuo Dance performances and original Jiacuo

Dance activities to earn money. Young people in the village can only perform simple dances with adapted and simplified steps. People are less and less involved in the original Jiacuo Dance activities, and young people also lack opportunities to learn Jiacuo Dance. Many of the tunes and dance steps of traditional Jiacuo dance are on the verge of being lost (Guo, 2017).

Impact of modern culture on traditional culture

At present, the infrastructure around Lugu Lake is also being improved. Mosuo young people now talk about National Basketball Association (NBA), film and television dramas, celebrities, etc., after dinner, and their passion for Jiacuo Dance is fading. In addition, some traditional cultural projects that do not bring significant economic benefits are being neglected and forgotten.

Excessive commercialization

Lugu Lake not only has the beautiful scenery but also has the unique Mosuo humanities. There are no less than ten scenic spots like Lugu Lake in Yunnan and Sichuan, but Lugu Lake has been the most popular for a long time because the Mosuo humanities and customs are full of primitive and ethnic characteristics for tourists. If Lugu Lake only pays attention to commercial development and does not pay attention to protecting Mosuo's traditional culture, it will inevitably disappoint tourists in the near future, just as the ancient city of Phoenix no longer attracts tourists because of its commercialization. In particular, Jiacuo Dance, as a business card of the Mosuo ethnic group, needs more attention to the inheritance and protection of the original ecology and preservation of the original flavour. The author found that Jiacuo Dance is no longer a spontaneous village activity to a large extent in Sichuan and Yunnan. The Jiacuo Dance heritage must have a corresponding background.

Conclusion

On the banks of the charming Lugu Lake, the mountains and rivers are interrelated. The melodious singing of the Mosuo people is often heard. In major festivals, Mosuo people gather in families or villages for cheerful Jiacuo Dance, the flute plays melodious and passionate tunes, Mosuo people are immersed in Jiacuo Dance, showing the life attitude of the Mosuo ethnic group: to dance with life. Jiacuo Dance, as an original dance, shows the way of life, primitive folk customs and beliefs of the Mosuo ancestors. Jiacuo Dance has been passed down from generation to generation for thousands of years, which has fresh vitality and is an intangible cultural heritage. Facing the dual influence of tourism development, attention to inheriting Jiacuo Dance original ecology and development has been aroused. This paper discussed the characteristic culture of the Mosuo ethnic group and the dance form of Jiacuo Dance, analysed its tune, overall characteristics, diverse origins, formation, costume, movement, pace, etc., from the perspective of choreography, and provided a deep understanding of Jiacuo Dance. At the same time, the author also went to the Mosuo village in Lugu Lake to learn about the Jiacuo Dance. At present, the life of the Mosuo people is getting better and better, but modern civilization and tourism also bring opportunities and impact on local traditional culture. On the one hand, Jiacuo Dance, as a representative of traditional culture and art, is able to show tourists a daily dance, and young people actively participate in the dance team. On the other hand, the Jiacuo Dance performances hosted by tourists are not original, many tunes and dance steps are on the verge of being lost.

Jiacuo Dance is a group dance for major festivals or celebrations, mainly in families or villages. Mosuo people now keep distance from traditional wooden houses and have started to live in modern buildings. Most of the grandmother's houses have been converted into tourist attractions. Therefore, it is urgent to give full play to the function of the village to build a complete Mosuo ethnic group cultural inheritance system under the guidance of the local government. For example, in certain Mosuo festivals, Mosuo people hold large-scale original Jiacuo Dance activities, not for attractions and tourists. The Mosuo people regularly hold original ecological Jiacuo Dance village and township competitions for tourists, and more tourists can feel the charm of the original Jiacuo Dance. Since the inheritors of Jiacuo Dance are getting old, and there are not many young people willing to learn Jiacuo Dance, the government can invest funds to encourage young people to learn the original Jiacuo Dance and provide subsidies. In addition, the government can also take Jiacuo Dance as a mass sport, popularize it in local primary schools, invite local middle-aged and elderly people who are proficient in Jiacuo Dance, help Mosuo children familiarize themselves with Jiacuo Dance since childhood, and stimulate their interest in ethnic traditional dance.

In conclusion, Jiacuo Dance needs to retain its original characteristics, which is the soul of Jiacuo Dance. At the same time, Mosuo people have to find a balance between the inheritance of traditional culture and the development of tourism. Almost all Mosuo youths who perform Jiacuo Dance want to join the village dance team, which is not conducive to the inheritance of Jiacuo Dance. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a comprehensive system for the tune and dance steps of Jiacuo Dance to be passed on forever.

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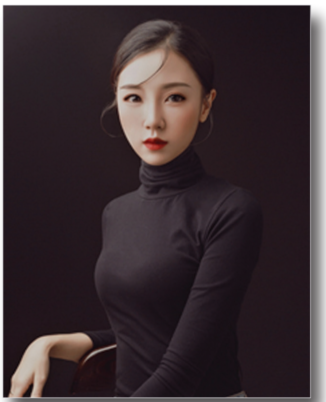

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Classification and Research of Dazu Folk Songs in Chongqing City, China

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The research of this paper is based on natural research methods and musicological research theory, and a brief study of Dazu folk songs.

Methods: Research is conducted by investigation and literature analysis. *The research problem and objectives*: Study the regional generalization and cultural influence of Dazu District. To analyse and study the categories of Dazu folk songs. To study the existing situation of Dazu folk songs. Through the research, this paper draws the following

Results: Witchcraft culture has a deep impact on Dazu folk songs. Dazu folk songs are divided into folk labor songs, custom songs, minor songs and children's songs.

Discussion: The songs repository is not good, as such further proper communication and storing are required.

Keywords: classification, Dazu District, dissemination, folk songs, preservation.

Introduction

Dazu is located in the west of Chongqing, 80 km from the main city of Chongqing in the East and 256km from Chengdu in the West. It is located between the economic and transportation corridors of Chengdu and Chongqing. It is not only the junction of Ba and Shu but also the integration of Ba and Shu cultures. The development of Dazu folk songs is obviously influenced by the 'witch' culture of the Ba people. At the same time, the development of Dazu folk songs is also influenced by immigrant culture and Buddhist culture, forming a unique Dazu national folk music culture.

Objectives

The objectives of this study are to study the regional concept and culture of Dazu. Through analysis, to study the types of Dazu folk songs. And finally, it tries to summarize the current situation, inheritance and preservation methods of Dazu folk songs.

Research Methodology

This article will use the data analysis method to study the cultural generalization in the Dazu area.

Quantitative analysis is used for classification research.

Method of comparative research is used to study the quality.

Results

The Folk Songs Produced Here are Influenced by the 'Witch' of the Ba People

Dazu is located in the west of Chongqing, 80km from the main city of Chongqing in the east and 256km from

Chengdu in the west. It borders Tongliang, Yongchuan, Rongchang, Tongnan, and other districts and counties. Dazu is located between the Chengdu Chongqing economic and transportation corridor. It is the integration of Ba and Shu culture. Dazu was founded in the first year of Emperor Suzong of the Tang Dynasty and the Qianyuan Dynasty. Before the Sui and Tang Dynasties, Dazu was a place where the Liao, Yi, and Han people lived together. It was a branch of the Ba people. The folk songs produced here are inevitably influenced by the 'witch' of the Ba people. At the same time, due to war and other reasons in history, the number of people living in this land decreased sharply, especially in the late Ming and early Qing Dynasties. Immigrants from Huguang, Jiangxi, Fujian, and other places have been pouring into the place along with their culture. The Huguang tune, commonly used in Dazu Sichuan Opera and witch dance, is xipi and Erhuang tune from Hubei. In addition, Dazu stone carving is a famous cultural tourist attraction in the Dazu district. It began in the early Tang Dynasty and experienced additional engraving in the Song, the Ming, and Qing Dynasties. It is mainly Buddhist cliff statues, which is the most famous sculpture in the south of China. The top work of grotto art was listed as a world cultural heritage in 1999. There are more than 60000 statues and more than 100000 words of inscriptions. From the content displayed at all times, Dazu religious music and dance have been very popular since the Tang Dynasty. According to Duan Xumei's preliminary statistics, 19 of the 75 stone carvings in Dazu cultural relics protection units at all levels have been issued. The current music materials are distributed in 65 niches; there are 76 bands and groups of different sizes, 36 kinds of musical instruments, and 240 pieces.

Dazu Folk Songs are Divided into Folk Songs, Labour Songs, Custom Songs, Minor, and Children's Songs

The emergence and development of folk songs directly reflect the life and culture of the region. Dazu folk songs are created and evolved by the working people in Dazu in different historical periods, labour production, and life. The types of songs are obviously affected by the working methods and cultural exchanges in Dazu. Folk songs handed down to the present can be generally divided into labour songs, custom songs, minor, children's songs, etc. Among them, due to the profound influence of Buddhism, the custom songs in Dazu folk songs have themes such as 'Buddha worship songs' (Duan,2004).

Labour songs are common types of folk songs in various places. They are generally popular and have rich themes. Dazu's labour songs are closely related to the characteristics of regional production, mainly including stonework chants, weeding Yangko, pole lifting, folk songs, ramming songs, etc. These songs are often sung in the process of production and labour to provide cooperation for labour. It is worth noting that there are also differences between the labour songs in the East and West Dazu districts. The labour songs in the east of Dazu are closer to the flavour of Bayu and Chongqing, and the labour songs in the west are closer to Shuzhou tune, which also fully reflects the influence of geographical relations on Dazu folk songs. In addition, there are many different singing tunes in the '100000' and 'Xiehe' areas. They can sing freely and form a unique tail cavity, which is rare in the Bayu area.

The Preservation is Not Very Good and Needs to Be Further Properly Communicated and Kept

With the Disappearance of the Cooperative Labour Function of Folk Songs, the Inheritance of Songs Is Complex

Dazu folk songs have many categories and rich repertoires, including 'Buddha worship song' and 'Weeping Yangge' in the areas of 100000 and Xiehe. However, with the change in people's lifestyles and the impact of other art forms, few young people can sing and are unwilling to take the initiative to learn Dazu folk songs. The important reason is that people rarely work according to the previous working methods, and the functions of 'coordinating labour' of labour folk songs are almost extinct (He J., 2021).At present, the existing genealogical examples are rare, and the audio–visual data are pitiful and almost worthless. If this situation continues, Dazu folk songs may only exist in people's memory in the future.

According to relevant statistics, there were two periods of large-scale collection of Dazu folk songs after the founding of the People's Republic of China. First, from the founding of the People's Republic of China to the early stage of the cultural revolution, with the support of party committees and governments at all levels in Dazu, they collected and sorted out Dazu folk songs several times. Professional and amateur musicians went to the mountains and went deep into various brigades, visited many folk singers, and collected many folk songs. However, during the cultural revolution, folk songs were poisoned, and these materials were turned into ashes. Second, in the 1980s, in response to the request of the Ministry of Culture and the National Music Association for the collection, sorting, and compilation of 'integration of Chinese folk songs', the music workers in Dazu made painstaking efforts to collect about 200 songs of different types. For the protection and inheritance of Dazu folk songs, the primary task is to collect and sort out the existing folk songs and their scores. The data of Dazu folk songs shall be integrated with ‘sound, image and spectrum’, and the sorted data shall be digitized to facilitate preservation, development, and utilization (He Q. P., 2011).

Dazu Folk Culture Has Attracted Attention, but the Research on Folk Songs is Slightly Insufficient

At present, the research on Dazu folk culture has attracted the attention of many departments and experts, and the research results are relatively rich, but the main research is reflected in stone carving related to culture and tourism, and a few articles mentioned the research on music in tourism-related research. For example, fan Xinyou’s‘deep thinking on the development of Dazu tourism’ proposed to organize a ‘thousand hand Guanyin large-scale song and dance party’ in the extended development plan of Dazu stone carving tourism products. There are few studies directly related to Dazu folk songs and the inheritance of Dazu folk songs and the integration of local culture and economy (Huang, 2022).

Dazu folk songs have distinct local cultural characteristics. In combination with the needs of local cultural construction, the special Dazu folk song music activities are conducive to creating Dazu’s local cultural characteristics. In the inheritance and innovation of songs, we can also strengthen cooperation with industry experts to jointly create Dazu folk songs with the characteristics of the times, inject fresh blood into Dazu folk songs, and realize the innovative development of Dazu folk songs while inheriting Dazu folk songs. In addition, the development of Dazu folk songs should be combined with the tourism industry economy of Dazu. The successful experience of famous brands such as ‘Chuanjiang Haozi’ and ‘impression Wulong’ should be used for reference to build an economic and cultural platform for Dazu folk songs, enhance the influence of Dazu folk songs, enrich the diversification of the Dazu tourism industry economy, promote the common development of Dazu folk songs and tourism economy, and make Dazu folk songs generate economic value and new life.

Collation and Digitization of Dazu Folk Songs

Internet media has a very rich form of communication. Words, pictures, and videos can be freely combined as needed to describe the specific content of news. In the traditional form of TV news communication, it is necessary to shoot, edit, and arrange it into the news programme. The process is complex, the form is single, and the capacity is limited. It is impossible to spread as much news information as possible. The use of network media to spread folk songs can directly edit some simple news in words, which can be released in a few minutes. Some important news can also be presented in a more complete form in combination with pictures, videos, and other information. At present, many people are living fast-paced life. This simple form of news communication is more in line with the rhythm of modern life, and people can choose freely. Rich forms of network media can bring more innovative means for TV news communication.

Cooperate With Media Local Colleges and Professional Colleges to Carry Out Folk Song Inheritance and In-Depth Development and Utilization

Local colleges and universities have the obligation to contribute to the local economic and cultural construction and provide talent supply for the inheritance, development, and utilization of local folk songs. It is unrealistic to rely on the efforts of a few people alone for the inheritance and development of local folk songs. In terms of talent training, local professional colleges and universities should fully consider the need for the inheritance of local folk songs, set up local folk music courses, guide the aesthetic direction of local folk songs, and cultivate the inheritors and advocates of local folk songs. Moreover, from the perspective of the professional development of local colleges and universities, the construction of local music courses and professional direction is also an important measure to refine the professional characteristics of local colleges and universities. Combining the inheritance of folk songs with the professional construction of local professional colleges and universities can achieve a win-win situation.

TV media can be used to spread folk songs. At present, many TV news communication enterprises or individuals in China are aware of the advantages of network media, and many TV news programmes are spread with the help of network media platforms to a certain extent. However, there are still problems of poor development effect, especially for some local TV stations or personal communication; even if network media is used, it lacks the actual effect of communication. The main reason for this phenomenon is the lack of enough publicity. Whether it is TV news communication or network media communication, a certain degree of publicity is required to let more people understand these forms. Therefore, in the process of integration and development of TV news communication and network media, publicity should also be strengthened. There are two main ways of publicity: First, daily publicity—the publicity of the network media platform should be added to the TV news programmes at ordinary times. The two-dimensional code of the TV news network account can be released at the end of the programme to reach the interested audience, and long-term publicity—the purpose of communication and promotion can be achieved to a certain extent. Second, advertise with the help of current events hot spots. For example, in the recent Olympic Games hot spots, many TV news media use the hot events to publicize their own network media platforms, attract more interested audiences with more abundant sports news, and combine the current events hot spots to achieve a very rapid promotion using the development of the integration of TV news dissemination and network media (Wang, 2020).

Whether it is TV news dissemination or network media publicity, it is inseparable from the editorial talents behind it. Especially on the network media platform, excellent editors can quickly grasp social hot events and figures, launch more relevant news information, and attract more users. Therefore, in the process of the integrated development of TV news communication and network media, we should pay attention to the training of more editorial talents. The editorial talents in the new era should not only have the traditional TV news editing ability but also have certain network media editing and application skills. Only by fully grasping the characteristics of the two forms can they be flexibly applied. By combining different characteristics of the accuracy and preciseness of TV news communication and the flexibility and richness of network media, create innovative features of TV news communication and network media integration.

Carry Out Special Activities for the Construction of Dazu Folk Songs and Build a Platform for the Inheritance of Folk Songs

Dazu folk songs have distinctive local cultural characteristics. Combined with the needs of local cultural construction, carrying out special Dazu folk song music activities is conducive to building Dazu's local cultural characteristics. In terms of song inheritance and innovation, we can also strengthen cooperation with industry experts to jointly create Dazu folk songs with the characteristics of the times, inject fresh blood into Dazu folk songs, and realize the innovative development of Dazu folk songs while inheriting Dazu folk songs. In addition, promoting the development of Dazu folk songs should also be combined with the economy of the Dazu tourism industry, learning from the success of famous brands such as 'Chuanjiang Haozi' and 'impression Wulong', building an economic and cultural platform of Dazu folk songs, enhancing the influence of Dazu folk songs, enriching the diversification of Dazu tourism industry economy, promoting the common development of Dazu folk songs and tourism economy, and making Dazu folk songs produce economic value and new life (Zeng, 2021). The history of the progress of human society shows us that in the process of the development of things of the same nature, the emergence of new things and the disappearance of old things become a pair of contradictions, but they are definitely not absolute substitutes, but of deep-seated integration, development, and expansion on the basis of absorption, reference, and inheritance. Is the development of new media not?

The development of new media is based on the development of traditional media. New media is emerging after the development of traditional media is relatively mature. The new media itself has the problems of low information release threshold and low-quality news flooding. However, this is precisely the advantage of traditional media. Traditional media has a large information collection team, experienced editors, rich news channels, strict control over news, high release threshold, and high-quality requirements. This is conducive to the new media to absorb and learn from and better create a new media platform. At the same time, it is beneficial to curb vulgar news and junk news and improve its authority and customer recognition.

Traditional media need to continue to develop under the promotion of new media. The new media can release the new information collected in time, which largely avoids the problem that traditional media often miss timeliness. The rich information collected by traditional media can be transmitted to customers in a short time with the help of new media technology, and at the same time, customers can be promoted to participate in the dissemination, which improves the readability and timeliness of news messages. More importantly, the traditional media cannot realize the benign interaction between news publishers, publishers, and news receivers, while the new media can not only realize the interaction between news publishers, publishers, and customers but also realize that the information receivers can actively become the publishers and transmitters of news messages, especially with the high utilization of WeChat and Weibo and the frequent push of links, and realization of the multichannel and three-dimensional release of the same message.

As the core component of campus culture construction, media plays a positive role in promoting campus culture construction and strengthening academic exchanges. A very important part of higher education is the academic development of colleges and universities. Apart from the academic itself, the more important part of academic development is the role played by the media with the development of new media; all kinds of national policies and academic research are no longer mysteriously suspended. We can read and study in detail what is published on the Internet.

As a bridge for the construction of campus culture, the media not only shoulders the communication between the inside and outside of the school but also conveys and reflects the school management concept of the school administrators and the demands of the majority of teachers and students. With the progress of science and technology and the rapid development of new media, in addition to the application in academic exchanges, the application on campus is everywhere. In recent years, in order to better display the achievements made in the construction of the universities, the school management concept and management experience, and establish a good image, all colleges and universities have not only strengthened the exchange and interaction of traditional media such as university newspapers and radio but also actively developed new media tools that adapt to the education in the new era. They have created WeChat and microblog public platforms and clients with their own characteristics, and developed apps belonging to the universities. At the same time, special channels are set up on the platform for teachers and students to voice their demands to the school, so as to promote the school construction to be more scientific, the management to be more in place, and the service to be more comprehensive.

Discussion and Conclusion

Dazu folk songs are an important part of Dazu's local culture. With the influence of Dazu regional characteristics, immigrant culture, and Buddhist culture, Dazu folk songs are unique. A thorough basic research of Dazu folk songs can better enrich the research of Chongqing local culture and provide a theoretical basis for the development of Dazu characteristic culture and economic support, the inheritance of Dazu folk songs, and the integration of local culture and economy. Dazu's folk songs are very rich in genres, which is very worthy of our analysis and research. In terms of music communication, we also need to strengthen it. Cooperation with universities and the promotion of government departments are effective means of communication.

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OPINION
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Human Rights in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*

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ABSTRACT

Human rights, a cornerstone of democratic states, enable and protect individual freedom, dignity and choice, making it one of the most powerful concepts of the present times. Improving individual conduct and social character facilitates human rights and, in this vein, reading and comprehending religious texts of diverse religions can assist one to glean through such universal principles that improve individual and social conduct, thereby establishing the universality of morals on which human rights are based. The presence of universality in the Bani of Sri Guru Granth Sahib and theistic philosophy of Sikhism vouches for an equal and fair society where human rights flourish. Studying Bani contained in Guru Granth in context of discourse on human rights is the objective of the paper for the values like individual and political rights, social dignity, justice, equality etc. permeates the entire Granth. The Bani profusely quoted exemplifies entire gamut of rights like civil, political, social, economic etc. and engaging in Bani is a way how individual and social character can be more right-oriented creating a just societal order in which happiness prevails.

Keywords: Human Rights, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, civil rights, political rights, social rights, economic rights

Introduction

Human rights refer to the rights present in our existing societies as essential conditions of life and integral for all, enabling all to live as human beings. Laski considers rights as social for being 'socially beneficial and socially essential, while the state only recognises rights and ensures them to every citizen'. "Human rights are the basic rights that a person irrespective of race, caste, gender, creed, religion or any other background cannot be denied anywhere and or at any condition" (*Alam, Khabirul & Halder, Ujjwal., 2018*). Human rights granted to all entities transcend all man-made boundaries and barriers.

Human rights concern the relationship of individuals with the state and is their status or claims and duties within state's jurisdiction. The 'historical roots of human rights thinking' is not discontinuous with the concepts related to it that had emerged previously. "All societies cross-culturally and historically manifest conceptions of human rights" (*Pollis, Adamantia & Schwab, Peter eds., 1979*). "There is continuity and change in the concept of human rights from the ancient Greeks to the present" (*Freeman, M., 2017*). The Code of Hammurabi is the most ancient text available outlining the rule of law. Ashoka, the Great, 'promoted religious toleration, provided for the health and education of his people, and appointed officials to prevent wrongful punishment' (*Weeramantry, C.G., 1997*). The ethics based on reciprocal principles and empathy finds expressions in Confucian, Islamic, Hindu, Buddhism and Sikhism ethics, all of which vouch vociferously for values like empathy, reciprocity, love, compassion etc.

However, the human rights phenomenon has largely remained as conspicuously absent in many societies since the times immemorial and the phenomena that *Praja* (subjects) were denied rights by *Raja* (King or Emperor) was prevalent in most of the societies. "Some have argued that there could be no concept of individual rights in ancient times, because individuals were considered to be subordinate parts of the social whole" (*Freeman,* *Michael, 2002*). There were some voices championing rights of the general masses such as the clarion call given by the Indian Bhakti saints of the medieval period that prepared the masses to rise for their rights.

The idea of human rights emerged after inhuman torture and genocidal policies perpetrated during Hilter's regime shaking the world. 'The Universal Declaration of Human Rights' adopted on 10 December 1948 was the first step to translate into action human rights concerns. "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood" (*Universal Declaration of Human Rights | United Nations*). The Declaration codifies the entire canvas of human rights i.e., *civil, political, economic, social and cultural* providing a common standard of achievement for all people and nations. Subsequently, national governments across the world endorsed legal instruments giving it a further sanction as integral to democratic nations.

Rights focus on freedom, protection, status, or benefit for the right holders (*Beitz, C., 2009*). Most human rights are claim rights imposing duties or responsibilities on duty-bearers. 'The duties associated with human rights often require actions involving respect, protection, facilitation, and provision' (*Nickel, James, 2021*).

These are universal, inalienable or exist independently of legal enactment as justified moral norms. "Human rights are often held to be universal in the sense that most societies and cultures have practiced human rights throughout most of their history" (*Donnelly, J., 2007*). For many centuries natural law, the standard against which all the other laws were to be judged, played a dominant role in Western Political Theory. 'To contest the justice of man-made law, one could appeal to the higher authority of God or natural law' (*Renteln, A. D., 2013*). The Western moral philosophy heavily rests on the presumption of universal moral principles. The categorical imperative of Immanuel Kant and the Original Position elucidated by John Rawls reassert this in their own ways. The Kantian notion is a vehicle for advancing human rights for he assumes a set pattern of the way of moral reasoning resulting in a single or universal result not impacted by cultural differences. Rawls's universalistic premise in the 'veil of ignorance' stipulates a condition under which individuals are subjected and choose the principles of justice under which the society must be made to operate.

Human rights discourse is associated with human dignity, individual needs and norms of a good society, and human development and human security are also connected with it. "Whereas human needs are seen as something being located inside individual human beings, human rights are seen as something located between them (*Galtung, J., & Wirak, A.H., 1977*). "Increasingly, justification of human rights is coming to depend less on human nature and rationality and more on the concepts of basic human needs and human dignity" (*Renteln, A.D., 1988*).

Elaborating on human rights tradition, Lefebvre endorses Foucault's notion of treating human rights akin to 'the care of the self' concept and considers "human rights as a means for individuals to concern themselves with, work upon, and improve themselves". He even goes to the extent of saying that human rights can be taken as a tool for 'self-help' and 'one that provides strategies for people to become more resilient, happier, fulfilled, present, loving, exuberant, and even joyful' (*Lefebvre, A., 2018*). Lefebvre rather extends human rights as a tool how improvement in others can be done and mainly understood 'as a tool for self-information and self-improvement for the sake of others' (*Golder, B., 2019*). Human rights is also opined as a 'way of life'. Henri Bergson opines that the human rights concept introduces humans with love and has more to do with emotion of love as juxtaposed with law. "Human rights and fundamental freedoms allow us to fully develop our intelligence, our dealings and our conscience to satisfy our spiritual and other things" (*Alam, Aftab, 2000*). "What it boils down to in the final analysis is that human rights grow from the respect and dignity that people accord one another in a neighbourhood, a community and a society, and that a nation upholds" (*Blau, Judith & Moncada, Alberto, 2009*).

If self-improvement or social norms and human rights are related, ***religious texts*** fostering self-improvement and social character gain a considerable significance. Religions have a profound universalistic dimension and if latent depths of religious traditions are explored, human rights concerns are discernible. All major religions of the world including, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism etc. have forward-looking vision of discerning good from evil or ethical from unethical. Human rights are of course, codified in national and international laws but a more practical source of it are the practical measures taken by humans for the same, which places prescriptions provided by religion on an exalted pedestal requiring paramount consideration and responsiveness.

Method

The provision, facilitation and creating conditions conducive for rights have gained a prominent place in the democratic discourse. Although rights discourse is a prominent feature of modern times, the absence or prevalence of rights has been phenomena since times immemorial. Theological ethics emanating from religions and human rights largely overlap on the moral plane and hence, both cannot be separated; rather religious injunctions enable facilitating environs to improve individual conduct building a positive social character. Locating the spirit of human rights in the holy scripture, Sri Guru Granth Sahib to extract out moral injunctions and prescriptions is the objective. Gurbani while detailing negative injunctions, emotions and deeds prescribes a blueprint for positive thoughts, actions and deeds. Bani describes rights and elaborates socio-political conditions in which rights can be actualised stressing on individual character to remain on righteous path. *So, the paper is a document analysis of Guru Granth from the angle of human rights* elaborating positive suggestions given by Gurbani for making place for human rights in the society and enabling each one whether high or low, rich or poor, man or woman etc. to enjoy rights.

Religions as a Reflection of Universal Moral Laws and Human Rights Notion

The very notion of human rights is grounded deeply in theological ethics and preserving such ethics would necessarily serve as a bulwark against the multiple challenges at multiple levels like individual, social, sociological, religious, philosophical or psychological levels. Religions have flourished in various parts of the world since the times immemorial and varied religions had different levels of contributions in moral matters. However, not all religions have served the purpose of being a harbinger of rights. But seeking human rights in religious discourse might provide a more secure footing, for religion shapes the fabric of society in its own ways. “Every religion has something like universal moral laws that condemn murder, rape, lying, stealing, dishonouring religion and proper authority and commending truth-telling, promise-keeping and upright living” (*Basu. L.M., 2007*). Religious ethics also seek to find out the correct order of things and if the matters pertaining to human rights are seen with this angle, individual as well as social contexts of lives can be enriched.

The notion of rights as ‘God-given’ finds expression in the US Declaration of Independence, 1776 mentioning that people are ‘endowed by their Creator with natural rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness’. This, in a way, recognises God as ‘the supreme law-maker’ providing some human rights. If God’s commands and human rights are aligned, on the metaphysical level, it might grant a secure status to rights but at the practical level, there might be a lot of issues. The people residing in varied parts of the world do not believe in any religion or their belief is not in the notion of God inherent in Islam, Judaism or Christianity. ‘If people do not believe in God, or in the sort of god that prescribes rights, and if you want to base human rights on theological beliefs you must persuade these people of a rights-supporting theological view. This is likely to be even harder than persuading them of human rights. Legal enactment at the national and international levels provides a far more secure status for practical purposes’ (*Nickel, James, 2021*). Hence, national and international endorsement and enactments are imperative in a global society.

Another question related to the notion of human rights is ‘Can human rights be defined as always being or “mirroring” moral rights?’ (*Nickel, James, 2021*). Undoubtedly, human rights support the moral stance but, in this regard, it is important to note that Human Rights Declarations and various Treaties not only elaborate ‘the existing moral consensus’ but their objective is to change the existing norms.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib and Premises of Human Rights

The concern for humanity and its rights and duties, even challenging ‘existing norms’ are enshrined in Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS). Human happiness and liberation is at the core of SGGS and for achieving it, the Granth strongly opposes falsity, deceit, unfairness and other evils, and dwells upon universal principles of humanity including brotherhood of mankind and fatherhood of Almighty. The spiritual quest for Divine creates bliss in one’s life and liberates one’s soul. “Salvation, understood most broadly as liberation from negative attitudes of the mind, such as egoism, conceit and greed for wealth and material comfort, is achieved, according to the Granth through spiritual worship and meditation and right conduct required to overcome human propensities for wrong-doing” (*Ahmad, Imtiaz, 2013*).

All the concepts of modernity including human rights have been achieved through *struggle*. ‘Human rights find their most reliable roots in the struggles throughout history for the values that underlie these rights’ (*Heyns C., 2001*). Magna Carta, 1215 was signed between King John and rebel barons wherein former recognised rights of barons even to oppose the royal command if their rights were not honoured and Glorious Revolution,1688 expanded the rights framework. French Revolution, 1789 challenged the divine powers of the Emperor and The American Declaration of Independence, 1776 reinforced that a social contract by the citizens gave powers to the government recognising people's right to change oppressive governments.

Human rights have been achieved through struggle and Gurbani asserts that one achieves only through struggle. Only brave-hearts who are not scared of sacrificing their own lives are true Sikhs. This is explained in the *Sabad* below:

> *Jao tao parem khelan ka chao.*
> *Sir dhar tali gali meri ao.*
> *It marag pair dharijai.*
> *Sir dijai kan na kijai. ||20||(SGGS: Pg. 1412)*
>
> If you wish to play the game of love,
> Come to me with readiness to die in your heart,
> For on this path, even the first step should mean that
> You will not hesitate to lay down your life- for righteousness.

This struggle in Bani not only indicates physical struggle but also controlling the mental faculties of man. Guru Arjan Dev says that Almighty and a devotee share an inseparable bond and the Divine is always watching and looking after his devotee, which makes a person realise the transient worth of the worldly deeds in one's life.

> *Kam krodh lobh moh nivare nivre sagal bairai. (SGGS: Pg. 1000)*

I have forsaken sensual desires, anger, greed and attachment to the world play.

Individuals are endowed with *reason and conscience* that is the guiding factor for all. A major premise on which modernity is based is that individuals are rational sovereign agents who have freedom to make choices and one's conscience helps in applying the moral knowledge to any situation. Human nature is pre-moral and Kantian reflection of the transcendental self, having existence prior to the attributes attained on the earth as the main force behind human actions, is the crux giving them a meaningful existence. "Thus metaphysics for Kant concerns a priori knowledge, or knowledge whose justification does not depend on experience; and he associates a priori knowledge with reason" (*Rohlf, Michael, 2020*).

Article 1 of UDHR states human beings born free and equal in dignity and rights, are endowed with reason and conscience enabling them to act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood. To understand the full implication and spiritual significance of any concept in the Gurbani, stress is laid on *reasoning and logical thinking*.

> *Bibek budh sabh jag meh nirmal bichar bichar ras pijai.* (SGGS: Pg. 1325)

One's keen intellect and precise understanding is immaculate in all this world. In thoughtful consideration, he drinks in the sublime essence.

Logical reasoning enables one to comprehend the difference between right or wrong, true or false, ethical or unethical, virtue or sin etc. and shows the path towards realizing Truth. Bani explains the way of a meaningful life and a life full of God-consciousness. Even while reading scriptures that contain esoteric knowledge, it is imperative to reflect upon it to grasp the true content. At many places, Gurbani emphasizes on application of mental faculties in all endeavours including charity and a noble cause like charity should be pursued with discerning perceptiveness for a desired effect.

> *Akal eh na akhiai akal gavaiai bad.*
> *Akli sahib seviai akli paiai man.*
> *Akli parh kai bujhiai akli kichai dan. (SGGS: Pg. 1245)*
>
> Intellect which leads to arguments is not called wisdom.
> Wisdom leads us to serve our Lord and Master; through wisdom, honor is obtained.
> Wisdom does not come by reading textbooks; wisdom inspires us to give in charity.

Human rights gives discerning abilities assisting to lead a fulsome social life paving way for a social understanding, despite the fact that acceptance of equality, limits one's rights.

> *Satsangat mil bibek budh hoi. (SGGS: Pg. 481)*

Joining the society of saints, my mind was awakened and began to discriminate.

The authors of SGGS representing linguistic, religious or caste diversities and geographical territoriality of India have an intrinsic unity in their unconditional faith in the Absolute Reality as the source of the entire creation. All natural diversities in the Creation with an underlying unity are God-created.

> *Suraj eko rut anek.*
> *Nanak karte ke kete ves. ||2||2|| (SGGS: Pg. 8)*

> And the various seasons originate from the one sun;
> O Nanak, in just the same way, the many forms originate from the Creator. ||2||2||

The universal reason is the basis of the claims for human rights while accepting the diversities. Universal consciousness is the source of diversities and so, preserving and respecting all living forms emanating from one source is important, dissuading humans from disregarding nature or disrespecting fellow beings. Guru Amar Das pronounces:

> *Ekas te sabh duja hua. (SGGS: Pg. 842)*

From the One Lord, all others were formed.

Kabir says that the source of origin of the entire creation provides an essential underlying equality of humankind and none can be termed as high or low. The creator is within the creation and man-made distinctions declaring some as inferior is not in conformity with the very principle that the creator permeates all forms and all spaces.

> *Aval alah nur upaia kudrat ke sabh bande.*
> *Ek nur te sabh jag upjia kaun bhale ko mande. ||1|| (SGGS: Pg. 1349)*

> First, Allah created the Light; then, by His Creative Power, He made all mortal beings.
> From the One Light, the entire universe welled up. So who is good, and who is bad? ||1||

Another aspect of human rights is that if an individual is free to do something, it assumes an equal amount of freedom for others but it is also a fact that my rights cease the moment the rights of others start and 'my personhood depends on the absence of what is other and in principle antagonistic to my free will' (*Basu, L.N., 2007*). So, rights are relational making tolerance for others an essential condition for the presence of rights. "There can be no free standing, absolute right, because such a right would violate the freedom of everyone except the bearer and it would be established on a ground different from that of universal human freedom" (*Basu, L.N., 2007*). So, the selfish propensities of one intruding into another's rights and *Humai* (ego), a source of dissensions should be eradicated. Bhagat Kabir writes that a mortal is possessed by such conduct but when death will befall upon him, he will not take any material treasures with him.

> Lalach jhuth bikar maha mad ih bidh aodh bihan. *(SGGS: Pg. 1124)*

You are engrossed in greed, falsehood, corruption and great arrogance. Your life is passing away.

The Granth envisions a utopian society where human rights prevail and creates a societal structure that promotes civil, political and economic rights.

Mention of Civil Rights in the Granth

Civil rights (Articles 3-15) comprise the entire gamut of rights making civilized life possible bringing well-being in a civil society. These ensure that rights are not denied to common people and prescribe injunctions that political functionaries do not misuse overarching power. A society is progressive when its indispensable component, individuals are imbued with virtues while moral values decline leads to disregard of liberties and rights of others becoming a major source of societal disharmony and crime.

Every individual has their own characteristics traits which are created through individual experiences occurring in their personal and social spaces. They aim at self-realization realized through one's perception and evaluation of any particular action or event. Rationality assists to make choices arriving at logical decisions impacting personal space and social space occurrences. Virtues guide humans to discover goodness shaping the individual and social character of any particular community. Lefebvre endorses this saying that the value of human rights is in its role as 'in enabling practices of personal transformation and self-improvement' (*Lefebvre, A., 2018*).

Individuals as a victim of vices conduct acts reversed to laws, which leads to all sorts of human rights violations. "The sense-organs of a person try to lead one astray. Eye has a seductive touch on seeing a beautiful object. Ears are pleased to listen to one's praise. Tongue prefers unwholesome victuals. Hands steal the property of others. Feet would commit crimes. All these are to be controlled" (*Gupta, Hari Ram, 1984*). The societies all over the world are gripped with such acts leading to violations every second, minute and hour. Embracing humane qualities prescribed in the scriptures and avoiding deeds reversed to laws including theft, dacoity, grabbing property of others etc. that are punishable offences is the crux of teachings of the Gurus and Bhagats enshrined in the holy Granth which will solve human rights violations problem.

The importance of the presence of intellectual, aesthetic, moral and spiritual values in human life permeates through the hymns contained in SGGS. The individual virtues and a code of morals is elaborated and the way to control vices is ordained in Japji Sahib (*SGGS: Pgs. 1-8*) itself. Respecting the dignity of others, reaching out to others or compassion and caring for others' happiness results in inner tranquility of the highest degree and well-being in the society.

Dhoul dharam daia ka put.
Santokh thap rakhia jin sut. (SGGS: Pg. 3)

That the Bull is Dharma, the Law, born of Mercy.
Which, through Contentment, creates Harmony.

Compassion or mercy is an integral part of justice; however, it should not shield cruelty or inhumane treatment. The premise that killing is to be condemned and non-violence or *ahimsa* is to be promoted has an essential congruence. Bravery is not just in gaining victory but in securing justice for oneself while reinstating just conditions in the society. This is endorsed by many thinkers. "Both Gandhi and Girard also address the religious preconditions of nonviolent action by underlining the need to prefer godly over worldly pursuits, and to overcome the fear of death by God's grace" (*Palaver, Wolfgang, 2021*).

Gurbani states that one who is brave fights to the end, even in the face of all odds. A person's life is meaningful and honourable only when righteous and running away from the battlefield makes one a coward.

Sura so pahichaniai jo larai din ke het. (SGGS: Pg. 1105)

He alone is known as a spiritual hero, who fights in defense of religion.

We have freedom such as those of thought and expression, but people are afraid to speak the truth due to fear of opposition and its repercussions. SGGS kindled the streak of fearlessness in humanity who were motivated to their core to stand up for rights and against tyranny and injustice. One should not take injustice lying down and it is important to raise one's voice at an appropriate moment.

Sach ki bani Nanak akhai sach sunaisi sach ki bela. (SGGS: Pg. 723)

Nanak utters the speech of Truth; for, now is the time to utter the Truth.

Self-realization of an individual is possible if one understands the transcendental God who resides in all persons and the entire creation and everything around us is manifestation of the Ultimate.

Ghat ghat antar barahm lukaia ghat ghat jot sabai. (SGGS: Pg. 597)

Deep within each and every heart, God is hidden; His Light is in each and every heart.

Embracing humane qualities is the ideal way of life and such a person transcends the temporal and spiritual boundaries. The sense of humility is outlined beautifully in Sukhmani Sahib (*SGGS: Pgs. 262-296*) asking one to shed pride of power, riches and land and act virtuously and in humility.

For salvation, an individual need not to reach the heavens to realize the essence of the transcendental God but it is possible by living ethically in this world, loving fellow-beings and remaining absorbed in God' love.

Jo rate seh apnai tin bhavai sabh koe. (SGGS: Pg. 557)

Those who are attuned to their Lord - everyone is pleasing to them.

Pride, infatuation, greed, maliciousness, vanity, viciousness and temptations are contingent; clinging to them is futile and embracing altruistic life which grows with Truth, is life's crux. Humans are largely attached to the worldly pursuits and their lives are centered around *maya* or worldly attractions and *haumai* or ego-centrism and in this spiral, they tend to lose inward peace, outwardly leading to violation of rights of others.

Sikhism's central credence in virtuous conduct is the guide to reach the ultimate reality. A virtuous life is based on values. "Truth is higher than everything else but true conduct is higher than even truth" (*SGGS: Pg. 62*) and *Santokh* or contentment, akin to temperance, is one of Plato's four cardinal virtues. 'Temperance is the virtue that attests to keep us from excess, and, as such, requires the balancing of legitimate goods against our inordinate desire for them. Our legitimate use of such goods may be different at different times; temperance is the "golden mean" that helps us determine how far we can act on our desires' (*Richert, Scott P., 2020*). This virtue helps in containing greed, selfish propensities, self-love, self-centeredness, lust for worldly attachments, egoism etc. and inculcating values like benevolence and restraint regulating selfish propensities and desires. *Vichar* or wisdom assists one in shedding out what is malefic for oneself and society. 'On the contrary, the unwise person has a faulty conception of what is good for him' (*Brown, Eric, 2017*).

But such an ideal society where individual conduct is high and where love guides the relationships between the familial sphere and the world at large is elusive resulting in blatant rights violations.

Political Rights in SGGS

Political rights armour individuals with rights protecting against infringement by fellow citizens, governments or social organizations. Protection against discrimination, right to participate in government or criticize if repressive, fair trials etc. are all its manifestation.

Gurbani elucidates a divine ideal order exhibiting a blueprint of its earthly aspect to be realized in the temporal world. Ruler and ruled is mentioned in temporal and abstract terms and the creator is eternal while his creation being transient will perish, sooner or later. If one lives under the spell of internal enemies, such a life is not meaningful.

> *Rat pine raje sirai upar rakhiahi evai japai bhao. (SGGS: Pg. 142)*
>
> and if the blood-sucking kings were to hold power over me.

This comparison of temporal rule that is atrocious and spiritual forms are in Bani:

> *Jo rat piveh mansa tin kio nirmal chit. (SGGS: Pg. 140)*
>
> Those who suck the blood of human beings-how can their consciousness be pure?

The rule of the rulers, in temporal as well as abstract terms is transitory for 'rulers, subjects and nobles shall not last'.

> *Raje rayat sikdar koe na rahsio.*
> *Hat patan bajar hukmi dhahsio. (SGGS: Pg. 141)*

Neither the kings, nor their subjects, nor the leaders shall remain.

The shops, the cities and the streets shall eventually disintegrate, by the Hukam of the Lord's Command.

The Gurus' period witnessed tyranny, injustice, fanaticism, oppression, political chaos, high-handedness and corruption. Wielding overarching powers, kings and their functionaries worked in atrocious manner and the poor and exploited did not have courage to raise their voice against the ruling exploiting classes. This equation based on king and subjects, high or low, powerful or powerless etc. was not at all acceptable to them. The Gurus' message enthused people, giving them courage to oppose the oppressors, in a way, heralding a new democratic era. Guru Nanak condemned Babur's attack, especially mentioning uneven battle waged.

> *Je sakta sakte kao mare ta man ros na hoi. ||1|| rahao. (SGGS: Pg. 360)*

If some powerful man strikes out against another man, then no one feels any grief in their mind. ||1||Pause||

Gurbani denounces the exalted position of kings based on the divine origin of kingship in forceful verses. The political authority exercising absolute rights over subjects, not acting morally and legally, flouting human rights or making no efforts to fulfill their duties towards the ruled was abhorred by the Gurus and Bhagats. The common masses were suffering at the hands of atrocious rulers indulging in inhuman acts like torture and slaughter disregarding religion and humanity.

> *Khurasan khasmana kia hindusatan daraia.*
> *Apai dos na dei karta jam kar mugal charaia.*
> *Eti mar pai karlane tain ki darad na aia. ||1*||(SGGS: Pg. 360)
>
> Having attacked Khurasan, Babar terrified Hindustan.
> The blame is on one's self, not the Creator, and so has made the Mughal the angel of death.
> There was so much slaughter that the people screamed. Didn't You feel compassion, Lord? ||1||

Even today despite all voices and concerns for rights, there are numerous examples of the invading countries violating people's human rights and such a situation was challenged by Guru Nanak. The power holders derive power by the trust reposed by the people in them as in the Social Contract theory that visualizes a social contract wherein people repose their trust in the rulers who are in turn, committed towards caring for the ruled ensuring that there is no mistreatment or wrongful punishment by the state granting justice.

Even in the democratic era, world witnesses political abuses unleashed by power-holders within the parameters of the nation and such political abuses are mentioned in SGGS:

> *Raje sih mukdam kute.*
> *Jae jagainih baithe sute.*
> *Chakar nahda painih ghao.*
> *Rat pit kutiho chat jahu.*
> *Jithai jian hosi sar.*
> *Nakin vadhin laitbar. ||2||(SGGS: Pg. 1288)*
>
> The kings are tigers, and their courtiers are dogs;
> For, they awaken those that sleep in God's Peace.

The King's Servants tear (the docile subjects) with their nails,
And, like curs, lick up all the blood that they spill.
But, hark, where men are to be judged (at the Lord's Court),
Their noses will be chopped off, for, God will Trust them not. ||2||

The king and administrators should don necessary qualities of kingship and endorse democratic ideals for the well-being of the subjects. The regime of opportunists who bow before the establishment for favourable gains and positions and corrupt functionaries is challenged.

Kaji hoe kai bahai niae.
Fere tasbi kare khudae.
vadhi lai kai hak gavae.
Je ko puchhai ta par sunae.
Turak mantar kan ridai samahi.
Lok muhaveh chari khahi.
Aisa hindu vekhhu koe. ||(SGGS: Pg. 951)

Becoming judges, they sit and administer justice.
They chant on their malas, and call upon God.
They accept bribes, and block justice.
If someone asks them, they read quotations from their books.
The Muslim scriptures are in their ears and in their hearts.
They plunder the people, and engage in gossip and flattery.
Behold, such is the Hindu.

A just and righteous regime that flouts arbitrary rule while promoting democratic ideals including human rights, justice, mutual coexistence, happiness etc. is desired, which can be a step ahead in actualizing not only the maximum good of the maximum number but at creating a governance order where everyone is content and happy. Such contentment can be experienced when one completely surrenders to Hukum or Divine Will.

A gentle governance order (*Halemi Raj*) was elucidated by Guru Arjan:

Sabh sukhali vuthia ih hoa halemi raj jio. ||13|| (SGGS: Pg. 74)
Let all abide in peace, under this Benevolent Rule. ||13||

The martyrdom of the Gurus is a manifestation of what we call human rights abuses. Guru Arjan had to face imprisonment in the Lahore Fort and brutal excesses were meted out against him. Guru Tegh Bahadur were subjected to utmost torture before being martyred. His maxim, 'Do not frighten anybody, nor fear yourself' or '*Bhai Kahun ko det nahi, Nahin bhai manat an*' (*SGGS: Pg. 1427)* gives a guarantee to the subjects against repression of the rulers and their functionaries. His martyrdom is a precedent of aspiring for a state where religious diversities flourish, upholding the rights of people professing an altogether different faith and standing up as a bulwark against religious persecution of Kashmiri Pandits.

The Sikh history is replete with instances wherein the Gurus and their ardent followers have borne excesses and torture in captivity bravely and sacrificed themselves for others rights like Guru Arjun, Guru Tegh Bahadur, Bhai Mati Das, Bhai Sati Das, Bhai Dayal Das, Sahibzada Fateh Singh, Sahibzada Zorawar Singh, Banda Singh Bahadur and his companions etc. Inhuman torture is punishable offence as per International Laws codified after Nuremberg trials. International jurisprudence declares such abuses like war crimes, genocide etc. as crimes against humanity, severe offences liable for punishment.

The *International Humanitarian Law (IHL)* endorsing the concept of just war advocates humanitarianism in war. Bhai Kanhaiya who comprehended the true intent of the message contained in priceless Gurbani served water to wounded soldiers of the Sikhs as well as the Mughal camps. Bhai Kanhaiya can be hailed as Forerunner of Red Cross Movement for he supported humanitarian treatment for wounded and sick soldiers. He reiterated what is inscribed in SGGS:

Na ko bairi nahi bigana sagal sang ham kao ban ai. ||1|| (SGGS: Pg. 1299)

No one is my enemy, and no one is a stranger. I get along with everyone. ||1||

So, political rights are important in a just order and Gurbani manifests all these facets.

Economic Rights and attached Duties in Bani

Economic rights are considered the 'second generation rights' covering the gamut of rights of sustenance, work, health, education, leisure etc. Economic dealings in trade or occupation are predominant in present times. The lust for power, position or material greed and disagreement in personal and social goals leads to inordinate clashes and social disharmony. A balanced life is that which is led with temperance. Guru Nanak's prescription for ideal life is that all should labour with hands and none should grab the rightful earning of others. Gurbani gives injunctions for checking rivalries and divergences.

'Hak Paraya nanka uss suar uss gaye.' (SGGS: Pg. 141)

To take what rightfully belongs to another, is like a Muslim eating pork, or a Hindu eating beef.

A prescription for maintaining equilibrium in life is to lead truthful life, earn honest labour and share from one's hard earnings with others.

> *Pahila sach halal due tija khair khudae.(SGGS: Pg. 141)*
>
> Let the first be truthfulness, the second honest living, and the third charity in the Name of God.

It is the duty of all to earn for subsistence of family, which should be rightfully done without intruding into the rights of others, doing unlawful activities and avoiding clashes. Bhagat Kabir condemns such vagaries of individual choices and deeds saying:

> *Baho parpanch kar par dhan liavai.*
> *Sut dara peh an lutavai. ||1|| (SGGS: Pg. 656)*
>
> Practicing great hypocrisy, he acquires the wealth of others.
> Returning home, he squanders it on his wife and children. ||1||

True God should permeate in all undertakings for one can be emancipated by good deeds.

> *Kheti vanaj navai ki ot.*
> *Pap punn bij ki pot.* (*SGGS: Pg. 152*)
>
> My farming and my trading are by the Support of the Name.
> The seeds of sin and virtue are bound together.

The excess or absence of materialism is bad and balance in life is imperative, which would shun accumulation, a source of evil in the society.

> *Jis garihi bahut tisai garihi chinta.*
> *Jis garihi thori so firai bharmanta.*
> *Duhu bivastha te jo mukta soi suhela bhaliai. ||1|| (SGGS: Pg.1019)*
>
> The household which is filled with abundance - that household suffers anxiety.
> One whose household has little, wanders around searching for more.
> He alone is happy and at peace, who is liberated from both conditions. ||1||

Today we see a wave of excessive materialism and consumption resulting in discord, sharing and caring in a world dominated by self-centeredness is elusive. Global public goods meant for all are getting concentrated in the hands of a few. Rather in the social development stage provision of resources should be equally for all. SGGS stresses on sharing nature's bounties created by God with all, which do not wane, rather increase if shared with prudence.

> *Khaveh kharcheh ral mil bhai.*
> *Tot na avai vadh do jai. ||3|| (SGGS: Pg. 186)*
>
> Expend thou as thou willest with all thy company.
> (But) it diminishes not and is on ever increase.

The life necessities for all is in God's Home and Gurbani elaborating mundane necessities mentions that the 'blesser of worldly joy' is transcendental Lord who is the ultimate 'treasure of all Good' for the devotees. Guru Arjan Dev writes:

> *Man mangao tan mangao dhan lakhmi sut deh. ||1||(1307)*
>
> *Thou blessest me with Glory, Power, Riches, sons, the human body.* ||1||

The worshippers of Almighty lead a fulfilled life and Bhagat Dhana implores to Almighty even for the basic necessities in very apt words.

> *Dal sidha magao ghio.Hamra khusi karai nit jio.*
> *Panhia chhadan nika. Anaj magao sat sika. ||1||*
> *Gau bhais magao laveri. Ik tajan turi changeri.*
> *Ghar ki gihan changi. Jan dhanna levai mangi. ||2||4|| (SGGS: Pg. 695)*
>
> Lentils, flour and ghee - these things, I beg of You. My mind shall ever be pleased.
> Shoes, fine clothes, and grain of seven kinds - I beg of You. ||1||
> A milk cow, and a water buffalo, I beg of You, and a fine Turkestani horse.
> A good wife to care for my home - Your humble servant Dhanna begs for these things, Lord. ||2||4||

Bhagat Kabir endorses this same spirit in his own practical words.

> *Due ser mangao chuna. Pao ghio sang luna.*
> *Adh ser mangao dale. Mo kao dono vakhat jivale. ||2||*
> *Khat mangao chaupai. Sirhana avar tulai.*
> *Upar kao mangao khindha. Teri bhagat karai jan thindha. ||3|| (SGGS: Pg. 656)*
>
> I ask for two kilos of flour, and half a pound of ghee, and salt.
> I ask for a pound of beans, which I shall eat twice a day. ||2||

I ask for a cot, with four legs, and a pillow and mattress.
I ask for a quilt to cover myself. Your humble servant shall perform Your devotional worship service with love. ||3||

So, material basic needs including food, clothing and shelter are recognised in SGGS; yet excess of them is bad and whatever one has, should be shared. An individual should make a right living, take only rightful earning and not encroach upon the earnings of others. The provision of all these needs are possible in a just state looking into citizens well-being. 'May everyone prosper' (*Sarbat da bhalla*) teaches the world to be more harmonious.

Social Rights in Gurbani

Societies all over the world witness glaring violation of social rights. Differences and discrimination based on religion, caste, gender, colour, race, ethnicity, etc. make the societies multi-structured and fragmented in which the marginalized and vulnerable are denied their '*personhood*'. The religious and caste affiliations, high or low class, regional disparities, gender biases etc. are quintessential groups on which societal *stratification* is based in the Indian scenario. Even in the present-day times, nearly all Indians are associated and ranked creating a pervasive social hierarchy. However, the impeccable and exemplary contribution of SGGS is shedding all notions emanating from this complex web of purity and pollution triggering rights violation. Gurbani says:

A true Muslim is one who is away from impurities and evils.

Musalman soi mal khovai. (*SGGS: Pg. 662*)

One who cleanses himself of impurity is a Muslim.

Guru Arjan pronounces that all humans despite differentiations created by the society attain emancipation by dwelling upon the Name of the Almighty.

Khatri barahman sud vais sabh ekai nam taranath. (SGGS: Pg. 1001)

Whether one is a Kshatriya, a Brahmin, a Sudra, or a Vaisyas; all these but swim across through Lord's Name.

During those times, community's three pillars guiding people to lead their lives were *Qazi* or Muslim judge, Brahmin and Yogi but corrosion had set in all of them. *Qazis* were indulging in falsehood, Brahmins were engrossed in demeaning rituals and Yogis were devoid of praxis; so were misleading masses ruining them in their own ways.

Kadi kur bol mal khae.
Barahman navai jia ghae.
Jogi jugat na janai andh.
Tine ojare ka bandh. (SGGS: Pg. 662)

The Qazi tells lies and eats filth;
The Brahmin kills and then takes cleansing baths.
The Yogi is blind, and does not know the Way.
The three of them devise their own destruction.

Gender-based inequalities and impurities are futile; his light is everywhere in the creation.

Dharan gagan nah dekhau doe.
Nari purakh sabai loe. (SGGS: Pg. 223)

In the earth and in the sky, I do not see any second.
Among all the women and the men, His Light is shining

Article 16 of the UDHR gives equal rights to men and women to marry and form a family and provides entitlement of equal rights 'as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution'. Family is the basic unit of the society and the human rights regime gives freedom and equality in the familial space. The oppressive privacy in the families and inequalities in familial relations is condemned, even punishable by law.

The Gurus consider the marriage between man and women very pure if based on virtues. In fact there is only one person i.e., God and the rest of the creation are women whose efforts are directed towards pleasing the husband or Almighty. Gurbani employs the metaphor of a bride explaining women's character and God is a groom and the seeker is depicted as a bride yearning to meet her Beloved or God. One who sanctifies God as her spouse is in a perpetual state of bliss.

The Guru bestowed a dignified status to women, bearers of even the mightiest of kings, emperors, seers and social reformers. "Infact, the context of attaching negativity to women is utterly disturbing, for the kind of reproductive strength the women's bodies offer is rather the sign of heavenly supremacy in itself. The Guru did not favour such pessimistic ideas to evolve in the society" *(Aurora, Sumeet D., 2017)*.

So kyon mandaaa khieay jit jamme rajaan. (SGGS: Pg. 473)

O, why call woman evil who giveth birth to kings.

The 'man-made notion' in a patriarchal society attaching an inferior status to women, impurities especially after childbirth, polygamy, Sati, Purdah etc. is vociferously denounced in SGGS for the laws of nature and God's laws do not conform to such futile practices. Emphatic assertion resonates in Bani from *Asa di Var*:

> *Je kar sutak manniai sabh tai sutak hoe.*
> *Gohe atai lakri andar kira hoe.*
> *Jete dane ann ke jia bajh na koe.*
> *Pahila pani jio hai jit haria sabh koe.*
> *Sutak kio kar rakhiai sutak pavai rasoe.*
> *Nanak sutak ev na utrai gian utare dhoe. ||1||(SGGS: Pg. 472)*

> If one accepts the concept of impurity, then there is impurity everywhere.
> In cow-dung and wood there are worms.
> As many as are the grains of corn, none is without life.
> First, there is life in the water, by which everything else is made green.
> How can it be protected from impurity? It touches our own kitchen.
> O Nanak, impurity cannot be removed in this way; it is washed away only by spiritual wisdom. ||1||

Sati or burning oneself in the funeral pyre of one's husband was disparaged; a new connotation of the term with temporal essence given was that Sati is one who cherishes the company of one's husband every moment and feels the pangs of separation with beloved like death.

> *Satia ehi na akhian jo mariq lag jalannih.*
> *Nanak satia janianih je birhe chot marannih. ||1|| (787)*

> Yea, the Sati is one who lives contented and embellishes herself with good conduct.
> And cherishes her Lord ever and Calls upon Him each mourn.

The society devoid of brotherhood, dignity and love is repudiated in SGGS and the ideals of welfarism and egalitarianism are echoed.

Conclusion

Human rights not only arm individuals against rights abuse but also aim at creating amicable living conditions. Overall growth and happiness is possible when human rights are facilitated and ensured for all. *O'Brien* (2008) defined happiness as 'that contributes to individual, community or global well-being without exploiting other people, the environment or future generations.' Such a society which promotes collective happiness of people is envisaged in SGGS wherein practical measures for such a envisioned society are revealed. Bhagat Puran Singh says, 'Guru Granth presents the most authentic account of social reconstruction of human society'.

Happiness is possible in an idyllic society and such an ideal space where human dignity is the essence is enshrined in the Bani of Ravidas. Spirituality is the basis of such a boundaryless society that is free from exploitation of man by man and where there is no grief, fear, injustice and excess taxes are not imposed on the residents. He says:

> *Begam pura sahar ko nao.*
> *Dukh andohu nahi tihi thao.*
> *Nan ṯasvis khiraj na mal.*
> *Khauf na khata na taras javal. ||1||*
> *Ab mohi khub vatan gah pai.*
> *Uhan khair sada mere bhai. ||1|| rahao. (345)*

> Baygumpura, 'the city without sorrow', is the name of the town.
> There is no suffering or anxiety there.
> There are no troubles or taxes on commodities there.
> There is no fear, blemish or downfall there. ||1||
> Now, I have found this most excellent city.
> There is lasting peace and safety there, O Siblings of Destiny. ||1||Pause||

Begumpura is marked by the characteristic of happiness of its residents, "completely satisfied, spiritually satiated and large-hearted mystics are already living here" (*Singhal, Dharam Pal, 2007*). The realm of Begumpura akin to 'Sachkhand' in Japji can be attained if dualities of mind and vagaries of thoughts and deeds are ended. "Begumpura is the highest spiritual stage that a seeker attains through continual practice of meditation" (*Singhal, Dharam Pal, 2007*). Bhagat Ravidas stipulates that entering into such a realm of truth, one becomes free from the cycle of birth and death, and sovereignty of God prevails eternally in such a blissful place.

SGGS recognises this fundamental underlying unity derived from God in humans and gives practical measures to realize it in one's feelings and actions, and love in relationship with others. Harmony in feelings is a part of happiness and the scripture emphasizes this harmony in body, mind and soul. The search for self as asserted by Foucault and Lefebvre is vital for 'No relationship is dearer than the one we forge with ourselves'. "Similarly, the love expressed between a husband and wife, between a man and woman, between parents and children, between two humans, is part of a search for that love which alone will make us complete and impart us a permanent state of happiness" (*TOI, 2021*). The practical measures to handle miseries build an essential bridge of mutual co-existence in multi-cultural global family putting an end to parochial acts and mutual mistrust.

The rights perspectives including civil, political, economic and social are enshrined in the Granth concerning human dignity, individual needs and social norms. The need of the hour is to reiterate human rights, which is possible after shedding selfish propensities and shunning conflicts. Resorting to traditional knowledge will definitely be instrumental in opening the closed mindset and herein lies the significance of understanding Bani contained in the scriptures like Guru Granth. The mysticism and spiritualism contained in SGGS is a pathway towards a world which is more sustainable and endorses fairer practices. An exploitative governance order based on exploitation, corruption, consumerism etc. is shunned in favour of a holistic order based on humanism securing mankind's future.

The Granth's eternal relevance for the Sikhs is expressed by Cole (*Cole, W. Owen, 1982*) when he says, "The Sikhs (became) a people of the book to an extent and in a manner which is not found in any other religion". What is required is that the humanist import of the Granth should be an indispensable part of the lives and the Living Guru is there to shape the destinies of multitude of people who endorse humanist traditions. Flaws and ills in the society and weaknesses and errors in individuals can be corrected if Bani is read and imbibed by the individuals and transmitted in the larger society.

Religions elaborating a normative ethical system and human rights enforcing individual values and social norms share a paradoxical relationship but support each other strongly. Religious ethical norms might serve as an indispensable source of human rights with prescriptions to abide by them but merely religious motivation to uphold rights has constraints, for the religious precepts are based on voluntary compliance and some kind of sanction is indispensable for implementing rights, acknowledging and reiterating the growing significance of the UDHR. However, the seekers of true religions are also ardent supporters of human rights for there is no system of rights that excludes religion. If the theological ethics suggested by religions is followed, human rights would best be articulated and fulfilled.

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OPINION

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Comparison of Chinese and Foreign Flower Elements Patterns

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ABSTRACT

The symbol pattern of flowers is the darling of art, which is loved by the people of all ethnic groups and countries in the world, and even serves as an important pattern on the coins of different periods of different countries. The difference between Chinese and Western aesthetics is only in their characteristics, and both are a part of the world culture, have their own independent aesthetic system and rhyme direction, and also have some commonalities, collision, communication, integration, change, and development.

Keywords: Art Chinese and foreign, cultural development, flower elements, floral patterns, art symbols, comparison, globalization

Introduction

In his book Global Times, Albru wrote: ‘In the 1980s, “globalization” was the key word, and in the 1990s, a general understanding emerged that the modern era is ready, and the global era has begun’ (Peng, 2005, p. 10). He meant that the modern era in a narrow sense has ended.

However, the modernity and modernization that I have mentioned here are even more extensive. In time and space, it contains globalization, which is a part of modern and contemporary nature. Each ethnic group has its own national character, native character, uniqueness, and independence, and is gradually moving towards modernization and realizing the modern and contemporary character. This broad modern and contemporary nature is not over, it is still developing and changing, always pointing to the distance, always pointing to the future.

Globalization does not mean the decline and dissolution of nation-states, nor does it mean the identity or homogeneity of global cultures (Peng, 2005, p. 10). In the broad sense of modern and contemporary modernization, the art or symbols of their own independent countries or nations will participate in the integration, development, creation, and construction of globalization.

The symbol pattern of flowers is the darling of art, and it is loved by the people and countries of all nationalities in the world, and even serves as an important pattern on the coins of different periods of different countries. This article 'throwing bricks and attracting jade' temporarily do some superficial comparison for people to understand that the differences between Chinese and Western aesthetics are just in characteristics, and none is superior, both are part of the world culture and have their own independent aesthetic system and rhyme and there are also some commonalities, collisions, communication, fusion, change, and development.

Flowers in the Painting is a Noble Sentiment, a Symbol of Beauty

Peony and Chinese Painting

The Chinese nation is a nation advocating beauty. Since ancient times, there has been a kind of peony and peony appreciation wind. Through the ages, the Chinese people have had a special liking for the peony, especially the peony has the 'national colour and sky fragrance, the king of flowers' reputation. Peony, because of its large and beautiful shape, magnificent, elegant, and fragrant flowers, has always been the symbol of prosperity, wealth, health, dignity, and auspiciousness in the hearts of the Chinese people, and was also known as the national flower in the Tang Dynasty. Chinese people will hang peony Chinese paintings in the main hall at home or the main hall of the office, to beautify the bedroom, edify sentiment, or for good luck, with people's beauty ideal.

Peony, because of its shape, is complicated, elegant, and gorgeous. It shows the noble and beautiful, dignified atmosphere, national colour, and sky fragrance, it is difficult to be drawn and it is easy to fall into the vulgar situation. Chinese painters in all dynasties have experienced an artistic creation process of ease, self-practice, and initiative. Since ancient times, many famous painters have painted peony; no matter simple or luxuriant, it is extremely rich in their style and characteristics.

Wang Xuetao is an accomplished master of flower and bird painting in modern China. His freehand brushwork of flowers and bird with pen and ink-sprinkled, colourful, unique style is very interesting. Yu Feian revitalized the painting tradition of flower and bird painting since the Song Dynasty, emphasizing sketch painting, paying attention to seizing the spirit and strong colour, forming a thick and bony style, and showing the vitality of luxuriance and glory.

Zhang Daqian's flower painting was originally based on the freehand style of the Yuan and Ming literati, but after he came back from Dunhuang in 1943 to study frescoes, he changed his style of painting, inherited the Tang and Song dynasties, and tended to be more exquisite and beautiful.

Wu Changshuo is the best at freehand brushwork and flower painting. He uses calligraphy in painting, integrating calligraphy, seal cutting, and knife handling into painting, forming a unique painting style full of gold and stone flavour. With the calligraphy techniques of 'cursive script' and 'seal script' in the painting, the shape is not realistic, forming a direct expression and lively 'freehand brushwork' brush and ink form affecting the modern Chinese painting circle. Wu Changshuo was the first person good at painting peonies since the late Qing Dynasty.

In the last two years of his life, Qi Baishi's physical strength and energy gradually declined. Sometimes he did not even know how to write his own name 'Baishi', but he still kept painting, especially the peony. In his famous painting 'Peony in the Wind' in the last year of his life, the wind blows in the painting, the pen seems to bring the rustling wind, prompting the rhythm of the waves, grace, ink, free, reflecting a complete life realm of freedom (G. H., 2022).

Plum, Orchid, Bamboo, Chrysanthemum—the Four Gentlemen in Flowers are Common Painting Flowers in China

The application of the 'metaphor and rising' technique in literati paintings, through the expression of plum, orchid, bamboo, and chrysanthemum paintings, expresses the artist's personality which is different from the vulgar and elegant fashion and is of bright integrity. 'Lan Zhang' means the beauty of poetry and 'Lan Jiao' means the truth of friendship. Orchid is quietly elegant and beautiful, outstanding, elegant and clean, and simple and quiet. Confucius praised it as 'orchid when for the king of fragrance'. 'Several plum blossoms in the corner, resist the cold and bloom alone': plum blossom symbolizes pride and independence; chrysanthemum 'alone endure human cold' and is tenacious; and bamboo symbolizes integrity. Since the Song Dynasty, the 'Four Gentlemen' have been repeatedly painted by the painters of all dynasties.

Zheng Banqiao is good at painting bamboo, orchid, stone, pine, chrysanthemum, etc., and for his smooth style, the strong style of orchid and bamboo is the most famous. He was not bound by ancient methods and learned from nature the 'Fine brushwork' and freehand brushwork. He put forward the three stages in bamboo painting, which is the eyes, heart, and hand, using brush and ink skills together. Zheng Banqiao painting bamboo in the cursive script of the long skimming method he draws more without chaotic, less without carelessness, and shows strong art.

Wu Changshuo painted the plum trunk from the bottom disc, folded up, branches tangled, vertical and horizontal, and the line crossed like the Chinese character '女 (Woman)'s shape, trunk ink is thick, pen is dry and flies white, pure and clean, vigorous as a gold knife, the petals are open or close and have circles and dots, it seems casual, but none of it was superfluous.

'Painting plum blossom delicate and powerful only 'Yang Buzhi' one person, strange only 'Yin Hebo' one person, old and strong only 'Wu Changshuo' one person'. All three are unsurpassed. There is no other way for me'. In the face of the plum blossom painting by Yang Buzhi, Yin Hebo, and Wu Changshuo, Qi Baishi once felt that there was no way out, but he finally broke through the siege (Ge, 2009).

At the age of 60, he painted plum, with thick branches, old as iron, exaggerated, and shaped flowers. This seemingly old man was confused, with no rules, in fact, more vigorous, like exaggerated.

Orchids live in secluded valleys and do not dye the world dust. Qi Baishi's painting of orchids is also different from the ancient painters of chastity and beauty, he boldly added grasshoppers, blue moths, beetles, and so on, also will be the orchid 'transplant' back to the secular world. He often painted orchids with dry and heavy ink, painted orchid leaves with wet light ink or pale green colour and painted flowers and achieved a strong visual contrast effect (Hu, et al., 2014).

Qi Baishi painted a lot of chrysanthemums in his life, 'picking chrysanthemums under the east hedge, leisurely see the South mountains' (Tao, Y.M, 417 A.D.), the pursuit of comfortable, quiet, harmony between human and nature.

Flowers Painted by Foreign Artists

In the 19th century in France, the famous court painter Redude did a romantic thing all his life: he focussed on painting, especially roses. From the prime of life to the white head, 58 years' time, he completed the world-famous 'Rose Atlas', which records 169 kinds of lovely roses. At that time, the botanists were also painters, every tree and grass, a single leaf, all reflected their rigour to science and artistic aesthetic.

The Dutch post-impressionist painter Van Gogh, deeply influenced 20th-century art, especially brutalism and German expressionism. His famous sunflower, iris, apricot flowers and so on, become the immortal work of personality, emotion and vitality. Monet, a famous French painter who is good at using the experiments and expression techniques of light and shadow, also painted a large number of flowers: lilies, tulips, roses, orchids, and daisies, especially in the water lily series.

Renoir and Gauguin also have a large number of flower works, neither of which are the 1:1 exquisite photo-style palace still life imitation of the past. Cezanne has broken the layout and structure of the flowers in the indoor vase and reshaped the highly personalized, relatively free, three-dimensional and new perspective.

In short, whether it is celebrities and high officials, or the masses of the people, ancient and modern Chinese and foreign art painting, sculpture and public art are fond of flowers. Pictures containing flowers, by virtue of beauty, representing sunshine and upward, have rich vitality, surprise, auspiciousness, and even power.

Flower Patterns on Chinese and Foreign Coins

Patterns on coins represent the sovereign dignity and the spiritual connotation of a country. The breeding pattern, result and reproduction of flowers is just similar to the development of a nation, it can be said that the fate of flowers is the embodiment of the fate of human beings. The cultivation, irrigation of flowers, and the confirmation of the whole society and its existence.

Orchid is printed on China's one-yuan RMB. Orchid has a long history of planting in China and has always been regarded as a symbol of purity, elegance, patriotism, and loyalty.

Daffodil is printed on the Chinese 5-yuan RMB. It is simple and elegant, fragrant, and can resist the cold and open in winter, symbolizing the auspicious temperament. Known as the 'queen of flowers', the Chinese rose is printed on the ten-yuan banknote of Chinese RMB. It originated in China and is now popular overseas. It is a contribution to the cultural exchange between China and the West, and it is China's 'diplomatic flower'.

The lotus flower is printed on the 20-yuan RMB, 'out of the mud without dye', symbolizing elegance, honesty, modesty, cleanliness, and other noble characters. Printed on the 50 yuan is the chrysanthemum, it is one of the four gentlemen of the flower. Chrysanthemum symbolizes moral integrity, in Japan also, it was regarded as the symbol of the royal family. Plum blossoms topped the list of the largest 100-yuan RMB. 'Plum blossom incense from the bitter cold', plum blossom is not only the four gentlemen, or the age of cold three friends, as frost proud snow plum blossom, has always been respected by the Chinese nation. Its noble, strong, and unyielding character is regarded by the Chinese as an important connotation of the national spirit (F.G., 2021).

The crown of red and white roses is on the 20-pound British coin. In commemoration of the Wars of the Roses, England adopted the combined red and white rose as its national flower. The Wars of the Roses ended with the marriage of Henry VII of Lancaster and Elizabeth of York (R.S., 2022).

The rose on the back of a coin in the time of Cosimo III in Italy and the Latin motto aimed to express: The rose, though elegant, is opposed to a thorn if anyone tries to destroy it. Samoan, Greek, Austrian, Niue, Serbian, and other coins have roses on them. The paired floral pattern, released in 2013, is an extension of the 1984 floral collection. The reverse side of the 1-pound coin depicts a rose and an oak branch representing England (One Hua, 2017). At different ages, there are all kinds of flowers on the pound, which symbolizes the recognition of their national spirit.

In short, the flower image is shown in the coins of people around the world, which is the confirmation and symbol of beauty and prosperity and also a positive and brave way to resist foreign aggression and gather strength.

As a Metaphor for Female Characters

In China, our 'The Book of Songs · Zhou Nan · Tao Yao' (11th-6th century BC, by anonymous, Zhu, 1997), has: 'The peach trees are in full blossom, burn its splendor; Woman in the return, brilliant to her home. The peach trees are in full blossom, bears strong thick fruit; Woman in the return, appropriate to her home. The peach trees are in full blossom, its leaf lush and green; Woman in the return, wonderful for his family'. This is the earliest use of peach blossom to describe a woman, as a wife who supports the family and makes the family beautiful. However, we find that the expression of the peach blossom in the picture of Chinese painting is basically showing the vigorous vitality brought by the peach blossom under the full vitality of spring, as an important carrier of life and reproduction.

In the Song Dynasty, there was a famous peach blossom Chinese painting, a beautiful, simple Chinese brush style, and now it seems that they still keep the gorgeous colour of the peach blossom trees; under the tree painting is a pair of mandarin ducks playing in the water. This is clearly a sign of spring, all things multiplying and flourishing.

Qi Baishi's peach blossoms are full of personality, noisy, loud brush strokes, and are very modern and abstract. The still, flat picture gets a strong expressive force and extended force. At the top of the picture is the bright and noisy, unforgettable, and personalized peach blossom. The peach blossom tree is a pair of cicadas and a pair of eye-catching fish in the lower right corner.

They all show the vitality of their beauty. In the face of nature and works of art, artists, subjects, and viewers, are all equal and lively individuals. Such self-sufficiency, in line with the law of beauty, the form of beauty and unique personality, is the necessary condition for the existence of art.

The expression of the American female painter O 'Keeffe's picture is the local attention, attention and affirmation of the micro amplification of flowers, which is a presentation that we can see as another gender, free, healthy, complete, self-confident, and reflecting the law of nature. In fact, this also implies the Chinese consciousness of the natural laws of the universe and reflects the relative freedom. Although the secondary sex, they are half of the population and is an important part of 'people'.

Modern and Contemporary Expression

Chinese people's reference to the appearance of flowers and women can be said to be very implicit and without nudity. But since the Renaissance, the West has affirmed the individual, pursued scientific consciousness, and praised the human body. They think it is in proportion to nature, rhythm, harmony, and beauty. Therefore, the nude in Western artworks is naked in various shapes and sizes.

For example, the characters in Michelangelo's 'The Last Judgment' were originally naked, and the Virgin Mary was also naked. The famous oil painter Munch's representative work of expressionism painting 'Maria' is also nude, personalized, even exaggerated, exciting, and deformed. Damien Hirst's sculpture Virgin Mother is a standing female figure, not only naked, but the other half is dissected and bloody, showing the internal organs.

Peach blossom was painted by Zhou Chunya, a famous contemporary Chinese painter. It expresses spring, vitality, and sex, and the warm and heavy discussion and thinking of life, this is the modern consciousness and contemporary thinking. There are also many painters in the United States with similar performances in the spring suburbs.

Huang (2008, p. 18) in art criticism involves art criticism standard in the first aspect of whether aesthetic said: 'whether for modern art, or for contemporary art, aesthetic did encounter unprecedented challenge, the problem is that when we in accordance with the existing aesthetic standards to judge, which nature is broken, the key is that whether the aesthetic standard itself has also changed? Further, are the social concept and its political and cultural context also changing accordingly? Therefore, in this sense, it is undoubtedly a misreading to simply attribute modern and contemporary art to anti-aesthetic painting or de-aesthetic painting'.

From a micro individual or a local attention, from thinking and discussion, the society, and even the thinking and exploration of the whole human being are mapped. In the process of adjusting, balancing, and projecting again, there will be contradictions and collisions. Such a cultural state of circulation, construction and development is the cultural trend of today's world.

For example, the 2022 World Biennale in Chengdu, China, shows the works of artists from various countries. Such an exhibition hall place is not for people to prostrate themselves humbly in front of it, but to become cautious people who 'dare not speak loudly'. It is an art place where the audience can also participate in artistic creation. For example, the artist Fenwan Chen's flowers are in the mirror, like a maze. It is covered with pink flowers, and the base is made of rotating mirrors. The audience can see their own shadow in it and also can see the gorgeous maze-like flowers. The audience can think about their own social situation, their own value, and meaning, and find their own confirmation through these works of art. In the interactive entertainment of visiting, rest, and play, the interactive participation highlights the subjectivity of the audience and has great social significance. It has pleased, aesthetically educated, inspired, cultivated, integrated, and united the people of all ethnic groups in the world, and built the spiritual world of the people. Therefore, the people having a strong call for the extension of the exhibition is the positive effect of modern art.

Lu (1908) talked about how to deal with foreign ideology and culture and Chinese traditional culture, he said: 'This is why a wise man must understand the general situation of the world, weigh and contest, get rid of its bias, obtain its essence, and apply to the country, and run harmoniously and freely. Externally, it will not fall behind the world's thoughts, and internally, it will not lose its inherent ancestral blood. It will draw on the advantages of the past and the present and establish new sects'.

The current world trend of thought is that the people of all ethnic groups need to live a prosperous, stable, and happy life. To build a beautiful China and build a beautiful world is the common aspiration and ideal of the people of all ethnic groups in the world. As an artistic expression, different nationalities and individuals should not only pay attention to the expression of individual emotions and cherish individual happiness and fairness but also observe the aesthetic characteristics of people of all ethnic groups in the world. In such a cycle, we can observe, understand, compare, and distinguish the cultural characteristics of different civilization systems in the cultural map of different historical periods (Yan, 2016).

Clive (1914) said: 'art wants to meet the requirements of this era, you must expand their influence, must have more popular art, there must be more for the general whole is not important, but is very important for individual art, because art sometimes is second-rate, but at the same time, he can keep the true colors. Not only that, art must be more inclusive, but of course people cannot achieve this by buying the best artists and making them less expensive, but to create such art in their best to achieve this'.

As Chinese artists, we should summarize the outstanding cultural achievements of the world and the construct and develop cultural experience, and on this basis, more accurately grasp and observe the characteristics of Chinese culture and inspire and strengthen the confidence in Chinese culture, consciousness ,and confidence, out of a road with our own national characteristics of cultural revival to make the Chinese culture and the rest of the world culture symbiosis, to further promote the development of human civilization.

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The Development for Social Entrepreneurship Innovation: An Extension Tax Theory of Public Good for Social Enterprise in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The concept of social enterprise (SE) has drawn interest on a global scale as an alternative strategy for promoting community social well-being. With the help of this revolutionary paradigm, corporate organisations' objectives have expanded their conventional focus from making money to addressing social challenges and promoting social cohesion. The idea of social entrepreneurship is not just more broad than that of a non-profit organisation; it also refers to a number of corporate entities or business models that use both profit-making and altruistic objectives. Unlike charitable organisations that received tax exemption treatment, SEs have not received a tax exemption even though Malaysia revised its regulations and accredited SEs.

Objective: Therefore, this article aims to expand the theory of public good to SEs in Malaysia.

Methods: In order to review and analyse legal theories for the development and application to social entrepreneurship, this research followed a legal doctrinal methodology. This study used primary and secondary legal sources to gather its data. Library research was used to find the aforementioned data using legal databases, websites, or textual sources.

Findings: Considering the SE sector's contribution to social development in Malaysia, similar to charitable organisations, it is necessary for the Malaysian government to adopt a special tax treatment to support and promote the existence of SEs in the market.

Results: The Public Good Theory, which primarily states that income tax exemption is granted for non-profit charity organisations owing to their dedication to generating public benefits, is used to justify and derive the tax exemption treatment for charitable organisations. This paper suggests applying the public good theory to SE in order to grant it a certain tax benefit or tax exemption status.

Keywords: SE, tax treatment, Malaysia, Public Good Theory.

Introduction

A business concept known as Social Enterprise (SE) was created to provide entrepreneurs with a platform to accomplish two goals simultaneously. One tool for addressing economic or social problems in a community or nation is SE. Most corporate entities in Southeast Asia are private with fewer social or economic companies. As a result, the United Kingdom (UK) passed unique legislation to oversee and encourage the growth of SE. These were created to remedy the lack of legislation governing the formation of philanthropic social businesses. These rules were created to help SE prioritise social purposes over the interests of private stockholders, in opposition to the commercial legal system. Contrary to other commercial entities, SE was founded for the benefit of the community, with the creation of profit being primarily for long-term sustainability. The existence and operation of SE, which serve as vehicles for community development and have the potential to benefit both the state and society, are autonomous of the federal government. With SE's active involvement, the government would have spent less on general government expenses and allowed the community to establish and maintain its source of income. SE is currently conducted in business entities that resemble commercial businesses, despite their operations and profit sharing being distinct. SE are taxed in a manner comparable to those of businesses that do not have special tax benefits. This paper discusses a plan to use the public good theory to support giving SE a special tax break as a government incentive for its community and local economy contributions. This study was carried out using a legal research methodology that comprised an in-depth analysis of the relevant legal ideas (Nuraisyah Chua Abdullah, 2018)

An Overview of SE in Malaysia

Social enterprise (SE) in Malaysia is defined as a "business entity that is registered under any written law in Malaysia that proactively creates positive social or environmental impact in a way that is financially sustainable" (Malaysian Global Innovation and Creativity Centre, 2019). An organisation that has successfully completed the accreditation process will be listed on SE as an Accredited Social Enterprise. A Ministry of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives (MEDAC) internet platform gives consumers and the general public access to information on SEs more effectively.

Most of the SE is handled through cooperative societies and other commercial entities founded by isolated communities in particular geographic locations and revolving around certain topics (Radzi et al., 2020). SE in Malaysia is divided according to their entrepreneurial activity into two groups. Two forms of SE, social purpose enterprises and entrepreneurial non-profits, are represented by several organisations, including non-profit and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as well as existing corporate groups.

Those who operate under a non-profit organisation will be governed by either the Trustee (Incorporation) Act 1952 or Society Act 1976 or the Societies Act 1966. In contrast, those in social business are governed by the law applicable to their business organisation, such as the Partnership Act 1961, the Companies Act 2016 and the Limited Liability Partnership Act 2012. Thus, local SE have challenges in selecting the appropriate legal form to register and conduct their social operations (Mokhtar et al., 2016)

In 2017, in response to the rising demand for SE, the Malaysian government released the Malaysian SE Blueprint (MSEB)(MaGIC, 2015), which outlines methods for boosting this sector. The MSEB was created to produce a sizable number of prosperous SE that enable sustained long-term growth for the sector as Malaysia advances in the process of economic transformation towards a healthy and resilient economy. The MSEB outlined a three-year plan to create a sustainable and egalitarian SE sector that would "transform the nation's economy".

In order to ensure social and economic well-being, the Malaysian government has continued to support the development of SE. According to Malaysia's 2019 budget, there was an agenda for SE. Income tax deductions will be provided for contributions from any parties to any social enterprise subject to a maximum of 10% of the aggregate income of a company or 7% of the aggregate income of a person other than a company (MOF, 2018). The Social Enterprise Accreditation (SEA) was established to confirm the legal status of SE in Malaysia. An accredited SE will have more access to the many available support systems as a result (Mansor & Rahman, 2021)

In 2022, this trend continued with introduction of a new framework by MEDAC that included several incentives to attract more players to venture into this new business (MEDAC, 2022). This might include tax treatment for those who have been accredited. The development of SE in Malaysia has a new national direction provided by this framework. According to Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob, the framework aims to empower social entrepreneurs by helping them overcome potential obstacles in line with the goals, plans and initiatives outlined in the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030, National Entrepreneurship Policy 2030 and 12th Malaysia Plan. Additionally, Minister of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperative, Noh Omar reaffirms that under SEMy2030, private companies participating in programs to encourage SE would receive a three-year income tax exemption. This exemption is one of the government's incentives for enterprises to support the private sector through social aid. As a result, SE in Malaysia has experienced phenomenal growth in recent years.

Revenue Law in Malaysia

The Income Tax Act of 1967 (often known as "ITA 1967") governs all tax-related issues for income received in Malaysia. According to the Federal Constitution, tax policies are covered in the Federal List of the Ninth Schedule; the Federal capital is subject to the Federation's jurisdiction over financial issues, including tax rates. The Inland Revenue Board (IRB), established as a statutory agency under the Ministry of Finance, is the entity with the legal authority to oversee and administer direct tax legislation. The primary goals of the IRB implementation are the assessment, collection, and enforcement of direct tax payments.

The self-assessment system that underpins Malaysia's tax administration imposes a legal requirement on taxpayers to calculate their own taxable income in conformity with government policy and rules. Since 2001, businesses have been using the self-assessment system, and it has since been expanded to other special class of income on which tax is chargeable is covered in Section 4A of the ITA 1967. As a result, for income to be chargeable, it must fall into one of the categories stated in sections 4 or 4A of ITA 1967. The lists, however, are not exclusive of one another. This indicates that both clauses may apply to such revenue.

The legal definition of income is not mentioned in the ITA 1967. Due to this gap in the law, it has become challenging to distinguish between transactions that are allowed to be counted as income and those that are not because the act only taxes income, not capital gains, that an individual may have acquired. As a result, specific references to court-decided judicial interpretations from earlier judgments are pertinent and must be considered. In the case of *Mamor Sdn Bhd v. Director of Inland Revenue [1981]1MLJ 117*, the High Court established principles for interpreting income in accordance with the Act.

a) Not every gain or profit-earning by the taxpayer is taxable income according to the Income Tax Act 1967
b) In order for a transaction to be taxed as an income, the nature of the profit has to fall within the ambit of section 4 (a)–(f)
c) One has to resort to case law to explore the scope of income
d) A rigid interpretation of the Act is required

The court had to decide whether money obtained through the cutting and selling wood from state government property given to the corporation for the growth of oil palm would be regarded as revenue under the legislation. The court determined that the money the corporation obtained from the removal of the timber for land development was merely capital and not subject to the "ITA 1967" as a result.

Business and non-business incomes are the two broad categories into which revenue may be divided. Every year, both types of income are assessed, referred to as the Year of Assessment (YA). The method for determining taxable income is outlined in Section 5 of the ITA 1967. Companies, a group of people and a corporation sole are all considered "persons" under Section 2 of ITA 1967. Thus, the Act applies to everyone residing in Malaysia. Any income earned in or derived from Malaysia will be subject to tax in that year under the ITA, which is based on a territorial basis. The territorial definition is expanded by Section 3 of the same act to cover foreign money earned in Malaysia from countries outside Malaysia. According to the aforementioned provisions of the ITA 1967, income tax is levied on all individuals, groups of individuals and corporations residing in Malaysia or earning any income there. Thus, it is necessary to discuss how corporate business entities, such as limited liability partnerships (LLPs), cooperative societies and businesses, are taxed for this research. Additionally, these businesses may qualify for tax breaks and incentives in specific situations. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the present tax treatment of charitable organisations under the Malaysian Income Tax Act 1967.

Taxation for Corporate Entities

The Malaysian Federal Constitution of 1957 gives the federal government the authority to regulate and oversee commercial operations inside its borders. The ITA 1967 is one of the laws set on business organisations. All commercial entities are required to pay income tax for each YA by this act, and the Inland Revenue Board keeps an eye on them. Corporate entities are subject to corporation tax, as opposed to other business entities such as partnerships and sole proprietorships (subject to individual taxation).

All corporate business entities are subject to corporation tax under Malaysia's tax system. The excess profit that corporate organisations make from their business operations is subject to taxation. The Malaysian government collected more than RM 72 billion in company tax in 2016 (the majority was derived from the income tax on petroleum, offshore operations and electricity levies). This sum rises yearly with the expansion of prosperous corporate entities carrying out business activities. The tax treatment varies according to the characteristics of each corporate entity type.

Company

All businesses with Malaysian incorporation must present financial accounting records for approval and audit. As a result, a company's profits and losses must always depict its financial situation at the conclusion of the fiscal year. The ITA applies to any business approved as a corporate resident in accordance with the aforementioned provision (section 8). Based on the audited accounts presented to the Inland Revenue Board, corporation tax will be assessed. If necessary, the IRB may check these audited reports after seven years. Since 2001, businesses must also conduct self-assessments. According to Section 107C(8) of the Income Tax Act of 1967, both estimated and revised estimated incomes may be paid to the Inland Revenue Board in instalments. Section 107C(9) of the Income Tax Act of 1967 states that any act of non-compliance with section 107C(8) renders the firm subject for a late payment penalty of 10%, to be assessed on the remaining tax instalment if not paid for the month. Each company must submit its tax return (actual tax after subtracting expected tax instalment) to the Inland Revenue Board within seven months of the assessment period's year-end date, per Section 77 (1A) of the Income Tax Act of 1967.

The defendant in *Kerajaan Malaysia v. United Axis Sdn Bhd [2009] AMTC 157* was charged with violating section 77(IA) of the ITA 1967 by failing to pay a tax debt of RM 2,034,300.41. However, the defendant asserted this was erroneous because the sale and purchase agreement should be utilised to calculate the amount of tax owed (which can only be measured or computed upon project completion). According to the complaint, the self-assessment notice system requires the income tax return to be treated as a notice of assessment under section 77(1A) and served under section 90(1A) (1B). The tax is required and payable when the notification is provided, regardless of any appeals that may be made against the assessment. The court held that the whole tax must be paid under Malaysian income tax law regardless of a disagreement regarding the assessment in the notification. The court will not permit any appeals on the disputed tax payment amount. The defendant should bring up the argument before a special commissioner.

Cooperative Society

Cooperative societies are societies registered under any written law relating to the registration of cooperative societies in Malaysia under the ITA 1967 (Section 2). Section 65 of the ITA 1967 provides special tax treatment for two additional entities:

- Farmers' Associations governed under the Farmer Association Act 1967
- Fisherman's Associations registered under the Fisherman Association Act 1971

Therefore, the ITA 1967 does not apply to any cooperative society registered outside Malaysia. Cooperative societies are subject to tax based on income from both mutual and non-mutual activity. Section 5 of the ITA 1967 is used to compute the chargeable income for cooperative societies. Section 65A(a) and Section 65A(b) of ITA 1967 also provide specific deductions.

A cooperative society would be covered by all company-related provisions of the ITA 1967. This could apply to the clauses in Sections 107C and 77A. Unlike corporations, cooperatives receive tax exemptions from the government for the first five years from the date of registration (Part 1 Paragraph 12(a) 6 Schedule ITA 1967). If the member's funds on the first day of the base period were less than RM 750,000, this privilege might be continued after the five-year period has finished (Part 1 Paragraph 12(b) of Schedule 6 of the Income Tax Act of 1967).

Additionally, cooperative societies' dividend payments are tax-exempt (Part 1 Paragraph 12(a) 6 Schedule of ITA 1967).

Limited Liability Partnership (LLP)

A hybrid corporate business organisation, LLP, was introduced in Malaysia in 2012. Similar to corporations, an LLP must pay corporate tax at the predetermined rate on its chargeable revenue for the assessment year. The first Schedule of Part 1 of the Income Tax Act of 1967 will generally be used to assess income tax on the LLP. For any LLP with RM 2.5 million or less in paid-up capital during the assessment year, the same schedule's Paragraph 2D applies (2D of 1th Schedule of ITA).

The Malaysian government also offers a tax incentive for new LLPs with capital contributions under RM 2.5 million to cover incorporation costs. This implies that a new LLP is permitted to write off any incorporation costs spent within the assessment year. The income of a LLP for the assessment year derived from sources outside of Malaysia but received in Malaysia is free from tax, according to Paragraph 28(1) of the 6th Schedule of the Income Tax Act of 1967. This exemption, however, does not apply to any LLP that:

a) operates in the banking business, insurance and shipping or air transport
b) whose foreign income, although considered as derived from Malaysia, has suffered foreign tax

Profits from LLPs may also be shared by all partners. Any profit received, credited or distributed to partners by a LLP is protected by Paragraph 12C of the sixth schedule of ITA 1967. Regarding the tax treatment of LLP partners, each LLP partner is not required to pay taxes on their portion of the LLP's income. Only compensation, perquisites and benefits-in-kind received from the organisation are subject to tax. The deduction for the partner's income for LLPs is also subject to specific limitations under the Malaysia Income Tax Act of 1967.

Tax Treatment

Tax Benefit

Although corporate companies pay more taxes on their profits, the government provides these entities with several deductions and incentives to help them continue operating. Deductions for business expenses and government incentives for particular activities are some advantages. The ITA 1967 also stipulates a formula for calculating adjusted income before taxable income is determined. Acceptable company expenses, specific allowable expenses and government incentives may all fall under this category.

An adjusted income is normally calculated from the deduction of gross income after all business expenses have been paid, in accordance with Section 33 (1) of the ITA 1967. To qualify for these deductions, a firm must fulfil two conditions. Despite being separate tests, the "wholly" and "exclusively" tests are always interrelated. Nevertheless, these tests are not defined by the ITA 1967 or any Public Ruling. Therefore, both definitions must be extrapolated from the law. In *Bentley, Stokes and Lowless v. Beeson*, Roman L. J. referred to "exclusively" as the intention or purpose of the money spent alone to generate commercial profit. He defined "wholly" as the amount spent. *Director of Inland Revenue [1982] CLJ 402, Ampat Tin Dredging Ltd*., Mohd Azmi J., rendered the following decisions:

> *"The question whether money is wholly and exclusively incurred in the production of gross income within the meaning of s 33(1) of the Income Tax, is a question of fact to be decided on the circumstances of each case. In this particular case, in the fact before the Special Commissioner, there was sufficient evidence to support their decision and they are corrected in law that that the disputed sum is not deductible under s 33(1) of Income Tax Act 1967"*

Tax Break for Business Expenses

The ability to deduct company expenses is one of the government's incentives for any business entity for their charges and expenses in developing their earnings. All corporate entities may deduct several expenses from their taxes, including entertainment expenses for business (Section 39)(1), rental of premises (Section 33)(1)(b), repair and renovation costs for premises or machinery (Section 33)(1)(c), licencing expenses (Section 34)(6)(m), training costs for employee (Section 34)(6)(a), bad and doubtful debt (Section 34)(2) and contributions to approved schemes (Section 34)(4).

Tax Incentives

Corporate organisations may benefit from tax incentives in particular industries. Tax incentives are designed to attract more foreign and domestic investors to establish their businesses in Malaysia and encourage the development of specific industries. Corporation entities engaged in Islamic finance, environmental protection, biotechnology and information technology are now eligible to claim a variety of tax incentives, including:

Investment Tax Allowance

The government's plan to promote and support investment activity in Malaysia includes the Investment Tax Allowance. Under the Promotion Investment Act of

1986, this form of incentive has been published in the gazette.

Preferential Tax Treatment

Preferential Tax Treatment is an exemption from paying income tax on certain business operations in particular sectors, such as dividends received by offshore firms from Malaysian resident corporations and dividends paid by offshore companies resulting from their offshore business activities.

Double Deduction

A government incentive known as the double tax deduction is given to legally recognised businesses to encourage and promote specific activities like R&D (as approved by the minister), revenue expenses for the promotion of exports, authorised employee training programs, halal certification and brand promotion advertising. Against the taxable profit, any costs associated with those operations may be deducted twice. Before calculating adjusted income, revenue expenses generated from those operations are given twice as much relief under double deduction.

For instance, the Malaysian government announced in the Budget 2019 that operational expenses incurred by Anchor Companies that adopt Industry 4.0 would be treated as a double tax deduction (MOF, 2018).

Tax Treatment for Charitable Activities

It is important to note that taxation is crucial to the state's ability to function. The government can efficiently carry out its duties for the general welfare in all areas, including social security, public infrastructure and defence. Tax incentives are a method for achieving a goal instead of using direct spending from total receipts. The Pioneer Status and Investment Tax Allowance, the Specific Incentive Scheme and special tax treatments to encourage small and medium-sized enterprises in Malaysia are a few tax incentives the Malaysian Government has implemented to boost economic operations.

Companies may contribute under community development incentives for tax-exempt donations to well-known groups. This shows that the Malaysian government values corporate social responsibility and other charity endeavours as means for corporate companies to contribute to community development. A corporate organisation may actively enhance social well-being through different CSR programs through these engagement platforms.

The ITA 1967 addresses tax incentives for CSR initiatives in three primary ways. Both provisions have distinct effects on how taxes are computed.

1) Charitable Activities under Section 34(6) of the Income Tax Act 1967

Section 34(1) of the ITA 1967 provides special provisions applicable to adjusted income from the business.

"(1) In ascertaining the adjusted income of a person from a business for the basis period for a year of assessment, deductions shall be made from the gross income from the business for that period in accordance with the following subsections (the person, business, period and gross income in question being referred to in those subsections as the relevant person, the business, the relevant period and the relevant gross income respectively)"

Section 34(6) specifically refers to situations in which business entities may deduct from their gross income as compensation for charity actions they have undertaken.

2) Charitable Activities under Section 44(6) Income Tax Act 1967

Further government incentives are included in this legislation to the same goal, in addition to the authorised specified expenses gazette mentioned in section 34(6) of the ITA 1967 above. The Malaysian government also offers tax incentives for businesses engaged in clearly identifiable charitable operations from accredited organisation under Section 44(6) of ITA 1967.

As specified in section 44(7) of the ITA 1967, this provision permits any charitable donation to a federal, state, local or other recognisable institution or organisation to be deducted up to 7% from an individual's aggregate income for the relevant year and 10% from an organisation's aggregate income. However, such contributions must be made voluntarily without expecting anything in return.

3) Charitable Activities under Section 44 (11C) of the Income Tax Act 1967

The Malaysian government has permitted tax deductions of up to 10% of a company's gross income and 7% of individuals for donations given to social businesses (Kementerian Kewangan Malaysia, 2019). When a charitable organisation receives a donation, as per Section 44(6) of the Income Tax Act of 1967, this treatment is equivalent to that. The distinction is in the allowance, based on the minister's administrative authority to permit a tax deduction under Section 44 and the donation to a charitable organisation (11C). Section 44 (11C) of the Income Tax Act of 1967 states that:

> "There shall be deducted from aggregate income a relevant person for the relevant year reduced by any deduction for that year in accordance with subsection (1) an amount equal to any gift of money or cost contribution in any kind of made the relevant person in the basis period for that year for any project of national interest approved by the Minister".

Deductions under Sections 44(6) and 44(11C), in contrast to those allowed by prior rules, must originate from the business entity's total revenue for the relevant assessment year.

Tax Exemption for Non-profit Organisations

Non-profit organisations can be categorised into two groups for tax purposes: charity organisations and non-charitable organisations. The belief that all non-profit organisations are exempt from paying taxes is not unqualified. Those without charitable status are nevertheless liable for taxes on any income not generated for charitable purposes. This implies that this particular type of organisation is required to pay tax on any revenues obtained from its commercial activity, such as entrance fees for non-members of the association.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are often managed by the private sector in Malaysia and fall under this category. Their organisation's goal is to foster welfare and philanthropy for society rather than making a profit. Non-profit organisations are "a club or association or similar institution is formed not for commercial purpose but social recreation, sport, art, science, literature or other leisure pursuits for the interest of their members," according to the Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia.

If a charitable organisation fulfils the conditions, it may apply for recognition to the director general. The English case of *Commissioner of Income Tax v. Pemsel (3 TC 53)* explains a charitable organisation. In this instance, Lord Mac Naughten divided charity into several major categories:

(a) Trusts for the relief of poverty
(b) Trusts for the advancement of education
(c) Trusts for the advancement of religion
(d) Trusts for the purpose of beneficial to the community not falling under any of the proceeding head

Charitable organisations are also required to submit audited yearly accounts to the Inland Revenue Board as part of their governance procedures at the conclusion of their financial year. This reviewed financial account must disclose every source of income, including gifts and profits from businesses. Additionally, it must list every expense that the company incurred during the course of the year.

Public Good Theory

Theoretically, Public Good Theory justifies and derives the tax exemption treatment for charity organisations. This viewpoint primarily states that charitable non-profit organisations are granted income tax exemptions because of their dedication to generating public benefits (Weisbrod, 1988). Without a doubt, philanthropic non-profit organisations are better suited to provide for and address social problems than the government. Consequently, such treatment is required.

Non-profit charitable organisations fulfil many government obligations to meet social needs because the government provides the facilities for them to do so. Despite this benefit, the government nevertheless plays a significant role in regulating charitable organisation operations by placing certain limits. Additionally, within the context of tax exemption treatment, the government has the authority to decide what constitutes the public benefit (Rob Atkinson, 1990)

Furthermore, it is standard practice to subject tax-exempt non-profit organisations to several rigorous standards to guarantee they uphold the goals that motivated their founding. The non-distribution of earnings ensures public welfare by informing the organisation's founders and contributors that any proceeds are not their personal property but rather are for the benefit of others. A tangible mechanism is required to show that public welfare is preferred over private interests if profit distribution is permitted for this type of organisation (Hines et al., 2010). The plan to grant tax benefits to for-profit charitable organisations may be most significant since it may open up new opportunities for the private sector to evade taxes, endangering government revenue.

From a different perspective, it is also possible to see how it recognises the necessity of balancing the supply and demand for social goods and services. Those who support this viewpoint point out that individuals are willing to pay for the social goods that a charitable non-profit organisation provides as a result of social and economic imbalances. In recognition of both parties, the government takes the initiative to give tax exemption to contributors who are prepared to pay for the social benefit, as well as the charity organisation.

Despite the fact that this theory is often related to non-profit organisations, there is a case where the court applied this theory to a for-profit business. The Federal Court of Australia considered the question of whether a commercial corporate organisation could be considered a charitable organisation for the purposes of charity endorsement even though the majority of its profits were donated to another welfare organisation in the case of *Commissioner of Taxation v. Word Investments Ltd [2007] FCAFC 171*. The question before the Federal Court of Australia was whether a for-profit corporation that donates the majority of its revenues to another welfare group might still be considered charitable for the purposes of charity endorsement. According to a report, the Word Investments generated profits through the operation of Bethel Funerals, a funeral home, from 1996 to 2002. The Bethel Funerals engaged in commercial activity to generate cash, cover costs and generate profits. However, most of its earnings were regularly donated to Wycliffe Bible Translators Australia and Christian groups. The business established a trust in 2002 to own and manage Bethel Funerals; thereafter, it was not involved and benefited from that commercial operation.

The court concurred that the goal of producing a profit should be the primary topic of analysis rather than the specifics of the commercial operations. The court rejected the tax authority's notion that a charitable organisation could only engage in commercial activities as a subsidiary or supplementary to the entity's charitable activity. The court further stated that the tax authority's primary responsibility is to oversee an integrated and comprehensive inquiry to determine the precise characteristics of the organisation in light of its goals, purposes and activities. The Federal Court of Australia then ruled that, notwithstanding the fact that the firm engaged in commercial activity and was not a non-profit organisation, its establishment was unmistakably for philanthropic purposes. Therefore, this was enough to classify Word Investments as a charitable organisation.

Tax Treatment for SE

It has been noted that SEs' profit distribution policies are the biggest barrier preventing them from gaining tax treatment equal to that of a non-profit organisation. The non-profit organisation is permitted to engage in commercial operations to support itself financially, but not permitted to distribute any profit from such activities to any individuals who own interests in the organisation. This restriction was put in place to prevent any misuse of funds for personal gain. As a result, all profits from its commercial endeavours must be put only towards achieving its stated (charitable) goals.

Tax law experts are concerned about the expansion of SEs, which fall between these two categories of entities. Many academics are debating whether for-profit organisations pursuing public benefits are eligible for tax benefits previously available only to charitable organisations (Doeringer, 2010)exhibit ambivalent responses to novelty, altered response to stressors, and cognitive impairments when tested as adults. They also overrespond to stimuli predictive of reinforcement, as shown by their elevated levels of conditioned activity when the presentation of food reliably follows daily activity tests in photocell cages. The dose-effect curve for D-amphetamine is shifted to the left in this situation, confirming the enhanced locomotor and stereotyped behaviours seen following systemic treatment with a variety of other psychomotor stimulant drugs. In vivo measurement of amine activity in isolates using microdialysis shows elevations in dopamine concentration in both the nucleus accumbens (ventral striatum. Those who favour giving charitable organisations the same tax benefits as for-profit businesses contend that the public good principle should be expanded to include for-profit firms that pursue social goals, such as SE (Atkinson, 1990). They stress that public good theory is neither prescriptive nor exclusive to non-profit organisations. The government should therefore offer tax advantages for any initiatives that aid in creating public goods.

Posner and Eric (2007) posit that despite allowing tax exemptions for for-profit organisations, which may make charitable organisations more susceptible to fraud and misconduct from businesspeople who prey on the public's goodwill, each jurisdiction's criminal misconduct laws are sufficient to curtail these offences. Furthermore, SE are subject to a legal framework, encouraging them to pursue their social mission at all times, regardless of the economic conditions, similar to the behaviour of charitable entities than a conventional corporation, contributing to the public good in prosperous times (and turns it off when economies change).

Allowing tax exemptions for SE also results in resource allocation that is reasonably priced. Tax advantages would subtly promote the expansion of for-profit charitable organisations. Due to this tendency, the government would allocate less money for direct community development spending (Surrey et al., 1970). Then, this allocation might be used to meet demand in other sectors, like development and the military. The above-mentioned arguments have their detractors, who disagree with the tax-exempt status of SEs for various reasons. According to Mayer and Ganahl (2014), it is challenging to communicate the idea of public benefit because non-profit organisations are using it. They contend that the idea of the public benefit is too open-ended, allowing any entity or group to merely assert that it has been pursued. For instance, traditional businesses can assert that by creating jobs for the community, they have had a positive impact on society. They further contend that the SE concept is not appropriate for tax exemption since such treatment could jeopardise its status as a hybrid organisation due to its competitiveness in commercial market activities.

Additionally, it is typical for tax-exempt non-profit organisations to be subject to several severe regulations to guarantee that they uphold the goals that motivated their founding. Since the founders and contributors of the organisation are aware that any revenues are not their private property but are for the benefit of others, the public good is thereby secured through the non-distribution of profits. A tangible mechanism is required to show that public welfare is prioritised over private interests if profit distribution for this type of organisation is permitted (Hines et al., 2010). The plan to grant tax benefits to for-profit charitable organisations may be most significant since it may open up new opportunities for the private sector to evade taxes, endangering government revenue.

Those who oppose giving SE preferred tax treatment are also concerned about governance difficulties. Being a hybrid organisation implies running the danger of governance-related problems, particularly if management does not always strike the right balance between individual interests and the company's social objectives. Therefore, these risk generally undermines the tax base's support for the charity, which could also impact non-profit organisations (Mayer & Ganahl, 2014).

L Hitoshi Mayer suggests that a tax scheme for SEs should consist of three elements:

a) **Investment**
A tax scheme for the SE should promote and encourage investor to provide capital funding for SE (Llyod Hitoshi Mayer, 2017)

b) **Commitment**
The scheme will also play an important role in ensuring that the SEs continuously honour their commitment for social benefit (Mayer & Ganahl, 2014).

c) **Purpose**
The purpose of selection is to encourage other business entities to operate as SE that generate profit and pursue at least one social benefit (Llyod Hitoshi Mayer, 2017).

For the long term, this researcher suggests that the government include SEs in the scope of the public good theory. This principle does not only apply to non-profit organisations, which means any group that promotes social good could use the public good theory (Posner & Eric A, 2007). Therefore, it may be argued that the government should reward their effort and dedication to promoting social well-being with a tax benefit. This idea can therefore be used for all people more effectively, independent of their characteristics and limitations in economic activity.

The public good theory could be applied to the government's tax incentive programs to support social goals by compensating citizens for their good actions.

According to Surrey and McDaniel (1970), there are two components to income tax. The first relates to the fundamental rules of income tax, such as the definition of taxable income, accounting regulations, rate regimes, exemptions and the classification of entities. They state that the second part of the income tax consists of special preferences known as tax subsidies or incentives. Tax incentives are created with a specific goal in mind, favouring certain parties, particularly to meet the needs of the government. It can come in various shapes, including permanent exclusions from income, deductions, exemptions, postponements of tax responsibilities, tax credits and special rates.

Without a doubt, tax expenditures can diminish federal treasury collections when the real tax due is less than the required amount. Even though the government may use direct spending from its annual budget to foster social development, tax expenditure has a number of advantages over direct spending, making it the most desirable method for achieving these goals.

The government may promote private engagement in social development through tax incentives or spending. Additionally, it has been asserted that employing tax incentives rather than direct budgetary decisions from the treasury makes them easier to implement. This is because the private sector will run the project through tax incentives, which minimises interaction with bureaucracy and governmental processes.

The use of tax incentives for the private sector is heavily criticised. Private decision-making may exacerbate power imbalances, while the private sector would preferentially select certain projects suited to their objectives, even though such implementation may decrease government bureaucracy and increase the effectiveness in responding to social development needs.

If the government supports the projects directly from the treasury, this cannot take place (Burman, 2003). Additionally, from the perspective of governance, tax spending would push the price of tax administration and necessitate the creation of a new regulatory agency to oversee it. In this scenario, the allocation and expenditure transparency mechanisms would be under legislative control as opposed to a direct budget. As a result, every legislative decision could be examined within the budget cycle to prevent fraud or misallocation (Bratić, 2006). Most activities are not subject to internal supervision (as in a direct budget), supervised by specified government authorities; therefore, this does not apply to tax expenditures.

According to Malaysia, SE may not obtain preferential treatment regarding taxes; consequently, their number (and growth) may not be as high as that of traditional firms. These SEs are likewise liable to income tax by the government because their business methods are comparable to those of for-profit businesses. According to the ITA 1967, SEs receive the same status as other commercial organisations. The lack of unique tax benefits for SEs may deter social activists from starting firms (Palil et al., 2021).

In order to justify tax exemption for SEs that are equal to charitable organisations as defined in section 44(6) of ITA 1967, the government is strongly advised to apply the public good theory to SE. The concept of SE should be incorporated into the definition of the charity organisation, and the applicable provisions should be modified accordingly.

Conclusion

Malaysia has a thorough tax system regulating all money earned and received inside its borders. All of these incomes are combined and dispersed for the benefit of economic and social development through the ITA 1967 and the IRB.

In Malaysia, all business entities are subject to taxation based on their assessment year. Tax is imposed on the owners of non-corporate entities, whereas corporate entities are liable in their own names. Corporate enterprises are subject to tax rates from their taxable income of up to 25%. The Malaysian government has a number of programs to encourage private investment in the nation's development, in addition to tight enforcement and high tax rates. These incentives are provided for a number of objectives, including promoting the growth of new businesses and fostering social development. For individuals who meet the requirements, this system grants tax incentives (either in the form of exemptions or incentives). For instance, Malaysia was specifically promoted as a desirable location for foreign investors by the Promotion of Investment Act 1986. Malaysian entrepreneurs are encouraged to boost their export activities by the Income Tax (Allowance for increased export) Rule 1999.

Based on the public good theory, tax benefits for social development are designed to encourage private engagement in advancing social development. This is very different from tax incentives created to promote business. According to the ITA 1967, these incentives can be divided into: aggregate income and adjusted income. Corporations are permitted to deduct contributions and expenses for CSR programs under Section 34(6) of the Act, while corporate entities are qualified for tax relief of up to 10% from their annual taxable income for any donation to recognisable organisations or institutions under Section 44(6) of the same Act.

The advent of SEs in the economic sector sparks discussion among academics about the appropriate tax treatment for them as well as how to best explain their existence. Some academics believe SEs and charitable organisations should be treated similarly because both have a stake in advancing societal well-being. Critics of these viewpoints assert that charitable organisations must adhere to non-profit distribution restrictions when doing public benefit activities. This is carried out to maintain exclusivity and prevent groups from operating for their gain through covert agendas.

It is suggested that SE be awarded a specific tax treatment considering the growth of the SE sector in Malaysia.

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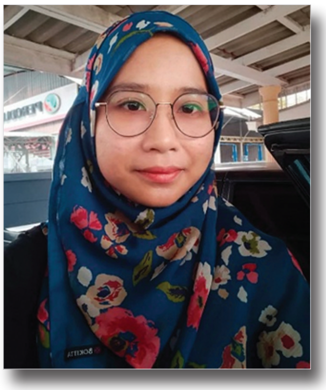

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Mamet's Oleanna in a Hazing Clash for Becoming Self-Actualized

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ABSTRACT

What humans can be, they must be. They must be true to their own nature. Abraham Maslow Oleanna is a 1992 play by the American playwright and author, David Mamet. This three-act, two-character play is about a tricky clash between a professor, John, and his student, Carol, who has a prejudice towards him and duels against him to defeat him. This play has mostly been analyzed through the thematic concepts of sexual harassment and power play between two opposite sexes. However, this essay is a try to do something innovative. In this study, with the help of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, as the methodology, it is going to be approved that the whole story is shaped around shortage and lack because human beings are motivated by their unsatisfied needs. Five levels of the hierarchy are used for looking deep into the characters' behavior. Physiological needs and the needs for safety, belongingness and love, esteem and self-actualization are the different steps of Maslow's pyramid. As it is going to be discussed, the need for knowledge, skill improvement, making the world a better place by theorizing about the dystopian aspects of life, dealing with problems by writing books and even financial betterment are all the surface plotline of the story; these are all some portraits of the Oleannaian utopia that is going to be built through the academic system. The results show that John and Carol's real intention is their desire for regaining power over one another, take revenge, win the duel, and reach their brutal basic needs.

Keywords: Abraham Maslow, the hierarchy of needs, basic needs, self-actualization, Oleanna, David Mamet, dystopia, academic system, motivation.

INTRODUCTION

Oleanna is a two-character three-act play the writer of which is David Alan Mamet, an American playwright, filmmaker, and author. This drama is considered 'a combination of absurd theatre and traditional realism' (Karabulut, 2020, p. 2). David Mamet is known for his critical viewpoint and his ironic satirical examination of American life. Mamet won the Pulitzer prize for drama in 1984 for *Glengarry Glen Ross*. To date, he has written 36 plays, 29 screenplays and 17 books, and directed 11 films. Concerning the play, 'Who or what is "*Oleanna*?" This two-person, three-scene play gets its title from a nineteenth-century Norwegian folk song about New Norway, a community established in the northern mountains of Pennsylvania in 1852…' (Chiaramonte, 2014, p. 40).

The struggle in the story starts when Carol is failed in John's course and plays tricks to regain her grade and power over her professor in the academic atmosphere

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of educational fairness, 'Mamet uses the education system as a vehicle for his perennial subject, what he calls "human interactions," in this case the ironic desire for both power and understanding in human relationships'(Murphy, 2004, p. 124). Yet the most interesting point about this drama is that the readers can decide to grant the right of being true to each character, 'That's the fun of this drama; it all about the perspective of each audience member' (Bradford, 2020). They fight in a duel and it depends on the reader to love or hate which side:

> Though we are nudged to see his point of view - that she is mistaking avuncularity for sleaziness, taking words out of context, turning metaphorical into the literal-it is this very reasonableness that contains the modus operandi of a stealth predator (Akbar, 2020).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Abraham Maslow, the American psychologist, who is best known for his theory of the hierarchy of needs claims that the five categories of human needs shape an individual's behavior. Moving in this hierarchy is from the most basic to the last level. As mentioned, there are five stages: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem and self-actualization and they must be followed in order of appearance,

> Maslow argued that each person is born with instinctoid needs that lead to growth, development, and actualization; the hierarchy of needs includes physiological needs (for food, water, air, sleep, and sex) and the needs for safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization (Schultz and Schultz, 2016, p. 269).

Physiological needs are Id-driven: air, water, food, shelter, clothing, sex and reproduction. These are the most basic needs of every human and he is mostly in search of satisfying them, which are also the needs of most species of the universe. When these needs are in danger of being fulfilled, the person only thinks about reaching them.

The safety needs: from environmental forces, war, personal security, safety in one's job and employment and also health, property, and resources, money, economic safety, and financial security, protection from violence, morality and emotional stability.

Love and belonging: loving others and being loved by them. People seek to overcome feelings of loneliness and alienation. Belonging means being a part of a group, a social group and feeling a sense of connection, i.e., making friends, feeling intimate with them, finding a partner, and experiencing sexual intimacy, creating a family for oneself. A sense of connection and companionship with others is also a member of this level.

Esteem (from this level on, the needs are ego-driven): respect, self-respect, self-esteem and recognition from the outside world and others are all the categories of the fourth level. Respect from the inside and outside. Recognition of the outside world and having the feeling of strength and freedom is the outcome of self-esteem. When these needs are met, the person feels self-confident and valuable; when not met, people feel inferior, weak, helpless and worthless: 'Satisfaction of the self-esteem need leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability and adequacy of being useful and necessary in the world' (Maslow, 1943, p. 10).

Self-actualization (growth need): self-fulfillment needs, the desire to become the most one can become. This need is a part of the aesthetic needs group, the need to know and understand more. Self-actualized people are free from basic needs, so none of these two characters in the story have reached real self-actualization. They like to be creative and have a sense of humor. They like to be viewed as complete personas. Appreciation of life, lack of prejudice, spontaneity, solving problems and giving solutions, acceptance of facts, being concerned about personal growth and being able to have peak experiences: finding new things, learning a second language, traveling to new places, winning awards, discovering and inventing are all the categories of this level. Continuing education and skill development are also self-actualized personal zest. Furthermore, self-actualized people seek truth, justice, wisdom and meaning. It is important to consider that the fifth level is a growth need. All four levels before are in the group of deficiency needs because they arise from shortage, need and lack. And they must be fulfilled but becoming a self-actualized person is an improvement in one's character and there is no obligation to reach this level for continuing life. Self-actualization needs only become a priority when the other four foundational basic needs are met.

Transcendence: once someone reached self-actualization, there appears a zest for him to help others reach the fifth level and become what they can become, to self-fulfillment and realizing their potential:

> These are, first, the desire for strength, for achievement, for adequacy, for mastery and competence, for confidence in the face of the world, and for independence and freedom. Second, we have what we may call the

> desire for reputation or prestige (defining it as respect or esteem from other people), status, fame and glory, dominance, recognition, attention, importance, dignity, or appreciation. (Maslow, 1954, p. 45)

These levels for reaching self-actualization are the main steps that the two main characters of the story are going to be analyzed psychologically and sociologically in this essay. In addition, in the end, it is going to be proved that their main concern is about reaching power rather than personality improvement.

RESULTS

> David Mamet is one of the rare dramatists of the 20th century who can show the conflict and harassment between genders realistically. Mamet's plays are paramount in the portrayal of modern social and psychological issues (Arjmandi, 2015, p. 2350).

John's Character Analysis

At the beginning of the story, John is okay with his physiological needs: food, shelter, sleep, sex, air and water. At the level of safety needs, his security, job, employment security, his health and property are at an acceptable level for a university professor. He has got a promotion because of being a good teacher and even has written a book that is taught by him. He is also in the process of gaining tenure. About love and belonging, he belongs to his university and family. He is the center of his class and belongs to an accepted social group. He is loved by his wife so much and she does care about him shown in the course of the story as she calls him too many times to know about his mood and also cares about where he spent his time the night before. A sense of friendship and connection with the outside world is so obvious in the calls that his wife and friends want him to join a party for his promotion and for buying a new house.

Regarding the fourth level, he feels both inside esteem and outside. He has self-esteem about having some inspirations and new ideas to be a revolutionary thinker in the educational system, gives some brilliant ideas about the whole process of testing and teaching and calls them ridiculous ways of learning. His status, as a brand-new professor, and his recognition of himself are shown in the first act. Due to his position as a teacher and getting his promotion, the outside world, in the guise of his family, are so happy with him, pays attention to him, and praises him. He feels good about himself as a writer. In addition, he feels that he is in a safe position and is discovering his potential. In the first act, the reader faces a self-actualized, civilized person who even wants to help his student reach transcendence. But all his acts can be seen this way too: 'CAROL: …You love the Power. To deviate. To invent, to transgress … to transgress whatever norms have been established for us' (Mamet, 1992, p. 27).

When the professor talks about his experiences of being stupid: his father has always been telling him that he is a genius and must not act stupidly, must know everything and make no mistakes; therefore, as a child, he thinks that the hardest thing to do is to learn (Mamet, 1992, p. 9). Now as a grown-up, he has discovered how to learn and is teaching others this impossible task for him as a child. Therefore, he has got something unique and now is so proud of himself as an agent of learning. Now as a teacher, he even goes beyond the process of learning to deconstruct and criticize the whole system. Furthermore, the book that he has written is his identity and he sees his vocation to take care of it and defend his pessimistic taking side against the policies of education.

John tells Carol that there is no rule and limitations for attending the class because the class is nothing other than the teacher and the student (Mamet, 1992, pp. 14–15). He ignores the system of grading and the schedule of the university. He does all these in favor of feeling likelihood with Carol but all his actions cause Carol to feel unsafe and to use all her potential to get everything back to safety. John, via a transcendental action, wants to show Carol that the rules and ideologies are made holy for her and she is not forced to obey them but this is not what she desires (Mamet, 1992, p. 18). She enjoys facts, laws and orders, takes advantage of the system in which she is grown up, cannot tolerate a world beyond it and feels frightened and threatened by his professor who mocks her holy safe zone. She limits the process of learning to only reading, taking notes, and memorizing the books. The reason for her actions can be the fact that Carol is endangered in the second level of safety needs.

On the other side, although John has already reached the fifth level, when his basic needs are threatened, he acts like an animal and beats Carol. This shows that he is not completely mature yet. In addition, he does care about his basic needs very seriously. Yet another reason is that once the person reaches the fifth level, he does not like to go back to the basic needs; this is why John gets angry when he faces losing his future as a respected person, his home, his job, his wife, his fame as a teacher and writer, even also having a criminal record of intended rape. He hates the ones who are more powerful than him: 'JOHN: … I hated everyone who was in the position of a "boss" because I *knew* – I didn't *think*, mind you, I *knew* I was going to fail' (Mamet, 1992, p. 12).

In addition, there exists an opposition between John's behavior and principles of thinking, 'JOHN: As I said. When the possibility of tenure opened, and, of course, I'd long pursued it, I was, of course happy, and covetous of it. I asked myself if I was wrong to covet it…' (Mamet, 1992, p. 23). He tells Carol that she must accept the rules of the system that she is in and must not be angry about her grade due to the reason that she is accepted to be a part of the educational system. Then he mocks, criticizes and even hates the educational committee (Mamet, 1992, p. 13). He tells Carol that he is not her father to be obeyed in every aspect (Mamet, 1992, p. 5) and then tells her that he talks to her as he talks to his son (Mamet, 1992, p. 11). John also says that he believes in democracy and freedom of thought but then hurts Carol and hates the committee who expresses their opinions freely and fires him (Mamet, 1992, p. 35). All these prove that John did not reach the last stage of the hierarchy fully.

John is only in a hallucinated way of looking at himself as a person who reached level five and Carol wants to show him that he is wrong. After their discussion in the first act, John goes to a hotel to think and revise his way of teaching if needed. What self-actualized people do. On the other side of the story, Carol lurks in her room and is planning for her professor's destruction; 'Self-actualizing people maintain their feelings of self-esteem even when scorned, rejected, and dismissed by other people' (Feist and Feist, 2008, p. 284). So, both of them are only mad about gaining power, not self-actualization.

Carol's Character Analysis

On the other side of this duel stands Carol. Analysis of Carol's position in the hierarchy shows that she ill-functionally reached and experienced it, is concerned about the deficiency needs, and is an immature person that wants to show off herself as a person who reached the fifth level and even intends to instruct John as a sinner who desires to gain power. She feels unsafe when another, a revolutionary thinker, reaches the position of power. Therefore, she intends to destroy him due to the reason that the system and its survival are so dear to her. In Carol's opinion, destroying a person and his life is not a problem to make the position of Power and ideologies safe.

Carol reached all her needs but was not the same as a girl of her age. This causes her to translate John's actions the opposite way a mentally healthy person makes meanings for his actions in her mind, 'Most recently, Thomas Goggans attempts to exculpate the Carol persona by pointing to textual suggestions of child abuse in her past' (Porter, 2000). She reached the first level, which is her physiological needs as air, food, water, sleep not sex and a shelter that is on the university's campus. Her sexual needs have not been met yet, so this can be a cause to take her professor's actions as being sexually flirting. As she asks John, why did he not go home and stayed with her? (Mamet, 1992, p. 11). This shows that she is already making up some romantic relationships with John in her mind.

In addition, at one point in the story, she wants to share a secret about her life that she never told anyone before (Mamet, 1992, p. 21). This means that she also feels closely belonged and is comfortable with John. Carol limits John in her basic physiological need for sex and sees John as a man and sexual organ. On the other side, John may see her as a student who needs help and sympathizes with her regarding the fact that she is the same as him in the process of being confused and making sense of the world around her. That feeling of the mutual experience of being stupid and an unwanted creature provokes John to try to help her (Mamet, 1992, p. 9).

The second level of the hierarchy in her case can be threatened so easily maybe due to the bitter experiences of her childhood as being sexually abused the same as what she mentions about the terrible things she tolerated, the horrible costs she paid to be able to come to school: 'CAROL: …Of hardworking students, who come here, who slave to come here – you have no idea what it cost me to come to this school – you mock us…' (Mamet, 1992, p. 27). Her abnormal reactions and fears are completely obvious whenever John reaches close to her. She feels a kind of insecurity and takes her professor's actions as containing pornographic content. John does not care about Carol's lack of security and wants her to jump up and acknowledge the fourth and fifth levels, i.e., self-esteem and self-actualization. Reacting towards John's carelessness, Carol takes him off the fifth stage and forces him to come to acknowledge Carol's unstable easy-to-be-threatened position.

The reason for Carol's reactions can be understood in Jess Feist's book as 'basic anxiety': the need for law, order, and structure are safety needs because some threatened young people who were hurt in the course of their childhood feel unsafe more than normal people.

They suffer from some irrational fears and they feel more secure by following laws and orders and staying within limits and structures (Feist and Feist, 2008, p. 287).

Love and belonging in the case of Carol are only limited to being devoted to her group. She never talks about her family, her friends or any other social group but her mysterious group. Moreover, maybe she never experienced any sense of love and affection yet, so she takes John's behavior this bizarre and serious. Maybe because Carol never met the third level, she cannot understand her professor's sympathy towards her and also is always caring about the first and second levels of her needs. Individuals in these levels cannot make sense of the third level. The sense of belongingness to her group is so precious to Carol that she ignores her professor's attention towards her and his zest for helping her.

Even in her belongingness to her group, she does not talk about her feelings towards them but only feels responsible for them, thinks of herself as an agent that must follow orders and be in charge of the laws whatever it costs, as destroying her professor's life. She talks about John's family with so much interest. This may mean that she lacks that sense of attention: a family who surprises her at a party. She also talks about John's condition as a safe one in the academic area, and his elitist position (Mamet, 1992, p. 27). This can show that her status in her group is not safe and she always must feel worried about losing her position. She feels stressed out when John is taking notes and asks John about what he is writing (Mamet, 1992, p. 18).

In addition, her group may be a dangerous one like a mafia because she is not allowed to explain anything about them. The way her group treats Carol and educates her to destroy lives and also the policies that they follow to take advantage of the rules of language in the case of creating different meanings other than what John meant, shows that this group, whatever it is named, is not a healthy, fair one.

The fourth level, which is esteem, is not well received by Carol. She thinks of herself as stupid and in the outside world, her group is more of a threat to her than a safe zone for granting her esteem and confidence. The opposite way can be considered too; maybe Carol's cautiousness about her group is the sense of respect that they grant her, the outside respect that she needs. In the case of being a student, she has failed one of the courses and all these causes her to lack self-confidence. Even John does not respect her at the beginning of the story. Therefore, maybe she is not an eye-catching top student in his class. Also, at one point in the story when she intends to talk about her never-told secret, she tells John that she is a bad person (Mamet, 1992, p. 21). This proves that what she thinks of herself is not a precious well-formed person in a good position. Her image of herself in her mind is not something lovely and acceptable.

In the case of self-recognition, there is no evidence in Carol's behavior to prove that she reached the fifth level. Carol thinks of herself as a stupid person; a little young creature who is full of hatred and needs to take revenge (Mamet, 1992, p. 36). This can represent that at least she knows how demon she is and the highest level she can reach is being evil. Although Maslow never mentioned badness in its extremes as self-recognition, Carol reached the top of the hierarchy in an animalistic brutal manner due to the system she had grown up in. If the reader analyzes these characters regarding the fifth level, Carol would be the most powerful, and John the most deconstructionist.

As mentioned, at the end of the story, John also turns into an animal when his properties, family, security, job and fame are threatened, beats Carol and calls her a part of a women's sexual organ, 'You little cunt' (Mamet, 1992, p. 41). This shows that both of these animals in the guise of humans reached the peak of this hierarchy but there is no guarantee to always be human and act civilized in a transcendental way. They reached the top of the hierarchy negatively due to the system and society that educated them. Now with malfunctioned basic needs, their position in the fifth level is not stable and this causes them to destroy one another to make their status safer.

DISCUSSION

'We will be judged by that least involved of' (Magistrates: history, *Oleanna*).

In *Oleanna*, the rules and laws and most importantly Power, as the motor motivation for trying to reach the different needs of human beings, shape the hierarchy of needs and give its slaves, individuals, priority for reaching them:

> CAROL: What has *led* you to this place? Not your sex. Not your race. Not your class. YOUR OWN ACTIONS. … You are going to say that you have a career and that you've worked for twenty years for this. Do you know what you've *worked* for? *Power.* (Mamet, 1992, p. 33).

Moreover, the most Power wants to gain is to limit and keep the individuals on the first level of this ladder to misuse them; the same as the animals in the circus and the same as John and Carol in this jungle of academia, ‘David Mamet, in a modern version of the old legend, presents a new perspective on the issues of power and truth’ (Hajigholam and Mohammadi, 2018, p. 53). Many people are always concerned about their basic needs and this is due to their governmental system and society. Therefore, they do not reach level five because Power does not allow them to reach so. There exists a beautiful humanistic hierarchy of needs that seems everyone can reach the peak of which by effort, but Power never does let them do so. Power destroys Maslow’s humanistic-just ladder of needs. As Augusto Boal in the *Theatre of the Oppressed* claims,

> All theatre is necessarily political; because all the activities of man are political and theatre is one of them … the theatre is a weapon. A very efficient weapon … it is, in effect, a powerful system of intimidation. (Chiaramonte, 2014, p. 39).

Apart from the power relations, there also exists an atmosphere of the impossibility of mutual understanding between Carol and John. The reason that causes John and Carol to be not able to communicate effectively is that they came from different social and economic backgrounds. It seems that many of John’s words are terms of arts in his elitist-secured position as a professor and Carol cannot enter that holy land. She is disturbed by John’s way of using hard words that forbid Carol to understand what John intends to talk about, which makes her madly angry. Both of them ignore one another because they are those vicious animals who only want to reach the hierarchy’s peak.

On the other side of the story, in the duel with John stands Carol as a responsible member of her group, as a strict follower of all the rules, biases and ideologies that are set by a big Power, the higher-educational system, that limits people’s actions. In her worldview, the one who wants to get out of the system and rules is sinful, guilty and dangerous for the second level of her needs, which is her safety and security both as a girl, the other of men, and also as a student, an out-casted creature in the world of cruel professors. Her position is vulnerable in both regards so if the professor wants to help Carol, he is dangerous because she cannot imagine a different position for a not-caring cruel professor; due to the reason that the professors never act this way in the dictionary of the professor–student relationship of Carol’s mindset.

In Carol’s viewpoint, if someone criticizes the system in which he works, he must be thrown off that system because he acts as a parasite of that system and the Power: ‘JOHN: It [education] has become a ritual, it has become an article of faith. That all must be subjected to, or to put it differently, that all are entitled to Higher Education’ (Mamet, 1992, p. 16). John does not obey the rules and mocks the system and does not act with a positive favor towards the system he takes benefits of.

In addition, Carol’s failure in John’s course is so abnormal for her because, in the limited world of her mind, her intelligence is like a machine. There is an input for it, the book of the professor and obeying his rules, and the output must be understanding that book and gaining good grades within the norms, which she surprisingly faced John’s book as a new thing that moves outside the rules and cannot be understood by her. She must not fail the course because she had read the book completely, memorized it and taken notes of all the parts. In addition, she obeyed John’s principles as her father (Mamet, 1992, p. 5).

This means for Carol, as a representative of her group when she cannot make sense of deconstructionist John’s book, no one in her group and her society would not like this book, so it must be omitted from the university books and class schedule. John is an out casted person who the Carols, and the likes, e.g., Power, and the government hate. John tells her that this is only a book and a course and it is nonsense to be worried about failure in it but it is like a holy precious vocation for Carol to pass the courses (Mamet, 1992, p. 7). Because her standard for coming to understand that she knows something is the educational system’s grading. She came here to know something that she did not know before and wants to find a light in the world of darkness (Mamet, 1992, p.7).

John’s behavior threats Carol’s safe zone and holy position of rules, ideologies and systems: ‘[John:] Somebody told you [Carol], and you hold it as an article of faith, that higher education is an unassailable good. This notion is so dear to you that when I question it you become angry’ (Mamet, 1992, p. 18). In the process of John’s friendly talks, Carol finds out how she can destroy him with the system that hates John. She becomes a spy on his life and finds no immoral point in hurting him. She tells John that as a human in opposition to being an animal, she has feelings but her responsibilities are more important to her (Mamet, 1992, p. 33). The system she is a slave of makes senseless heartless animals who only take care of their duties.

At the end of the story, she even decides how John must talk to his wife, about the most personal things of John's life, 'Don't call your wife baby…' (Mamet, 1992, p. 41). She wants to deal with John's way of behaving by not talking to girls, not criticizing rules and even talking with his wife, the way Carol, as a feminist, prefers. She wants to correct him and change him into a timid animal that is slaved in the system of education and his social group, the same as Carol herself.

In the first act, John, so proud of his elitist position as a professor, does not care about Carol and her concerns but his house and promotion. He also talks in a way with Carol to show off his knowledge and his self-supposed big achievement in the process of learning. Then, he tries to mock the whole system as a free thinker who is so advanced and criticizes the rules Carol cares so much about. He feels that he can act freely and talk democratically in his private office with his student but there is a Power, like that phone and interrupting ringing, in his very private life that controls everything and limits him and his freedom. If Johns talk more than they should, think more than they are allowed and guide people more generously than they are limited to, they are already destroyed.

He does not concentrate on Carol's way of talking and behaving because he is worried about his financial security at the moment. People, who are at different levels of the hierarchy of needs, cannot make sense of one another urges; to reach each other's needs and understand each other's priorities. For gaining an equal and mutual point of view towards the events and people's reactions, there is a need to come to know at which level they are. In addition, if he is on a different level, communicating effectively is somehow impossible. She has a limited point of view. Carol's needs are more focused on basic needs and she translates John's actions following the stages of her needs. His acts are pornographic because Carol cannot make sense of loving others and sympathizing with them. She takes John downer in his status to let him understand her and moves to the next level of gaining more security and esteem by destroying her professor's life.

Even in the second act, John, so proud of himself as a self-actualized person, wants to take up Carol to the fifth level and show her some light. He is self-centered and sure that the committee would not accept Carol's complaint and wants to save her by persuading her to retract: 'It's ludicrous. Don't you know that? It's not necessary. It's going to humiliate you, and it's going to cost me my house, and…' (Mamet, 1992, p. 25). However, the system prefers the ones who are like Carol, who obey the rules and do follow orders and restrictions. In addition, he supposes that the way he acts towards his students is his right and they must not complain about his actions.

He, as a self-actualized person, wants to solve their problems peacefully, but Carol prefers the law to decide because she believes in truthful trustworthy rules of Power. She does not have this much confidence to face the problem and solve it by herself. John intends to make everything all right by himself and does not like the committee and government to nose into his private life, career and even his behavior. Moreover, maybe he enjoys staying as a superpower in his safe elitist position. When John feels insecure, returning to safety would be the only thing he cares about, not being a transcending individual.

In the third act, the story turns vice versa and Carol has the upper hand in the duel. Carol, until now, was only a student and from the beginning of the story only learned John's weak points (Mamet, 1992, pp. 12–13). She is a good listener and recorder in the two first acts and can use John's way of thinking against himself. However, in the third act, she appears as an instructor, wants to instruct John about his behavior and proves to him that he is not a god. He must not give meaning to his actions: 'CAROL: You think you can deny that these things happened; or, if they did, if they did, that they meant what you said they meant' (Mamet, 1992, p. 26). He has no power to inject connotative meanings into his words. This is the job of a much bigger Power in Carol's opinion and she prefers holy things to be done by holy committees that always are one hundred percent true in each way.

This is like a threat to Carol's safe zone that somebody, like John, gives meanings to words. What is done by Power is that it uses the language and the meanings of words in the way it serves its purposes. Therefore, language and ideologies are used for changing reality and giving wrong meanings to words out of their context; for example, raping. The sufficient meaning is what benefits more, 'Reading of *Oleanna* will resist consensus because the drama investigates how language and gesture signify differently for all involved in the performance. The drama is necessarily provocative because its events take place within a landscape of indeterminacy' (Badenhausen, 1998, p. 3).

As John tells Carol that when she thinks of herself as a loser and failure she will fail and she must think the opposite way to win; '…The tests, you see, which you encounter, in school, in college, in life, were designed, in the most part, for idiots, by idiots'. Moreover, the professor tells her that there is a need for Carol to fail at them because they are garbage (Mamet, 1992, pp. 12–13). She acts the same towards John and can take revenge from the patriarchal world of men. She also wins over a more powerful system, the teachers' group, in comparison with her status as a tiny girl student.

In the middle of the third act, John tells his wife that he lost his job and was confused for a while but now he is well and came to know that his job does not worth having (Mamet, 1992, p. 40). Then Carol moves one step further and tells John that his book is her aim of attack because of his attempted rape. At this moment, he suddenly comes to an epiphany and considers Carol as a danger because he sees his responsibility towards his job as a writer and his son as an agent of the next generation as sacred. He sees his book as a Bible. Moreover, at the end, when Carol orders him how to name his wife, he becomes an angry animal: 'JOHN: You vicious little bitch. You think you can come in here with your political correctness and destroy my life? …' (Mamet, 1992, p. 41). When John loses his power, he becomes much angrier and crueler than Carol.

At the time, these two come into the same level of power relations by Carol's complaints, their mutual understanding and the possibility of free discussion increases. Now, John must listen to Carol carefully and pay attention to her tiniest reactions, and take notes because he is frightened of her. At this moment, he understands what democracy means because he is not in his safe upper-hand position anymore:

> According to bell hooks, the first step towards any such 'transformational politic' is to deconstruct simplistic polarities of oppressor and oppressed and to recognize (as Mamet so clearly does) that 'our capacity as women and men to be either dominated or dominating is a point of connection, of commonality'. (MacLeod, 1995, p. 213).

From this point, it can be concluded that John must be threatened the same as Carol and have to be punished like an animal to acknowledge his real status in the hierarchy of needs. If his life is threatened, can he remain a self-actualized writer who acts in a free-thinking way and wishes to transcend his students to the top of the hierarchy?

> CAROL: Why do you hate me? Because you think me wrong? No. Because I have, you think, power over you. Listen to me. Listen to me, Professor. (Pause) It is the power that you hate. So deeply that, that any atmosphere of free discussion is impossible. It's not 'unlikely.' It's impossible. Isn't it? (Mamet, 1992, p. 35).

As Carol acts as a symbol of irritating power in John's life, he reacts like a brutal animal rather than a civilized high-ranked teacher to throw her away from his life and regain his power over his career and family. Carol acts as a threat to all John's basic needs. Mamet proves that Carol is not hateful, the power is; and anyone even John, in the upper position, would be as disgusting as Carol. She reaches the peak of the hierarchy by taking John down. The proof of this statement that these characters have not reached self-actualization fully yet is the concept of 'meta-motivation' (Schultz and Schultz, 2016, p.255). According to this concept, self-actualized people are not motivated by their basic needs anymore. However, these two fights for their four levels of needs to gain power over one another.

CONCLUSION

This essay attempted to analyze Mamet's play with the help of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy. In the results part, both of the characters of the story are analyzed deeply and it is indicated at what level of need they are standing. Furthermore, in the discussion section, the writer tried to talk about the role of power and government in reaching or not gaining the top of the hierarchy by the members of society. Abraham Maslow makes a utopia out of the hierarchy for human beings' improvement but the actual outcome of this *Oleanna* is a dystopia in Mamet's opinion. The same as the *Oleanna* land itself that was going to be a perfect society in America but it turned out to be the opposite; the educational system appeared the same in Mamet's idea. Maybe if Maslow wanted to categorize this society, he would put this entire utopia in the fifth level and label them as self-actualized persons but *Oleanna* never can be lasted. These two are civilized academic people but power and the eagerness to reach it make them act like animals. Therefore, the utopia of the hierarchy of human needs and trying to reach that ideal is useless at least from David Mamet's point of view. John is on the fifth level of the hierarchy but Carol's danger makes him defend his basic needs against her boastful actions. His position decreases to the first level of biological needs due to Carol and the system of power. Power does not care about individuals' improvement to the top of the hierarchy but only itself and increasing its control over all of its members' lives.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors have read and approved the manuscript and take full responsibility for its contents. The authors declare that no conflicting interest exists.

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The History and Inheritance of Qingyang Opera

CONCEPT

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ABSTRACT

Qingyang Opera once occupied a pivotal position in the history of Chinese opera and Jiangxi-Po culture, closely related to Hukou's geography, humanities, economy, folk customs and religion. However, after this ancient drama was almost dead in Hukou, it was slowly and widely sung. From the aspects of history and reality, internal and external, this paper dialectically analyses the reasons for the prosperity of Qingyang Opera in Hukou, hoping to provide a valuable reference for the protection and inheritance of traditional culture such as Qingyang Opera in Hukou.

Keywords: History, Inheritance, Jiangxi Hukou, Protective measures, Qingyang Opera.

Introduction

Qingyang Opera was formed by combining local opera tunes, local pronunciation, folk music and religious music after the Yiyang tune flowed into Qingyang, Anhui Province, in the Jiajing period of the Ming Dynasty. It inherited the artistic legacy of ancient opera in the Ming Dynasty, continued the legacy of ancient Qingyang opera in the Ming Dynasty, and entered Jiangxi from southern Anhui in Wanli period of the Ming Dynasty, which greatly influenced the Jiangxi opera.. Qingyang Opera nurtured the formation of Sichuan Opera, Xiang Opera, Hui Opera, Gan Opera, Qing Opera, Peking Opera and Huangmei Opera.

Evolution and spread of Qingyang Opera

Qingyang Opera has been running through the Ming and Qing dynasties for hundreds of years, spreading widely and influencing greatly, and is popular at home and abroad. After its heyday, it began to go to local areas, took root and sprouted everywhere, and gave birth to nearly half of Chinese operas, for example, Qing Opera in Hubei, Sichuan Opera in Sichuan, Hui Opera in Anhui, Xiang Opera in Hunan, Hukou Gaoqiang and Duchang Gaoqiang in Jiangxi, Liuzi Opera in Shandong, Yangqiang in Jiangsu, Wu Opera in Zhejiang, Qingxi in Henan, Qingxi in Shanxi, Chaozhou Opera in Guangdong and Puxian Opera in Fujian. There are also Peking Opera and Huangmei Opera, which are inextricably related to Qingyang Opera, forming a huge 'Qingyang Zhuqiang' system.

In June 2006, the State Council approved and published the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage (hereinafter referred to as 'intangible cultural heritage') lists determined by the Ministry of Culture, with a total of 518 items. Jiangxi Hukou Qingyang Opera is on the list. Qingyang Opera belongs to traditional drama performance art. 'Intangible cultural heritage' is an important part of cultural heritage, a witness of our history and an important carrier of Chinese culture. It contains the unique spiritual value, thinking mode, imagination and cultural consciousness of the Chinese nation, and embodies the vitality and creativity of the Chinese nation. Protecting and making good use of intangible cultural heritage is of great and far-reaching significance for inheriting and carrying forward national excellent cultural traditions, enhancing national self-confidence and cohesion and promoting the construction of socialist spiritual civilization. After the Hukou County Party Committee, the county government and the county cultural bureau successfully applied for the national 'intangible cultural heritage', they quickly increased their protection efforts. However, the results were not obvious due to the lack of professional talents and theories.

Qingyang Opera has experienced a decline from prosperity to decline for hundreds of years. Up to now, there are only a handful of its descendants. Even in Hukou County, it is difficult to see a performance of Qingyang Opera. The main reason is that it is old and replaced by new operas. The lack of influential descendants is not easy for young people to accept. Due to the impact of the modern cultural market, the market is relatively small, and the troupe is only organised by weddings and funerals in rural areas or migration. It is difficult to renovate ancient music, with a low penetration rate and difficult innovation. Although Qingyang Opera is listed as a national intangible cultural heritage, its inheritance and development are still not optimistic. In order to let younger people know about Qingyang Opera, learn to sing Qingyang Opera, carry forward and inherit Qingyang Opera and protect national art treasures, Jiujiang University and Hukou County signed a cooperation agreement on inheriting Qingyang Opera art, which is the first school in Jiangxi to jointly protect and inherit national local opera. The monograph of Qingyang Opera was compiled, excavated and published together. As a teaching material for students to learn Qingyang Opera, music majors offered compulsory courses in Qingyang Opera, and old artists of Qingyang Opera were hired to sing and perform in schools. Teachers and students could accept the skills of old artists and make efforts to inherit Qingyang Opera, an ancient art.

Protective measures and methods

Jiujiang University is the only undergraduate college in Jiujiang City. When we learned that it was very difficult to protect and inherit the local 'intangible heritage'—Qingyang Opera, we actively took effective measures and did a lot of work. Specifically, it is mainly reflected in the following aspects:

In-depth research to understand the protection and inheritance status of Qingyang cavity

In order to understand the current situation of Qingyang Opera protection and inheritance, Gan Xiaoqing, president of Jiujiang University, personally led the relevant professional and technical personnel of the school to Hukou Cultural Bureau and Hukou and Pengze County villages for investigation four times and mastered a large number of first-hand information. For example, through investigation, we know that in the 1980s, among more than 110 village-level peasant troupes in Hukou County, there were 48 Qingyang Opera Troupes. However, with the death of old artists, the art of Qingyang Opera in Hukou County was almost lost. Needless to say, until now, inheritance protection still faces many difficulties: The data preservation environment is very simple, and the preservation means are relatively primitive. Many handwritten scripts in Guangxu period can only be simply placed in file boxes. Many audio tapes are the original vocals of the deceased artists and have not been burned and backed up. Once degaussed, they will not be remedied. The investigation also learned that Liu Chunjiang, director of Hukou County Cultural Bureau, has done a lot of research on Qingyang Opera. Under his leadership, he has collected 131 handwritten plays, 36 original plays, 448 music cards, 64 single-fold and miscellaneous plays and 50 Yu Ben music materials. The county has also set up a professional troupe of Qingyang Opera and so on (An., K., 2007).

Based on the data of survey, the school held a special seminar and decided to set up Qingyang Opera Art Research Institute, which belongs to 'Lushan Culture Research Center'; established Qingyang Opera Exhibition Hall; actively declared relevant national and provincial research projects and strove for research funds; hired Liu Chunjiang, the director of Hukou Cultural Bureau, as an adjunct professor, signed a contract with him, and implemented the corresponding salary; and incorporated the relevant contents of Qingyang Opera into the teaching plan and local teaching materials for art college students to study and research. This series of effective measures greatly promoted the research work of Qingyang Opera.

Attach importance to community construction and protect inheritors

Professor Zhou Xing of Aichi University in Japan, a famous 'intangible cultural heritage' protection expert, once said: 'No matter how loudly we shout the slogan of intangible cultural heritage and how much money and manpower we invest, it must be implemented in the community on which it depends, and it must be extended or maintained in national life' (Liao & Zhou, 2007) The inheritance and protection of any 'intangible cultural heritage' is, first of all, the human factor. In order to protect the inheritors of Qingyang Opera, Jiujiang University actively assisted Director Liu Chunjiang in applying for the national 'intangible cultural heritage' inheritor for the old artist Yin Wuhuan and achieved success. On June 13, 2009, Jiujiang University and Jiujiang Cultural Bureau co-sponsored the unveiling ceremony of 'Yin Wuhuan Institute of Qingyang Opera Art' undertaken by Hukou County Culture, Radio and Television Bureau and Fulong Township Government of Hukou County. It was grandly held in Yijia Village, Fulong Township, Hukou County. Yin Wuhuan, an old artist, taught the students of Qingyang Opera Art Troupe to sing Qingyang Opera on the spot, which made the students deeply feel the artistic charm of Qingyang Opera.

Set up research groups, declare scientific research projects at all levels, and standardise project management

In order to make the research on Qingyang Opera more scientific and standardised, our school has set up three research groups on Qingyang Opera to study Qingyang Opera from different angles or sides (Li, 2006). From 2007 to 2008, two research groups successfully applied for provincial humanities and social sciences projects and the other successfully applied for national art projects and won a total of 10,000 yuan of project funds. Among the members of the three research groups, there are cultural bureau cadres with rich research experience and long-term roots in rural communities, highly educated teachers who understand vocal music, vocal music theory and opera theory, and foreign language teachers who understand English and Japanese and management cadres of art colleges. This provides a talent guarantee for the in-depth study of the subject.

Establish Qingyang Opera website and build a research and resource-sharing platform

In the information age, if the traditional drama culture is not combined with modern media, it is impossible to protect and develop it effectively. In order to strengthen the publicity and evaluation of Qingyang Opera and create good research and public opinion environment, our research group has established a website of Qingyang Opera, which consists of columns such as Qingyang Opera, Qingyang Opera and Religion, Qingyang Opera and Folk Customs. In order to introduce 'Qingyang Opera' to international friends who are concerned about China's 'intangible cultural heritage', expand the international influence of 'Qingyang Opera' and prepare for the project to apply for UNESCO's 'Representative Works of Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity'. Our research group has also translated some materials about Qingyang Opera into English and Japanese, etc.

Compile teaching materials and implement class hours

Since 2008, Jiujiang University has incorporated Qingyang Opera into the training plan for music majors in Art College. Incorporating the essence of Qingyang Opera into local teaching materials makes Qingyang Opera, an excellent 'intangible cultural heritage' reflecting national spirit and folk characteristics, have a legal status in university music teaching (Zhou& Gong, 2012). This measure plays a great role in promoting teaching activities, popularizing protection knowledge, cultivating protection awareness and creating a good atmosphere for the whole school to protect 'intangible cultural heritage'.

Establish Qingyang Opera Exhibition Hall

After the active efforts of the research group, Jiujiang University set up Qingyang Opera Art Exhibition Hall in the spring of 2008 and sorted out the data collected by our research group into the exhibition hall for the use of the research group and other researchers. Currently, 36 original plays and more than 60 single-fold plays have been collected. There are 448 music cards, 118 hours of singing music cards (boxes), 40 Facebook cards, more than 1,000 photos, more than 20 performance CDs, 40 Yu Ben singing music scores and more than 100 drama materials related to Qingyang Opera (13 provinces). It also collects ancient music symbols, religious ceremonies, origin and evolution, class troupes, stage couplets, artists' careers, and preliminarily completed the preliminary work of a series of research topics such as 'Jiangxi Qingyang Opera Examination', 'Jiangxi Qingyang Opera Music' and 'Jiangxi Qingyang Opera Repertoire'.

Qingyang Opera has entered the campus, allowing us to get in touch with this ancient art that has been circulating for hundreds of years (Zhu, 2014). In the eyes of contemporary young people, Qingyang Opera is difficult to learn, sing, understand and perform, which is not as easy to understand and sing as Huangmei Opera, but the inheritance and development of Qingyang Opera are urgent. Enhancing the pulse of the times and the breath of life of ancient singing and promoting the development of this ancient singing naturally falls on the shoulders of educators and literary and art workers (Teng, 1962).

People's cultural life is diversified with the development of society, and appreciation habits have also changed.. To inherit Qingyang Opera, we must strive to carry forward our own advantages, accept all foreign musical expressions, methods and means that are conducive to expanding ourselves, integrate them into our own blood and turn them into new elements that constantly improve, strengthen and develop ourselves.

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The Diversity of the Spread and Development of New Folk Songs in Guangxi, China

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ABSTRACT

Since the end of the 20th century, the spread of new folk songs in Guangxi has shown a diversified development trend. In order to give full play to the social communication effect of new folk songs in Guangxi and enhance the social influence of new folk songs, Guangxi music elites and social and cultural circles have constantly explored and innovated, forming a diversified communication development trend of new folk songs. These include radio communication, television communication, competition promotion communication, etc. These media provide a platform for the social communication development of Guangxi new folk songs.

Keywords: broadcasting media, development, Guangxi, new folk songs, spread

New Folk Song Broadcast Media Communication

Since the end of the 20th century, the broadcasting of Guangxi new folk songs started from literary broadcasting in the 1980s. The initial prototype began with the introduction of traditional music in Guangxi. By the 1990s, with the great leap forward reform in Guangxi's broadcasting field, radio, and art, special programmes with a fresh flavour of folk music and literature as the style orientation were beginning to take shape. With the launch of the 'sea of songs' brand strategy, Guangxi's literary and artistic broadcasting boutiques are gradually approaching the direction of creating a new Guangxi and spreading new folk songs, represented by Guangxi music appreciation and eight Guangxi songs in the sea. From March 1990 to April 1993, the radio programme 'listening to and singing the new willow branches—talking about Guangxi Folk Songs', recorded by Guangxi People's Radio and television station, has become a literary and artistic work that truly opens up the broadcasting channel of Guangxi new folk songs. Playing new folk songs became all the rage.. In the 21st century, with the popularity of television in public families, the radio transmission mode of new folk songs has gradually weakened (Zhang, 2003).

Formation of New Folk Song Broadcasting Media

In the 1980s, driven by the literary and artistic creation of Guangxi society, the literary and artistic topics of Guangxi Radio gradually appeared, which laid an important foundation for the spread of Guangxi new folk songs. Broadcasting of literary and artistic communication forms are beginning to take shape. At that time, radio

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programmes such as ‘rich and colourful folk music of our national minority’ and ‘Chinese minority female singers and their songs’ edited by Yang Haiyan became the first literary and artistic broadcasting works in Guangxi to pay attention to the tendency of national music and predicted the future development direction of national music.

At that time, the radio works included the music topic ‘love attracts tourists from all over the world, and the scenery fascinates ancient and modern people’, the music series radio ‘today’s long march road—Guangxi chapter’, ‘Guangxi music appreciation’, the music topic ‘Introduction to the colourful national customs of Guangxi’, ‘the red water river from 33 bends’, ‘eight Guangxi songs on the sea’, etc. People in Guangxi Radio and television industry said: at this time, the special topic of radio and art is still in the embryonic stage and has not yet had universal significance, but the fresh flavour of literature and art has begun to take shape.

In May 1982, a song appreciation radio programme was recorded by Guangxi People’s Broadcasting Station to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Mao Zedong’s ‘speech at the Yan’an Literature and Art Symposium’. The programme ‘love attracts tourists from all over the world, and the scenery captivates ancient and modern people—a group of female solo songs singing Guilin landscape’ won the best programme award of Guangxi People’s Broadcasting Station.

In November 1988, in order to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the founding of the autonomous region, Guangxi People’s radio and television recorded a series of six special radio programmes, ‘Guangxi music appreciation’, which were successively broadcast by the Central People’s Broadcasting Station, China Radio International, and China Radio Corporation of Chinese descent. The wide broadcast of Guangxi music appreciation gave the Chinese audience a preliminary understanding of Guangxi characteristic folk music and laid a foundation for the exploration of Guangxi new folk song radio programme production.

Development of New Folk Song Broadcasting Media

After 1989, with the establishment of the China Radio Art Award and the China Radio Drama Award, Guangxi Radio art implemented a high-quality strategy to expand the development space of art broadcasting while trying to build a Gehai brand. Guangxi Radio’s literary works paid more attention to being close to reality, life, and the masses.

From 1989 to 1996, there were 46 special topics on radio and art in Guangxi. Among them, the radio at the prefecture, city, and county levels accounted for all the articles in Guangxi’s 59% of art broadcasting works. Typically, ‘sailing in the sea of songs in Guangxi’, recorded by Guangxi People’s radio, won the first prize in the national minority music and folk music programme broadcast selection, the third Guangxi literary and artistic creation bronze drum award, and the first prize in the region’s excellent radio and television programme selection (Liu, 2013). It has laid an innovative foundation for the exploration and development of the communication mode of Guangxi’s new folk songs.

In 1989, in order to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the 25 episodes of large-scale music special series—‘singing in the sea—introducing some musicians in Guangxi music world’ and the 10 episodes of the music special series—‘Jin Feng singing in the sea, red apricots showing in southern Xinjiang—Introducing Guangxi minority singers’ described in detail that Guangxi minority singers’ class cultivated new forces of singing new folk songs with new ideas in the new era, making the traditional folk elements bloom new vitality under the background of the new era. The programme describes in detail the development of social elements of Guangxi’s new folk songs since the end of the 20th century. The programme has launched in-depth thinking and discussion on the development of Guangxi’s new folk songs and the inheritance and development of traditional music culture.

The Prosperity of New Folk Song Broadcasting Media

In the 1990s, the development of Guangxi’s new folk song broadcasting literary works was most represented by ‘listening to and singing the new willow branches—talking about Guangxi Folk Songs’.

In March 1990, Guangxi People’s Broadcasting Station recorded 26 consecutive episodes of ‘listening to and singing the new poplar and willow branches—talking about Guangxi Folk Songs’, which was broadcast at the first International Folk Song Festival.

In 1991, Guangxi People’s Radio Station edited and broadcast ‘talking about Guangxi Folk Songs’, which ‘made a brief introduction to the folk songs of all ethnic groups in Guangxi, and introduced the new folk music works adapted and created based on these folk songs, which made positive efforts for Guangxi folk songs to go out of the autonomous region and was welcomed by the audience'.

In 1993, Guangxi People's Radio recorded 50 episodes of the large-scale music feature programme 'Listening to and singing new willows—talking about Guangxi folk songs', which is not only a milestone for Guangxi national radio but also 'the first sound integration of Guangxi excellent folk songs since liberation'. The programme 'Listening to and singing new willows—talking about Guangxi folk songs' provides an opportunity to promote the excavation of folk elements and systematically reflect the song culture of all ethnic groups in Guangxi. The programme adopts a new way to replace the old one and displays the representative folk songs of the people of all ethnic groups in Guangxi in a panoramic way. Taking the records in the history of the development of new folk songs as clues, this paper truly describes the excavation and adaptation of Guangxi folk song creation by Guangxi musicians since the founding of new China and carefully describes the psychological process of Guangxi folk song creation in the new period. 'Talking about Guangxi Folk Songs' gives full play to the advantage of large radio radiation and shows the strength of Guangxi in producing large-scale literary and artistic topics in the form of dialogue and rambling on more than 350 new songs (Zhu, 2012).

Since the end of the 20th century, Guangxi broadcast art media has played an important role in the exploration, development, and communication of new folk songs in Guangxi. After the 21st century, with the popularization of television and the gradual weakening of the radio communication mode of new folk songs, the communication of new folk songs in Guangxi has gradually turned into a visual TV communication mode.

TV Media Communication of New Folk Songs

The advantages of TV media for the spread of Guangxi's new folk songs are mainly reflected in the visualization of sound. It helps to create a new audio-visual aesthetic experience for the audience through sound visualization. The TV media of new folk songs starts from the picture background, so that the audience can feel the flavour of national music in the new era from visual aesthetics while experiencing music.

The TV transmission of Guangxi's new folk songs can be summarized as follows: (1) TV music columns and album production; (2) live TV music competitions; and (3) live broadcast of a large-scale party.

TV Music Special Columns and Album Production

The inheritance of Guangxi's new folk songs by TV music columns makes the new folk music more entertaining and appreciative on the basis of showing the style of the times. The special programme of TV music shows the special symbols of traditional culture behind the new folk songs of Guangxi through the way of performance and singing in ethnic regions so that the public can experience the national connotation in the process of appreciating songs. Through the infiltration of the cultural background of Guangxi's new folk songs, the audience can gradually feel the charm and enhance their impression of the new folk songs.

Since the end of the 20th century, the representative works of Guangxi's new folk TV music special programme and album production are:

Music Special Column

The 'singing folk songs' programme launched by Guangxi TV satellite channel, which was launched in 2004, is the first music entertainment programme in China that crosses tradition and popularity, integrates nationality and fashion, and strives to create a new image of folk songs by integrating fashion elements and packaging means.

According to network and industry insiders, singing folk songs brings together excellent planners and production teams of large-scale music and dance programmes in China, which is another feat after the successful holding of many international folk song festivals in Guangxi. By holding the International Folk Song Festival, Guangxi has made itself equal to folk songs in the eyes of the audience. Also, it promoted the spread of Guangxi's new folk songs. The satellite channel of Guangxi TV station launched a new music and entertainment column under this background, boldly breaking the limitations of traditional folk songs and comprehensively integrating traditional folk songs with fashion and pop songs.

Music TV Programme

Guangxi TV music works that have promoted the spread of new folk songs in Guangxi include: the song of the Red River, the first karaoke song in Guangxi in 1997; 'love of Third Sister Liu's hometown' sung by Su Yanling, Jia Shuangfei, Guo Jin in 2002; and 'love of Zhuang hometown'. In 2003, the production of music and television included Lao Wang, Abba, and Ma, the production of TV music story lunge piaobei, and the production of TV music Zhuang Xiang Xing.

Song of the Red River is the first karaoke song in Guangxi. It contains 25 new folk songs created in Guangxi since the founding of the People's Republic of China. They include Chairman Mao coming to Guangxi, Zhuang youth loving Chairman Mao, and hurry back to Arli and love China, which have great influence in the country, and Guangxi's original new folk songs Beibu Gulf love song, Zhuang village trip, and twelve Dong Village months, which have won awards in the central government.

All the songs in this album adopt the way of re-orchestration. While painting, the recording director takes a picturesque picture of the beautiful scenery and ethnic customs of Guangxi, which fully reflects the artistic conception and connotation of the song.

The TV music programme Zhuang Xiang Xing uses singing and dancing to package new folk songs. The new folk music is used throughout to show Guangxi's enthusiastic and vibrant prosperity and create this fluctuating song sea situation through the comparison between day and night. It has become an audio-visual feast to spread new folk songs and enjoy new folk songs. TV has both Guangxi's local characteristics and the aesthetic flavour of the times. The melody is beautiful, smooth, bright, and concise (Su, 2014).

New Folk Song TV Music Competition Column Communication

The TV communication platform of Guangxi's new folk songs is also reflected in the production and live broadcast of TV music events. Among them, the widely spread TV music competition programmes include: the world-class Guangxi singer TV Grand Prix, Guangxi youth song competition, and the popular new folk song talent show 'one voice of love, the earth flying song'. These live TV music events not only provide a platform for the exploration of Guangxi's new folk song vocal talents but also provide an important channel for the dissemination of Guangxi's new folk song works.

'Best in the World' Singer TV Competition

In August 2003, the Guangxi 'world's best' TV singer competition was officially launched. This was a major event to publicize Guangxi's new folk songs. This was also an important measure for Guangxi to launch the implementation plan of the 'revitalization of Guangxi national song and dance project' since the 21st century. It is an important implementation point of the cultural strategy of building a 'landscape brand' and 'folk song brand'.

This activity aims to promote the creation and dissemination of characteristic songs in Guangxi's ethnic areas, activate the cultural life of the people, and also aims to explore and promote excellent singing talents in Guangxi and revitalize the development of Guangxi ethnic music. The entry requirements of the competition have played a role in promoting the dissemination of Guangxi's new folk songs.

Of the two songs sung by the contestants, one was required to be an excellent work on the Guangxi theme created by the lyricists and songwriters in our district or by the lyricists and songwriters outside the district since the Fourth Plenary Session of the 13th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. The other song must be the 30 new works selected in the 'singing Guangxi' song campaign or local new works. The participating singers were divided into professional group, amateur group and bel canto, national, and popular singing.

There were more than 100 songs in the world-class TV singer competition, which is a big review of Guangxi's new folk song creation since 2003. Among them, Guangxi's new folk songs 'A beautiful and magical place', 'crossing the mountain with a good day', 'Hometown', 'Lijiang love', 'as long as I'm with you', 'Mysterious sinkhole', 'Zhuang sister', 'folk song floating home' and 'Zhuang brocade on the dragon's back' won the Golden Melody Award and were widely sung.

Guangxi TV Young Singer Grand Prix

The Guangxi trial of the CCTV Young Singer Grand Prix took the opportunity of selecting Guangxi singers to participate in the national CCTV Singer Grand Prix, which played a promoting role in the dissemination of Guangxi's new folk songs and talent training.

In recent years, solo singers have emerged in the Guangxi Young Singer Award trials such as chenchunyan, Wei Ying, xiebin, Yuan Quan, Chi yicui, Zhuni, Chen Li, liaohongfei, Chen Xue, zhonglijuan, lisiyin, and the Guangxi singers of kazam band, who have gained experience in this event and become the main force in the dissemination of Guangxi innovative folk songs. Guangxi 'nidiya' chorus and Guangxi Academy of Art Chorus also made their debut in the TV Youth Singer Grand Prix. The Guangxi TV Youth Singer Grand Prix provided a platform for the dissemination of Guangxi's new folk song chorus works.

New Folk Song Talent Shows of 'Love of Life, Flying Songs of The Earth'

'Flying song of the beloved land' is the first domestic new folk song talent show created by Guangxi TV station in recent years. With the purpose of appreciating new folk songs, it has lasted five seasons since its launch in 2012, and is recognized and loved by people at all levels and ages in China (Ren, 2014).

'Flying song of the earth' has been established for 17 years relying on the most influential 'Nanning International Folk Song Art Festival' in China. The purpose of this talent show is to 'choose the best and most beautiful folk songs', and use the advanced concept of radio and television media to package new folk songs. On the premise of paying attention to the aesthetic value orientation of civilians, we should integrate foreign elements with traditional folk elements. The purpose is to find a new mode of folk song communication that adapts to the domestic modern reality consciousness and social mainstream culture. The programme integrates a variety of singing styles that appeal to both refined and popular tastes, combines the diversity of new folk songs with the diversity of public aesthetics, and provides strong intellectual support for the reserve of Guangxi's new folk singers and creative talents.

In the "Flying Ssongs of the Earth" competition, we re-arranged the songs and created traditional folk songs with new ideas, which is the inheritance and innovation of traditional folk songs. The singing of traditional folk songs is very beautiful among the people, but the tradition has been moved to the stage intact. There are many different feelings because the environment is changing and the audience is changing. This new folk song contest may not be the best way to inherit and carry forward the tradition, but it can create a momentum in a special period and arouse the public's passion for the creation of traditional culture.

In recent years, 'one song of love flying song of the earth' and Nanning have become cultural brands that display the image of Guangxi's new folk songs. 'One song of love flying song of the earth' not only spreads Guangxi's new folk songs but also constantly explores new sounds and melodies in new folk songs. Its purpose is to create new folk songs that can be sung by people, and then arouse people's attention and love, especially the younger generation. Further, it promotes the popularity of new folk songs, makes outstanding contributions to Nanning International Folk Song Festival, and delivers more fresh blood to the new folk song talent pool.

International Folk Song Festival Live TV Media Communication

The live TV broadcast of the Nanning International Folk Song Festival can be said to be the music variety TV programme that has the greatest influence, the longest duration, and the widest range of development in Guangxi, and can effectively promote the new folk songs of Guangxi. Since the first Nanning International Folk Song Festival was broadcast live in 1999, it has lasted 18 sessions. The live party of the Nanning Folk Song Festival takes 'putting new clothes on folk songs' as the artistic conception, so that the new folk songs have the vitality of the new era. Thus, it promotes the development of the popularity and modernization of the new folk songs and endows the new folk songs with fresh vitality. Nanning International Folk Song Festival has become the most important platform for the dissemination of Guangxi's new folk songs. Since the end of the 20th century, the works of Guangxi's new folk songs disseminated through the Nanning International Folk Song Festival spread at home and abroad (Zhao, 2010).

Wide Range of Live Broadcasting

The Nanning International Folk Song Festival was broadcast live on CCTV to the world audience, directly pushing the starting point of Guangxi's new folk song communication to the height of internationalization, and then creating the vibrant artistic charm of Guangxi's new folk song, which is not only full of new ideas but also more exciting. By means of the live TV broadcast of the Nanning International Folk Song Festival, the general public can appreciate the essence of Guangxi's traditional folk music on the basis of enjoying the new folk songs with the flavour of the times and Guangxi's new folk music with the flavour of the times can be deeply integrated into public life.

Lasting Communication and Promotion Results

Nanning International Folk Song Festival has always adhered to the positioning of folk songs, dedicated to the inheritance and collection of folk songs and the innovation and promotion of new folk songs. In the past 18 years, it has made unremitting efforts to promote new folk songs in Guangxi. At the same time, Nanning International Folk Song Festival has a more lasting fermentation effect on the promotion and packaging of Guangxi's new folk songs.

During the past 18 years, a batch of Guangxi new folk songs with Guangxi national music characteristics and highlighting the charm of Guangxi Zhuang folk songs were launched at Nanning Folk Song Festival. A batch of new folk singers who grew up in Guangxi came out of Nanning International Folk Song Festival and spread Guangxi's new folk song works. They integrated the folk culture with the society of the times, promoted the exchange and communication of the new national culture, and promoted the development of cultural research, literary criticism and literary theory related to the new folk songs of the new era. While promoting the creation of new folk songs in Guangxi, they also expanded the construction of the nationalized vision of the creation of new folk songs in Guangxi. For example, at Nanning International Folk Song Festival, new folk songs with Guangxi characteristics, such as 'toast song', 'night in the sky', 'folk song leads the moon', and so on, were created and adapted elaborately by songwriters; the songs were organically combined with traditional music with modern creative techniques and packaged with electroacoustic dance beauty which promoted the collision and integration of traditional national notes and modernity. On the basis of spreading the traditional notes, the different versions of 'hurry back to Arli' and 'flying songs on the earth' are more devoted to the injection of modern elements, which makes Guangxi's new folk songs find the power to spread in the manifestation of the flavour of the times and the bloom of youthful vitality. The diversified dissemination and performing arts of these new folk songs prove that this kind of performance is not divorced from the people, but is more loved by the diverse people, meets the diverse aesthetic needs of the public, and makes Guangxi's new folk songs become a new era national music works that can be appreciated, sung, and appreciated by both refined and popular people. The adaptation of folk songs like spring river water in different versions and styles in the opening ceremony of the Nanning International Folk Song Festival made young people appreciate the diverse and changeable national style of Guangxi's new folk songs. Since 1999, Nanning International Folk Song Festival has become an important birthplace of Guangxi's new folk songs.

Performance Style Meets Diversified Aesthetics

The opening ceremony of the Nanning International Folk Song Art Festival, which lasted for 18 sessions, showed the diverse interpretation style of Guangxi's new folk songs to the public and made unremitting efforts to meet the multicultural aesthetic needs of the masses.

The 18-year live broadcast platform of the Folk Song Festival has made many excellent new folk song works in Guangxi enter the hearts of the masses and has engraved a deep brand. Take the continuous innovation and adaptation of folk songs like spring river water, hurry back to Ali Li, and vines wrapped around trees as examples.

In 1999, a new rock version folk song 'folk song is like spring river water' kicked off the opening ceremony of the first Nanning International Folk Song Art Festival. The unique singing form brightened the audience's eyes. After ten years of bass player career, Sečen Gerel has been very popular in China, and a 'Sečen Gerel whirlwind' is setting off in the music industry. On the stage of the 2008 Folk Song Festival, Julie, the black duck group and Xin Baoer jointly performed the 'female chorus' version of 'folk songs are like spring river water', which also showed a completely different artistic atmosphere.

The pleasant melody of the Guangxi song 'return from the market' has long been deeply rooted in the hearts of the people. On the stage of the folk song festival in 2000, reincarnation and Panther rock bands completely changed their faces in return from the market, adapted it into a fashionable rock version, and sang in a bold style, which was deeply loved by many young people.

The essence of Guangxi's new folk songs lies in connecting the times on the basis of Guangxi's folk and national cultural styles, and integrating fashionable and popular modern music elements. The new folk songs produced on the stage of Guangxi Nanning International Folk Song Festival meet the aesthetic psychology and artistic needs of the young generation. Compared with traditional folk songs, the new folk songs are closer to the modern aesthetic standards of the young generation. The strong artistic shock wave swirling on the stage of the Nanning International Folk Song Art Festival is promoting the renewal of the creative concept of Guangxi's new folk songs and the inheritance of the artistic vitality of folk songs.

New Folk Song Creation and Event Communication

There are two ways to promote Guangxi's new folk songs through competitions: one is to select excellent works for packaging and promotion in Guangxi regional song creation competitions. The second is to select excellent works to participate in the national song creation competition to achieve the purpose of promotion.

Competition Promotion of New Folk Song Creation

Since the end of the 20th century, a series of strategic measures taken by the literary and art circles in Guangxi has not only promoted the establishment of the 'Gehai' cultural brand but also pushed the creation of new folk songs in Guangxi to the height of leapfrog development.

Since 1999, new folk songs of Guangxi have emerged and won national creative awards. At the same time, they have been recognized and loved by the audience all over the country. In these new folk songs, the music elements with Guangxi characteristics have been widely favoured by the public.

For example, since 1999, the works that have won the 'five one projects' award of the Central Propaganda Department and the Golden Bell Award for Chinese music include 'March 3 and September 9' (panqi Ci, fupanqu), 'flying songs of the earth' (Zheng Nan Ci, xupeidong Qu), 'rural social drama' (Mei Shuai yuan Ci, he Chaoli Qu), 'Yao Shan Qing' (MAI zhansui Ci, stating Liu Qu), 'crossing the mountain with a good day' (LAN Huaichang Ci, fupanqu) 'Flying' (zhangminghe Ci, xuzhanhai Qu), etc.

Another example is chuibu Ballad (MAI zhansui Ci, Fu PanQu), 'Huashan love' (Huang Ping CI Feng, Shou Lun Qu), 'Zhuang sisters' (MAI zhansui Ci, Jin FengHao Qu), 'Beibu Gulf love song' (Liang Shaowu Ci, Tang liqu), and 'Mom and Dad', which won the National Radio New Song Award and the China Music and Television Award, respectively.

Construction and Promotion of Creative Event Platform

Since the 20th century, creative events in the Guangxi region have played a certain role in promoting Guangxi's new folk songs, such as Guangxi original music creation competition, Guangxi song creation pioneer list, Guangxi music Golden Bell Award, Guangxi literary and artistic creation bronze drum award, etc. The establishment of these awards has played a certain role in promoting the musicians in and outside Guangxi to actively create Guangxi's new era and new folk songs.

Guangxi Song Creation Pioneer List

It aims to commend bands or individuals in Guangxi's local original music world. Since the pioneer list of Guangxi song creation was launched on January 1st, 2000, it has been warmly pursued by Guangxi music lovers. Guangxi song creation pioneer list is the only programme in Guangxi that specializes in promoting popular songs created, sung and produced by Guangxi musicians. Over the past five years, the programme has received nearly 4000 works of lyrics and songs, which has built a platform for the development of Guangxi's new folk song popular style creation.

The pioneer list focuses on local songwriters' creations, local singers' singing, and local media operation platforms. It not only plays an important role in promoting and activating the development of Guangxi pop music but also lays a solid foundation for the discovery and cultivation of new local singers and songwriters to go nationwide.

For example, in the 2006 Guangxi song creation pioneer list, the focus band created the Guangxi original new folk song 'sharp ballad': a song with the unique tone and lining of Guangxi melody. On the stage of '2006 flying song of the earth', the 'sharp ballad' was brilliant, and the Guangxi 'focus band' who sang this song became popular. Then it attended the 'China South Korea Song Festival' held in South Korea with CCTV. In 2009, it was selected to celebrate the 60th National Day held by CCTV 'Long live the motherland', a large-scale theatrical evening party, which brought together many Chinese stars, made the audience all over the country and even the world get a glimpse of the style of Guangxi's new folk songs (Wei, 2015).

Guangxi Music Golden Bell Award

The creation of the Guangxi Music Golden Bell Award aims to promote outstanding Guangxi music works to participate in the selection competition for China Music Golden Bell Award. The objective of the Guangxi Golden Bell Award for music creation is to select the song works of Guangxi created by Guangxi songwriters or songwriters outside the region. Since the establishment of the first Guangxi Music Golden Bell Award in 2005, the following works have won awards:

'Beautiful and magical place' (Pan Qi Ci, Xu Peidong Qu), 'folk songs sing spring every year' (Liang Shaowu Ci, Fu pan Qu), 'Zhuang sisters' (MAI zhansui Ci, Jin FengHao Qu), 'mysterious Tiankeng' (Pan Qi Ci, Fu Xin Qu), 'Folk songs bring out the moon' (Hu Hong Ci, he Chaoli Qu), 'parents' (Zhang Rensheng Ci, Tang Li Qu) 'Stamp your feet' (MAI zhansui's Ci, Huang Chaorui's Qu), 'Lijiang River's love' (Bai He's Ci, Xu Peidong's Qu), 'black clothes Zhuang's wine' (Guo Qingxuan's Ci, Lin Haidong's Qu), 'butterfly kiss' (Chen Jieming's Ci, Lao Zi's Qu), 'Zhuang's toast song' (Liang Shaowu's Ci, Nong Lisheng's Qu), 'wind and water rise from Beibu Gulf' (Pan Qi's Ci, Fu Xin's Qu), etc.

These new folk songs of Guangxi have not only been widely spread in Guangxi but are also loved by the public in the region. Some of these works, such as 'beautiful and magical place', 'folk songs bring out the moon', and 'love of Lijiang River', have become new folk songs widely sung by Chinese people.

Since the end of the 20th century, with the reform and development of new media, the spread of Guangxi's new folk songs has gradually shown a diversified development trend in terms of communication forms and channels. In the continuous transformation and development of new media, Guangxi's new folk songs carry out diversified communication and creation through the production and dissemination of radio topics, the publicity of TV music MV, the rebroadcast of large-scale music evenings such as the Nanning International Folk Song Festival, and the collection and promotion of song creation competitions. In this way, while showing the unique voice of the times and national charm of Guangxi to the public, we can experience the charm of the times of the traditional voice of the nation.

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Research on Cultural Elements in Salar Music of Qinghai Province Under the Perspective of Belt and Road

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ABSTRACT

The Chinese nation has 5000 years of history and culture, carrying the historical development of various periods and has a broad and profound Chinese culture. As a part of the traditional culture of the Chinese nation, the intangible cultural heritage is the key to improving the national cultural soft power and plays a decisive role in future cultural communication. The construction of 'Belt and Road' has provided a lot of opportunities for national development, and countries along the 'Belt and Road' have benefited a lot from it. National culture, as an important element, reflects the cultural level of a country. The study and protection of history and culture have shown the brilliant process of national development. In Xunhua and Hualong counties of Qinghai Province, long-honoured Salars gather, who inherit the traditional culture through oral transmission. Salar folk songs are one of the national intangible cultural heritages. They combine the elements of Tibetan, Han, Mongolian, and religious music. Salar music is diverse, rich in content, and unique, forming a unique charming culture. This article studies the display of cultural heritage elements in Salar music of Qinghai Province through the intangible cultural heritage perspective of 'Belt and Road'.

Keywords: 'Belt and Road', combine, cultural elements, intangible heritage, Salar music

Introduction

With the deepening of world globalization, the exchanges between countries have become increasingly close, and the cultural exchanges provide higher possibilities for carrying forward the excellent national culture. Under the perspective of 'Belt and Road' intangible cultural heritage, the study of cultural heritage is of great significance. As far as the Salars in Qinghai Province are concerned, their musical elements are a major element of the intangible cultural heritage. Salar is a nation with a small number in Western China. Although the number is small, it has a long history and culture. Rich and colourful folk music is one of its main characteristics and has high research value.

The Development of Salar Music in Qinghai Province

The History of Salar Music

The Salar nationality is one of the ethnic minorities in China, which has a long history and culture and has formed a unique excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation through the precipitation of the long history. In the diversified development of world ethnic music culture and diversified ethnic music, people also pay more attention to the research on folk music. In the process of diversified ethnic music development, human communication and exchange are one of the important ways of cultural integration.

The Salars have also experienced a great migration, moved from one place to another, where they lived in major changes, settled in Qinghai Province, a unique art of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, which is of great significance to the study of ethnic minority culture in Qinghai Province, resulting in the change of music culture. The settlement sites of the Salar people are near the mountains and rivers. Influenced by the regions, cultural development and communication are also in the same area, which also produce cultural changes. Migration affects not only people's living environment, but also religious beliefs and customs. Therefore, the Hui people are of great significance for the development of the Salar people. In the long history of China (Chen, 2021), the Salars and other ethnic groups in Qinghai Province lived in harmony and prospered together, creating a splendid national culture for China. The Salar song is striking with its unique musical melody. The change of melody makes Salar music changeable, which is loved by a large number of people and makes many singers addicted to it.

Diversified Salar Folk Songs

Folk music and religious music are the main two parts of Salar music, with various forms such as Salar, Salar feast, music, flowers, labour songs, and nursery songs. Because the Salar do not have their own words, their culture is preserved by oral inheritance, the national characteristics of the Salar. Chinese is a common language of their communication, which is of great significance to the development and prosperity of their culture. Combined with the cultural background of multiple ethnic groups, the Salar culture is more colourful, and the Salar folk songs also show a diversified trend.

'Salar' means the songs of the Salar people, the famous 'Brazilian Ancient Skating', 'Salai Brazil', and so on, and the songs are popular in different regions. The rhythm of this song is cheerful, the melody is unique, and the sentences are relatively short, with usually four or six sentences. The rhythm is cheerful and deep, the two styles form a sharp contrast, which is one of the mainstreams of Salar music. Another example is 'Salar youth', also known as 'Salar flower', which is a popular folk song, which is very popular among the Salar people. The national and Tibetan folk songs are the inspiration source of 'Salar youth', which absorb the essence of various parts. There are two forms: solo and duet, and the lyrics cover the characteristics of the Salar language. In addition, it also has a distinctive characteristic, which is generally a love song, which pays great attention to the object and occasion, so as to avoid unpleasant things. So 'Salar boy' is also known as 'wild music', because it is sung in the mountains in the wild.

To Study the Significance of Cultural Elements in Salar Music in Qinghai Province

Overview of Salar Music Research in Qinghai Province

In China, each nation has its unique development process, and the resulting literature and art are numerous, although minority music except Han music research collection and arrangement is relatively less, but it does not mean that minority music research is meaningless, on the contrary, for the minority music research instead, it can promote the development of folk music in our country and make the folk music diverse (Li, 2021). Among the folk songs of Salar nationality in Qinghai Province, melody, tone scale, and music style are their main musical characteristics. Moreover, the national art and literature with unique regional characteristics of Salar nationality plays an important role in the historical and cultural development of China and even the world and has high aesthetic value. Salar people are pure and simple, with rich thoughts and emotions, and the pursuit of beauty, and the resulting literature and art have a large number of high research value.

For example, 'Du Renzana' is a song adapted from Mongolian folk songs. Ethnic songs, produced in people's lives, are very popular and close to life. With the development of the modern economy and society, the development of folk music has reached a new height, the modernization of science and technology makes folk music spread to further places, making more people hear folk music. This is an unprecedented development opportunity for the study of various ethnic music and the inheritance and protection of national culture. Excellent traditional culture is worthy of respect and being inherited by everyone (Han, 2019). Therefore, in the diversified music culture, it is necessary to strengthen the promotion of folk music culture and better integrate it into the development process of modern society.

The Development of The Salar Ethnic Culture

The Salars lack their own language, so the historical documents are very few, and the existing documents are basically synteny materials, which are of great research value. Sala has its own changing laws and characteristics, and its pronunciation, intonation, and grammar make outstanding contributions to the study of geolinguistics (Rong, 2020). Corresponding to Salar culture is the diversification of music and the diversification of culture. The causes of this phenomenon include internal and external causes. The internal reason is obvious in the change and development of the national culture, and the external reason is the influence of other ethnic groups, which are imperceptibly affected in the process of contact with other ethnic groups. Through continuous innovation and development, the culture has produced conflict and collision, but also produced assimilation and integration. Through the analysis and research of this change, we can have a deeper understanding of the Salar culture. Various kinds and forms of Salar music involve all aspects and fields, which embodies the aesthetic connotation of national culture in the beautiful Salar music, and accumulates the precipitation of history and the art of music (Stone, 2021).

With the rapid development of tourism, more and more attention is paid to the protection of cultural heritage, and various countries have thus increased the inheritance and protection of cultural heritage. In the process of rapid development, people know that the rich and colourful national culture can bring great benefits to the country and even the world. The music culture of the Salar group is one of the intangible cultural heritages, which is listed as the object of protection by the state and has high research value and significance. Of course, in addition to the intangible cultural heritage, there is also material cultural heritage, such as the mosques built by the Salar people, which has a very high artistic level. The residences of the Salar people are different from other ethnic groups, mainly showing a very distinctive square appearance. As an intangible cultural heritage, Salar music also drives the development of other related industries, of course, the most prominent one is tourism. The unique Salar music will undoubtedly attract a large number of tourists, to feel the music and the enthusiasm of the Salar people so that the tourists can experience the different local customs. The distinctive sheepskin raft, fence building, temple construction technology, etc. are the typical representatives of the Salar ethnic group, promoting the development of the related tourism market.

‘Belt and Road’ Intangible Cultural Heritage Horizon Research Strategy

‘Belt and Road’ Intangible Cultural Heritage Horizon

As we all know, ‘One Belt’ refers to the Silk Road, while ‘One Road’ refers to the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road, passing through both land and sea. It is a multilateral development strategy, which promotes China’s modernization and drives the development of China and even the world. The exchange of national culture in countries cannot be separated from the ‘Belt and Road’. As the initiator and advocate of the ‘Belt and Road’, we should set an example, improve cultural soft power, and promote the development of national culture, especially by paying more attention to the excellent traditional culture. As an excellent traditional national culture, the intangible cultural heritage can move from the local to the world. It has a very high historical research value and humanistic research significance, and the connotation of the local culture is vividly spread. Under the perspective of ‘Belt and Road’ intangible cultural heritage, the development of national culture has a good environment, making it possible for places to move to the world. Of course, in the process of transmitting culture, we should not only spread the superficial cultural phenomena, but also pay attention to the internal attributes of culture (Xu, 2021).

In recent years, there are numerous national cultures transmitted through the perspective of intangible cultural heritage. A successful communication culture requires innovative utilization and creative inheritance. Take the Desarar music culture in Qinghai Province as an example. After a long history, the Salar culture form is relatively stable and has been spread and continued without its own words. Different from other cultures, the Salar music culture did not disappear subsequently, but got a new development opportunity, and was successfully positioned as an intangible cultural heritage. Intangible cultural heritage is the cultural form formed by people in spiritual aspects, and it is the condensation of culture for a period of time. Under the construction of the ‘Belt and Road’, it provides opportunities for the national cultural industry, of course, which includes not only opportunities but also challenges. Salar music is the only music of its own nation, and very few people really know it except its own people. With the progress of the ‘Belt and Road’ intangible cultural heritage horizon, people also show their attention to ethnic minorities, which is a process of cultural exchange that has both advantages and disadvantages, and should be viewed rationally. Intangible cultural heritage also needs a certain material carrier, and only the empty cultural concept is difficult to accept. Therefore, when it comes to Salar music, musical instruments are a good carrier. Unique musical instruments are always refreshing, whether they will be played or not, which also carries Salar music culture, which has its high cultural value.

Ethnic Cultural Heritage Cultural Situation Under the Vision of 'Belt and Road' Intangible Cultural Heritage

The ultimate goal of building the 'Belt and Road' is to achieve a community with a shared future for mankind. This is a great practice. It has strengthened cooperation and ties between countries and enabled countries along the road to achieving win-win cooperation. In its long history, the dissemination and protection of culture have been given great attention. Advocating the construction of the 'Belt and Road' has strengthened cooperation and exploration in all the regions along the route, thus creating a good platform, which is the strategic demand of China's long-term development. The protection of national culture is undoubtedly also the protection of the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation, which is a witness to the national development history of thousands of years. This strategy can better promote the dissemination and protection of national culture.

Over the years, the Chinese nation has maintained a united, friendly, and harmonious ethnic relationship. The development of national culture in such an environment has made the Chinese nation more confident and has gradually moved it from the country to the world. The national culture under the perspective of 'Belt and Road' intangible cultural heritage is very important, and the development of the country and the development of national culture complement each other. Benign cultural exchange is the premise of the development of national culture, which brings not only the development of their respective cultures but also the integration of economic development, which is a trend and a strategy. Regional economic integration has brought the research of national culture to a new height, transforming it from the commonplace of cultural exchange to an ideological resonance (Zhu, 2021). The study of national culture under the perspective of 'Belt and Road' intangible cultural heritage is a complementary and win-win situation, which affects not only the culture between countries and nations but also, more importantly, the international ethnic culture.

The Protection Problem of Cultural Heritage Elements

The Development Status of Cultural Heritage Elements

In the study of ethnic minority music culture, cultural elements are its core content, and the research value of cultural elements is self-evident. Since the beginning, the development of ethnic minorities has played great significance in the historical development of the country, and the emergence of each cultural phenomenon reflects the state of social and historical development at that time. Although in the process of economic and cultural development, the emergence of cultural elements does not match its economy and the intangible cultural heritage is paid little attention to in the case of backward economic level. However, even under such circumstances, the cultural heritage elements have been preserved and inherited and re-creation is their development direction.

Take minority music as an example. Although in the modern creation process, some composers will use minority music in it, there are many problems. Some consider it a dismantling and destruction of folk music, a disaster for composers who used it improperly. In addition, such use may lead some listeners without knowing the truth to misunderstand folk music, and even produce unpleasant experiences to resist folk music. All these are the problems that may be encountered in inheriting and developing cultural elements. The continuation of ethnic minority music has a long way to go. Of course, in the development process of ethnic minority music, there have also been many excellent classic works produced, which are worth of savouring by everyone. This shows the influence of society, customs, and history on the development of a nation and is a precious wealth accumulated for a hundred years.

Problems Faced by the Chinese Heritage Elements of Salar Music in Qinghai Province

As a multi-ethnic country, there are various ethnic cultures and the development of folk music in various forms. Against such a background, the development of folk music is extremely challenging but also full of vitality. In the development of Salar music, problems have also emerged endlessly.

First of all, what we should face is the living environment of folk music. In the process of modernization, many places have established high-rise buildings in many places, and the original living environment has been destroyed. A single form of a building is not attractive to people, which is also the reason why the country should establish the protection of intangible cultural heritage, which is the spiritual inheritance.

Secondly, with the change in people's way of production and lifestyle, many folk customs have changed, and the original unique music has also disappeared. In addition, a large number of people leave their hometown for work leaving no one to inherit traditional music, hence the development of folk music is difficult. Of course, people's aesthetic concept is also a factor. Modern entertainment products are far more attractive to young people than traditional culture. For example, nowadays, few people wear Salar clothes, even among the native people, most of them eye modern clothes. This is a blend of culture, but it is also a decline of traditional culture. There is a big gap between the life of older generation and the present life, but the progress of the times will never go back to the past.

The rapid development of the tourism industry has indeed brought great economic benefits to the local area, but there are also some negative problems. Large-scale developments and utilization are undoubtedly a great disaster for the local environment. With the arrival of a large number of tourists, traditional folk customs have also been impacted and collided. One-sided attention to the market will also lead to the loss of intangible cultural heritage.

Finally, people lack in-depth research on music. Although many music researchers have made great research achievements in ethnic minority music, these achievements are also very small compared to the extensive and profound music culture of ethnic minorities. In addition to recorded music, there is certainly a lack of research in music. Of course, the lack of education in folk music is also a big problem for people to solve.

In short, the development of folk music has a long way to go, which cannot be done overnight. By studying the cultural elements in the Salar music of Qinghai Province under the perspective of 'Belt and Road' intangible cultural heritage, people can see many existing problems of intangible cultural heritage. Salar music has strong vitality and is enduring. This is an example, a further understanding of the national culture, inheriting the excellent traditional culture is a long-term strategic development goal. The promotion of 'Belt and Road' is a good platform for the development of intangible cultural heritage, and we should seize this opportunity to go international.

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This issue of the JHSSR has been reviewed by experts in Business, Finance, Economics, Literature, Management, Music, Psychology, Religion, Sociology, Social Studies, and Urban Studies.

These experts provided candid and critical comments, which helped our editorial team pinpoint the specific comments and improved the papers' quality. The JHSSR editorial board is very grateful for the invaluable contributions from all reviewers listed above *(in alphabetical order by first name)*.

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(Manuscript Preparation & Submission Guide)

Revised: November 2022

Please read the guidelines below and follow the instructions carefully. **Manuscripts that do not adhere to the Journal's guidelines will not be put into the peer-review process until requirements are met.**

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A well-formatted manuscript follows all journal instruction. All elements of the manuscript are printed in English with 1-inch margins at top, bottom, and sides. Right margins are unjustified. Horizon journals accept manuscript submissions which uses any consistent text— Format-free Submission! This saves you time and ensures you can focus on your priority: the research.

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- ✓ The submission cites current theoretical and empirically-based literature, including relevant articles published in the Horizon Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research;
- ✓ The submission is written in language that is engaging, lively, and direct, using active voice whenever possible;
- ✓ The submission includes a maximum of four tables and figures uploaded as separate files, if applicable;
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- Cover letter
- Declaration form
- Referral form
- Manuscript structure

(Title, Author details and affiliation, Abstract, Keywords, etc. using the **IMRAD** style). See below explanation.

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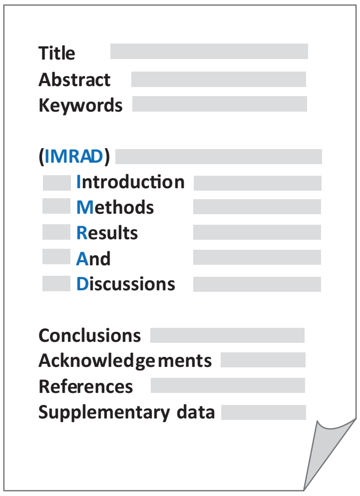

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