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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 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 open-access online scientific journal which is free of charge. It publishes the scientific outputs.

Recognized internationally as a leading peer-reviewed interdisciplinary 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 behavioural sciences 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.

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 and behavioural 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, including anthropology, cultural studies, economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology.

Scope of the journal includes HUMANITIES– Field of Languages, Linguistics, Literature, Translation, modern Languages, Education, Philosophy, Humanistic Theories and Practices. SOCIAL SCIENCES– Archaeology, Anthropology, Economics, Geography, History, Law, psychology Political Sciences, sociology, dance, music, sport, Graphic Design, Technology Management, public policy, Arts and Cultures, and Accounting.

History and Background

A premier journal in its field, JHSSR was established in 2019, and has been in circulation 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 Horizon journals. It aims to achieve its SCOPUS status within 2 years of publication.

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, 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.

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.

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

Horizon JHSSR 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: CrossRef, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Excellence for Research in Australia (ERA), 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 Horizon 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 author must ensure that when a manuscript is submitted to Horizon, the manuscript is an original work. The author should check the manuscript for any possible plagiarism using any software such as **TurnItIn**, **i-Thenticate** or any other similar program before submitting the manuscripts to the Horizon journal.

All submitted manuscripts must be in the Journal's acceptable **similarity index range**:

< 30%– PASS; **30-40%–** RESUBMIT MS; **> 40%–** REJECT.

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Code of Conduct

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

Article Processing Charges (APC)— Open Access Journal

Open access publishing proposes a relatively new model for scholarly journal publishing that provides immediate, worldwide, barrier-free access to the full-text of all published articles. Open access allows all interested readers to view, download, print, and redistribute any article without a subscription, enabling far greater distribution of an author's work than the traditional subscription-based publishing model. Many authors in a variety of fields have begun to realize the benefits that open access publishing can provide in terms of increasing the impact of their work world-wide.

Horizon **does not impose** any submission fees, publication fees or page charges for those intending to publish their research in this journal. However, as Horizon is an open access journal, in norms with all open access journals, the journal has imposed an Article Processing Charge (APC). To publish in Horizon, authors are required to pay an APC of USD250 per article. A waiver to this available for academics with a heavily subsidized fee of USD100 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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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 14 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.

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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 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 PLC, beyondproofreading@gmail.com at your own discretion.

Language Accuracy

Horizon **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 Horizon'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.

Horizon 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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Do not raise the bar unnecessarily by exaggerating requirements for successful publication, but rather encourage young researchers to try and experiment. Researchers can raise their ambition level through gained experience.

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Contents

FOREWORD

Professor Nayan Kanwal, FRSA, ABIM, AMIS, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Editor, JHSSR

Welcome to the **Fourth Issue of 2020** of the Journal of Horizon Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research (JHSSR) focusing on various issues of Education and Literature.

JHSSR is an academic, interdisciplinary, and peer-reviewed GOLD open-access publication, published rapidly by BP Services. The journal is independently owned, dependent upon donations and run on ***not-for-profit*** basis for the benefit of the world-wide social science community.

This issue features 10 articles consisting of an invited article, an opinion piece, concept and a review each. In addition, there are 5 regular articles from various authors that come across from different countries, namely **India**, **Malaysia**, **Nepal**, **Palestine**, **Philippines**, and **USA**.

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 endeavor more meaningful.

Being capable of publishing in peer-reviewed journals is commonly seen as an indicator of proper scientific research. It is the duty of a researcher to publish his results for the scientific community. Research can be seen as a product that must be sold to the target audience in the form of an article. In other words, research results do not exist before they are successfully published. The key people for getting one's article accepted for publication in a journal are usually the Editor-in-Chief, editor, and reviewers. After publication, a well-written article will attract readers, eventually resulting in a scientific impact defined by whether other scientists will cite the article.

In some cases, people raise the bar unnecessarily by exaggerating requirements for a successful publication. This may be either an intentional attempt to bring the game to a higher level, or merely unintentional. Unfortunately, it is difficult to improve the level before understanding the publishing process in the first place. Writing scientific journal articles is learned through writing and publishing attempts when constructive feedback is available. It may occasionally be possible to enter the big league of very high-level journals directly, but only with adequate levels of support and feedback. In other cases, it is possible to publish in increasingly better journals once gaining experience through more moderate publication mediums. A researcher can raise their ambition level through gained experience. Hence, it is equally important for any researcher to begin their publishing with new or young journals provided they are of good standing.

Learning to write journal articles is, however, not a black and white issue where there are absolute rights and wrongs. Being constructive is more important than seeking out flaws in the message. Young researchers should utilize several sources while building their know-how regarding scientific writing.

All the papers published in this special edition underwent the journal's **stringent peer-review process involving a minimum of two 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 journal not only by authors and researchers in Malaysia and America but by those in other countries around the world as well.

I would also like to express gratitude to all the contributors who have made this issue possible, as well as the authors, reviewers and editors for their professional contribution. Last but not least, the assistance of the journal's editorial office in Texas is fully appreciated.

Horizon JHSSR is currently accepting manuscripts for upcoming 2021 issues based on original qualitative or quantitative research that opens new areas of inquiry and investigation. The editors hope that the authors publishing in this journal can support the noble cause of Horizon in reaching its goals.

Let me conclude by saying that with the publication of this issue, we have completed two years of successful 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 2021 and beyond. I am confident that 2021 will bring yet another challenging year of emerging scholarly articles.

I also hope that we'll be seeing a farewell to two of the biggest colossal words both in and outside of academia right now — Coronavirus and COVID-19 pandemic.

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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INVITED

Colors of Skin and COVID-19: Plateaus of Post-Enlightenment

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ABSTRACT

The most prescient takeaway in the wake of this Covid 19 catastrophe is: A pandemic is a global catastrophe without simplistic explanations. This article seeks to unravel the anatomy of a persistent problem: Systemic racism and inequality breed oppressive human conditions which manifest institutional meltdown–nationally and internationally–that calls for Enlightenment Two. A post-enlightenment argument is made to re-think *Social Contract* and its consequential dissolution owing to persistently hierarchized inequality and injustice.

Keywords: Systemic inequality; racism; Covid 19; institutional meltdown; and post-enlightenment challenges.

Postulates and Problems

From John Maynard Keynes to Milton Friedman, 1970 to 1990, fiscal regulatory systems federally enjoyed relative independence until the coronavirus changed this paradigm. The clubby rules of macroeconomics have changed. The holy grails of sciences–economics, sociology, and political science included–have faltered. The perils and paradoxes of this new paradigm shift is the focus of this essay. To validate certain assumptions, two analytical units–the United States of America and India–have been discussed in terms of basic issues that relate to racism and inequality in the world's two most important democracies. Despite many differences, there is uncanny situational similarity between the two. It partakes of special significance in the post-pandemic phase for two main reasons: First, the two great democracies under Trump's and Modi's leadership embody the upsurge of nationalist-populist movement which is unprecedented. Second, all democracies are far more transparent than totalitarian countries where censorship muffles civil liberties. Social media and free press unravel events even before they occur as against those which conceal and distort even catastrophic events at the expense of public interest.

A comparative-formulative narrative underscored by primary and secondary evidence validates a possible theory of *Enlightenment Two* as a precondition to reclaiming civil society.

From *"Black Plague"* to *"Corona Jihad"*

> "I began studying the 19th century in a bid to understand the origins of the violent racism that had characterized life (for me) on a housing estate, not for the apolitical aesthetic (as if there were there such a thing) which I'm told from time to time by non-Black scholars should underpin the study of literature. I was drawn, too, to Emily Brontë's 'H. and I are going to rebel' – a rebellion across class, race, and gender allegiances. Until we appeal to the intellect and imagination of children of colour, with histories that speak to their lived realities, we are unlikely to find them as our students or colleagues."
>
> Angelique Richardson[2]

As a 'dark-skinned,' almost "gypsy", whose parents were non-fictional (real) "Indians", I can fully identify with

[1]Professor and Dean Emeritus, School of Social Work, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70808-5752 (swmoha@lsu.edu; www.Brijmohan.org)

[2]'H. and I are going to rebel' https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?tab=wm&ogbl#inbox/WhctKJVzZKtLlDsvdsQlqVHpGCBtzMnmbhVtTRfXqNKgMQcRbHbqMHZqtKRmkvsPRdpZQgG (London Review of Books, August 2, 2020)

Bronte's Heathcliff. There is a universal quality in pain and suffering due to banality of evil exclusions. When cataclysmic events occur, their colors change but ethos and essence remain unchanged.

Pandemics are global matters. Covid-19 has morphed the existing paradigms that explained, regulated, and sustained human existence. It has failed science, medicine, governance, and creeds which promoted civility. Theoretically, humanity hangs on a cliff, notwithstanding trillions of dollars invested to keep us alive. Both macroeconomics and micro-dynamics of social intercourse have been proven wrong. While racism and its variants have deeper historical-cultural roots in every society, the prevalence and magnitude of epidemics and pandemics are attributed to epidemiological, virological and related factors which tend to play out independent of human role. However, their hideous interdependence cannot be ignored.

As Coronavirus broke out, violence and social unrest threatened the basic structure, social fabric around our social order. The ugly head of racism was not confined to the US. In Nizamuddin, Delhi, where a multitude of Muslims were hiding, people avenged the *Corona Jihadis* with unmitigated mayhem. The massive violence led to protests signifying Black Lives Matter (BLM). The hideous interface between a pandemic, racism and inequality cannot be overlooked to reconfigure certain principles for enduring civility.

"It is always dangerous to apply selective lessons from biology to politics. And it is just as bad an idea to apply inapt political principles to biology," *Nathan Gardels, Noema Editor-in-Chief,* concludes:

> "The anti-maskers of the West also dismiss this quality of interdependence by dogmatically insisting on the political ideal of personal liberty in the face of a contagious pandemic that recognizes no such corporeal boundaries. "Give me liberty or give me COVID" seems to be the misguided rallying cry of society's most irresponsible members"[3]

The crux of post-Enlightenment lies here. The two world wars followed by India's balkanization, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan speak volumes of imperial hubris and violent ideological fissures. Hitler, Stalin, and Mao used those trappings to achieve their utopias which did not exist. ***Racism, like the caste system, is a systemic inequality institutionalized by hegemonic myths of legitimized ideologies of hierarchized superiority.***

In a special issue on 'The new ideology of race,' *The Economist* alerts everyone especially campus academics: "A set of illiberal ideas about how to tackle American racism will only hinder progress," (July 11–17, 2020: 7). Three aspects of this problem are identified: i) continued blight of African-American even after the end of slavery; ii) the political right's use of race as a divisive political tool; and iii), lastly, academia's rejection of the "liberal notion of progress." Despite elements of truth, *The Economist* views this approach is flawed:

"It is a worldview where everything and everyone is seen through the prism of ideology–who is published, who gets jobs, who can say what to whom; one in which in-groups obsess over orthodoxy in education, culture and heritage; one that enforces absolute equality of outcome, policy by policy, paragraph by paragraph, if society is to count as just" (July 11–17, 2020: 7).

Though academia has a basis for this ideological radicalism, it only serves as a euphemism to perpetuate intra-campus in-groups' hegemonic lust for power and material benefits in a rather capricious and racist fashion. *White Privilege*, and its offspring subsumed under 'white trash' inclusive of phony sense of victimhood of the 'white women', reign the hallowed corridors of empty ideals. Cady Lang succinctly writes:

> "The 'Keren' meme is a reminder of the troubling legacy of white women weaponizing their victimhood." (*Time,* July 20–27, 2020: 30)

Fragility of *white women* has been at the center of "Black Plague" portraying African-American males as sexual predators justifying their misfortunes including Jim Crow laws and lynchings. Lang sums up:

> "The historical narrative of white women's victimhood goes back to myths constructed during the era of American slavery. Enslaved black men were posited as sexual threats to white women, the wives of the slave owners, when in reality, slave masters were the ones raping enslaved girls and women. The narrative perpetuated the idea that white women, who represented the good and moral in American society, needed to be protected at all costs, thus justifying racial violence toward Black men or anyone who posed a threat to their power. It was the overarching theme of *The Birth of a Nation…* the inspiration for the rebirth of the KKK." (Lang, 2020: 31)

[3] https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?tab=wm&ogbl#inbox/WhctKJVzZKlpfbSRKnWRLKGTXpPKJPbzqGPggQMgrXBttjWLbMJpFccpBzSvSBsLWGZQwtv (August 1, 2020)

America is changing but not that well. The white-robed KKK criminals now sport pinstripe suits with red ties. Rewind some two decades ago: In my own school of Social Work, there were three full professors–one Asian Indian, the others two, a native American and a Jew–who were demonized as "the axis of evil" by the second floor occupants, mostly white females who are now on the top of ladder as full professors. Since I had the temerity of voting against the promotion and tenure of at least three of them, I became a target of their vile vindictiveness. I have been retired for almost a decade, yet this bunch remains restless to hurt me. Two years ago, I underscored a column written by George Wills in *The Advocate* by way of a Letter to the editor. A pathetic alliance of avengers manipulated faculty resolution to get my *Dean Emeritus* title revoked, unsuccessfully. This fiendish hatred of the non-white man who is perceived as a threat to the *White Privilege,* is not too uncommon. One cannot fight against this wicked phenomenon. I once tried to get some legal recourse, but my own lawyer sold me out.

A footnote to history

Workplace toxicity can be lethal. A snapshot from the recent past: the scars have replaced wounds, but the pain persists. I was hospitalized in 2012 for a major abdominal surgery. About 24 hours after a painful procedure, I received a call from my erstwhile acting dean to see her in the office. When I asked her how I could help, she minced no words but to ask me to vacate my office as it was needed for a new professor. A few weeks later, I did oblige without any protest. As Dean Emeritus I am still entitled to certain privileges. I collected my personal effects–pictures, posters, documents, and a few files and left all materials to be left in the students' lounge. I have never gone back there nor have I been invited–even when called for–to that place. I had worked there for 34 years until I retired (December 25, 2009) under the force of hostile workplace conditions. It will take volumes to flesh out how racism and reverse-sexism work against an individual who is neither black nor white. While teaching a course on diversity, I once quipped: "I haven't seen a colorless person." I have lived through this anguished *otherness* in the colorful Dixieland of this fabulous country for about 45 years. The United States, as I often say with pride, is more than a country: It is a new civilization. What I deeply regret is the "ressentiment" –to use a Nietzschean expression–of the anti-Semites and their ilk who shamelessly use their phony "whiteness" and "fragility" to climb up the ladder at the expense of certain marginalized people. These soulless people have marred the essence and ethos of the American Dream which some people experience as nightmares. I can never forget the horrific episodes of 1986 (*See* Mohan, 2012: Ch IV: 122–159) when the system used a nefarious set up to pervert the very meaning of "promotion" at the behest of a "privileged" alien. I lost my innocence. It is the dearest price one could pay to remain human.

During my decades' old post-dean life, there have been sad moments when I had wished for some bad thing that might happen to me. Undeserved humiliation is sometimes unbearable. Big organizations, like a university, usually work impersonally. Universities I served are good universities. It is the feral politics of my own profession, the sociology of social work, which is inherently malignant. Mostly, these soulless "angels" are really parasites who continue to drain on the marrow of what is best in America. It is a sociological obligation "to translate 'personal troubles of milieu' into 'the public issues of social structure,'" as Comte and C. Wright Mills tried in mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries (Becker, 1968: 364). "*Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism?"* (Diangelo, 2018).

When George Floyd "couldn't breathe", I could fully empathize with the agony and despair of a black man who is still perceived as a threat to civil order aka *White Privilege*[4]. Look at the abuse of this pernicious license:

> "According to a reporter for The Hill, Yoho did not cease in his expressive disdain for Ocasio-Cortez even as she walked away. Once he believed her to be out of hearing range, Yoho reportedly described his colleague as a 'fucking bitch.'[5]"

While the vulnerability of African Americans to ill heath, poor housing, poverty, and crime is a national problem, not many white Americans seem concerned about it. "Black America [is] in peril," Lexington writes about it in *The Economics:*

"Little wonder black have been so stricken by covid-19. In Washington, DC, blacks are less than 47% of the

[4]Singh, Atul P. 2020. 'Social Work's Post-Pandemic Challenges,' *Tryaksh International Journal of Humanities, TJIH,* I, 1: 1–6. My reflective analysis of Social Work's role constitutes the main planks of this discourse curated by Dr Atul P. Singh and sponsored by National Association of Professional Social Workers in India.

[5]https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-ted-yoho-lesson-in-decency-on-the-house-floor?utm_source=nl&utm_brand=tny&utm_mailing=TNY_Daily_072420&utm_campaign=aud-dev&utm_medium=email&bxid=5be9cecc24c17c6adf3b04f6&cndid=40380448&hasha=c0c6f5a7857065a7a89e632b85ba5d88&hashb=27aceb9d4cf959e285c842df842fc2d8208ba672&hashc=b0a6038ddaf1444247bfbd01d3034774292337ac58c220e9c116182ee36ea8d9&esrc=right_rail_news&utm_term=TNY_Daily (*The New Yorker,* reported by David Remnick, July 24, 2020).

population, but account for 80%of its 445 coronavirus deaths" (May 30, 2020:25). A false news is circulated that children are immune to this deadly virus.

Global Dysfunctionality

Thomas J. Bollyky and Chad P. Brown contend: "When a COVID-19 vaccine becomes available leaders around the world are all too likely to resort to "shortsighted 'my country first' approaches" to manage its production and distribution—with disastrous results. "Absent an international, enforceable commitment to distribute vaccines globally in an equitable and rational way, leaders will instead prioritize taking care of their own populations over slowing the spread of COVID-19 elsewhere… . It is not too late for global cooperation to prevail over global dysfunction, but it will require states and their political leaders to change course."[6]

The Indian Drama, if I may, unravels the quintessential roots of rituals of *Caste* and primordial *class* which have universally institutionalized the structures of inequality and injustice. The authors of *Rig Veda* prevailed, as did Marx. Isabel Wilkerson "reframes systemic inequality in the U.S." and "argues for understanding the U.S hierarchy as a caste system: a deeply entrenched yet artificial method of categorizing people by birth" (Worland, 2020: 91-93). Racism has been compared with and likened to Indian caste system before. Indic scholars, an emerging force in revisionist academia, would disagree with Worland's characterization of its origin as "artificial." To Wilkerson, *racism* does not fully capture the infrastructure of inequality; she builds on caste which represents "the man-made nature of systemic injustice" (Worland, 2020: 92): Isabel Wilkerson narrates race as a socio-political equivalent construct like caste in India (2020).

Arundhati Roy makes a powerful statement: "The relentless and ongoing incarceration of activists, academics and lawyers in this case is a manifestation of this Government's understanding that this nascent, emerging secular, anti-caste and anti-capitalist politics that these people represent, provides an alternative narrative to Hindu fascism and poses the clearest threat—culturally, economically as well as politically—to its own disastrous Hindu Nationalist politics that has led this country into a crisis that has blighted the lives of hundreds of millions of people which ironically includes its own supporters."[7]

When I discussed Candy Lang's narrative about the white women's "victimhood" and their men's wanton sextual predation of the enslaved women, I should mention how pervasive is this abominable behavior in India's caste pyramid. About six decades ago, I remember the so-called 'untouchables' (Dalits) were generally dark skinned. Now, at least physically, the color barrier that starkly identified major caste hierarchy, has disappeared. A *Dalit* boy may be lynched for going out with a higher caste girl, but his perpetrators do not mind–in fact, they lust– for sleeping with *Dalit* women.

Capital, Marvel Covid-19, and Piketty

> "Against a backdrop of mile-long lines for food handouts Congress and the Federal Reserve have put $7 trillion in the hands of investors through the CARE Act's corporate bailout and follow up interventions. Since March 2020, the wealth of US billionaires has risen by $565 billion. ...The leaders and chief funders were behind it, and overwhelming majorities in Congress went along. This consensus has been at the heart of politico-economic evolution in the US, where a seemingly inexorable process of economic deterioration has been met by intensifying predation."
>
> Robert Brenner (2020)

When you go through a thousand plus pages of Thomas Piketty' new book (2020), you understand the exterior (Marxist) and inner (Nietzsche) structure of human proclivities. At no other time in post-war history this banality has been so vividly demonstrated as now. Becoming rich and richer while people are dying in thousands is the nadir of depravity which builds capital and its owners. But Marx was right: they are also their own gravediggers.

The politics of pandemics, *The Economist* contends, will be a challenge to most western governments: "In the West covid-19 is a challenge to the generations of politicians who have taken power since the financial crisis. Many of them decry globalization and experts. They thrive on division and conflict. In some ways the pandemic will play to their agenda. Countries may follow

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[6]The New Yorker, Only Cooperation Can End the Pandemic by Thomas Bollyky and Chad Bown, https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?tab=wm&ogbl#inbox/WhctKJVzZJvrDdBzWqbQWqvLZHkjpVmcJGWkzFCqkccDKfNwKVcSdDrWgTcrStWgnsJsNSq (July 27, 2020).

[7]On the arrest of an anti-caste activist Professor Hanu, Arundhati Roy gave a statement: https://maktoobmedia.com/2020/07/29/arundhati-roy-protests-arrest-of-hany-babu/?fbclid=IwAR0rHr8XhMX2IQNkkzRJwWYECyQ5WyIfzlY9ZpYJ0ERiAr28_5Yw9XZ-ZF0, Maktoob, July 29,2020 (retrieved, August 3, 2020).

America and turn inward and close their borders" (2020, March 14:7). "America is called a nation in decline: a rich country too divided, selfish, and racist to keep its citizens safe" (*The Economist:* June 13, 2020:34). One wonders if America is one of the failed states. When a world power falters, we must pause and rethink some of the forgotten lessons of history.

Pankaj Mishra explains how *Anglo-America loses its grip* (2020: 9–14). Pundits of western hegemonies (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012; Diamond, 2020; Ferguson, 2011) have laid down algorithms of success underrating China, India, Brazil, Egypt, and other non-western nations. President Donald Trump tastelessly labeled these developing nations as "shithole countries." Covid-19 has shown how smaller countries sidelined by regional powers have shown courage and insight to solve their own problems. Singapore, South Korea, and Vietnam on the one hand Germany and Japan on the other merit credit. Mishra writes:

> "Covid-19 has exposed the world's great democracies as victims of prolonged self-harm; it has also demonstrated that countries with strong state capacity have been far more successful at stemming the virus's spread and look better equipped to cope with the social and economic fallout. …. Anglo-America's dingy realities – deindustrialization, low-wage work, underemployment, hyper-incarnation and enfeebled or exclusionary health systems– have long been evident. Nevertheless, the moral, political and material squalor of two of the wealthiest and most powerful societies in history still comes as a shock to some." (2020: 9)

Jared Diamond's view of "how and why some nations recover from crises and others don't," posits both nations and individuals on a par while confronted with crises. While his "turning points for nations in crisis' have some merit, it is simplistic to overstate their universal prevalence. Many 'developing' nations, India and Egypt, were great civilizations before colonial exploitation. The British Empire could not have become an Imperial power without India's economy, natural and human resources. If Indians failed to see the evilness of a trading East India Company, it's more of a tragedy than "turning point." The same could be said about the Aborigine who according to one Australian senator did not recognize them as human beings at all (Diamond, 2019:260). My point is: Jared Diamond *selected 7 modern nations and analyzed their turning points in light of 12 factors without foreseeing the invincibility of Covid 19.* His main assertion needs to be reevaluated:

> "It required the shock of the Cocoanut Grove fire to transform short-terms psychotherapy: can nations decide to transform themselves without the shock of a Cocoanut Grove?" (2019: 23)

Shock therapy cannot transform many nations. Nothing could be more shocking than India's balkanization in 1947 (Mohan, 2020). India and Pakistan are nuclear powers only to destroy each other. *What the British Did to India*, is succinctly summarized by Shashi Tharoor in his *Inglorious Empire:*

> "British imperialism justified itself as enlightened despotism for the benefit of the governed, but Shashi Tharoor takes on and demolishes this position, demonstrating how every supposed imperial "gift"—from the railways to the rule of law—was designed in Britain's interests alone. He goes on to show how Britain's Industrial Revolution was founded on India's deindustrialization and the destruction of its textile industry. In this bold and incisive reassessment of colonialism, Tharoor exposes to devastating effect the inglorious reality of Britain's stained Indian legacy." (Tharoor, 2017)

The so-called First World has flourished on the imperial mayhem and rapacious colonization of nations which the western scholars have labelled as *Third World.* The abuse of power, perversion of reason and prostitution of ideologies are wolf- children of the western *Enlightenment Paradox*. In his *A brief history of humankind*, (Harari, 2014; 2018) suggests that *Sapiens are* indeed capable of big changes. Colum McCann, the founder of *Narrative 4,* comments:

> "Covid 19 is, like most things, so much more than one thing: it is an annihilator of time, for sure, but it is also–bizarrely, in our exponential age–a creator of time as well… . The voices that matter really matter will be the ones that come from underneath, not above." (*Time,* May 20: 19)

"Every historian writes in–and is impacted by–a precise historical moment," Ibram Kendi writes while analyzing "The Definite History of Racist Ideas in America" (2016: ix). Both human conditions and ideological streams have evolved overtime. Reason and objectivity are social constructs defined by those who write history.

Man is an incomplete social animal. So is the study of *Sapiens*. Science is amoral; politics is not. Reason and objectivity are social constructs defined by those who write history. Unless 'social contract' is rewritten by authors–unlike the John Lockes of *Enlightenment* –slavery, poverty, deprivation, disease and all other social covids will continue to bedevil humanity[8] (Mohan, 2021). Knowledge is an incomplete process. "No science is fully developed." (Becker, 1968: 361)

[8]The concluding statement is a subject of my forthcoming book *Rediscover of Society: The Post-Pandemic Ordeal* to be published by Nova Scientific Publications, New York (due out 2021).

Competing Interest Statement

The author has read and approved the manuscript and takes full responsibility for its contents. The author declares that no competing interest exists.

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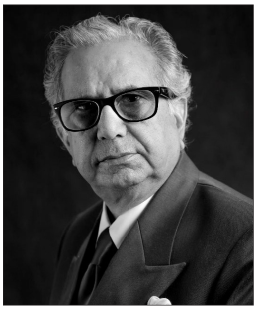
Biographical Statement of Author



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Dr. Mohan is a prolific intellectual whose volumes of writings have nearly launched an international movement to "think critically and act globally." In a digitally revolutionized world, neither "social" nor "work" will remain the same.

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OPINION

Peace Education: A Challenge for Educators

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ABSTRACT

Our society is at risk. Post-Covid scenario is quite disgusting. Conflicts between individuals, communities and nations are on the rise. Just and nonviolent conflict solutions are needed to ensure equilibrium in human interactions. Faith in culture of peace is essential. Favorable attitudes towards peace and human rights are to be inculcated. No doubt education can play a leading role but at present it is at crossroads. Educators have to evolve a peace education curriculum and co-curricular activities. This curriculum is to be transacted in a congenial learning environment characterized by democratic orientation, cohesiveness, acceptance, permissiveness, involvement and encouragement. Teaching strategies like jurisprudential inquiry, social inquiry, non-directive teaching, brainstorming, value analysis, awareness training, role playing, value clarification, etc. can be used to foster peace attitudes and values. Peer mediation, counselling, UNESCO's pledge for peace have a great potential in facilitating the task before educators. Networking and cooperation among the educators and non-governmental organizations can create an adequate foundation on which educators can depend. Researchers can provide a basis for making sound educational decisions. The situation is grim but the efforts of educators can lead to effective socialization of values related to peace.

Key Words: Peace education, teaching strategies for peace, culture of peace, conflict resolution, peace-pledge.

Our society is at risk. Ignorance of each other's life style and mistrust between people leads to arousal of differences in understanding the views of each other. These differences gradually aggravate and conflicts emerge. Conflicts continue and peace becomes a dream. Increasing globalization and intensifying conflict have worsened the situations. Conflict among people and their communities continues to be a major global challenge along with poverty and worsening socio-economic inequity. Terrorism is being perceived as a threat to human security. Violent conflicts in the educational institutions and society are on the rise. Bullying in the campuses is causing an alarming situation. Youth have the energy to do well in various fields but they need a culture of peace to develop their potentialities. Conflicts arise due to hatred, weak governance, failure of the educational or social system, thrust on globalization and liberal outlooks, human security problems and pseudo-democratization. We need to evolve a society in which parties involved in the conflict negotiate to bring peace without the intervention of law courts, police or involvement of power group members of the community as mediators. An institutional culture in which positive presence of ethical behavior, regard for and acceptance of human rights of others, social justice and equality must pervade. Students need to understand the root causes underlying their conflicts, know human rights laws, envision alternative structures of security and learn skills for managing micro and macro conflicts without violence. Efforts for post-conflict transformation are necessary.

Culture of peace

According to UNESCO's Culture of Peace Program, peace is good for society. It is a just and non-violent solution of conflicts which generates an equilibrium in social interactions, so that all the members of society can live in harmonious relation with each other. It is founded on justice and liberty. It involves taking actions to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur. Peace-making action brings hostile parties to agreement through peaceful means. Sustained, reconciliatory and co-operative work to deal with underlying conflicts can help in building peace.

According to Nan-Zhao, "A 'culture of peace' reflects 'active, positive, participatory process where diversity is respected, difference is tolerated, dialogue is encouraged, and conflicts solved in a spirit of mutual understanding and co-operation' (UNESCO). It's a process that grows out of the beliefs and actions of people and develops differently in each country and region, depending on their traditions, cultures, religion. Therefore, a culture of peace is by necessity a long-term, multi-dimensional process, a process of transformation of values, attitudes, behaviors and ways of life in favor of peaceful living together in an increasingly interdependent world".

Need of peace education

People need interactive and inquiry-based training to act peacefully and abjure violence while resolving conflicts. Feeling of considering the entire world as a family (vasudhaivakutumbakam) is necessary. We need to extend the concept of family to school/college and community. Educational programs are seldom planned in advance but everyone feels the need for education to support peace building efforts. Students need to have dialogue on knowledge, values, skills and behaviors related to peace. They also need to develop positive attitudes towards peace and peace strategies. According to Tyler & Halafoff (2005), "If peace education is to become an accepted part of the school curriculum, it will need to be innovative and engage students in a number of ways. It is hoped that others involved in similar projects can draw upon this experience". The education for a culture of peace is founded in UNESCO's constitutional mandate to build peace "in the minds of men".

The mission of UNESCO in the process of peace-building is underpinned in its Constitution, 'Peace must be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind'. According to Nan-Zhao, "Education is a principal means of peace building; it constitutes a major foundation, a cornerstone and a core component of a culture of peace. UNESCO has been assisting Member States in promoting education for peace by a) developing education policies that place the objective of education for a culture of peace at the very heart of educational process; b) improving educational contents and methods that weave the peace-culture values, skills and knowledge into the fabric of both formal teaching and non-formal/in-formal education; c) promoting linguistic diversity and multi-lingual education and cross-cultural learning; d) building capacity through teacher training and professional development; and e) sharing innovative educational practices through strengthened partnership and networking." Educators share the responsibility to foster favorable attitudes towards peace among students by creating an urge for mutual understanding, developing the value of tolerance and enabling them to learning to live together. The seeds of harmony are to be sown and the learning environments should be congenial for the release of tensions through adoption of an appropriate conflict resolution strategy.

Based on UNESCO's ideas, the following may generate a culture of peace in the educational institutions and the classrooms-

1. Satisfaction of basic human necessities, including not only material needs, but also those which are political, social, juridical, cultural, etc.
2. Education for change, promoting values which guide people's actions in daily practice.
3. Freedom from myths, especially the myths and symbols which prevent people from taking personal responsibility for the future.
4. Recognizing that the solution of conflicts does not necessarily require physical force.
5. Demystification of threats, recognizing that others are not necessarily our enemies.
6. Feminization of culture i.e. no male-domination in social hierarchy and authority.
7. Disobedience as a virtue, not in the form of irresponsibility but a critical consciousness engaged in the resolution of conflicts.
8. Respect for cultural identity and avoiding any tendency to impose an unnecessary universal culture uniformly on all stake holders in education.
9. Accepting pluralism, diversity and tolerance.
10. Empowerment of the weaker sections of society. Ensuring their human rights by providing security. Making efforts to allow the encounter of the human being with his surroundings in equilibrium and freedom from oppression.

India takes pride in being a land of unity in diversity. It has rich traditions of making efforts to live together. Education for peace should be founded on the desire to learn how to live together in harmony. It is based on common values of human compassion, tolerance, benevolence, mutual understanding, social collectivism, and solidarity. The rich educational materials related to peaceful coexistence and living together need to be tapped for peace education. In spite of diversity in socio-political, cultural, religious, ethnic and linguistic terms, solutions can emerge through peaceful dialogues and negotiation based on mutual understanding. Tendency for this can be taught in the classroom. For this we need the following:

- Education for learning to live together to plant seeds of peace in the minds of the young to prevent conflicts and violence.
- Identifying and disseminating region/country-specific core values conducive to peace and harmony for educational purposes;
- Renovating/adapting curriculum and developing interdisciplinary approaches;
- Promoting active learning experiences and teamwork for students through practical projects;
- Involving teachers as key force in education for peace and improving teachers' competencies in teaching values related to learning to live together;
- Creating supportive school climate of tolerance and respect encouraging a democratic participatory culture;
- Strengthening education research for better informed policy-making, curriculum renewal and pedagogical approaches to education for learning to live together in peace; and
- Strengthening partnership and networking in the joint efforts. (Nan-zhao, 2004).

Curriculum for peace education:

A course on Peace Education may be designed to facilitate transformation of participants to empower them to stand for their human and civil rights and build a civil society. A common ground may be explored for activists and educators of an area. Case studies of various countries and institutions may be narrated or disseminated through u-tube channels. According to International Conference on Education (1994) following ideas are worth considering while imparting peace education-

1. Training and practice of conflict resolution and mediation in school systems, among staff and students, and extension through community involvement to the rest of society.
2. Linkage of school activities to ongoing activities in the community which promote participation by all in culture and development.
3. Incorporation into curricula of information about social movements for peace and non-violence, democracy and equitable development.
4. Extension of the sense of community not only to all peoples but also to all life on the planet, with the aim of preserving both the world's cultural diversity and its ecology for future generations.
5. Systematic review and renovation of curricula to ensure an approach to ethnic, racial and cultural differences which emphasizes their equality and unique contributions to the enrichment of the common good.
6. Systematic review and renovation of the teaching of history, to give as much emphasis to non-violent social change as to military aspects of history, with special attention given to the role of women in history.
7. Teaching of science in terms of its relation to culture and society, as a tool which can be used for war or for peace, for exploitation or for co-operative development.

While constructing a curriculum for peace education, educators face a challenge to select and organize contents. The content may be taken from the incidents of interpersonal domestic or institutional conflicts, civic or community tensions, judicial interventions in civic matters, movements against social evils, stories or poetry based on racial or other types of discriminations, differences in opinions expressed on political and management issues, gender issues, conflicts between fundamental duties and human or children's rights, factors leading to constitutional amendments in a nation or rules governing the functioning of administrative officers and political leaders. It is also possible to teach these contents by drawing students' attention to various conflicts while teaching political science, history, environmental science, geography, literature, genetics, economics, commerce, sociology, law and education etc. Cocurricular activities based on conflicts may also be developed. While framing the curriculum the following may be included in a course for peace education:

Developing sensitivity to peace

UNESCO's Pledge for Peace may be taken by teachers and students of educational institutions. It should not be imposed. The relevance of the culture of peace for the students and teachers needs to be discussed in and outside the classrooms. Both teachers and students can pledge that in their daily life they shall-

1. Respect all life i.e. Respect the life and dignity of each human being without discrimination or prejudice.
2. Reject violence i.e. Practice active non-violence, rejecting violence in all its forms: physical, sexual, psychological, economic and social, in particular towards the most deprived and vulnerable such as children and adolescents.
3. Share with others i.e. Share my time and material resources in a spirit of generosity to put an end to exclusion, injustice and political and economic oppression.
4. Listen to understand i.e. Defend freedom of expression and cultural diversity, giving preference always to dialogue and listening without engaging in fanaticism, defamation and the rejection of others.
5. Preserve the planet i.e. Promote consumer behavior that is responsible and development practices that respect all forms of life and preserve the balance of nature on the planet.
6. Rediscover solidarity i.e. Contribute to the development of my community, with the full participation of women and respect for democratic principles, in order to create together new forms of solidarity.

Teaching strategies for teaching peace education

Joyful learning or heavy dependence on expository teaching may not give dividends. Experiential learning or observation of incidents as exhibited in videos, short films, u-tubes or dramatization of historical events may be beneficial or making students sensitive to the need of peace and engagement in critical thinking to arrive at conflict resolutions acceptable to parties in disagreement. Educators will face the challenge of selecting, adapting or designing appropriate teaching strategy in view of the abilities of their students. Several new teaching strategies can help teachers to develop students' abilities to explore social issues and try to resolve them. 'Jurisprudential' teaching strategy can help children develop their value clarifying competencies, value conflict resolution abilities and social consciousness (Misra, 1993), social values and socio-metric status in terms of social dialogue and social action (Pandey, 1991), and secular-mindedness, social behaviors and social cognition (Singh, 2004). Passi, Sansanwal and Singh (1988) found that 'jurisprudential inquiry model' can bring about positive changes in student teachers' ability to analyze controversial issues, think from others' point of view, listen to others carefully, argue logically and not losing temper while arguing. According to Joyce and Weil (1985) this teaching strategy "is based on a conception of society in which people differ in their views and priorities and in which social values legitimately conflict with one another". It consists of the following phases-(1) Orientation to the case, (2) Identifying the issues, (3) Taking a position, (4) Exploring the stances, (5) Refining and qualifying the position and (6) Testing factual assumptions behind a qualified position. Four patterns of argumentation are used- "establish the point at which value is violated, prove the desirable or undesirable consequences of a position, clarify the value conflict with analogies and assert priority of one value over another and demonstrate lack of gross violation of second value (Joyce & Weil, 1985). 'Social Inquiry Training model' of teaching can help students think about how to enquire about social issues, build and test theories related to social action in different contexts. Value discussion model of teaching can help students in value clarification. 'Brainstorming' teaching strategy can be used for developing students' ability to think about the consequences of various solutions of social problems, identify various qualifiers for them and guess causes for success and failure in the implementation of various social reforms or solutions. 'Cognitive growth' teaching strategy which is based on the theories of Piaget and Kohlberg, can be used for fostering students' moral reasoning about various policy issues related to natural and social environment and social sensitivities. This teaching strategy includes two main phases- (I) Confrontation with stage relevant tasks in which teachers present socially puzzling situations well matched to learners' developmental stage and (II) Inquiry in which teachers elicit students' responses, ask for justifications, offer counter suggestions and probe students' responses. 'Nondirective teaching model' emphasizes building the capacity for personal development in terms of self-awareness, understanding, autonomy and self-concept. In this teaching strategy teachers encourage free expression of feelings and ask students to define problem, and accept and clarify the feelings of students. Students discuss problems, develop insights and the teacher clarifies possible positive actions and supports students. 'Awareness training strategy' can help students learn how to assert their views without creating noisy scenes or resorting to indecent social manners and violence. This teaching strategy includes the following sequence of teaching activities-presentation of the task, completion of the task, analysis of the task, discussion of procedure for task completion, and promotion of sense of responsibility and openness. 'Role playing' strategy' can help students develop their self confidence in exhibiting various socially and emotionally competent behaviors. It also develops their social sensitivities and favorable attitude for human rights and fundamental duties. This teaching strategy begins with teachers' introduction or identification of the problem, making the problem explicit, interpreting the problem story, exploring the issues and explaining the procedure of role playing. Student participants are selected and teacher analyses the roles and assigns them to different students. Teacher sets the stage, prepares the observers, and then asks them to enact their roles. Role is discussed, reviewed, and plan for the next enactment is suggested or evolved. Re-enactment is done, roles are observed, discussed, reviewed and alternatives are suggested again. The experiences are shared and generalizations are made.

Peer mediation during conflict resolution may also pay dividends. Human rights are basic to conflict. When one group is treated as inferior, the groups cannot integrate due to difference in cultural factors dividing them. Violence, tensions and hidden ideation of cultural superiority generate a rift among the students belonging to different communities. They cease to have respect for the cultural traditions of others. It is necessary that students are taught how to achieve reconciliation, tolerance, mutual trust, and give up the habits of protection and vindication. While using this strategy, students are taught alternative ways to resolve their disputes and conflicts. Openness in communication, co-operation in achievement of learning objectives and affirmation of differing view-points guide social-interaction. Students are made responsible for solving their own problems. Solutions are never imposed by teachers. Learning through the experience of mediation by using dialogues enables the students to adapt their conflict resolution strategies in future.

Counselling also can be helpful in maintaining peace and avoidance of conflicts. Students will face many problems when their teachers use various teaching strategies to enable them to learn how to solve social issues. Then 'cognitive therapy', 'play therapy' and 'psychodrama' techniques can be used by counsellors to help students take decisions about their personal-social problems

(1) Concept of positive and negative peace, (2) peace activism, (3) Peace Studies, (4) Nonviolence, (5) Understanding Conflict, Bullying and Violence, (6) Conflict Management Strategies, (7) Civil Society, (8) Human Rights and Children's Rights, (9) Peace Building Exercises: Learning from Experiences, (10) Communication and social-emotional intelligence, (10) Environment Protection and Sustainable Development, (11) Cultural Identities, (12) Research on peace and peace education.

Designing a suitable learning environment

The challenge of developing a congenial classroom learning environment can be met by educators by ensuring the following-

- Prevalence of no suspicion and mistrust between the students of different cultures and regions.
- Democratic orientation in the classrooms as exhibited by observance of the principles of the dignity, justice, equality and mutual respect of men.
- Ensuring that ignorance, prejudice and inequality have no place in decisions.
- Positive attitudes towards justice, fraternity, non-violence, freedom and peace.
- Encouraging mutual assistance and sensitivity to issues of concern for others.
- Respect for the individuality of all class fellows, and their culture, values and ways of life.
- Promotion of increasing interdependence among students.
- Cohesiveness and cooperation.
- Readiness to help others in solving their problems.

Conclusion

Conflicts among individuals, community members and nations are on the rise. They need to be resolved in such a way that values are not compromised, human dignity is maintained, rights of fellow human beings are not trampled upon by individuals, pseudo-democratization is not used, and non-violent means are used. Educators face the challenges of becoming sensitive to their role as peace loving persons, enable students to understand the need and relevance of peace in life, devise a suitable curriculum for peace or teach their subjects in such a way that implications for peace are explained. Understanding of the causes of conflict, opportunities for reconciliation of conflicts in and outside the classrooms, use of appropriate teaching strategies or their adaptation to suit local and global demands, and efforts to exhibit their accountability to sustainable peace in the society are essential. Taking of a pledge of peace based on UNESCO's vision can sensitize educators and students to the need of peace in and around them. Teaching strategies like jurisprudential inquiry, awareness training, role playing, social inquiry training, brainstorming, cognitive growth, nondirective teaching, experiential learning, etc. may help teachers to explore social, economic, civic, educational, cultural, gender, inequalities, etc. issues. Peer mediation and counseling will help educators and students to think of and accept peaceful solutions to conflicts. A classroom climate characterized by democratic orientation, cohesiveness, cooperation, mutual respect and trust, scientific temper, humane and helpful attitudes, and nurturance, will be essential.

Competing Interest Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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He has contributed 102 research papers in several research journals, sixty two psychological tools, 16 books and six research projects. He was given Awards of excellence by Indian Association of Teacher Educators and University of Allahabad, and best psychometrician award by IPERA, Agra.

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CONCEPT

Opportunities and Challenges of BRI to Nepal: A Nepalese Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Despite geopolitical complexities riveting the Asian region, Nepal, as an immediate neighbor, has formally joined the China-led Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), with an anticipation to promote mutual beneficial cooperation in various fields including infrastructure up-gradation, economic development, and enhancement of the capacity in the service sector, technology transfer, cultural collaboration and above all growth of tourism sector. Because of the connectivity, millions of Nepalese and foreigners visit or go to China through Nepal. The BRI was introduced in 2013 aiming to build a trade and infrastructure network connecting Asia with Europe and Africa along the ancient trade routes. This research is done by using the secondary data: Journal articles, conference proceedings, various documents of government, books, newspaper articles, magazine articles, and websites. The paper explores future risk and current opportunities for Nepal when the Nepalese government engages in the contract with the Chinese government. However, BRI does not demonstrate as an opportunity for Nepal from American lens.

Keywords: Belt and Road Initiative, Nepal, China, Investment, Government.

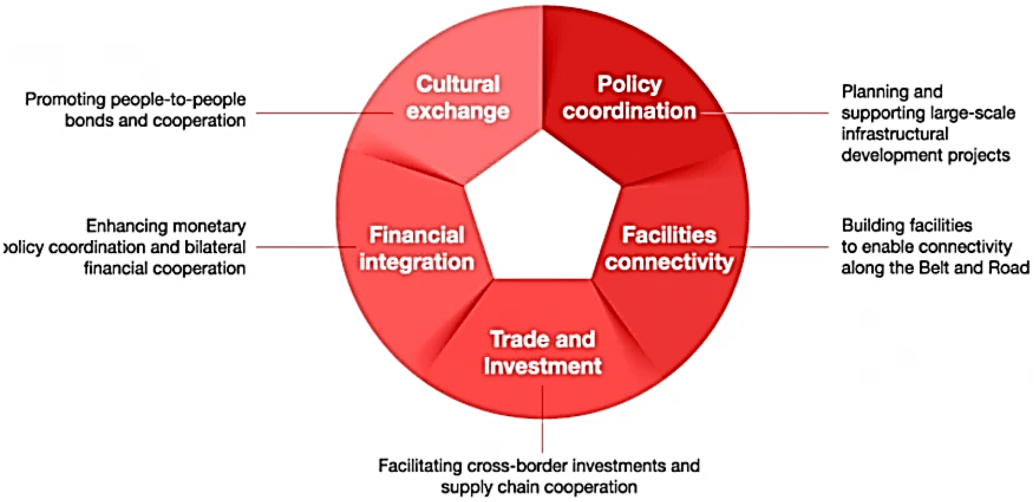
Introduction

China and Nepal have a very long friendly relationship. When China adopts the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a historical initiative connecting the people over the world and facilitates various opportunities for global peace, Nepal cannot remain aloof. The main purpose of this study is to explore opportunities and challenges for Nepal under the background of "Belt and Road Initiative". It discusses with regard to political aspects. This study argues that Nepal and China will get economic and political benefits from these initiatives. It connects both China and Nepal through roadways and airways by coordinating policies of the governments. A strong mutual synchronization between China and Nepal is necessary to achieve the goals of Belt and Road Initiative through supportive law, policy, rules and regulations, proper strategy implementation, and social factors. It advises to ease the atmosphere for further investments. The need of completing continuing projects on time to attract further capital and technology needs to be a key strategy.

Significance

It is seen that both Nepali and Chinese governments should promote the entry of products so that healthy trade and commerce thrive in future. Moreover, establishment of a mechanism on bilateral coordination and implementation of projects funded by China is very pivotal. The study carries an issue that is suitable for enhancing bilateral relations between Nepal and China. With insights on BRI as a base of economic prosperity of Nepal and gateway to China to observe entire south Asia especially India, will be a good raise of voice in favor of BRI. The issue is relevant in the present context and is significant to a wide range of readership including diplomatic relation to policy making level. The article seems to be focused on opportunities induced by BRI. Above all, it seeks a plethora of opportunities amidst a few risks to make it more convincing.

Conceptual framework



Belt and Road basics - Belt & road news. Retrieved from https://www.beltandroad.news/belt-and-road-basics/

The Belt and Road Initiative promotes the easy flow of money, goods and the services between China and Nepal by cementing new friendly relations among communities. "For developing and emerging economies in these areas, investment and trade accelerate development for the benefit of all" (Belt & Road News, 2019). The conceptual framework is based on the same model of BRI, which has the objective of facilitating cross-border investment and supply chain cooperation. Policy coordination, facilities connectivity, trade and investment, financial integration, and cultural exchanges are the key aspects of BRI.

Methodology

This is a qualitative research that mainly uses secondary data: Journal articles, conference proceedings, various documents of government, books, newspaper articles, magazine articles, and websites. Both the hardcopy and electronic resources have been used for gathering relevant information. Limitation of this study is that it is extracted from available secondary data only because it does not contain any primary facts and figures.

Findings

China and Nepal have a long history of mutual exchanges and cooperation. In the past, Nepal competently poised the relation by offering letters and gifts (tributes) to China, and recorded evidence of equal exchanges in Nepal. Nepal should exploit BRI either by endorsing the welfare or by being the transit hub between China and India. Being a landlocked country, without being connected with railways, sustainable development seems bleak, and out of other initiates like trade, tourism and investment and people-to-people contacts, this seems more pertinent. Nepal and China have recently made the agreements, which have highlighted the economic aspects of regional cooperation. There has been some cynicism about the feasibility or potential benefits of some of the proposals.

Discussion

Historical ties

China and Nepal have a long history of bilateral exchanges and cooperation. It is usual as China is one of the two immediate neighbors of Nepal and they are land linked. According to historical evidences thousands of years ago, Kathmandu Valley was a big lake. A Chinese monk Manjushri drained the water from Chovar by chiseling the hills, one of the myths claims it. According to Hiranya Lal Shreshtha (2015), the first Nepali non-resident in China was Bhuddhabhadra, and following his footsteps, Newar merchants from Kathmandu visited Lhasa since the seventh century. Later following the marriage of Princess Bhrikuti (Green Star), Newars from Kathmandu expanded their trades from 1100 – 1400 AD. It has been ages since then. 2020 marks the 65 years of diplomatic relation. This has exalted social and economic development through investment, grants and infrastructure building.

Nepal skillfully balanced the relation by offering letters and gifts that were interpreted as tributes in China, and recorded evidence of equal exchanges in Nepal. After the 1950s, Nepali youth started to go to Hong Kong as British Gurkhas, and later as traders. Some monasteries in Taiwan are led by Nepali monks. Recently the concept of bonding sister cities have been endorsed like that of Pokhara and Linxie. Despite not having similar sizes and geo-political sensitivities, Nepal and China have decorum of friendliness, generosity and cordiality. Therefore, Nepal and China have very strong ties.

Nepal should exploit this opportunity either by endorsing the benefits or by being the transit hub between China and India. By the virtue of it, no doubt, the number of tourists will increase by leaps and bounds, creating employment and income opportunities for the locals. Indeed, tourism has enormous advantages, and now it has been one of the major economic activities of Nepal. But, can Nepal manage the opportunities created by the BRI? This is one of the pertinent questions today (BK, 2017).

Duwadi (2016) opines that the Himalayan Rivers, which transcend boundaries, are the common source of water in India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh (p. 80). Also, China is the key member in different dimensions including mitigating climate change. The ethnic diversity and cultural wealth of the Hindu Kush Himalaya region is enriched by the Hindu Kush valleys in Afghanistan; the high mountains of Nepal, India, and Pakistan; the Tibetan plateau of China; and the Three Gorges in the Far East of China. However, since the Second World War, the region has been a hotspot of political and military conflict (Schild, 2008, p. 328).

China's Belt and Road Initiative is the most ambitious and expansive campaign announced by the Chinese government, one that signals China's intent to establish itself as a preponderant regional leader and an active driver of future globalization. Large amounts of financing currently being marshaled through various funding vehicles hint at the direct economic gains that could potentially emerge from the BRI's infrastructure projects (Dixit; 2017).

However, memorandum of understanding or cooperative agreements has been specific in the case of Nepal in spite of the fact BRI has been a great priority of the newly formed government of Nepal. According to Firstpost (2018), Nepal is gradually moving forward with political stability, full of possibilities; consequently, with the Chinese assistance, we can attain economic prosperity. This sounds reasonable as Nepal in the past could not avail of the Chinese aid like that of India.

Opportunities

China has been emerging as an economic power; therefore BRI has Tremendous size and scope in Nepal. BRI economies account for one-third of global GDP and trade, and close to two-thirds of world population (China's massive Belt and Road initiative, 2019). "If BRI projects are successful, they stand to benefit a large number of poor people and huge bands of the world's economies, with large positive spillover effects on global welfare" (Haomin, 2016). Nepal is obviously going to benefit from BRI in the long run.

According to The Hindustan Times (2018), "Nepal has expectations on the initiatives to contribute to the development of infrastructure, enhanced cross border connectivity through railways and roads, promotion of trade, tourism and investment and people to people contacts" (p.1). Being a landlocked or landlocked country, without being connected with railways, sustainable development seems bleak, and out of other initiates like trade, tourism and investment and people to people contacts, this seems more pertinent.

E-initiative is the need of the hour resulting in many initiatives, which has transformed all sectors and higher education is no exception to this due its advantage (Mahalik, 2020, p. 83). Because of lock down, all schools and colleges have been shut down for months. Few institutions have started online education mainly in urban areas. However, lack of proper infrastructure and training linger around. Therefore, if BRI funds education institutes, it would be better to cope with the challenges emerging.

Asia Pacific Daily (2016, February) published an article about it. According to them Nepal can attract investment in industries and infrastructure building by taking advantage of its geostrategic location between China and India. Currently, as Chinese economy is slowing down (Sapkota, 2017), an increasing number of Chinese companies are looking to invest outside of China. Nepal can be a potential destination for such investment once necessary infrastructures are developed here. Tourism is the key sector that Nepal can take the most benefit from once the infrastructure is developed in line with BRI vision. It will also facilitate trade and investments here.

China has proved itself as a friend in need helping Nepal after the 2015 earthquakes. The Chinese Army helped Nepal Army to reopen Arniko Highway that links Kathmandu with the Chinese border. China also sent medical personnel, rescue experts and rescue supplies.

Nepal also adheres' One China Policy and supports all multinational forums including AIIB (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

The enhanced connectivity to be ensured by the revival of the ancient Silk Road will help promote Nepal's tourism (Nepal Foreign Affairs, 2016). Several millions Chinese tourists have been visiting foreign countries. Therefore, if a small fraction of them visit Nepal. This will also help to increase setting up manufacturing base here as we can export and import goods from here to both Chinese and Indian markets. Another industrialist Mr Sooraj Vaidhya is more hopeful and argues that implementation of BRI will greatly contribute to reduce the time and cost of Nepal's international trade. As a landlocked country with poor infrastructure, Nepal's cost of trade is higher compared to other countries. For sure, the chief benefit is increased connectivity by land will bring more tourists to Nepal and it will boost our tourism industry. Bilateral businesses that are able to synchronize their own expansion plans with announced BRI activities would promote the overall business climate. Moreover, China has encouraged foreign private sector investors to directly participate in BRI efforts.

Improving connectivity will be another opportunity. It currently takes months to ship goods from China to Nepal, with most goods being transported by sea and dropping it to Indian ports. If railways lines are constructed and Nepal is linked with mainland China, shipping goods by train can cut transit time in many folds, and the costs can be reduced much more. There is a tradeoff between saving time and saving money: each day's delay in getting an item from the factory gate to the consumer is estimated to reduce trade by one percent (Ruta, 2018). Improving the capacity and network of railways and other transport infrastructure could lead to more cross-border trade, increased investment, and improved growth in Nepal's economies. China's cooperation on infrastructure improvements is needed to solve this challenge. If successful, BRI projects stand to make trade easier in one of China's most important and ancient neighbors.

China is considering extensively the railways, but growing Chinese interest in Nepal goes beyond railways lines with massive hydroelectric projects, airports, and pilgrimage center in Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha, one of the pillars of China and Nepal togetherness besides the Himalayas, getting their funding. As a transit route for China to penetrate into South Asia, including India, Nepal can reap benefits from the development of the transport infrastructure. Similarly, growth of industrial enterprises will help to foster our national economy (Pokharel, p. 6). Besides, the economic perspectives, the cultural and religious standpoints have been reshaping Nepal-China relations. He adds, "The number of religious tourists for pilgrimage is likely to grow, resulting in strengthened socio-cultural ties. The promotion of tourism is also possible with the Tibetan and Chinese tourists getting improved access to Nepal's rich and unique nature and topography" (p. 7).

The BRI can be a development catalyst in Nepal, helping increase the country's financial cushion and improving social and economic conditions. Furthermore, as Nepal seeks to graduate from being a least developed country and become a middle-income country prior to 2030, economic collaboration under the BRI would minimize Nepal's singular dependence on India, which is forged not only by economic interests but by geography as well. Nepal's participation in the BRI would help foster economic aspirations without the fear of another blockade at the southern border of the country (Dixit, p. 11). Nepal, in fact, has been fully dependent on its southern neighbor India. This is the reason why India frequently pressurizes Nepal by clamping official and unofficial embargoes. Chalise (2018) argues:

For its part, China wanted to amplify support for its 'grand project' before the forum and to increase the count of participant countries. Across the border, the BRI presented Nepal with an opportunity to strengthen economic ties with China and lessen its singular economic and political dependence on India. This has been a particular concern for Nepal's government after its southern neighbor resorted to an unofficial border blockade over the country's constitution writing process in 2015. In that sense, the BRI has not been an especially tough sell to Nepal.

Moreover, China's BRI is the key to developing closer ties with Nepal. Both Beijing and Kathmandu restated their commitment to previous agreements on developing cross-border economic and transport links. According to Sapkota (2017), though its internal politics has delayed the signing of key agreements, Nepal has been trying to find a pragmatic and balanced way of integrating itself into the initiative and working out how best to leverage the optimal benefits from the Chinese initiative (7). Its options include establishing a joint mechanism to develop further projects. Moreover, to examine their economic viability to ensure Nepal does not fall into a debt trap is another option. This is what the majority of people of Nepal want to achieve in the coming days.

Risks of BRI

In spite of Nepal and China's recent agreements that have highlighted the economic aspects of regional cooperation, there has been some skepticism about the feasibility or potential benefits of some of the proposals. Action plan of BRI is unclear. Amongst other challenges, the security challenge would be the most important one. Who is going to invest where is unclear until today because rail, road, and water-transportation were included earlier, but now it comprises many other dimensions too.

The key source of such suspicion comes from geopolitical sensitivities rather than technical or economic considerations. Addressing some challenges will also be the key for Nepal's success. Firstly, Nepal will require a quality pool of human resources to initiate and upgrade the infrastructures and convert the trade deficit scenario into a profitable one. Handling consignment clearance and tax collection on Nepal's route under the BRI demands competency from Nepali officials (Pokharel, p. 6). Another challenge is that China has not shown too much concern about New Delhi's stance and has indicated it will continue trans-Himalayan development with or without India. Moreover, Nepal is not regarded as a key country in the BRI, which means China has had to consider the best way of integrating it into the project. O'Trakoun (2017) warns that given the importance of the BRI to China's leadership and the strategic considerations underlying the US-China relationship create a risk.

Nepal cannot alter its geography, therefore, it has to emphasize its policy of keeping an equal proximity to the two (Sapkota; 2017). Despite lingering differences on certain issues, Nepal's relationships with both its immediate neighbors have created multiple bonds and it is unlikely that it would want to go against their interests in the region. Above all, India and Bhutan have not endorsed it yet. Another question may be asked whether the concept of BRI is going to help the productive capacity of Nepal. Nepal, being sandwiched between India and China, must have a good relationship with both.

The atmosphere for further investments

BRI is also the blueprint of connecting Nepal with Eurasia transport corridors. It is known that feasibility study of railways from Keyrung – Kathmandu-Pokhara-Lumbini and doing viability studies of railways lines at other points in Nepal are in top priority. China wants to build important infrastructure in Nepal, notably to establish a new trade route from Tibet to Kathmandu, via Mustang, for some time.

"Its presence in the region has been seen b y other countries, particularly India, as a move towards undermining support for the Tibetans: Nepal houses numerous Tibetan refugees and it is from there, China believes, that separatists continue to operate and receive succor" (Sheikh, 2017, p. 2). Particularly in the wake of political volatility and natural disaster, Chinese interventions support the material and imaginative projects of a Nepalese state seeking stability, security, and economic growth. Long perceived as peripheral to the state center, Rasuwa is rapidly becoming central to Sino-Nepal relations, particularly in the context of bilateral investments in hydropower and transportation infrastructure (Murton; 2016). It is seen that Chinese development in Rasuwa has been increasing as support for territorializing practices of Nepal. It represents a "gift of development" that connects Nepali ambitions of development with Chinese anxieties over exile Tibetan populations and reflects a strategic reorientation of geopolitical alliances between Nepal and China.

Chinese goods flood in every Nepali market. In order to improve Nepal's international trade through China, the construction or completion of the following highways must be completed in the shortest possible time. Furthermore, these highways: Nijgadh-Kathmandu-Bidur-Mailung-Rasuwagadhi, Chatara-Leguwa-Khandbari-Kimathanka, Gaidakot-Ridi-Beni-Jomsom-Korala, Surkhet-Khulalu-Simikot-Hilsa, and Kathmandu-Kodari/Tatopani, need to be converted into four-lane fast track highways by applying finances for these highway projects through the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank along with the Chinese government (China Aids). According to an Lilamani Poudel, Nepal and China should have an agreement to use Guangzhou, Hangzhou, Tianjin, Chongqing, Horgos/Khorgos, and Kashgar sea ports and or land ports of China through the above-mentioned four-lane highways and other ten two-lane routes, to be constructed or completed in the near future.

China, in fact, plans to build two lines from Sigatse- one line leads to Kerung the nearest Chinese town from Nepal, from where Rasuwagadi will be connected and the second will lead to Yadong, on the India- Bhutan border.

Conclusion

China has given indication of starting mega projects in Nepal that are mandatory for economic transformation, and this is the main opportunity for Nepal which in the past was guided by not bilateral but unilateral relations. BRI may give an opportunity for Nepal to convert from a 'landlocked' county to a 'land linked' country. Connectivity has emerged as the new dimension in Nepal and China relations despite geopolitical hindrances. Geo-economics may slowly displace geo-politics. Though Nepal's neighbors India and Bhutan are indisposed to participate in BRI, it may prove to be a great opportunity for Nepal to play a bridging role between two big giant countries, and to have global connectivity, however, the same could be the reasons for enormous risk for implementing BRI successfully. China is Nepal's true friend indeed. Therefore, to embrace such a great friend in every occupation, Nepal ought to seek practical and sustainable policies to be benefited from BRI projects.

Recommendations

Nepal's foreign policy should not be trampled by the change of governments in Nepal, and the policy reform and cooperation needs to complement infrastructure projects to boost connectivity. A strong mutual synchronization between China and Nepal is necessary to achieve the goals of BRI through supportive law. Policy coordination should be reinforced and consolidated for expanding mutual trust connectivity and sharing experience for economic development. Unrestricted trade should be promoted for deepening financial integration and constructing the road for innovation, strengthening the people-to-people bond for mutual learning. Both Nepal and China should see each other with their own eyes by getting rid of the convention buffer mentality.

Competing Interest Statement

I declare that I 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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REVIEW

A Review of the Literature on Integration of WhatsApp into English Language Classroom

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ABSTRACT

Education system has tremendously developed from the traditional way of teaching and learning to a modern and efficient way of transmitting knowledge to the students. Today, educators and students depend on the technological tools in teaching and learning process. Social media applications such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, Telegram and many more have been introduced as platforms to keep ourselves updated with the latest information and also to make new friends from all over the world. However, in education line, the implementation of WhatsApp in English language classroom can be beneficial not only for leaners, but also teachers or instructors. For instance, the use of WhatsApp in education enhances social interaction, students' motivation, sense of belonging, and it supports learning anytime and anywhere. Even though there are lots of benefits of utilizing WhatsApp in English language classroom, there are certain aspects that have to be taken into consideration in terms of the difficulties and challenges of using this application. There are some concerns with regard to privacy and security, losing attention, and use of slang language. Considering both positive and negative sides of using WhatsApp does not change the fact that this application has been rapidly becoming popular not only for communication purposes but also, as a teaching-learning tool in education. This study reviews the literature regarding the use of WhatsApp in English language classroom.

Keywords: online communication, WhatsApp, vocabulary, oral skills, learning experience.

Introduction

Online communication is an available path of correspondence and an unending type of electronic instrument that assists the distributing of information. It also provides study guides, social interaction, and a sense of community. A study by Zarei & Hussin (2014) emphasized that one of the significant roles of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the accessibility to knowledge and a wide selection of learning materials. Ward (2001) & Caplan (2003) mentioned that online communication plays a central role in the development of compulsive Internet use. In the era of technology, students use technological devices to facilitate the learning process. Using technology as a study guide motivates them to enhance their academic performance. By integrating technology into a classroom setting, students will be able to improve their computer skills which play a momentous aspect in the learning process. Furthermore, Lim et al. (2003) and Hew & Brush (2007) stated that teachers can integrate technology into education to develop learners' thinking and problem-solving skills. In a study Zarei & Al-Shboul (2013) stated that the students had positive perceptions towards employing the Internet as a learning device, obtaining sufficient general knowledge of the Internet, and the learning was encouraged

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via integrating Internet in teaching. A study by Zarei, Hussin, & Rashid (2015) focused on learners' experiments of employing blogs to embolden themselves to carry out pre-class reading assignment and observation after class. The research aimed at learners' perceptions towards the utilization of blogs. The findings disclosed that there were positive perceptions towards the usage of blogs for before class preparation and after class observation.

Szabó (2019) stated that "there is now a consensus on the requirement for large corporate training providers to embrace the new forms of technology and to integrate them into their pedagogical offering. Mobile learning and micro-learning respectively have developed as a result of these needs". In addition, Cetinkaya (2017) believed that social networks are becoming prevalent due to their nature to meet the needs of young people towards socialization and education. In line with this, the use of social media applications such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are prevalent among individuals. As such, people attempt to familiarize themselves with technology and incorporating it into day-to-day basis. WhatsApp is a well-known application which is available nowadays and its users are not charged for sending messages or making phone calls as they are allowed to do so via Wi-Fi or mobile data. Moreover, WhatsApp provides a variety of messages such as simple texts, photos, audios, videos, GIFs, and stickers. Students can learn easily and effectively via WhatsApp if they are guided and monitored by their teacher. They will have the chance to explore the functions of the application to gain more solutions to the problems via discussion with their peers. Additionally, students can practice and improve their English language learning through communication with other people all around the world through WhatsApp. Therefore, this study attempts to review the literature on the use of WhatsApp as messaging application in English language classroom.

WhatsApp Integration in Education

According to Chun (2006), the accessibility of online exercises and electronic word references assist undergraduates with being shown to trustworthy creations and to wear down investigating thoroughly. In a study by Zarei & Hussin (2014), it was articulated that ICT offers students the chance to communicate with their peers and teacher in the target language outside the classroom and this aids in helping the students to broaden their social skills and regulate issues faced in learning. An analysis of the usage of WhatsApp by students from a specific class in a South African college depicted positive feedback from the undergraduates who asserted that the employment of the application was hassle-free and a fun way of learning. With the integration of the application, learners came to the conclusion that it aided in reducing learning gaps.

Correspondingly, undergraduates' point of views towards the use of General English and the impact of WebQuest were analysed. In a study by Khrisat and Mahmoud (2013), the researchers inspected undergraduates' viewpoints towards ten helpful highlights and applications in General English classroom. It was revealed that the undergraduates indicated positive feedback towards the benefits of organization in learning. Alshumaimeri & Almasri (2012) also analyzed the execution and effects of WebQuest on higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia. Based on the findings gathered, WebQuests have the potential for use in pushing investigating appreciation. These analyses demonstrate that there is a need to produce a gander at the results of smaller highlights and applications, to be specific, versatile WhatsApp, on the web and separated word references, advantageous camera, online assets, and warning on English investigating practices of tertiary estimation male understudies in a Saudi EFL classroom.

By and large, WhatsApp has been transformed into a common stage that overhauls receptiveness, enables interest, and fortifies motivation to play a crucial role in academic assignments. To compare with the past technological tools that had been integrated, WhatsApp has great characteristics that embolden instructors and learners to employ it in order to enhance understanding, improve the effectiveness of the lessons, and simplify the teaching and learning process. According to Zarei, Hussin, & Rashid (2015), technological devices play a part in improving ESL learners' motivation, and this makes them take charge of their own learning.

In the modern era, a social media such as WhatsApp can be employed to enable students to develop their abilities since these applications allow them to strengthen their English language proficiency. Educators can get solid examinations with respect to how to utilize WhatsApp in language learning. An understudy focused system is appeared in this point of reference. This system permits more examination of WhatsApp in English language learning, offers the understudies more chances to detail their very own stand-out contemplations or feeling about the issues and furthermore to update their significant limits in the vernacular learning process. To give sustenance differing learning styles, it is basic to devise particular sorts of undertakings and exercises. Every one of them is done in English to submerge understudies in an English-talking situation.

Reinforcing Vocabulary Learning via Using WhatsApp

In this technological era, technological gadgets are used everywhere including classrooms. Learning via mobile phone grants teachers and learners to use it as a platform both inside and outside the classroom. In a study by Chakir (2018), it was stated that learners can download a free dictionary application on mobile phones which can help them to search for words effectively and efficiently rather than using a traditional dictionary. In addition, learners can use mobile phones to communicate with teachers by using the messenger or other applications. This makes it convenient for teachers and learners instead of communicating through face-to-face. Furthermore, (Thornton & Houser, 2005; Stockwell, 2007; Lu, 2008; Cavus & Ibrahim, 2009; Abbasi & Hashemi, 2013; Şahan, et al., 2016), stated that mobile phones can be integrated in education to teach language components such as vocabulary.

Similarly Jafari and Chalak (2016) investigated the role of WhatsApp in teaching vocabulary to Iranian EFL learners. They found that using WhatsApp had significant role in vocabulary learning of the students. They also mentioned that there was not a substantial difference between male and female students with regard to their vocabulary knowledge after using WhatsApp application. Furthermore, Alsaleem (2013) attempted to determine whether WhatsApp application has a significant effect on writing vocabulary word choice and voice of undergraduate Saudi students. The findings of his study revealed a significant difference between the overall writing scores of the pretest and posttest of the students that journaled. Moreover, the examination of individual item scores demonstrated that there were statistically significant improvements in vocabulary word choice and voice as two critically important writing factors. The findings of a study by Hamad (2017) showed that using WhatsApp enhanced students' learning and enthusiasm and it helped them to enrich their vocabulary and learn more from their mates' mistakes.

Chakir (2018) explored the effectiveness of English vocabulary learning through WhatsApp application in comparison to a paper-based method of delivery. A total of 60 high school students took part in the study. Based on the findings, the researcher came to a conclusion that mobile-based study for English vocabulary had a positive impact on Moroccan EFL learners' vocabulary learning. However, the dominance of a mobile phone over the paper-based in terms of test scores was not mentioned. Besides, in the delayed test and the results showed no significant difference between the scores of the two groups. Bensalem (2018) carried out a study on the impact of WhatsApp on EFL students' vocabulary learning. The findings of his study indicated that WhatsApp group significantly outperformed the traditional group on a vocabulary test. Furthermore, generally the participants had positive attitudes towards learning new vocabulary items via WhatsApp.

The Impact of WhatsApp on Students' Oral Skills

Nowadays, the young generation spends most of their time using social applications to communicate with each other and share important information. Not forgetting, teachers and learners smartly utilize this platform to enhance their teaching and learning process. The voice notes function of this application benefits the learners to improve their oral communication. In a research conducted by (Baradaran & Khalili, 2009), it was put forward that with the employment of WhatsApp, students can communicate with other learners from around the world by using the language they understand.

Ali and Kootbodien (2017) identified the perceptions and trends of Abu Dhabi university students when considering WhatsApp as an effective interpersonal communication medium. They found that WhatsApp can be considered as an effective interpersonal communication medium and it can improve students' oral skills.

Mustafa (2018) stated that WhatsApp has a great impact on speaking skills. He also suggested that the teacher who wishes to improve the students' speaking skills should consider the application of WhatsApp in the learning process. Mustafa (2018) believed that WhatsApp has a great role in improving EFL learners' oral communication skills.

Furthermore, Andújar-Vaca, Cruz-Martínez, and Soledad (2017) conducted a study on WhatsApp and its potential to develop oral skills. The results of their study illustrated that there were significant improvements regarding oral proficiency in experimental group and negotiations were the LRE most common throughout the activity. In fact the integration of social network in learning had positive results and learners had the chance to get rid of problems via traditional learning. The findings also showed that the learners may have struggled in English language learning due to lack of confidence through face-to-face communication. Therefore, the application provides the chance for the learners to practice their oral skills by shaping their confidence level through communication.

The Use of WhatsApp as a Communication Tool in Education

According to the previous studies, WhatsApp has been introduced for communication purpose especially for teachers and learners. For instance, the findings of a study by Naidoo and Kopung (2016) illustrated how high school students who received academic support in mathematics through IM service were able to put forward questions throughout the learning process after school hours. This study proved that WhatsApp has become one of the popular communication tools for students and teachers. It is also one of the easiest ways to communicate with their teachers even after their class hours. In other words, the findings of their research suggested that the use of the WhatsApp instant messaging assists students in learning mathematics. It fostered a social constructivist environment for mathematical learning as well. This environment supported students in improving their academic performance in mathematics.

Moreover, another study was conducted with the university students on employing WhatsApp as a communication tool with their lecturers. This study was conducted by Scornavacca, Huff, & Marshall (2009) among university students who communicated during and after class through an internal SMS scheme that the university had introduced. The findings revealed that the students were likely to ask more questions and engaged through the application. According to (Doering, Lewis, Veletsianos, & Nichols-Besel, 2008; Sweeny, 2010), the speciality of WhatsApp application is that if there is an important message or information that the students would like to ask their teachers, they may do so without any hesitation. While Doering et al (2008), voiced out that this application aids in breaking down the teacher-student social barriers. Sweeney (2010) articulated that through this application, students will be more serious about their tasks to impress their peers.

Majority of the teachers are utilizing WhatsApp as a communication tool rather than using normal text message (SMS) as it is convenient for teachers to send important documents or assignment questions through WhatsApp. Another easier and hassle-free way is teachers can also create a WhatsApp group for the students' discussion as it can be used anwhere without time limitation. Based on the study conducted by Bansal & Joshi (2014), the usage of WhatsApp application can assist in enhancing students' experiences of mobile learning. The researchers found that learners' social interactivity with their teachers and peers had escalated and students had positive perceptions towards learning through this application. In this study, the researchers employed the mixed-method where a mixture of quantitative and qualitative approaches was used to collect the data for the study. The researchers found that students benefited from WhatsApp application as teachers provided administrative messages, classroom management tips and extra exercises on previous lessons taught. For instance, the students had the chance to ask any questions if they were having difficulties in their tasks. Bansal & Joshi (2014) also stressed that the integration of WhatsApp in teaching and learning helped teachers stay updated what students were doing and types of problems that they faced. Besides, from the interviews conducted, participants were asked whether mobile learning through WhatsApp has educational benefits and considered as collaborative learning. Based on a study by Bansal & Joshi (2014, p.30), some of the academic advantages stated by the students throughout the interview were quick feedback to the issue, a better insight into the issues faced, recapitulation of earlier learned topics, learning from the others, discussions and accessibility of learning materials. Hence, students felt comfortable to learn through WhatsApp and suggested that the application should be used in future learning. All in all, the students stated that learning via WhatsApp is fun because it may lead to useful discussion and posts.

According to the results of a study by Bouhnik, Deshen, & Gan (2014), the students mentioned some technical advantages of using WhatsApp, such as simple operation, low cost, availability, as well as immediacy. The students also referred to educational advantages, such as the creation of a pleasant environment and an in-depth acquaintance with fellow students, which had a positive influence upon the manner of conversation. The findings of this study revealed academic advantages such as the accessibility of learning materials, teacher availability, and the continuation of learning beyond class hours.

Over the earlier year, the high intrusion of smartphones into the market has begun creating utilization of WhatsApp as a correspondence stage for various understudy gatherings. Teachers can make a gathering for their understudies that sets up a sort of "fundamental relational association" for the class. Different reasons why people hold onto WhatsApp as their principle correspondence channel rather than choices (for instance, SMS or other informal communities) are the minimal effort of the application joined with the ability to send countless, the capacity to coordinate an on-running discourse with various colleagues at the same time, the weaving together of a system of mates or family, and a sentiment of security as for other interpersonal organizations.

Conclusion

The employment of ICT in education has long ago been implemented by the government as in aids in information sharing, improves educators' teaching strategies, and strengthens students' writing skills and learners' motivation towards learning. With the employment of WhatsApp as a learning tool in English classroom, educators and students can communicate through this application anywhere and anytime in order to facilitate the process of learning. Besides, with proper training and exposure on techniques and strategies in the employment of WhatsApp in English language learning to a certain extent, it can assists educators in being at par with the 21st-century teaching.

Competing Interest Statement

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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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Gender Variations in Coping Mechanisms Used after Disagreements in the Home Domain: The Case of Malaysian Youths

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ABSTRACT

Disagreements could lead to conflicts, hence knowing how to cope with them would be of benefit. The current paper aimed to understand if there were gender variations in the coping mechanisms used after disagreements in the home domain. A non-probability sample of 672 Malaysian youths aged between 19–40 years was taken. Of these, 271 were males and 401 were females. Questionnaires were administered face-to-face. SPSS version 16 was used for data analysis. Results showed a significant variation in gender perspectives and the respective coping mechanisms used. Majority of the males claimed to feel 'no difference' after domestic disagreements. Their most sought-after activity or preferred coping mechanism was to 'play games'. In contrast, females often experienced emotions such as unhappiness and sadness after encountering domestic disagreements. Most of them preferred sharing their feelings with others. Some tended to resolve disagreements individually on their own by sleeping, crying, moping, or sulking. Males seemed to cope by participating in an active activity while females coped by indulging in a passive activity. This variation between males and females suggested that males could be more restrained and less expressive; whilst females tended to be more expressive. This outcome illustrates typical male and female behavior in Malaysian society. It is deduced that the male respondents' lack of expressiveness is reminiscent of the typical male attitude and masculine behavioral traits. Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, youths who now spend more time at home or work remotely from home, may ponder over how best they can resolve disagreements in the home domain. The findings of this study would thus be particularly useful for families and couples to avoid mental health issues, such as isolation, depression, suicidal acts, and violence at home.

Keywords: Coping mechanisms, domestic disagreements, gender differences, Malaysian youths, mental health.

Introduction

In nation building, one component that can drive a country's economic growth is its people, particularly its younger generation also known as youths. They are the productive workforce of the country who will be taking on future roles as leaders, economists, strategists, and nation builders. Their input to the country is very important because they have the power to lead their country to greater economic growth and political stability. These

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youths need to be future proof, strong, competent, and well equipped with a healthy mind, body, and soul. The healthy state of youths, including mental health, is a prevalent topic worldwide. Many countries are striving to achieve national stability by promoting healthy lifestyles and balanced diets as a measure to encourage their people to stay healthy. Nevertheless, good health, in particular mental health, is not just dependent on a healthy lifestyle and a balanced diet, healthy mental health comes from one's capability of resolving problems and disagreements and the ability to cope with the adversaries of life, as experienced by many in the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic situation.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as the state of wellbeing where every individual realizes his/her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his/her community (WHO, 2020; Heather, 2010; Lynch, 1977). Mental health is regarded by the WHO as a state of having a balanced physical, mental, and social well-being; it is more than being physically healthy, with no illnesses or diseases. The individual with a healthy mental state is one who has a balanced well-being. He/she is resilient, has a sense of security and reality, is able to cope with the challenges of life and can still interact with others, and is sufficiently matured in problem solving. In the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic that has affected the world, good mental health also refers to knowing how to cope with such unprecedented life-threatening incidents, knowing how to live life competently and competitively, knowing how to deal and cope with the daily stress of work, having the resilience to bounce back, and being competent enough to adjust to current times, especially when faced with numerous adversaries.

Velu, Gopinathan and Raman (2020) examined organizational resilience among the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) status companies in Malaysia during the COVID-19 pandemic. They found a positive correlation between employees' behavioral streams and their resilience. It appears that in times of physical distancing when people do not necessarily meet face-to-face, the form of communication appears to have changed. The communication had shifted from human-centeredness to technology-centeredness. Due to this state of affairs, it is even more crucial to have a healthy state of mind, equipped with effective coping mechanisms, and being instrumentally positive when dealing with uncertainties during a crisis (Velu *et. al.*, 2020, p. 124). Focusing on the productive workforce, Szabó (2020, p.23) contended that such a shift from face to face to remote work styles would continue to accelerate, and to be the new normal beyond 2020 due to the safety and health measures required to protect employees. The enhancement of the 5G telecommunication networks and software had helped to complement the set-up of the virtual collaboration the world needs presently. This reliance on virtual communication would affect the quality of the face-to-face (unmediated) and computer-mediated communication (Szabó, 2020, p. 23).

Shifting the focus of the communication from the workplace to the home domain involving a family setting, it appears that domestic communication among family members would also need to be examined. A family that provides good support to the family members in times of crisis strengthens its young and prepares them for future challenges. One way to achieve this is to cultivate good values and attitudes as well as to equip the young with survival strategies that can enable them to deal with life's daily stress (Kayumova & Zakirova, 2016). Besides supportive and nurturing families, the social environment also contributes to how people behave, particularly, when conflicts, misunderstandings, or disagreements occur. From their exposure to many different scenarios of adversity, young people can gradually learn to develop important skillsets that can be used to manage their daily lives that may be filled with conflicts, misunderstandings, disagreements, discontentment, and other unpleasant situations. For instance, conflict is about disputes arising from a lack of mutual understanding while misunderstanding is caused by misconceived ideas of others based on incorrect or skewed interpretations. Nevertheless, through experience, trial and error, young adults would be able to find multiple coping mechanisms to deal with these situations, and from these, they would then discover the most suitable strategy or strategies to deal with life's challenges. From these, they would be more likely to manage their emotions, such as dissatisfaction, frustration, stress and anxiety, better.

Disagreement reflects a lack of consensus between two parties and is mostly seen as confrontational when 'the expression of one's view differs from that expressed by another (Sifianou, 2012). However, any disagreement that is not mitigated or adequately managed, may result in the overt (tangible), and covert (intangible) emotional responses of both concerned parties. Serious disagreements may lead to turbulence of emotions, such as the breakdown or breakup of a relationship. Based on this, it is therefore important that when in disagreement, youths have to be mindful of the friction, animosity, hostility, conflict, and misunderstanding created. They also need to know of the repercussions involved. Coping strategies can be learnt, practiced, and mastered to alleviate feelings of helplessness, distress, pain, hurt, or anger more effectively. This is particularly helpful for introverts who practice avoidance, denial, or withdrawals in such situations, rather than dealing with them strategically.

Benefits of Study

Malaysia is a multiracial, multilingual, and multi-religious developing nation with a total population of 32.6 million, with 29.4 million (90.2%) citizens and 3.2 million (9.8%) non–citizens (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020). It is imperative to know how its young people cope and support each other so as to be mentally strong, emotionally stable, and physically healthy. One way to understand how Malaysian youths are mentally and emotionally equipped is to investigate their capacity to cope in an undesirable situation when they disagree with their family members. In particular it would be beneficial to learn how the different genders deal with disagreements in the home domain.

This study is based on the non-probability sample of 672 youths. In that regard, the findings may not be generalized. Nonetheless, the findings would shed light on how Malaysian youths, in a non-crisis home domain setting, cope with disagreements. The outcome would reflect the social reality of the Malaysian context. The findings would also demonstrate how social constructivism and differences in perspectives have affected the way Malaysian youths cope with disagreements.

Definition of key concepts

Some of the concepts used in this study are defined as follows:

- **Youths** refers to young men and women aged between 19 and 40.
- **Disagreement** refers to any instance where two parties do not see eye to eye over an issue; disagreements can occur regardless of small or big issues.
- **Coping mechanism** refers to the strategies used by the respondents in order to dissipate the situation or to overcome the negative feelings they experienced.
- **Home domain** refers to the environment where individuals interact with others who are members of the family.
- **Variation** refers to the gendered difference noted in the use of coping mechanisms.
- **Gender** refers to the two sexes with biological distinction, i.e. male and female, that also denotes a range of social and cultural attributes constructed based on varied expectations of the society towards the two genders.

Literature Review

Gender Roles

The behaviorist theory in psychology informs us that children mimic the behavior of their role models- either their parents, older siblings, or their caregivers. Learned behavior impacts the daily behavior patterns of children until adulthood. Additionally, the way a society is developing can also affect how its youths behave. For instance, a liberal and a closed society differ in terms of behavior, attire, education, entertainment, food, and forms of entertainment. This implies that a liberal society encourages its young to be liberal whilst a conservative society encourages its young to be more conservative and traditional by following societal norms. Children observe these rules and social norms to become what society expects them to be in terms of behavior and thoughts. Consequently, men and women behave “accordingly” by following the desired manner, and adhering to the perceived expectations of society. While some values are good to follow and practice, other values can be suppressing and restrictive, particularly those related to ‘negative’ emotions. These emotions, such as sadness, anger, pain, hurt, or distress when experienced may be expressed differently, depending on how one is brought up.

In the *Daily Mail Online* (23/09/2015), Fleig wrote that, “One in four 18 to 34-year-olds say showing emotions is a sign of weakness”. Are emotions and feelings to be suppressed? Conner (2000), a clinical and medical psychologist, observes over the years, how men generally avoid showing emotions whilst women tend to share and discuss their problems “to explore, deepen, or strengthen the relationship with the person they are talking to”. Most men perceive that solving a problem is a way to demonstrate their competence, hence they tend to dominate and to assume authority in the problem solving process, instead of attending to the quality of the relationship in resolving interpersonal disagreements.

Gender role is defined as a set of attitudes, behaviors, and self-presentation methods that has been ascribed to members of a certain biological sex. This includes norms for behavior, which some researchers termed as “the rules of masculinity” or the “masculine ideology” (Pleck, Sonenstein & Ku, 1993; Chu & Porsche, 2005). This study contends that men must act tough, stay in control and be stoic, and not talk too much to others. Men must uphold tough attitudes at work. Women, in comparison, play the role of primary caregivers. The traditional concept of men also insinuates that men should not shed tears and cry like women do, men must be strong and determined, both in physical strength and character. Men should never be emotional, so that they remain rational, calm, in control, authoritative, and decisive. Men are expected to be steadfast in their traditional roles, and to hold fast to such kinds of expectations, men are seldom accepted as stay-at-home fathers. Men seldom feel secure when their wives earn more than they do, and such attitudes have clearly been passed down through their upbringing. Numerous debates have emerged with regards to the nature and nurture of gender roles. In a recent study of a cross-cultural comparison of American and Lithuanian respondents, it was found that female Lithuanians tended to react politely; they also used creative reactions while answering some survey questions. In contrast, Lithuanian male respondents appeared to be less polite, and they used fewer creative reactions (Jakučionytė, 2020, p. 174). Some societies view both genders as a very distinctive cultural construction while modernists believe that these attitudes and behaviors flow from their biological sex traits and personalities. Given the gender perspectives subscribed by a relatively conservative society such as Malaysia, this study aims to focus on the emotional strength of the two genders by comparing their use of coping mechanisms when in disagreement in the home domain.

Gender roles have evolved with the liberation of education, and job opportunities given to women, but perhaps still not rapidly enough to match the current waves of change. Women are capable of doing what men used to do, such as serving in the engineering, astronomy, physics, medicine, and various domains of work today. However, the depictions of women can be biased against women in some parts of the world (Negash, 2006). Asian men still carry the notion that they need to emulate their fathers by being strong and powerful in character. It would be better for men to withhold their emotions, especially those of sadness, pain, and helplessness, regardless of how deep their emotions may hurt them. To some extent, they may even think crying is weak. Clearly, these views about men's behavior have been passed down to them by society, and further accentuated by the media. Consequently, it is not alarming that today's men behave in similar ways. Likewise, the female counterparts have also not escaped from the clutches of society and the media which constantly portray women as weaker than men, feeble-minded and indecisive, emotional, and chatterboxes. Their aim, as stressed by society and the media, is to look beautiful, be feminine, attract men, and then forever remain dutiful or sacrificial wives and mothers. These roles continue to be accentuated through their upbringing, hence young women today continue to behave in stereotypical ways. Incidents in countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Iraq, Iran, Myanmar and also other parts of Southeast Asia are evidence of such claims. As a result, many of our youths grow up 'following the rules'.

The Malaysian culture, in general, is collectivistic in nature, adhering to social values such as respect for elders and the authority, emphasis on harmony and orderliness, avoidance of conflicts, politeness, and humility (Asrul, 2003; Salleh, 2015; Yaacob, 2009). In the Malaysian context, a child who is well behaved is socially more attractive and acceptable than one who is a 'rebel' or 'out of the norm'. While the former is embraced by the community, the latter is often regarded as an embarrassment because s/he cannot conform. Kuang, Wong and David (2010) studied how Malaysian youths expressed their disagreement by remaining silent instead of a confrontation. This is more pronounced when they disagree with those who were more senior within the family or society.

Distinctive gender differences

John Gray's (2004) book entitled *Men are from Mars and Women from Venus* highlights the major differences between men and women in terms of behavioral and linguistic expressiveness, suggesting that such notions of gender roles are norms that are socially constructed, and these gender roles are often rigid or fixed. Nonetheless, Carothers and Reis (2012) challenged this notion in *Men and Women are from Earth*, justifying that both genders are similar but the society has over-emphasized the differences. These differences have inevitably, become more distinctive when viewed from a cross cultural perspective. This therefore leads to the debate of nature and nurture and whether gender variation exists in our culture, and if it does, then is the variation predominantly biological, physiological, psychological, emotional, or behavioral in nature?

Past research (Rucker, 2010) has shown that men and women are anatomically different with men's brain being larger than women's by 10% and heavier by 1112%. Their larger muscle mass and body also require more neurons to control these muscles (Rucker, 2010). Men are more left-brain dominated, they are good in mathematical skills although poorer in communication (Diamond, 2003). In comparison, their female counterparts have a balanced capacity to use the two hemispheres in their brain, making them good communicators (Rucker, 2010). Diamond (2003) also noted that women were more linguistically inclined, caring, and more affectionate. They were also identified as being more resourceful, with significantly more strategies for resolving workplace conflicts Gwartney-Gibbs and Lach (1992). As natural communicators, women also liked to hold a dialogue with others particularly about their dissatisfactions and disputes. Unlike the women, their male counterparts tend to be more rational and linear with more use of the legalistic language (Gwartney-Gibbs & Lach, 1992). These variations between men and women suggest that they are also likely to differ in the way they deal or cope with disagreements.

Mental health Issues

The Observer (17/08/2008) reported that 75% of all suicides can be attributed to men who were more neurotic, and less fulfilled. Focusing on the 21st century modernity, our paper suggests that men may have changed in their behavior today because times have changed. However, when men do become more expressive in their emotions, society tends to frown on them. Consequently, men revert back to bottling up their feelings. This lack of support from society could cause men to go through various issues of mental health, with the case of depression, constantly highlighted in foreign and local newspapers (*The Star*, 20/06/2012 and 22/09/2012; *The Star Online*, 06/11/2014 and 11/10/2016) becoming an issue.

Thornicroft (*The Guardian*, 02/08/2010) claimed that in general, women are twice at risk of suffering from depression when compared to men. *The Sun Daily* (23/07/2013) reported that 1% of the Malaysian population has mental problems, with 20% having mental health problems like depression, stress, and anxiety. Of these, stress is more commonly identified as it is a term most people use to indicate a physical turmoil. Stress can be caused by an internal thought or an external stimuli and disagreements caused by daily interactions can create stress and anxiety. In this regard, knowing the right coping mechanism to apply during such situations can help to mitigate this phenomenon.

Gen Y

The media has been reporting that the Gen Y people (those born in 1980 or after) are those most depended on by most countries for economic growth. Unlike their grandparents or parents who were born as baby boomers, the Gen Y generation is not only more technology savvy, but also tougher in their ability to deal with change (Mujtaba, Manyak, Murphy, & Sungkhawan, 2010). Raised by more generous parents who have more disposable incomes, the Gen Y generation is exposed to modern technology, have wider world experiences and bigger access to global mass media. With this exposure, the Gen Y generation is also more updated with information as they resort to modern communicative modes like the internet, SMS, emails, Facebook, twitter and Instagram. They are constantly in the know. The Gen Y people have been described as a generation that is more willing to take on transformation, a step which most nations are currently subscribing to by brain-picking on their expertise. Today's Gen Y youths are expected to transform their countries, as is currently happening in some countries. Nevertheless, with advancement in technology, Gen Y people are also faced with more challenges. In their bid to survive, they compete with more people for a better livelihood whilst accommodating higher costs of living, higher unemployment rate, higher crime rate, higher corruption and cronyism, and more conflicts. They also face more demanding educational needs, family responsibilities, marriage commitment, interpersonal relationships, work stress, and the perpetual problem of financial management. If the Gen Y generation, as a younger set of population can cope with these challenges well, it would mean that they are mentally fit and physically resilient, hence valuable to their respective countries for nation building. In contrast, if they were less mentally fit, more physically vulnerable, and incapable of coping with these challenges, they would have less tenacity to deal with life's challenges thereby, defeating the nation's aspirations. One good way to gauge this tenacity is to analyze how they cope with a hostile situation like disagreements, especially in the home domain.

Coping mechanisms of young Malaysians

Reports (Khadijah et al., 2013; Noorbala et al., 2001) have shown that when youths are unable to cope with challenges in life such as love or affective relationships, debts, or a loss in identity, they may fall into depression or suicide modes. Suicide rate is on the rise in Malaysia. According to a Germany-based market and consumer data provider, Statista (03/07/2020), suicide rate has been on the rise in Malaysia since 2010, with many resorting to taking their own lives over issues like failing in school examinations and loss in love (*The Star*, 02/06/2012). The publicity director of Befrienders Kuala

Lumpur, Ardy Ayadali reported that suicide is the second leading cause of death for youths between the ages of 15 and 29 in Malaysia (*New Strait Times*, 08/05/2017). The common triggers for suicide among the callers of Befrienders are depression, broken relationships, and cyber bullying. Ardy further contends that the solution for suicidal attempts by the youths often depends on the person's coping mechanisms and the family's support system, particularly good relationships. The 'fragility' of the Gen Y youths was traced to the reported case of 1,156 people who had committed suicide over the three-year period between 2009 and 2011. Majority of them were aged between 24 and 44 years old (*The Star*, 02/06/2012). More alarmingly, the same news report indicated a ratio of three men to one woman involved in suicidal acts or attempts, with the Chinese showing the highest number in suicides (48%) followed by the Indians (21%), Malays (18%) and other races (13%).

Claiming that suicide has become an epidemic in Asia, Kok, Gan and Goh (2011) mentioned that suicide rates in several highly populated countries also account for the greater part of the world's suicides, making it an issue that needs to be addressed quickly and swiftly. Their study investigated how Malaysian youths talked about causes of suicide, revealing that suicide was more acute among the young. Participants aged between 15–24 years old were found to be mostly seeking help from friends. The study concluded that several main factors could induce suicide among the young – their ability to cope with interpersonal relationships such as boy-girl relationships, family issues, and stress arising from school work demands. The study also disclosed that more males indicated that relationship with the opposite sex was a contributing factor to the suicide problem. The Chinese students involved in the study further reported that school work was the main factor. A high percentage of the participants also revealed that their life was self-determined, implying that the younger generation make most of their own decisions without consulting others. This admittance shows that issues affecting the younger generation need to be addressed quickly since the stress they experience in relationships and family issues can be of grave concern (Khadijah et al., 2013; Tam & Lim, 2009).

The need to conduct studies involving young Malaysians was echoed by the Ministry of Health, Malaysia (11/10/2012) which reported that young Malaysian students including those 15 years and below were suffering from stress. The report blamed parents for their lack of interaction with their children due to work. Apparently, the number has risen from 13% in 1996 to 20% in 2011 (Ministry of Health Malaysia, 11/10/2012). The Ministry stated that it would be making efforts to tackle the problem including preparing a national strategic plan on mental health and increasing the number of Community Health Centres within the country.

Depression, anxiety and stress among Malaysian university students

Khadijah et al. (2013) examined Malaysian students and their stress level. It was found that older Malaysian students (18–24) had higher stress levels with the greatest stress showing up during the latter years of tertiary education. The fear of failure was stated as the most stressful. The study revealed that females had higher stress levels which supported the findings of Vrana and Lauterbach (1994). Both sets of reports also perceived females as overreacting, such as over-reporting on medical and psychological symptoms. Consequently, it appears that female participants had coped with stressful events by being expressive with their feelings.

Traditional female traits have also been studied by Conner (2000) who verified that women dealt with their emotions through sharing and discussing. This seemed to be women's way of exploring and deepening their relationship with others. Women were more concerned with the way the problem was solved. Men, in comparison, were more concerned only about solving the problem. Men often view their ability to solve problems as a personal strength (Conner, 2000). This suggests the prevalence of gender differences.

Emotions

Emotions are strong feelings, such as joy or fear (Collins Dictionary, 2006) which can move a person to act in exceptional ways. From the psychological perspective, strong emotions may lead to a complex state of feeling which includes physical and psychological changes that can affect the person's thoughts. These changes then influence the individual's behavior. Meyers (2007) stated that human emotions can involve changes such as physiological arousal, expressive behaviors, and conscious experience.

Disagreements are not emotions, but disagreements can create emotional experiences which can lead to a change in behavior, feelings, and thoughts. It is these changes that can offset the individual's behavior. Some people argue openly when disagreeing; others may resort to silence or sulking. Disagreements are common in our daily interaction with others. They are inevitable because people have personal orientations towards certain issues. While the western society may appreciate direct confrontations during disagreements, Malaysians tend to avoid confrontations. This is more notably visible among certain ethnic groups (Asrul, 2003). Such traits can be attributed to the Malaysian behavior that has been described as a ‘high-ambiguity-tolerant culture’ where people ‘don’t feel threatened by unknown situations’ (DeVito, 2008, p. 39). Such a community, according to DeVito (2008), accepts that uncertainty is a way of life and that rules which dictate communication and relationships may not always be the same for others. Since most Malaysians are tolerant of such uncertainties, it would seem that maintaining social harmony is their priority (Asrul, 2003). Some communication strategies among Malaysians (Jawakhir, 2006; Kuang & Jawakhir, 2010) have been identified. One among these is indirectness in speaking (Asmah, 1995; Jamaliah, 2000; David & Kuang, 1999, 2005; Shanmuganathan, 2003). Kuang, Wong and David (2010) also found that Malaysians tend to avoid confrontations by resorting to silence. However, this only applies in the context of specific issues like money. The use of indirectness and silence may be interpreted as attempts to maintain social harmony. These strategies could imply that participants do not know any other way of communicating effectively. A person’s poor ability to express him/herself during conflicts is also an indication that negative feelings are being suppressed. With the right strategy, these negative feelings can be diffused gradually.

Disagreements can occur at all levels of communication: between family members, superiors and subordinates, people of equal status, and also strangers. Disagreements between a superior and a subordinate (including parents and children) are expressions of power and hierarchy where those with the power assert themselves through disagreements and those without or with lesser power, succumb by suppressing their feelings. The more outspoken subordinate may react to the disagreements explicitly, but such a behavior is risky as it bears negative consequences. In that regard, people do need to have varied mechanisms for coping with disagreements. Some of these coping mechanisms will be discussed in this paper.

Habermas (1984) mentioned that every day communication is about an exchange of rational ideas between people who are equal and devoid of power. Everyday communication is communicatively achieved through agreement. Neither party can impose on the other, whether instrumentally or through intervention, and whether directly or indirectly. Agreements can be obtained by force, ‘but what comes to manifest through outside influence, or the use of violence, cannot count subjectively, as agreement because agreement rests on common convictions’ (Habermas, 1984, p. 287).

Hovatter (1996) noted that disagreements are induced by one’s personal orientation system (values, needs, interests, and intentions). Depending on one’s personality and tolerance level, disagreements can be subtle, quiet or vehement. As long as the tolerance level is not overstressed, a disagreement may or may not be conveyed. If it is conveyed, it may be done so in a non-verbal manner, suggesting that the individual’s emotion is within control (Hovatter, 1996).

Emotional intelligence and gender differences

Emotional intelligence is an important aspect of development that can enhance successful social interactions. A good level of emotional intelligence can help individuals alleviate conflicts. Investigating how males and females perceive their own emotional intelligence (EQ) levels, Lim (2011) found no significant gender difference in actual and self-estimated EQ level. However, he noted that both genders seemed to perceive that males have higher EQ levels than females. This interesting finding suggests that there is some form of stereotyping taking place in the minds of the local participants.

Najib (2012), however, found that more than half of the male (51.25%) and female (51.55%) students had low scores in emotional intelligence, but there was no significant difference between the two. Haryani, Sharifah, and Rose (2010) observed that gender was correlated with emotional self-regulation. Female participants had higher emotional self-regulation, thereby suggesting that females were better at controlling their emotions.

Methodology

The domain of disagreements compiled for this study was developed from a previous survey that was conducted on a group of young Malaysians. They were randomly asked if they experienced disagreements, and if so, in what context. From their responses, the contexts of disagreements were subsequently grouped as home (with parents, siblings, and boyfriend/girlfriend), education (university/ colleges – lecturers, classmates and administrative staff), and workplace (bosses and colleagues). For the purpose of this paper, only the coping mechanisms used after disagreements in the home domain was applied.

Respondents comprised a non-probability sample of 672 Malaysian youths comprising 271 males and 401 females. Although their ages ranged from 1940 years, a majority were between 20–25 years old (Mean age = 23.38, SD = 3.01). All had voluntarily participated in the survey which contained fourteen responses based on the 5-point Likert scale ranging from Always (1 point) to Never (5 points), and two open ended questions. The aim of the study was conveyed and all the questions contained in the survey form were explained in detail. The questionnaires were administered and collected by the researchers after respondents had completed them within 2030 min. Respondents who were unable to complete on time were allowed to take the survey forms home. These were then collected the following week by the researchers at a specific pick-up point. Out of 684 questionnaires administered, only 672 were found suitable for analysis with the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 16.

This paper focuses on the data generated from one of the questions which asks, 'How do you normally react after disagreements? You can tick more than one option. A total of 21 options were provided for this question: 'sleep', 'cry', 'mope/sulk', 'feel unhappy', 'feel depressed', 'feel angry', 'feel life is unfair', 'feel confused', 'feel sad', 'feel restless', 'cannot concentrate', 'keep feelings to myself', 'no difference', 'share feelings with friends', 'share feelings with family, 'share feelings with intimate friend', 'see counsellor', 'listen to loud music', 'listen to soft music', 'write into a journal, ' and 'play games'. These responses comprised actions that can be taken to cope with their disagreements. They may also experience certain sensations following the disagreements. The 5-point Likert scale responses ranged from 'always', 'frequently', 'sometimes', 'rarely' to 'never'. Mann-Whitney U Tests were undertaken to test gender differences.

Results

For the purpose of this paper, the survey questions first looked into whether or not Malaysian youths experienced disagreement in the home domain. Of the total of 672 respondents surveyed, statistics indicate that majority of the youths – 91.6% males and 94.6% females, agreed that they experienced disagreements in their interactions in the home domain. The Chi-square analysis indicates no gender difference in disagreement with others in the home domain, $r(722) = .18$, $p > .05$.

To further test the frequency of disagreements occurring in their lives, the Mann-Whitney U Test was used to determine gender differences. No significance in gender difference was noted, with the mean rank for males being 379.50, and for females being 340.79.

To tap into the Malaysian youths' perception of whether or not disagreements spoil their day, gender differences were compared. Results showed that there were gender differences, $r(667) = .72$, $p < .05$.

The following section focuses on gender difference in the coping mechanisms used after disagreements in the home domain.

Table 1: Mann-Whitney U Test on Gender Differences on the way Youths React

Coping Mechanism		n	Mean Rank	*U*	*Z*	*P*
Sleep	M	280	372.85	50022.00	3.02	Sig
	F	411	327.71			
Cry	M	280	445.86	29018.00	11.39	Sig
	F	409	275.95			
Mope / Sulk	M	271	387.46	38898.50	6.22	Sig
	F	395	296.48			
Feel Unhappy	M	283	380.27	50864.00	3.28	Sig
	F	418	331.18			
Feel Depressed	M	279	357.73	53922.00	1.39	NS
	F	411	337.20			
Feel Angry	M	279	345.77	57410.00	.139	NS
	F	414	347.83			
Feel Life is Unfair	M	280	334.63	54355.00	.73	NS
	F	401	345.45			
Feel Confused	M	276	356.90	52053.00	1.69	NS
	F	407	331.89			
Feel Sad	M	279	381.38	46488.00	4.25	Sig
	F	408	318.44			

(continued)

Table 1: Mann-Whitney U Test on Gender Differences on the way Youths React (continued)

Coping Mechanism		n	Mean Rank	*U*	*Z*	*P*
Restless	M	279	352.78	51677.00	1.59	NS
	F	398	329.34			
Cannot Concentrate	M	282	341.51	56396.00	.00	NS
	F	400	341.49			
Keep to Myself	M	278	350.33	54256.50	.89	NS
	F	406	337.14			
No Difference	M	276	303.03	45409.50	3.35	Sig
	F	386	351.86			
Share with Friend	M	273	370.04	44487.00	4.06	Sig
	F	396	310.84			
Share with Family	M	272	383.44	42447.50	5.13	Sig
	F	403	307.33			
Share with Intimate Friend	M	271	334.89	52063.00	.39	NS
	F	391	329.15			
See Someone I Trust	M	271	324.29	51027.00	.81	NS
	F	390	335.66			
Listen to Loud Music	M	273	317.58	49297.00	1.77	NS
	F	392	343.74			
Listen to Soft Music	M	277	354.42	50850.50	1.82	NS
	F	399	327.44			
Write into a Journal	M	273	362.97	45600.00	3.53	Sig
	F	393	313.03			
Paint/Draw	M	273	341.82	51100.00	1.07	NS
	F	392	326.86			
Play Games	M	278	287.47	41136.50	5.63	Sig
	F	394	371.09			

Sig = Significant at $p < .05$ NS = Not significant

As can be seen, there were significant gender differences in some of the coping mechanisms applied. The mean ranks indicate that male youths tended to significantly differ from their female counterparts in the following ways: cry (11.39), mope/sulk (6.22), play games (5.63), share with family (5.13), feel sad (4.25), share with friend (4.06), write into a journal (3.53), no difference (3.35), and feel unhappy (3.28).

In addition, male youths have less or no emotions to express despite a negative event like a disagreement. with restraint in their emotions by claiming ‘No Difference’. Results further indicate that when they do try to cope by resorting to some mechanism, male youths chose ‘Play Games’ as an active activity after disagreements. However, the nature of the type of games played was not elaborated upon.

The findings of this study also showed that female youths differed significantly from male youths. The results also showed females liked sharing their feelings with others and expressed themselves after disagreements in subtle as well as expressive manners.

There were little or no gender differences in the following reactions, feelings or coping mechanisms after a domestic disagreement: ‘feel depressed’, ‘feel angry’, ‘feel life is unfair’, ‘feel confused’, ‘feel restless’, ‘cannot concentrate’, ‘keep feelings to myself’, ‘share feelings with intimate friend’, ‘see someone i can trust’, ‘listen to loud music’, ‘listen to soft music’ and ‘paint/draw’.

Discussion and Conclusion

This paper has reported on the findings of the coping mechanisms used by 672 non-probable samples of Malaysian nationality. Evidence can be drawn to show that the majority of Malaysian youths experienced disagreement in the home domain, but there was no gender variation in this aspect of their interaction in the home domain. There was evidence indicating no gender variation in the frequency of disagreements experienced in their lives, but there were gender variations in terms of whether or not disagreements spoilt their day.

The comparison of results implied that males were more restrained with their emotions- ‘No Difference’ after a disagreement in the home domain. In contrast, females tended to succumb to their emotions by feeling sad. They also chose to express themselves inwardly through crying, moping or sulking in silo. While males chose to indulge in an active activity like playing games to cope with the disagreement, majority of the females chose to “Sleep”. Male youths did nothing about their emotions, henceforth, feelings. Female youths shared their feelings with others, as Conner (2000) had noted about women, they needed to seek support from others.

The results of this study showed a communication trait or pattern that demonstrates some aspect of the male stoic traits and the female expressive behaviors, as noted by literature. The interpretation derived from this study imply that the male youths’ indifference towards disagreements suggest their self-restraints, avoiding any reactions or responses to the situation. Such a response pattern suggests that male youths were adhering to the conventional male roles of being stoic, restrained, and non-expressive (Levant, 1992).

There is perhaps no ideal way to release stress after each disagreement. Male children who are brought up with sufficient family love and support are healthier and stronger in facing adversities in their adulthood. Japan, a developed nation with male dominant mentality, is evolving in a way where males are allowed to cry in public. This phenomenon can be seen in many reality television or modern dramas in Japan (Ikoro, Omessah & Ekevere, 2015).

Conner (2000) contended that men who are less expressive could explore, understand and appreciate communication traits that are regarded as feminine, and by so doing, would understand themselves better. Likewise, when women have explored and come to understand how men perceive problem solving in a relationship, women themselves can be better equipped in understanding their own emotional needs that resonate and reflect femininity. For that reason, it is recommended that further research be conducted on younger men and women in other domains, such as love relation and friendship, workplace and education in other regions in order to verify if the distinctions do exist between men and women. Future studies can focus on finding ways to deflect this possibility of men adhering too heavily to social norms. It is vital to identify with swiftness if this restrained behavior of men can cause the Malaysian youths to succumb to stress, and ultimately experienced some mental health issues. Emotions, whether among men or women, need to be expressed and healthily managed. If left unattended, this could potentially result in excessive stress thereby leading to a high level of anxiety for men. Nonetheless, this threat needs to be addressed and further evidenced by future research.

Carothers and Reis (2012) noted that average men and women are indifferent in aspects pertaining to interpersonal orientation (e.g. empathy, relational-interdependent self-construal), gender-related dispositions (e.g. masculinity, femininity, care orientation, unmitigated communion, fear of success, science inclination, personality type), and intimacy (intimacy prototypes and stages, social provisions, intimacy with best friend).

The above notion is applicable to the fact that males and females did not show very significant differences with regards to their emotions and feelings after a domestic disagreement. For example, there were little or no gender differences in terms of how both genders were emotionally affected by domestic disagreement: feel depressed, feel angry, feel life is unfair, feel confused, feel restless, cannot concentrate, keep feelings to myself, share feelings with intimate friend, boy/girlfriend, see someone i can trust, listen to loud music, listen to soft music and paint/draw.

However, the results showed that after having disagreements in the home domain, Malaysian females were more likely to express themselves, via self-restricting activities such as crying and sulking, as compared to men. The aftermath discomfort or anger due to disagreement is hence, confined to themselves. However, some females would not just do the self-confining acts in silo. They also tend to share their feelings with other people whom they trust, seeking validation of their feelings by telling or consulting others. As previous studies (Kilmartin, 1994; Pennebaker, 1995) had shown, women communicate to share their feelings with others after disagreements. Talking it out perhaps helped to scaffold the aftermath of disagreement, such as the feelings of discomfort or uncertainty.

Limitations

The findings of this study have shed some light on the coping mechanisms chosen by 672 Malaysian youths to show that gender variation exists. This study also confirms a cultural phenomenon that male youths behave in a ‘masculine’ manner by being introverted, suppressive, or non-expressive of their arising emotions. They keep feelings to themselves although they might resort to intrapersonal outlets to stabilize their emotions, and in this case, playing games. Nonetheless, the nature of the game (e.g. online, physical sports, contact games or engaging in tournament) had not been clearly specified in the responses, hence it could not be further elaborated. The finding of this paper is probably too small to substantiate any solid claims about gender variation for the general Malaysian youths. However, the outcome may be able to assist youths to detect their own strengths and weaknesses when dealing with disagreements, particularly in the home domain. The step for any behavioral change, can thus begin with the individuals recognizing their own habitual responses and behavioral traits in disagreements (Habermas, 1984; Hovatter, 1996).

There could be another socio-cultural dimension that has not been addressed in this quantitative study. For example, given the multi-ethnic culture of Malaysia, the youths are probably and naturally more tolerant towards disagreements both in the public and the home domains. They may also be expected to be obedient by leaning towards their family norms, values, and expectations. Thus, they behave in the way they are expected to, not truly in the manner they wish to respond to. It is hoped that the findings of this paper can enhance our understanding as well as empower the Malaysian youths in their interaction with others by allowing them to adjust their behavior patterns whilst dealing with others across different cultures, boundaries and social positions.

As a concluding note, disagreements and differences in opinions amongst family members and those living under the same roof can always be dealt with more harmoniously via effective communications. This is embedded in trust and support for each other. Therefore, it is essential for parents and their young adults to establish the trust and support that is required to mitigate the situation within the home domain.

Competing Interest Statement

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

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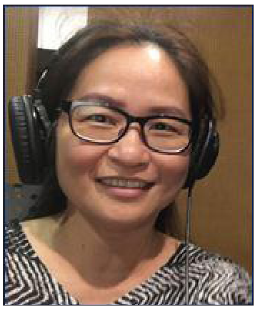

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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Covid-19 Pandemic and Economic Landscape in Malaysia: A New Crisis and Norms

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ABSTRACT

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought a severe negative impact on the country's economic and social life. The COVID-19 pandemic is regarded as a new form of crisis and has resulted in numerous uncertainties and developed new norms. The paper analyses the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia in relation to the Movement of Control Order (MCO) and the effects and changes in business and economic landscape as well as policy responses. It examines the five phases of MCO, and measures undertaken in each phase based on secondary data from various sources. It also analyses the policy responses of the Malaysian government during the COVID-19 pandemic; the new norms are discussed, too.

Keywords: pandemic, economic impact, social impact, stimulation package, MCO, local policy response.

Introduction

Indeed, the present global state of the COVID-19 pandemic which originated from Wuhan, China compared to previous infectious diseases such as Hong Kong flu (1968–1969) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) between 2002–2003 is considered to be the worst infectious disease pandemic in modern times (El Zowalaty and Järhult, 2020). According to World Health Organization (WHO) statistics, on 17 September 2020, the total number of confirmed positive and death cases, globally, were, 29,737,453 and 937,391, respectively[1]. According to World Health Organization (WHO) statistics, on 17 September 2020, the total number of confirmed positive and death cases, globally, were, 29,737,453 and 937,391, respectively[2], and the numbers are expected to keep increasing every day (Kumar, 2020). Meanwhile, there were about 8,437 cases and 813 deaths for the SARS pandemic[3]. Furthermore, some developed countries such as the United States, and some European countries for instance Spain, Italy, France, Germany, and the UK were also badly affected. Currently, the United States, Spain, Italy, and France have recorded more than 30,000 deaths with United States recording the highest which is more than 6 million total deaths. Due to its threat being beyond the monetary issue, the negative impact of this new type of crisis is far worse than previous economic or financial crisis that ever happened in history (Peeri et al., 2020). Undeniably, the COVID-19 pandemic could be considered a new pandemic crisis in the modern era which was expected to be worse than the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) (2007–2008) because of its threat to global human safety and security affecting all sectors (Arshad et al., 2020).

[1]https://covid19.who.int/table
[2]https://covid19.who.int/table
[3]https://www.who.int/csr/sars/country/2003_07_11/en/

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In managing the infection emergency, stopping the spread of the infectious disease from turning to be out of control is the essential target and should be done promptly (Zhao et al., 2020). Right off the bat, most nations have prohibited travel to and from the influenced zone. On account of COVID-19, China has restricted travel all through Wuhan to contain the infection. At the same time, Movement of Control Order (MCO) is a serious measure that realised by a government to contain the contamination from spreading inside the country due to the imported cases (Ahmed and Memish, 2020; Ebrahim and Memish, 2020). These controls prohibit out-of-home, open social events, and other means to stop the transmission (Bruinen de Bruin et al., 2020; Xiao and Torok, 2020). The methods have been exhibited during the spread of diseases, for instance, Spanish flu, Hong Kong flu, and SARS (Wildersmith et al., 2020).

Malaysia also did not escape from the disease transmissions. Malaysia reported the first case of COVID-19 on 25 January 2020, involving three Chinese tourists who entered Malaysia on 23 January via Singapore, while the first confirmed case, detected on 4th February 2020, involved a Malaysian who had recently returned from Singapore (Elengoe, 2020). Malaysia, additionally have prohibited travel to and from Wuhan, China to forestall the spread of the infection toward the start before limiting from and to China (Shah et al., 2020). Meanwhile, to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within the country due to the imported cases, Malaysia also implemented (MCO) from 18 March 2020 to 12 May 2020, with an extension on the conditional MCO completed on 09 June 2020. These controls include a ban on out-of-home, public gatherings, and temporary closure of business operations to reduce individual movement that increase the speed of the disease transmission (Shah et al., 2020). Then, Malaysia continued with Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO) until 31 August 2020 extended till end of the year. To date (18 September 2020), Malaysia has recorded 10,147 cases with 129 deaths and 9,264 recovered[4] (MOH, 2020).

A survey conducted by the Department of Statistics, Malaysia (DOSM)[5] revealed that nearly half of the self-employed respondents (46.6%) lost their jobs during the MCO implementation. In addition, survey findings also showed that 71.4% of self-employed respondents saved enough for only less than a month. 67.8% of firms/business companies announced that during the MCO era they had no source of income. Therefore, 53.4% of companies/business firms will only survive for 1-2 months if they fail to provide workers with full pay/half paid leave. Moreover, the Agriculture and Services sectors have reported the highest number of job losses compared to other industries, 21.9% and 15.0% respectively. The study by Katumo and Maingi (2020) which determined the causality between youth unemployment and economic growth in Kenya found that there exists a unidirectional relationship between youth unemployment and economic growth.

It seems that the Malaysian economy and numerous organizations or businesses are confronting difficulties due sto the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of MCO by the government indirectly (Ibrahim, 2020). Briefly, the country's economic recovery during this COVID-19 pandemic crisis should be handled in a different perspective unlike the previous economic and financial recession as it involves human healthcare, safety, and security (Peeri et al., 2020; Shah et al., 2020). In addition, the MCO implemented by the government, rather than the market itself, has also contributed towards the downturn of the economic growth (Leo and David, 2020). Thus, different mitigation strategies will be applied to cope with the impact of the pandemic crisis. Accordingly, Malaysian government had actualized a financial upgrade bundle adding up to RM250 billion in which government assistance helped people and also gave help to SMEs for their organizations all through the pandemic (The Star, 2020; Jalil, 2020). However, the strategies may not be relevant to other countries because the context, government policies, culture, and business practices are different in different countries.

As most of the previous studies on COVID-19 in Malaysia mainly discussed the impacts and measures in Malaysia per se (Shah et al., 2020), this article tries to investigate these issues in the context of Malaysia as well as the state of Sabah. The state of Sabah is unique because of two reasons. Firstly, Sabah relies on the tourism and hospitality industry which was mainly affected during this COVID-19 pandemic. Secondly, after the change of federal government in February, Sabah is one of the states that have a different ruling political party than the federal government which causes different opinions in managing the crisis. Even though the Malaysian government has slowly allowed businesses to resume their operations with strict SOP during the RMCO, these new norms will also take some time to show some positive effect. This is because we are facing uncertainty where nobody knows how long the COVID-19 pandemic crisis

[4] http://COVID-19.moh.gov.my/

[5] https://www.dosm.gov.my/v1/index.php?r=column/cone&menu_id=d3pnMXZ4ZHJjUnpnYjNyUnJhek83dz09

would last till the vaccine is available, which requires further research on this uncertainty. In the short term, the stimulus packages can surely be helpful for those who are affected in the pandemic crisis whether they are the business operators or households. Thus, the question is to what extend these stimulus packages can curb the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis towards Malaysia's economic, and human security and safety especially in Sabah. Hence, this paper aims to provide an insightful understanding of the changing of the business and economy landscape in view of policy responses and new norms.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed individuals' standard into another standard. On the off chance that this pattern proceeds, the monetary circumstances will worsen if not tended to promptly (Azlan at el., 2020). Internationally, financial upgrade bundles were actualized by governments in numerous nations as basic systems to address the monetary effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. The aims of these improvement bundles are to: a) ensure that people's major needs are satisfied especially for most affected families during the advancement control demand; b) economy, sensibility, and recovery during and after the advancement control solicitation; and c) change areas which are genuinely impacted, for instance, the travel business and convenience industry, general prosperity, and cultivating (Murugiah, 2020).

To achieve these targets, most governments have completed both money related and financial course of action to cushion the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The group joins various honors and inspirations provided for impacted associations and individual business directors to ensure their business congruity, for instance, charge help, wage allotments, advance assistance, boycott, work finance deferrals and sponsorships, and others in order to diminish the budgetary weight looked by the affected associations and individual business heads (Bernama, 2020). Nations, for example Australia and Malaysia, likewise gave budgetary help to deserving families to guarantee they get their day to day essential needs, for example food, and to pay for their monthly obligations. Simultaneously, this technique could expand the buying capacity of the family unit.

Literature Review: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic as a New Crisis and changing landscapes

COVID-19 has let almost all countries of the world plunge into economic crisis from where it will take a long time to recover. Economic ecosystem will continue to be disrupted when new infections are still reported (OECD, 2020). From the research of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the World Bank has predicted that global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth will shrink by 2.4%. Malaysia will also to be under pressure as Malaysia is a small country that depends on other countries such as the United States and China. Malaysia's GDP growth will shrink by 2.61% by 2020 as reported by the Malaysian Economic Research Institute (Khalid, 2020).

According to Fan (2003), Lee and McKibbin (2003), and Knapp et al. (2004), there are a number of economic studies on the effect of influenza and appraisals of the expense of SARS. There is widespread epidemiological risk about the number of people who will be affected and monetary risk regarding how a flare-up will impact fiscal development. Chronicled experience shows that regardless, during a pandemic scene, everybody in a little while acclimates to the affliction and monetary activity continues. On the intrigue side, a pandemic is most likely going to impact buyer sureness and change social models. It will in like manner impact money related master conviction, which can have far-reaching outcomes. On the positive side, a pandemic will affect the human work, as affliction will constrain various authorities to stay at home. It will in like manner continue impacting the tamed creature's section oppositely. Governments ought to deal with a questionable technique condition as they respond to the overall prosperity emergency and financial withdrawal. Markets will, when all is said and done, overcompensate, which could fuel the money related impact.

The COVID-19 pandemic has put the world's major economies such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, China, and Japan at risk. Stock markets crashed and oil prices plunged heavily following the pandemic. This creates concern over the condition of the global economy as well as the world financial structure (Mahar and Ghumro, 2020). Based on Mahar and Ghumro (2020), COVID-19 is the reason for recent business closures and economists have predicted that the pandemic may bring about inflation. The reason is that the supply and demand within the business structure has been affected, and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows towards emerging countries were likely to drop significantly.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) forecasts that such restrictions will impact more on retail and wholesale trade, and real estate services in Malaysia. However, the result may vary country to country. Economic outputs in advanced nations were also estimated to reduce by 15% following many business closures while emerging economies expected to decline by 25% (Jackson, Weiss, Schwarzenberg, and Nelson, 2020).

On the opposite side, agrarian and mining sectors might be less influenced. Notwithstanding extraordinary level of control measures and timing on assignment of development limitations will prompt distinctive seriousness (OECD, 2020). It is said that GDP in affected nations is 2.4% lower than that in unaffected nations. In the travel industry sector, at the point when China shut down in January and February in 2020, its assembling products and enterprises tumbled to the lowest level in its history. This is represented by the decrease of almost 17 percent in exportation contrasted with 2019 (Gerald, Kwiatkowski, Singer, and Smit, 2020). At the point when China lifted its restrictions the U.S. and the Eurozone economies began to drop. According to FitzGerald et al. (2020) beginning March 2020, the U.S. is encountering moderate cancellations in assembling and administrations division. A similar situation is likewise experienced by main parts of the Eurozone. Besides the falling costs of goods, significant monetary standards have devalued essentially against the U.S. dollar because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

MCO in Malaysia during the COVID-19 pandemic is significant stalling the incidence of COVID-19; yet in addition it will bring damaging financial misfortunes (Kaur, Kunasegaran, Singh, Salome & Sandhu, 2020). In general, private utilization and corporate venture will fall with terminations of organizations and administrations just as movement restrictions additionally have adverse effect on close to home vocations and organizations. MCO will let people and organizations affected by uncertainty confront risks of direct income limitations because of decreased salary. Small and medium-sized undertakings (SMEs) and vulnerable groups like low-salaried people and jobless specialists will feel this liquidity crunch.

New business and prospective clients have declined because of the negative financial repercussion of the COVID-19 pandemic. Malaysia Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) fell from 48.5 in February to 48.4 in March which shows a further decrease of the Malaysian goods manufacturing sector (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020); Additionally significantly affected outside business sectors because of the sharp decrease in send out interest in March. After the underlying adverse effect of Chinese interest, the pace of decrease was essentially equivalent to the level in February. Assembling organization noticed that as COVID-19 hit worldwide interest then there will be broad decrease in unfamiliar deals. When looking forward from the business point of view for the following year, Malaysian manufacturers are required to additionally decrease production.

Assembling organizations are feeling the pressure because of the execution of constraints in both household and fare markets to control the spread of COVID-19 which seriously limited interest and capacity of goods' manufacturers to work fundamentally beneath full production capacity. Also, organizations have totally suspended production because of the paucity of workers and the fall in number of new outlets had prompts fabricating creation has declined at a phenomenal rate. Local and foreign constraints in this COVID-19 pandemic brought a steep decline in new orders in April. A division of the organization's principle client had been shut.

Fare request fell pointedly as around 83% of organizations announced a sharp drop and abatement in orders from abroad (MIDA, 2020). Measures taken to control the COVID-19 flare-up prompted a sharp decrease in assembling movement in which the regulation measures have seriously hit local interest and many organizations' production has gone down with the suspension of business. Governments around the globe make a serious move to the human life framework from being overpowered; trade request has fallen sharply (Murugiah, 2020).

COVID-19 likewise influences the travel industry. Malaysia's economy has significant contribution from tourism and the travel industry because the travel industry alone contributes to the economy which about 27 million vacationers will visit Malaysia consistently (Lee-Peng Foo et al., 2020). COVID-19's effect on Malaysia's travel industry will rely upon the course of the COVID-19 spread in Singapore and China as number of vacationers that visit Malaysia from Singapore are the maximum at 39% and from China it is 12%. At the point when the rate of human-to-human transmission of COVID-19 is high, it may prompt restriction in movement to keep away from risk and will prompt fewer travelers to visit Malaysia (Duddu, 2020). Other than that, COVID-19 has caused a fall in the value of raw petroleum that influences the state income. In 2020 to date, unrefined petroleum costs have been updated up to 20% (Duddu, 2020). This has prompted the fast action of urban communities and states to control the spread of COVID-19 which has closed down many restaurants and hotels the nation over (Lee-Peng Foo et al., 2020). Hotel reservations have dropped, and cafés have laid off staff due to the brief closure of the business. The monetary effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the hospitality industry is more extreme than the cumulative financial downfall of 9/11 and 2008 (Ozili and Arun, 2020).

Methodology

The method of Integrative Review (IR) used in this paper. This study adopts the synthesis approach to identify thematic concepts. The paper of Buheji, M (2020) argue that IR approach helps to develop new problem from secondary data. In the previous literature many studies also use Principal Component Analysis (PCA) for develop an index in these kinds of studies.

Findings and Analysis: New crisis and new norms

The outbreak of COVID-19 Pandemic has brought about new SOP in business operations and shaped the growth of the economy in different ways. The earlier Global Financial 2008 downturn was brought about by glitches in the banking and shadow banking frameworks and influenced private and business land (Erkens et al., 2012; Feldkircher, 2014; Fratzscher, 2012). Be that as it may, in this current COVID-19 pandemic issue, the approach needs to center around another objective which is support for the medicinal services framework to continue the nation economy (Mazzoleni et al., 2020). Be that as it may, government may face difficulty either to expect its relative structure of infection or keep up the economy. Pre-empting the spread of the infection may limit the individuals' development and business activities (Xiao and Torok, 2020).

Backing for medicinal services is to guarantee individuals' wellbeing as one of the significant variables of creation (Aluga, 2020). The measure for the medicinal services incorporates the forestalling the spread of the infection (Lin et al., 2020), improving the open social insurance framework (Colivicchi et al., 2020; Quach and Hoang, 2020), fortifying the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) measures (Colivicchi et al., 2020) and help to front liners (Dawoud, 2020). In the short-term, measures for charmingly and request side ought to guarantee the business operators can proceed with business without laying off and maintain a social distance may carries negative effect on the economy (Bruinen de Bruin et al., 2020). For instance, low availability of production will cause increment in cost which if it is not controlled will cause increment in food cost drastically. In this manner, measures ought to predominantly concentrate on easing incomes for business operators and family units. In business, support for monetary help will lessen the business operators' budgetary weight so they can proceed with their business activities without cutting their business or laying off their laborers which may not increase joblessness rates. Simultaneously, local government money related support provides individuals and family units to keep up their buying activities which will help the business at long last. At least, this is likewise to guarantee individuals' essential needs are fulfilled particularly for low income family units.

Review of Malaysia's Policy Responses

Malaysian government has responded to the COVID-19 Pandemic in a different way. To start with, Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad had announced the initial 2020 monetary stimulus package back in February, intending to neutralize the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (Leong, 2020). The package targets organizations and people in the travel industry and travel businesses. On March 27, 2020, Malaysia Prime Minister, Muhyiddin Yassin announced a bundle of additional stimulus package to counter the impact of MCO. This bundle, presently worth some RM250 billion covers a wide scope of financial perspectives. Table 1 shows the fundamental measures in the stimulus package by the Federal government of Malaysia.

An overview directed by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) announced that practically 50% of independently employed respondents (46.6%) lost their positions during the implementation of the MCO from March 1831 (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020). Additionally, the overview results likewise showed that 71.4% of independently employed respondents have enough reserve funds for one month. Then, 67.8 percent of organizations/business firms informed that they had no reserve of pay during the MCO time frame. What's more, 53.4 percent of organizations/business firms can possibly get by for 1 to 2 months on the off chance that they keep on giving full paid/half paid leave to representatives. Additionally, Agriculture and Services segments enlisted the most noteworthy level of occupation misfortunes contrasted with different divisions with 21.9% and 15.0%, respectively. Accordingly, the government needs to make a quick move on these issues to guarantee that the additional package reaches its recipients.

Sabah' s Policy Responses

On 25 March, the State Government announced a RM670 million stimulus package to facilitate the industries effected by the COVID-19 pandemic on Sabah and its

Table 1: Stimulus Package by Federal Government[6,7]

Healthcare Measures	**Supply and Demand Side Measures**	
	Business Operators	**Individual and Households**
• A special monthly critical RM400 allowance for doctors and staff directly involved with COVID-19 until the end of the pandemic. • A special monthly critical RM200 allowance until the end of the immigration pandemic and related front-line staff (police, military, civil defense and RELA). • Special monthly critical allowance increased from RM400 to RM600 a month until the pandemic ends	• Digital domestic tourism vouchers of up to RM100 per person for domestic, rail, and hotel accommodation. • Minimum Employees Provident Fund (EPF) contribution by employees will be reduced from 11% to 7% from April 2020 to December 2020. Malaysians still can opt out of this change. • A one-off RM600 payment for Taxi, tourist bus, and trishaw drivers; tourist guides • E-hailing drivers RM500 one-off payment • Wage Subsidy Program for all businesses with local employees receiving RM4,000 or less per month.	• An extra RM100 will be remitted to all BSH recipients' bank accounts in May 2020. • A further RM50 is also to be paid out in e-tunai. • Households with incomes less than RM4,000 (RM1,000 payable in April and RM600 payable in May 2020) • Households with income between RM4000 and RM8000 = RM1000 (RM500 payable in April and RM500 payable in May) • Single individuals above the age of 21 and receiving less than RM2,000 per monthRM800 (RM500 payable in April, RM300 payable in May) • Single individuals above the age of 21 and receiving between RM2,000 and RM4,000 per month. RM500 (RM250 payable in April and May) • A one-off RM500 for civil servants Grade 56 and below (including contract workers) • Internet Free internet plans from April 1 until the end of the MCO. • Internet Free Plan (1G per day) plans up to the end of the MCO starting from 1 April.
	• Personal income tax relief of up to RM1,000 on expenditure related to domestic tourism. • Reduce Overnight Policy Night (OPR). • Discount Electricity bills • A six-month moratorium on the loans and financing repayment	

residents (Daily Express, 2020). The Sabah Chief Minister, Mohd. Shafie Apdal said the stimulus package contained 15 measures, including help to business administrators, front liners and the affected individuals for the entire of Sabah. Table 2 shows the fundamental measures in the stimulus packages by state government of Sabah. Taking everything into account, Sabah state likewise executed the arrangement to oblige the industries.

An ongoing review by the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) Sabah found that 26% of the state's travel industry players lost their positions because of the implemented MCO. The discoveries of the overview additionally indicated that 32% of laborers got a compensation cut and another 43% are on unpaid leave. The review likewise featured that the tourism industry is the most affected in Sabah (Chan and King, 2020) as it faces trouble to continue business as the business depends on guests from China and Korea. Hence, it is significant for the state government to help this industry as it will influence the state reserve later.

Reopening the Economy: The New Norms and What are the new practices?

With regards to overcoming the COVID-19 Pandemic, a few new practices have been presented and actualized. According to Woolcock (1998) statements:

> *"The challenge for development theorists and policy-makers alike is to identify the mechanisms that will create, nurture, and sustain the types and combinations of social relationships conducive to building dynamic participatory societies, sustainable equitable economies, and accountable developmental states".*

However, according to Keefer and Shirley (2000) in societies where formal and informal institutions of wide "radius" are missing it may be possible in the short and medium-term to improve just the reach and functioning of informal norms that operate only within family, religious or ethnic groups, despite the risks that this poses for inter-group transactions and cohabitation.

[6] https://www.aseanbriefing.com/news/malaysia-issues-second-stimulus-package-combat-covid-19-salient-features/
[7] https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19#S

Table 2: Stimulus Package by State Government of Sabah[8]

Healthcare Measures	Supply and Demand Side Measures	
	Business Operators	Individual and Households
• RM60 million was allocated for front liners including doctors and nurses, of which RM50 million will be used to provide them with essential equipment such as face masks, sanitizers and personal protective equipment (PPE). • Additionally, RM10 million will be used to provide frontline food supplies.	• Loan by Sabah Credit Corporation for small traders ranging from RM300 to RM2000 with a zero-interest rate and a repayment period of up to three years. • SME industry fund with a 3.5 per cent loan interest rate	• Every head of household registered in the e-Kasih system would receive a one-off cash payment of RM500 and that would involve some RM20 million. • The B40 group will receive one-off cash assistance of RM300 each for Sabahans working in the peninsula, taxi drivers, fishermen, mountain porters, elderly people, orphans, people with disabilities and single mothers • Support for those at quarantine centers and family under home quarantine.

Readiness of Country

Cadena et al., (2020) highlighted two important factors in determining readiness namely the number of new cases in each area and the public-health readiness. Confirmed numbers of cases especially hospitalizations need to be low enough for a health system to manage individually rather than through mass measures. Meanwhile, the strength of the public health systems includes detecting, managing, and preventing new cases, including adequate medical capacity, the ability to perform a diagnostic test for COVID-19 with a fast turnaround time. It is expected that areas with significant ongoing transmission and low public-health readiness should expect that restarting economic activity will only lead to more transmission. These two dimensions determine four stages of readiness to reopen the economy, with Stage 4 the least ready (High new confirmed cases of virus, low public-health readiness) and Stage 1 the most ready (Low new confirmed cases of virus and high public-health readiness).

Ensure people's safety and confidence – New Norms

The infection is, as of now, inside the network, customary general wellbeing measures probably will not have the option to stop all human-to-human transmission. Accordingly, we have to think about moving from regulation to moderation. Along these lines, strict SOP ought to be followed to enable the certainty of the individuals on their security at work. To settle this, it is fitting to gradually continue significant business in less infectious areas however with strict SOP. For this situation, limitations could be facilitated first in areas with low disease rates or diminished danger of transmission as referenced by Cadena, et al (2020). In addition, physical distancing is still in practice, besides comprehensive training on proper hygiene and new rules mandating the use of personal protective equipment. These should help people to build confidence about their safety.

Get ready for a new normal: Digital business – New Norms

Any crises, including this pandemic, can spur the adoption of new technologies, business models, and our behavior towards work and shopping. Every difficulty will lead to another opportunity, thus before the vaccine for the virus is discovered, we have to be ready to accept the new normal.

Rebuild the Most Affected and Significant Industry

During this COVID-19 pandemic, tourism, agriculture, and healthcare are among the affected and important industries to rebuild to sustain the country's economy. Agriculture is important to ensure that food is adequate for the country in the event of a prolonged crisis. However, healthcare is also important so that the government is better prepared to cope with the new wave of the infectious disease in the future. For a country that depends on tourism, domestic tourism needs to be promoted because as long as the virus issue is not resolved, it is not possible for foreign tourists to travel in the near future.

Conclusion

Because of social distancing, lockdown, and persistent relief measures, individuals would doubtlessly be

[8] https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2020/03/25/sabah-announces-rm670-million-aid-package-to-cushion-covid-19-impact/

beginning to change their tendencies and a portion of these will stick. In the desperation existing apart from everything else, it is anything but difficult to dismiss the activities that may be required for tomorrow (Buheji and Ahmed, 2019). The new standards come to guarantee the network and association's quick reaction and the effective transformation to change. Since this pandemic may have a progression of flare-ups, it is required to have additionally with-it arrangements of overflows so as to recapture the certainty of both the networks and the market. Thus, for the world to continue going ahead it needs to conform itself to the following new standards (Craven et al., 2020; Hsu et al., 2020). The following standards after COVID-19 would have been abnormal for anyone in the past. The post-COVID-19 years will not resemble the pre-COVID-19 years. The pandemic would affect the fundamental issues of life, what faith individuals have, the way they think, how they imagine their jobs through everyday life, the cutting edge basics, how they would respond to a coming life emergency, and in general everything would be bound to change (Buheji, 2020).

The impact of the COVID 19 pandemic has influenced the overall economy and has sent policymakers looking for ways to deal with and respond. Thus, policymakers must give assistance to affected nuclear families and humbler associations to direct the impact of this COVID-19. Nevertheless, every country has their own course of action and culture, thus every country will have different ways to deal with and settle the impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic. The stimulus package started by the administration uplifting the motivators to create business enterprises with the proficient utilization of existing and new information can be energized by a steady financial and institutional environment. In like manner, raising an educated and talented capacity pool is fundamental to create specialists that can make, offer, and use data enough. Finally, as advancement conveys better ways to deal with improve structures across arrangements of interlinked parts and undertakings, incredible correspondence, spread, and getting ready of information is pivotal to ensure change (World Bank Digest, 2020).

The results of this paper offer insightful information for the industry and Malaysian economics readiness in facing critical situation. This paper contributes to future discussion on the impact of current plan and packages provided by the local government in arranging crisis and making decision during the pandemic. The findings in this paper highlight the need for further research to determine the impact of new norms as post-pandemic activity and recovery plan of industry.

Competing Interest Statement

All authors have read and approved the manuscript and take full responsibility for its contents. The authors have declared that no competing interest exists.

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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Media Content Analysis on Impacts of Covid-19 Pandemic on the Tourism Industry in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

COVID-19 has created a profound negative impact on the economy and society and the tourism industry has suffered gravely as well. It has changed human behaviour and social life and also the way businesses operate, especially in the context of tourism. This paper aims to review the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry in Malaysia. Dissemination of information is vital to comprehend the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and media content analysis is an alternative tool to provide such information. The media reports essential information on how COVID-19 affects the tourism industry and national economy, which shapes public perception on these matters. This paper highlighted the uses of media content analysis and the Leximancer software to interpret secondary data and to offer an alternative perspective for understanding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry in Malaysia through the media landscape, in a chronological manner from January to July 2020.

Keywords: COVID-19, impacts, Leximancer, Malaysia, media content analysis, tourism.

Introduction

The Novel Coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, is an infectious disease which began in Wuhan, China. COVID-19 is caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) and is instigating widespread repercussions around the world affecting everything, from public health to the global economy (WHO, 2020). The closure of borders, implementations of social distancing and travel restrictions have created barriers to international travelling and to the movement of people. Consequently, travel and tourism have been severely affected. News and media play a vital part in reporting the impact of COVID-19 and thus provide an understanding of how the tourism and hospitality industry, as well the national economy, is being affected by COVID-19. However, the impact of COVID-19 on tourism from a chronological standpoint is unclear, as is the severity of such an impact.

Travel is constantly affected by the spread of infectious diseases (Chan & King, 2020). Tourism is a primary global industry responsible for 10.4% of the global gross domestic product (GDP) and 10% of employment (Joppe, 2020). Travelling to and from China was disastrous due to COVID-19. Airlines have either cancelled all flights or drastically reduced flights, and Hong Kong had closed its borders (Joppe, 2020). The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared COVID-19 a global health crisis and fears that this pandemic may affect the tourism industry in the long run due to the closures of the airport, cancellations of flights and closure of borders which may significantly impact the economy (Davies, 2020).

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According to Quah & Alias (2020), China's GDP has suffered eight times more when compared with the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak in 2003. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) (2020) claimed that it would take nine months for the situation to return to normal due to the scale of the pandemic. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will be much more significant, as tourists from China are the major segment for Malaysia. Since 7 February 2020, West Malaysia has stopped all flights from Hubei and East Malaysia has announced a travel ban on all flights from China.

Reported cases of COVID-19 are presented in Figure 1 (Roser, Ritchie, Ortiz-Ospina, & Hasell, 2020). However, cases have reduced and the situation appears to be under control. The tourism industry was projected to be among the most affected industry by this pandemic (Permal & Jamal, 2020). In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Malaysian government imposed a Movement Control Order (MCO) to decrease the risk of spread of the infection, putting the projected annual tourist arrivals of nearly 27 million in great uncertainty (Kaur, Kunasegaran, Singh, Salome & Sandhu, 2020). The Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC) even called off the Visit Malaysia Campaign 2020 (VM2020), and it is believed that the tourism industry has lost RM3.37 billion in the first two months of 2020 (Permal & Jamal, 2020).

Reflecting on the new phenomena of the COVID-19 pandemic, this paper highlight the need to better understand this phenomenon by utilizing media content analysis and the Leximancer software to interpret secondary data to offer an alternative perspective for understanding the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry in Malaysia.

Methodology

Media analysis was initiated by Harold Lasswell in the 1920s as a systematic technique to study mass media and propaganda and systematically explain the manifest content of communication (Macnamara, 2005). It is a type of qualitative content analysis which aims to be objective, precise, and general in describing what is said on a given subject in each place and time (Macnamara, 2005). This method enables the researcher to examine large data over a time period to identify discourses and their meanings (Macnamara, 2005). Media content analysis emphasizes on one explicit part of the media landscape such as editorial media, which consists of news articles, online sites, opinion columns, radio broadcasts, and social media.

For this paper, the media content analysis was utilized to provide narratives of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry in Malaysia (Albors-Garrigos, Haddaji & Garcia-Segovia, 2020). The media's representation of the issue may contribute to a better understanding of the social situation (Greeno & Hall, 1997; Leo & David, 2020). Since COVID-19 is a new disease and has created unprecedent times, this method of analysis will provide an analysis on online news that reflects the actual situation. The media content analysis

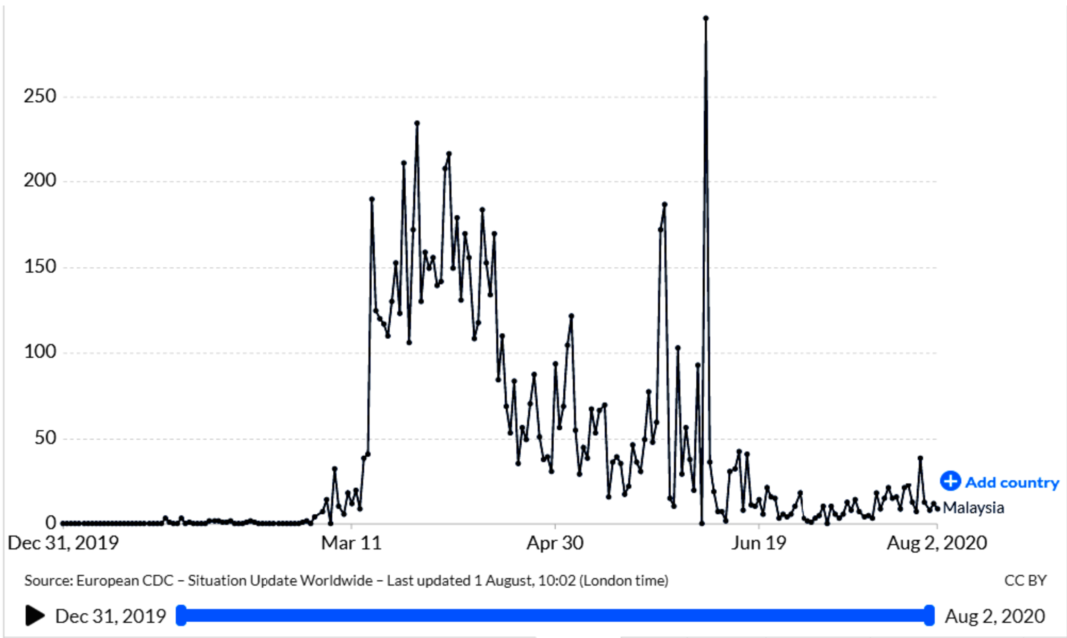

Figure 1: Malaysia confirmed COVID-19 cases.

in this paper focuses on local online news articles from The Star, BERNAMA, Malay Mail, Free Malaysia Today, and the New Straits Times.

Media representation on pertinent issues may contribute to a better understanding of how COVID-19 affects Malaysia's tourism industry (Albors-Garrigos, Haddaji & Garcia-Segovia, 2020). This paper utilized search engine tools and a range of keywords (i.e., COVID-19, Coronavirus, Malaysia, Tourism, Hospitality) to identify online news articles on how COVID-19 impacts Malaysia's tourism industry. This research was carried out from 1 January 2020–31 July 2020. Irrelevant and redundant information was removed through a team consensus.

The Leximancer software was used to analyze a large amount of qualitative data for media content analysis, as it is able to analyze qualitative textual documents, extract data, and display the results visually (Kivunja, 2013). The Leximancer software produces lists and relationships based on the text collected (Angus, Rintel & Wiles, 2013), thus is considered a reliable statistic. Different themes may arise utilizing computerized model list conception, as Leximancer employs occurrence and co-occurrence counts of words to extort significant conceptual and thematic content directly from the data text. This has created a tailored taxonomy as a concept map, indicating crucial concepts and interconnections between these concepts (Angus, Rintel, & Wiles, 2013). It shows relevant links amongst the key themes, as reported in Figure 2-7.

A total of 256 online news articles extracted from sources such as The Star, Malay Mail, Free Malaysia Today, New Straits Times, and BERNAMA (Table 1) were uploaded to the Leximancer software on a monthly basis. The results are presented in a conceptual map signifying the main concepts of each month within the data and their relationship. Each conceptual map offered a portion of the ranked concept list of the top-ranking concepts from Leximancer, and each concept is the words collected that commonly appear together throughout the data (Biroscak et al., 2017). The main concepts in each month are discussed in the results and discussions section below.

Table 1: Google search results related to the COVID-19 Pandemic in Malaysian tourism and hospitality industry (1 January 2020–31 July 2020)

Month	Online News
January	38
February	53
March	38
April	38
May	30
June	33
July	26
Total	256

Results and Discussion

The analysis of the impact of COVID-19 in January 2020 is presented in Figure 2. Based on the Leximancer result, it seems that the three highest hits are Coronavirus,

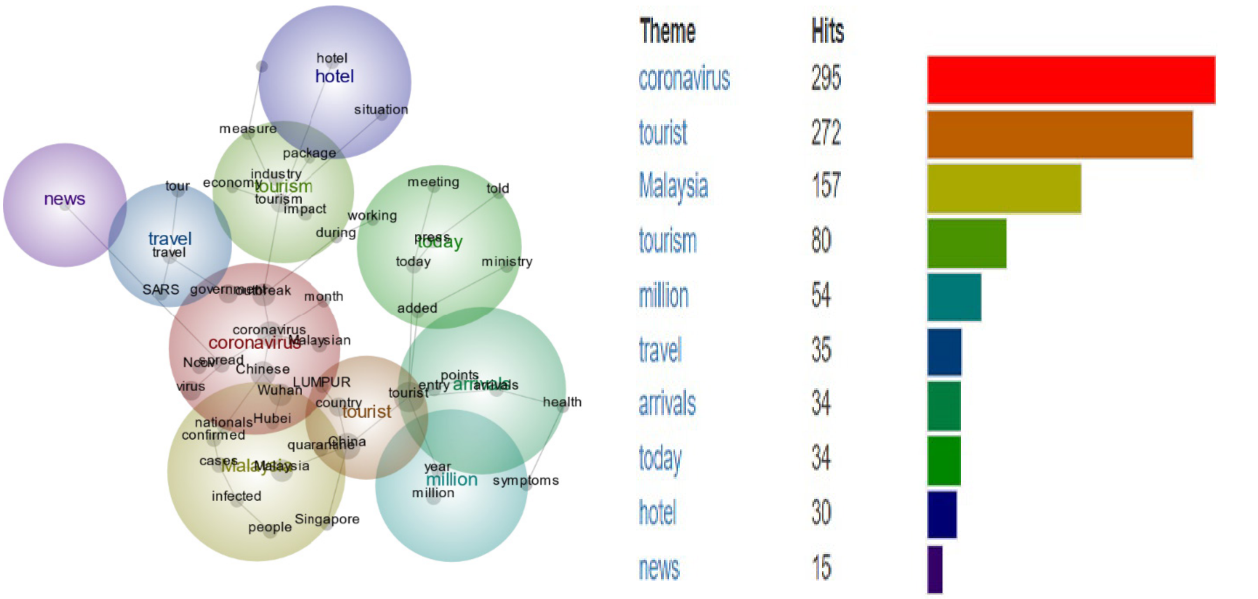

Figure 2: Leximancer results on media news in January 2020.

tourists, and Malaysia. The result shows that the central theme is Coronavirus, with 295 hits and related concepts such as Coronavirus, Chinese, outbreak, Wuhan, virus, spread, Malaysian, and nCoV. In January 2020, the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the term used by the media to describe the virus was "Coronavirus 2019 outbreak", "nCoV" and "SARS-liked virus". The media was still focusing on the situation in China, specifically in Wuhan, where the virus was claimed to have originated from. On 31 January 2020, WHO declared COVID-19 as a global health crisis.

Another central theme was tourist (272 hits), which is linked with concepts such as China, country, and quarantine. China announced a lockdown in Wuhan and other cities in Hubei on 23 January 2020. At this stage, the Malaysian government was still accepting tourists from China. However, on 27 January 2020, the federal government imposed a travel ban on Chinese tourists from the Hubei Province, while the two states in East Malaysia (Sabah and Sarawak), who have full control over their immigration regulations, imposed a travel ban on all Chinese tourists.

The results also show Malaysia as one of the main themes (157 hits), related to concepts such as Malaysia, cases, confirmed, people, and nationals. On 25 January 2020, Malaysia reported its first case of COVID-19, a 40-year-old tourist from Wuhan. At the end of January 2020, Malaysia reported eight confirmed cases.

The tourism theme has 80 hits with three related concepts such as tourism, impact, and industry. At the beginning of January 2020, most tourism sites remained open, and the Malaysian Association of Tour & Travel Agents (MATTA) even stated that tourism had not been significantly affected by COVID-19. The Ministry of Tourism insisted on keeping the arrival target for Visit Malaysia 2020 (VM2020) despite challenges faced by industry players. However, as the SARS outbreak in 2003 profoundly affected Malaysia's tourism and hospitality industry, the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC) had established a Tourism Recovery Committee responsible for offering guidelines to tourism operations (MOTAC, 2020). At this point, the government believed that it was still too early to gauge the impact on the tourism sector and to consider any stimulus package.

In January 2020, the media focused on the virus itself, countries and people affected in general, and less emphasis was given to the effects of COVID-19, as it was just the beginning of the pandemic. The results in February 2020 are presented in Figure 3, and the central theme with 318 hits is package, and associates with concepts such as package, stimulus, impact, economic, government, sector, year, and Malaysian. On 27 February 2020, the Malaysian government announced the first stimulus package (worth RM20 billion) to mitigate the economic effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. By 28 February 2020, there were 25 confirmed COVID-19 cases.

To enhance domestic tourism, the government offered personal income tax relief for domestic tourism-related expenses and digital vouchers for hotel accommodation, rail tickets, and domestic flights (MFM, 2020). However, families will most likely avoid visiting public places entirely until COVID-19 comes under control.

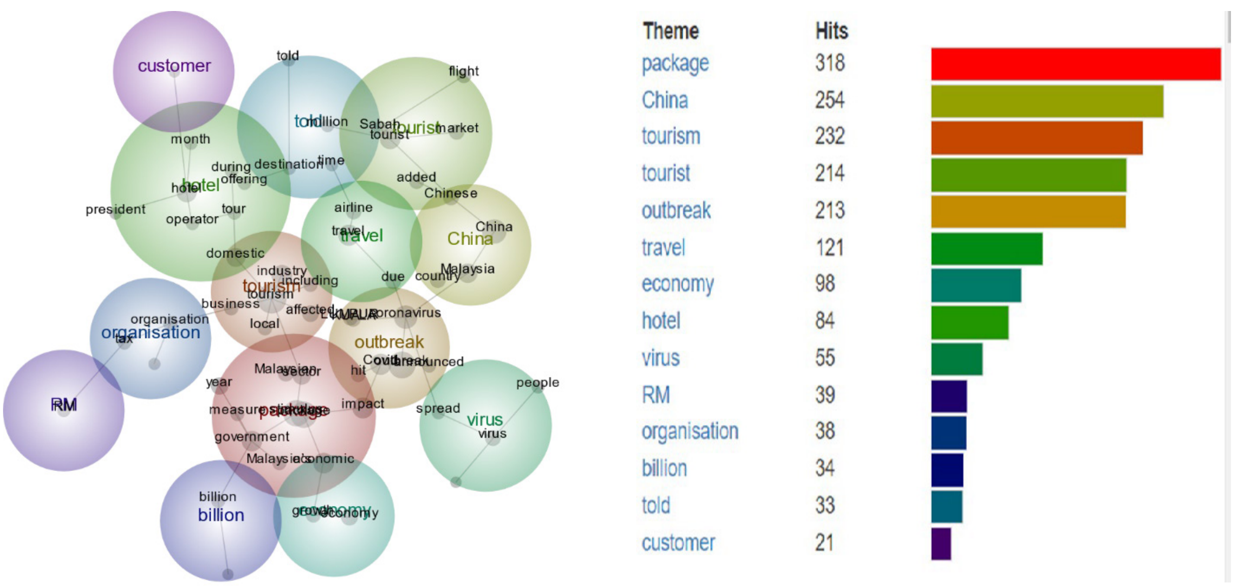

Figure 3: Leximancer results on media news in February 2020.

The government is making efforts to support the sector superficial (EIU, 2020).

With 254 hits and concepts such as China, Malaysia, Chinese, and country, China was revealed to be one of the main themes during February 2020. On 27 January 2020, the Malaysian government deferred visa grants for tourists from Hubei to curb the spread of COVID-19 and on 9 February 2020, travel restrictions were imposed for Chinese visitors from Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces (Karim et al., 2020).

Tourism, industry, domestic, and affected are related concepts for tourism theme with 232 hits. China has been the largest source of foreign tourists for Malaysia (EIU, 2020). MOTAC urged the ministry to rethink the strategy for VM2020 as the tourism industry had faced almost RM3 billion in deficits up to February 2020 due to COVID-19 (Dzulkifly, 2020). Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH) reported that almost 96 000 bookings had been cancelled and MATTA reported over 3000 tour group cancellations. The issue of the dependency of Malaysian tourism on Chinese tourists was highlighted and on 4 February 2020, MOTAC suggested focusing on markets which were not affected at that time such as India, West Asia, and South Korea (Yusof, 2020). International travellers navigate via airports where millions of people convene in proximity and this is a significant safety concern. However, domestic tourism offers the alternative of families using private vehicles, which are deemed less risky (Yusof, 2020). In addition, local business owners, travel companies, hotels, and restaurants have offered promotional packages to attract Malaysians. For example, five-star hotels have reduced their prices and formulated 'staycation' packages which include food and beverages deals (Chan, 2020).

In March 2020, the media started to focus on broader areas impacted by COVID-19. The government attempted to ease the pandemic's effect on the tourism industry by offering double tax deduction on employee training courses, deferring monthly income tax instalments and providing tax exemptions up to six months from March 2020.

The results in March 2020 are presented in Figure 4, and the central theme was COVID with 320 hits, in association with concepts such as COVID, travel, March, outbreak, Coronavirus, and measure. Malaysians did not initially realize how fatal COVID-19 could be, and in January 2020, while China had imposed a lockdown in Wuhan, the Malaysian government still displayed no intention of banning Chinese tourists. However, on 17 March 2020, as the number of confirmed cases reached 673, the Malaysia government announced a 14-day MCO starting on 18 March 2020. On 25 March 2020, the Malaysia government announced the first extension of the MCO from 27 March to 14 April 2020.

For March 2020, tourism and government were revealed to be significant themes with 259 and 218 hits, respectively.

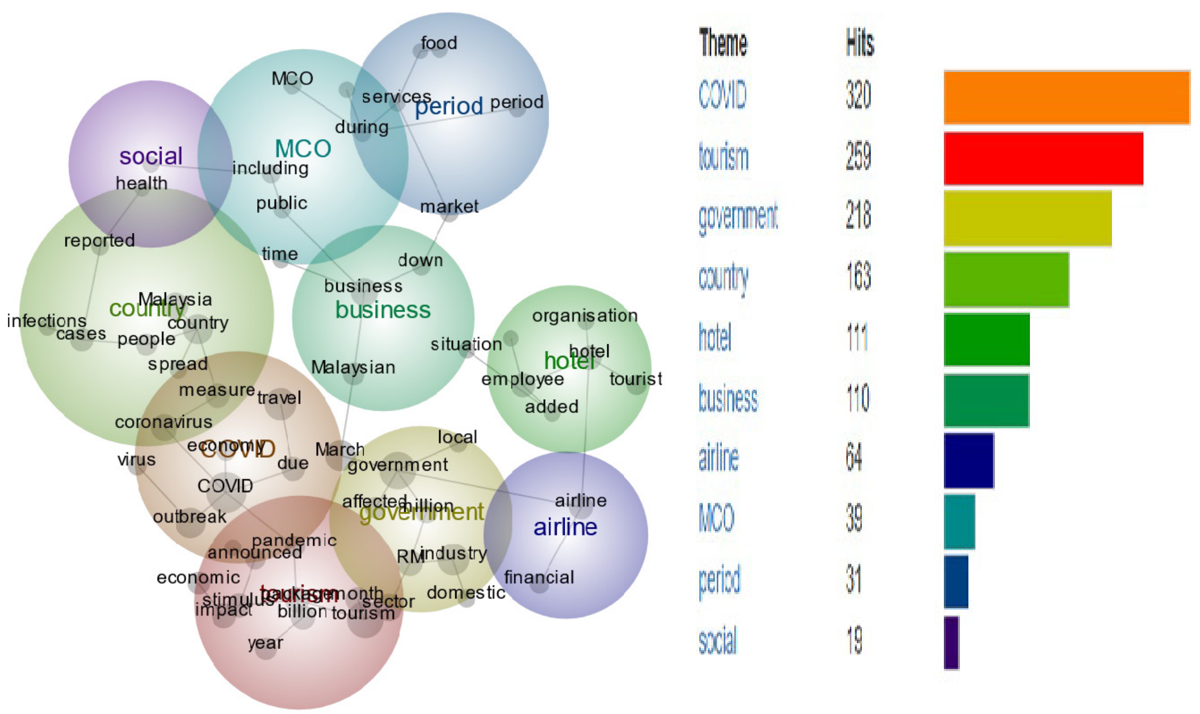

Figure 4: Leximancer results on media news in March 2020.

The tourism theme was associated with concepts such as sector, impact, stimulus, billion, and economic, while the government theme was linked with concepts such as industry, RM, and million, with the latter two being interrelated. Since March 2020, Malaysia's tourism industry has suffered RM3.37 billion losses, with hotel room cancellations amounting to RM68 million, and MOTAC eventually cancelling VM2020. To aid the tourism industry, the Malaysia government revealed a second stimulus package on 27 March 2020, which allocated RM200 million micro-credit schemes for small businesses in the tourism industry. The previous stimulus package allows businesses in the tourism sector to suspend income tax payments for six months, while the second package allows banking institutions to convert credit card balances to long-term loans, offer six-month loan moratoriums and corporate loans restructuring. However, MATTA representatives claimed this was insufficient, as it did not address employee retention issues which are crucial, as it is predicted that there will be almost no tourism activity in April, May, and June 2020. Tourism businesses have indicated possible employee downsizing and many are hesitant about taking up any additional loans for fear that they would be burdened with more debt where recovery is in the long term only.

The lockdown had significantly affected restaurants and eateries across Malaysia, with strict regulations against dining in, allowing only takeaways and deliveries (Razak, 2020). According to Food Industry Asia (2020), the Malaysian government announced the Prihatin Rakyat Economic Stimulus Package 2020 on 27 March 2020 (worth RM1 billion) which offers assistance to local fishers and farmers to increase production, to ensure food supply remains sufficient.

The results in April 2020 are presented in Figure 5, with the central theme being hotel (278 hits) which is linked with concepts such as Hotel, MCO, people, and operator. The prime minister declared a second extension of the MCO from 10 until 28 April 2020. On 23 April 2020, the prime minister declared a third extension until 12 May 2020 to provide time and space to healthcare employees who were fighting the pandemic and to avoid another wave of infections if the MCO is lifted too soon. The government had identified 63 hotel accommodations as quarantine centers for Malaysians returning from abroad. And fixed a sum of RM150 per day as the cost of hotel accommodation which includes room and food charges.The chosen hotels were offered sales and service tax (SST) exemption as an incentive which helped to ensure the survival of the chosen hotels. However, MAH representatives claimed that based on a survey they had done on 16 April 2020, around 15% of the hotels in Malaysia might have to close down. Some hotel operators stated that they might remain closed till the end of this year, while some will resume their operations after a vaccine is found. Hotels are prohibited from receiving new guests and have served only those who had already checked-in into the hotel before 18 March 2020. Many hotels such as Estadia Hotel and Hatten Place Melaka have issued a memo asking employees to take unpaid leave until 30 June 2020.

Another theme is COVID, which is highly associated with tourism, industry, pandemic, and impact. This is

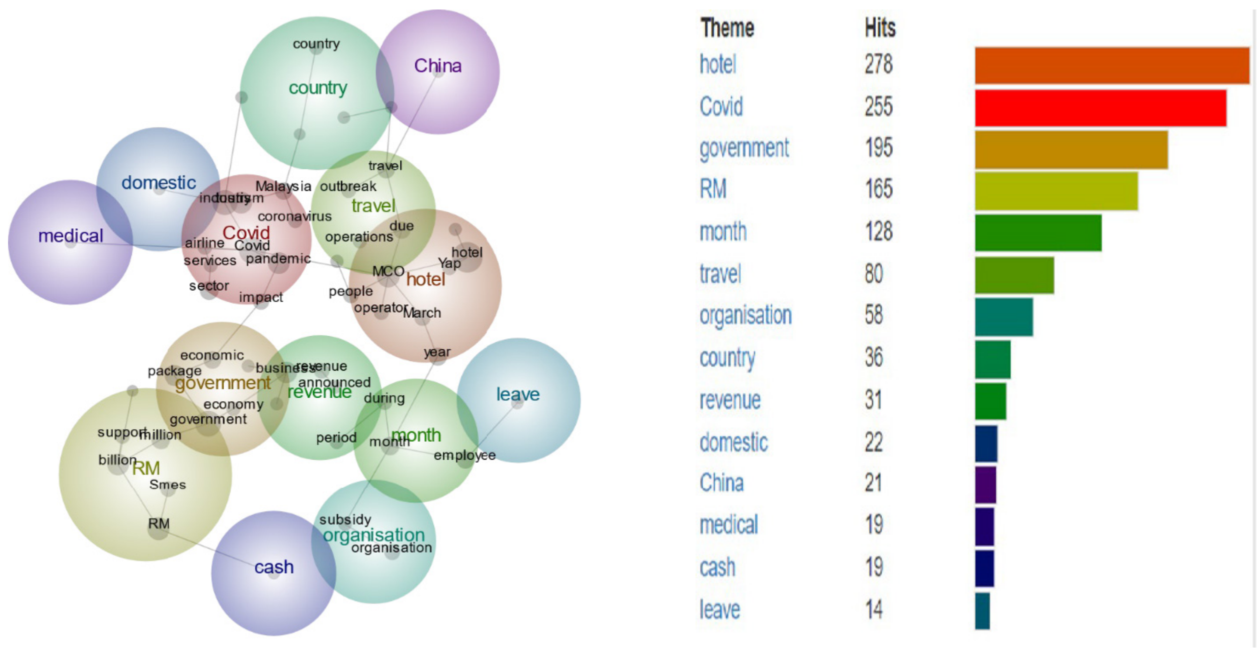

Figure 5: Leximancer results on media news in April 2020.

interrelated with the government theme which includes business, package, and economic concept. The Malaysian government had introduced the third stimulus package on 6 April 2020 (worth RM10 billion) to assist small and medium enterprises affected by the MCO. Nevertheless, MATTA requested the government to extend the wage subsidy programme for another six months or more, as recovery may take longer than expected. Moreover, airline companies such as Malaysia Airlines and AirAsia sought government assistance to secure funds for their survival. On 2 April 2020, AirAsia Group founder, Tony Fernandes, stated that he was working with the government to obtain a loan but has enough cash to last most of this year if sales return. MATTA representatives also urged the government to provide financial support for Malaysia Airlines to ensure it can survive post-COVID-19, as the aviation industry is the core of the entire industry ecosystem. Without airlines to enable the entering of millions of tourists into Malaysia, a domino effect would occur, affecting Malaysia's economy as a whole. At the end of April 2020, Malaysia had reported 6002 confirmed cases of COVID-19.

The results in May 2020 are presented in Figure 6. Tourism, COVID-19, and travel are the central themes which are linked with concepts such as industry, sector, Pandemic, Malaysia, jobs, impact, business, airlines, and affected. The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the private sector is significant, particularly for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), who constitute 98.5% of total firms, and who will be severely affected as they have less financial capital to absorb an economic shock. Those employed in the tourism sector such as in hotels and airlines have experienced losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as they have gone on unpaid leave, experienced pay cuts, and some have lost their jobs. The owners of some of Kuala Lumpur's finest hotels had to put their properties up for sale as revenues had all dried up due to travel restrictions across the world. At least ten hotels have shut down permanently since May 2020.

As the MOH managed to flatten the curve, on 4 May 2020 the Malaysian government announced a Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO) to last till 9 June 2020. The MOH representatives announced that the CMCO showed signs of success as the authorities had managed to keep daily new cases of COVID-19 in double digits with the condition that the public continues to follow the standard operating procedures (SOP) given. Subsequently, MATTA representatives saw the opportunity amid chaos to highlight Malaysia as a safe destination. Nevertheless, the entry bans and border closures have still affected tourism, particularly the aviation industry. MOTAC had initiated recovery plans by focusing on domestic tourism. Penang is planning a survey aimed at gauging the effects of COVID-19 and gathering input from the industry's stakeholders to establish current and post COVID-19 recovery plans, while Melaka is planning special packages to revive tourism activities. At this stage, tour agents were permitted to operate, but no tourism activities were allowed. At the end of May 2020, Malaysia had reported 7819 confirmed COVID-19 cases.

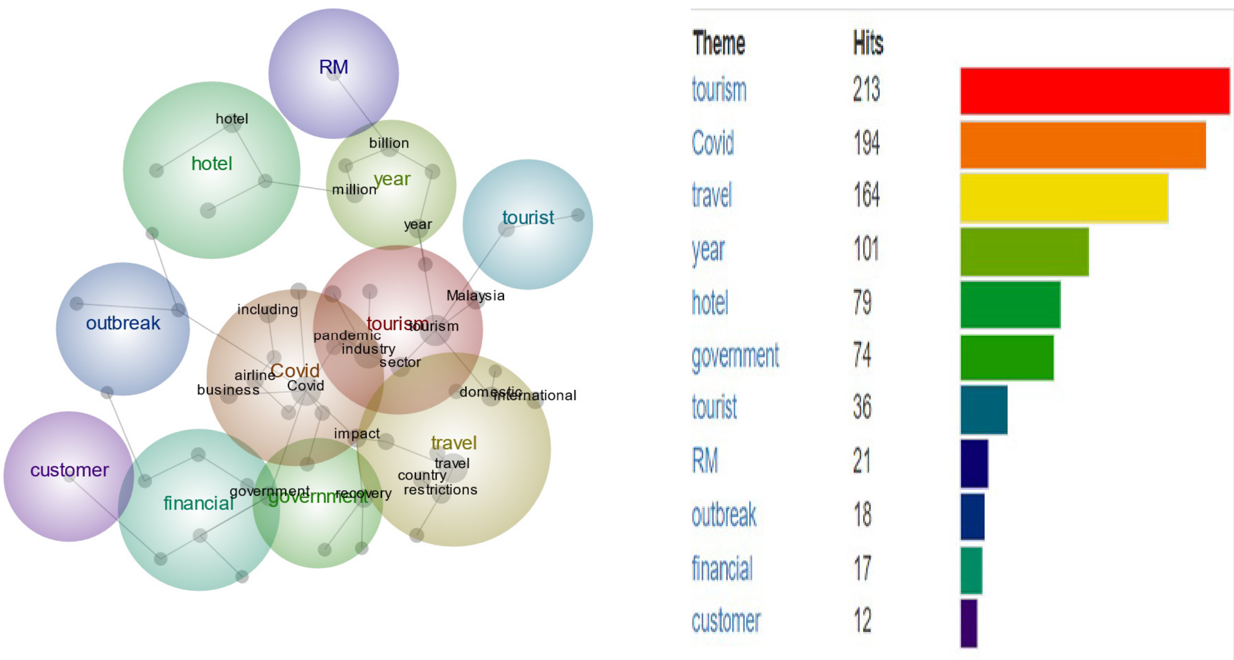

Figure 6: Leximancer results on media news in May 2020.

The central theme in June 2020 (refer to Figure 7) is tourism with 409 hits, linked to concepts such as industry, travel, COVID, domestic, government, recovery, economic, and impact. On 5 June 2020, the prime minister unveiled the RM35 billion National Economic Revitalitsaion Plan (PENJANA) to regenerate Malaysia's economy. PENJANA aims to lessen the impact of unemployment, increase investor confidence and sustain the tourism industry. The deferment of tax instalment payments for the period from 1 April to 30 September 2020 has also been extended for another three months until 31 December 2020 for tourism-related organizations. On 9 June 2020, the prime minister announced the end of CMCO and implemented the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO) until 31 August 2020. Under this new phase, interstate travel is permitted, but international travel is not, as Malaysia's border remains closed. Domestic tourism is allowed and encouraged, and flight and public transport are allowed to operate at full capacity to facilitate this.

The hotel theme, which is related to concepts such as business, Malaysian, and tours, had 202 hits. The tourism industry faced losses of around RM45 billion in the first half of 2020 due to the pandemic, with the most affected workforce being the services sector, such as hotel, food and beverage, arts, entertainment, and recreation. On 10 June 2020, Malaysians returning from abroad were no longer required to stay at a quarantine centre for 14 days; instead, home quarantines were introduced. Thus, hotels chosen as quarantine centres could now only depend on domestic tourists for survival. MAH and MATTA representatives urged for borders to be reopened to travellers from 'low-risk' nations sooner to help boost Malaysia's tourism industry in the long run. However, due to many countries being similarly affected by COVID-19, this may not be the best solution currently. At the end of June 2020, Malaysia reported an increase of 820 confirmed COVID-19 case compared to May 2020.

As presented in Figure 8, tourism was still the central theme for July 2020, but with slightly different concepts such as recovery, border, and MCO. MOTAC representatives stated that the tourism industry is expected to begin recovery in the second quarter of 2021. The ministry has also made a nationwide tour to identify domestic tourism products as part of its initiatives to boost domestic tourism. In July 2020, the MICE sector and SPAs resumed operations as part of the recovery plan. Even though Malaysia's border will be closed until 31 August 2020, it has been open for medical tourists since 1 July 2020. Hotel reservations had also increased up to 30.74%, compared to 9.63% in May 2020. The aviation industry also showed signs of revival as AirAsia Airlines stated that 180 000 seats were sold for travel between July and September 2020 through domestic travel promotions. However, international tourist arrivals and stay are expected to decrease by 75% compared to 2019 and projected losses are more than RM31 billion. On 25 July 2020, it was announced that Malaysia Airlines and Japan Airlines had partnered up to offer joint venture flights. Malaysia Airlines representatives stated that the partnership aims to establish a travel bubble between Malaysia and Japan, which will ease restrictions for cross-border travel and facilitate commerce, trade, and boost tourism

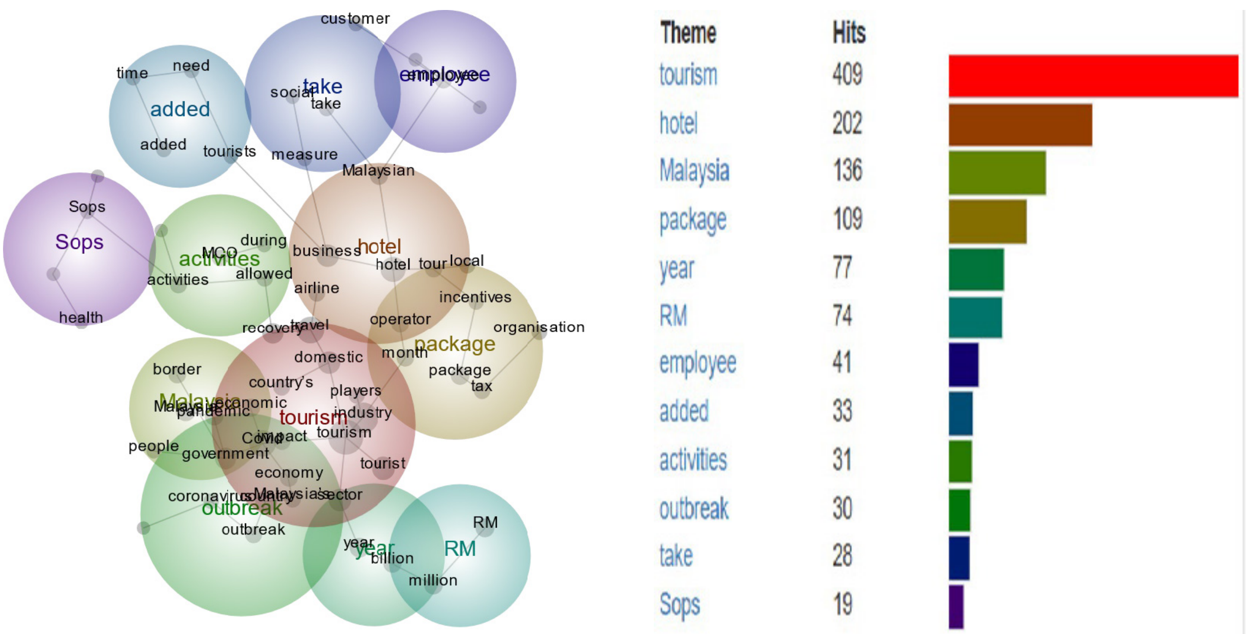

Figure 7: Leximancer results on media news in June 2020.

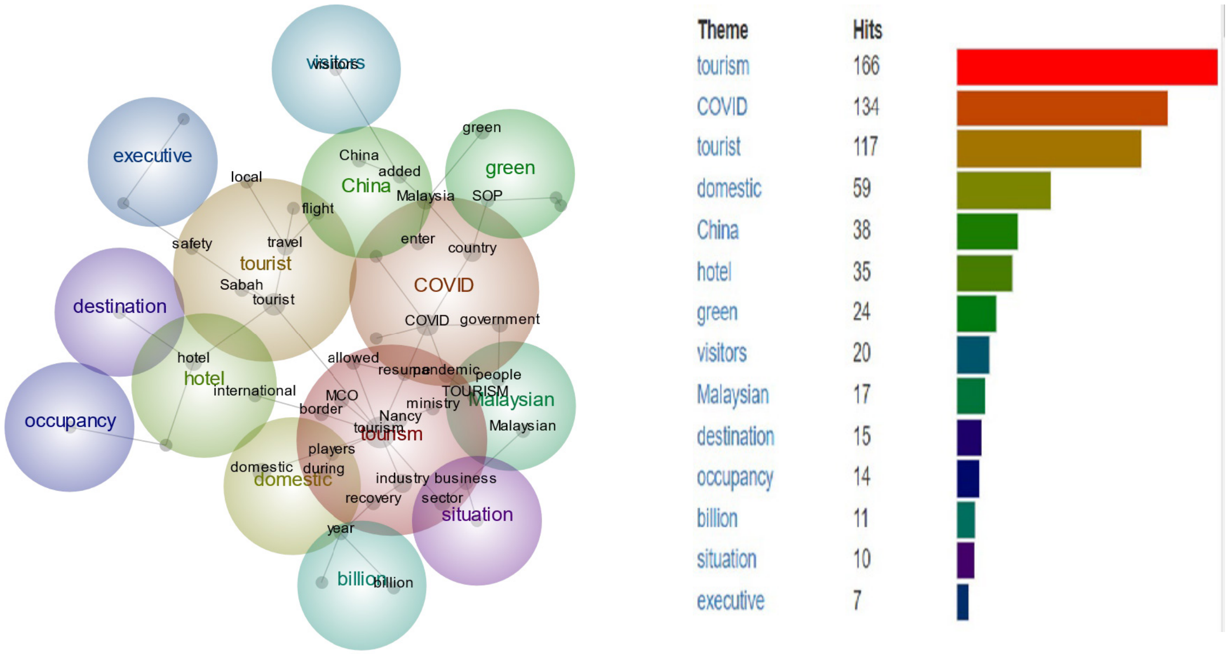

Figure 8: Leximancer results on media news in July 2020.

for both countries. To combat the COVID-19 crisis, the Malaysian government has encouraged the merging of the national airline, Malaysia Airlines, and low-cost Asia Airlines (Bertke, 2020). At the end of July 2020, Malaysia had reported 8976 confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Conclusions and Contributions

The paper contributes to an insightful understanding of the chronological development of the COVID-19 pandemic impact on the tourism industry in Malaysia- a novel contribution in terms of utilizing media content analysis and Leximancer software to provide a sound and deeper narrative of the situation. COVID-19 has impacted the demand and supply of tourism products and service worldwide (Bakar & Rosbi, 2020). The demand for medical assistance, food, and other critical products and services has increased, but the demand for non-critical products and services such as tourism has decreased tremendously during the pandemic. Thus, the impact on the small-scale especially the tourism industry is likely to be dramatic (Khan & Yasmine Khan, 2020).

At the beginning of the pandemic, the government and tourism industry stakeholders downplayed the pandemic showing limited concern about the consequences for the tourism industry, and perceived the COVID-19 pandemic to be similar to the SARS virus, thus not expecting the fatality of the outbreak. In March 2020, with an increasing number of confirmed cases and the casualties involved by referring to other countries that downplaying the pandemic. In Malaysia, when COVID-19 spiralled to pandemic level, the political narrative was unified and the focus was on fighting the pandemic (Kumar, 2020; Morais, 2020). Malaysian government took drastic measures by implementing the MCO, closing borders and offering stimulus packages to ease the economy. In July 2020, reaping the benefits of reacting early to the COVID-19 pandemic, Malaysia started to recover by focusing on domestic tourism.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the tourism industry became heavily dependent on the government (Shah et al., 2020). Even though the stimulus package does not benefit the tourism industry directly, but the government had built a good foundation by effectively controlling the spread of COVID-19, making Malaysia one of the top five countries to have successfully contained COVID-19.

This paper provides a review of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry in Malaysia through the media landscape in a chronological manner from January to July 2020. This paper has identified, evaluated, and synthesized the media content to create a summary of current narratives that can contribute to the media content analysis literature about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry in Malaysia.

Competing Interest Statement

All authors have read and approved the manuscript and take full responsibility for its contents. The authors have declared that no competing interest exists.

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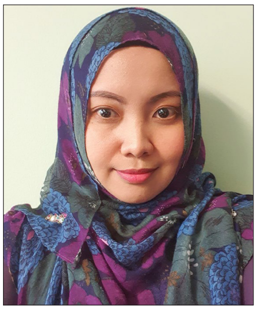

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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Women Striking Balance between Work and Personal Life during COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case Study of National Capital Region of India

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ABSTRACT

This study analyses and draws out valuable insights on how women juggle between work-life during the pressing circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic in National Capital Region of India (Delhi-NCR) and aims at reviewing the challenges women face to achieve a sound psychological and physiological balance in their lives. The research aims at studying working women and homemakers in Delhi-NCR to understand the challenges they faced during the sudden emergency of COVID 19 in maintaining work life balance and the parameters that helped them overcome these challenges. In order to achieve the desired outcome of the challenging role played by women as wives, mothers, sisters, daughters, daughter-in-law's, grandmothers along with being a working woman; the research aims at understanding the mental and physical barriers they faced on a daily basis and the factors that stressed them the most.

Keywords: Women; Pandemics; Balance; Stress; Work-life.

Introduction

The extensively acknowledged and accepted job of women is childbirth, be spouses and mothers, do the cooking and other household chores; they deal with men and are subordinates to male position (Haralambos & Heald, 2016, pg. 442). Even in the most developed societies women have to face some or the other way of subjugation. These conceptions are applied, somewhat, to basically every known society. The most essential division of work has all the reserves of being established on sex or sexual orientation. There are men's activity and women's activity ascribed in the easiest hunting and gathering groups to most complex industrial social orders. As far as the rewards of prominence, riches and influence are connected to sexually orientated jobs, women constantly fall off to an extremely terrible place. Be that as it may, with the rise of Women's Liberation Movement, two principle positions have risen up out of the discussion. First, keeps up that the sexual division of work and disparity between the genders is resolved somewhat by naturally or hereditary based contrasts among people. Secondly, the individuals who contend that sexually orientated jobs are socially decided to contradict the position and imbalance between genders result from socially developed force connections.

Historically, the division of labor has evidently been carved out on the basis of sexes and while analyzing the theories of sociologists and anthropologists like Lionel Tiger and Robin Fox who propounded the concept of *'the human biogrammar'* (Tiger & Fox, 1972) to explain the genetic and biological basis of division of labor between sexes. These anthropologists challenge the social researchers. They assume that individuals carry on essentially the way of life what they call human *'biogrammar'*. The Biogrammar is a hereditary based program, which inclines people to act with a goal in mind. Although the biogrammar structures of people are comparable in numerous regards, there are significant contrasts between them as asserted by the advocates of this hypothesis.

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Tiger and Fox argue that compared to women, men are more aggressive and dominant. These qualities are hereditary; specifically, they result from differences among male and female hormones. These distinctions are halfway because of hereditary legacy from man's primate precursors and mostly because of a hereditary transformation of hunting lifestyle. They are answerable for the security of the band and for coalitions or wars with different groups. Consequently, men hoard the 'position of intensity'. Since Tiger and Fox consider dominance to be a 'sex linked characteristics' (Haralambos & Heald, 2016, pg. 443), it apparently recommends the over-loaded fantasies encompassing the viewpoint of a dynamic woman.

By correlation, women are conditioned by their biogrammar to reproduce and take care of children (Haralambos & Heald, 2016, pg. 444). The essential nuclear family consists of mother and child. In their words, 'nature intended mother and child to be together' (Haralambos & Heald, 2016, pg. 444). Henceforth, the division of work is completely represented for a woman inside the limits of a house and the man designed up to look for the family.

Furthermore, G. P. Murdock propounded the concept of *'biology and practicality'* (Murdock, 1986)**.** Even though, other anthropologists work from totally different assumptions. They see natural differences among people as the premise of sexual division of work in society. In a diverse study of 224 social groups going from hunting and gathering groups to present day country states, Murdock inspects the exercises assigned out to people. He discovers tasks, for example, hunting, gathering and mining to be predominantly male jobs, cooking, assembling wild vegetables, water carrying and making and fixing garments to at great extent female job. He expresses that, 'a man with his superior physical strength can better undertake the more strenuous tasks, such as, lumbering, mining, quarrying, land clearance and house building. Not handicapped, as is woman by the physiological weights of pregnancy and nursing' (Haralambos & Heald, 2016, pg. 445). Thus, the favorable circumstances innate in a division of work by sex apparently represent its all-inclusiveness.

Tallcot Parsons examined on the same lines of genetic and biological disposition as the former anthropologists and consequently propounded the concept *biology and the 'expressive female'* (Parsons, 1964)**.** Similar arguments are advanced to represent the role of women in industrial society. Talcott Parsons sees the isolated nuclear family in modern industrial society specializing in two essential functions: the socialization of the young and the adjustment of adults (Haralambos & Heald, 2016, pg. 446). Parsons illustrates the woman's role in the family as 'expressive', which implies she gives warmth security and emotional support. This is fundamental for effective socialization of the young. This is considered her major contribution to the second function of family i.e. the stabilization of adult personalities. The male provider spends his working day competing in an accomplishment-oriented society. This 'instrumental' role leads to pressure and anxiety. The expressive female relives this strain by providing the breadwinner with affection, considerations and understanding. Thus, existing organic differences represent an obligation of familial solidarity inside social orders.

It can be evidently noted that they suggest that women were biologically different from men consequently stating that sexes are further differed upon their physicality and hormonal responses- like men being accorded with the task of higher strain tend to become more aggressive however women are compartmentalized to be as more emotionally expressive and nurturing thereby assigning them with roles of caregiver rather than the breadwinner. This perception persists from the generation of hunters and gatherers up until today despite the advent of feminist movements.

Whereas, sociologists like Ann Oakley's *'cultural division of labor'* (Oakley, 1974) is highly critical of this biological basis on which division of labor is categorized. She claims that this preconceived notion of men- women relationship and the western and male eyes theorized roles. She further explains that there is an array of societies in the world wherein roles of sexes are either reversed or are jointly shared. Turning to present-day societies, Oakley notes that women form part of many armed forces, particularly those of China, Russia, Cuba and Israel. In Indian about 12% of laborers on building sites are women and in some Asian & Latin American countries a quarter of labor force in mines are females. She even comments on perceptions like the absence of a motherly figure does not necessarily affect the condition and emotional bond and competence of a child. Moreover, stating that some sort of distance between the mother and the child makes the former less irritable compared to a full-time mother.

Ernestine Friedl gives another clarification to the sexual division of work and male predominance. Like Oakley, she reinforces a social clarification-taking note of the astonishing variety in sexual orientation jobs between social orders. For instance, she sees that in certain social orders, activities, for example, weaving, earthenware making, and stitching are believed to be 'normally' men's undertakings, in other's this is predominantly the role of women (Friedl, 1975). It is noteworthy that in social orders where men perform such undertakings, these convey higher prominence than during the ones where their female counterparts perform them. Friedl sees this, as an impression of male predominance, which she keeps up, exists somewhat in all social orders. She characterizes 'male strength' as a circumstance wherein men have profoundly particular access, despite the fact those not being generally selective privileges to those exercises to which society concurs the best worth and the activity of which grants proportion of command over others.

She further remarks that the level of male strength is an outcome of the recurrence with which men have more significant rights than women to resources outside the household gathering. This movement carries incredible prominence and capacity to the man's capacity. She checked it by looking at a couple of hunting and gathering societies. Thus, Friedl's thoughts are original and intriguing and uncover an entrancing transaction among science and culture.

Sherry B. Ortner attempts to give an inclusive explanation to the universal devaluation of women. Ortner claims that it isn't biology as such that attributes women to their status in society yet how each culture characterizes and assesses biology (Ortner, 1975). In this manner, if this universal evaluation is changed it could help endeavor adjustment in female subjection.

The universal evaluation of culture as superior to nature is a fundamental reason for devaluation of women. Women are seen as closer to nature than to culture; henceforth degraded when contrasted with men (Haralambos & Heald, 2016, pg. 452). Their characteristic working is identified as reproduction, maturity adding up to their fundamental tendency, for example, nurturing of a newborn child. Consequently, institutions like family are connected more with the expressive duty of women which is closer to nature. And institutions, like, legislative matters, warfare, religion, are subsequently an undertaking for men. However, Ortner's argument contains certain insufficiencies but it does contain a significant legitimacy. It contains a general clarification for a universal phenomenon of the below average status of women.

Women and Industrialization as examined by Ann Oakley has traced the changing status of women in British society from the eve of the industrial revolution to the 1970s. She claims that, 'The most important and enduring consequence of industrialization for women had been the emergence of the modern role of housewife as *"the dominant mature feminine role"* (Haralambos & Heald, 2016, pg. 454). During the early phases of industrialization, which Oakley dates from 1750 to 1841, the factory steadily replaced the family as the unit of production. Women were employed in factories where they continued with their conventional work in textiles. The primary significant change, which influenced their status as workers, was an advancement of industrial facility acts beginning in 18l9, which gradually limited child labor (Haralambos & Heald, 2016, pg. 455). As a result, children became increasingly dependent on their parents and necessitated care and supervision, a role which fell on women. From 1841 to the advent of 'First World War' in 1914, a combination of pressures from male workers and philanthropic reformers confined female employment in industry. Women were seen by many male factory workers as a threat to their employment (Haralambos & Heald, 2016, pg. 455).

Victorian Ideology, particularly the versions of the upper and middle classes, expressed that a women' place was in the home. Queen Victoria reported, *'Let women be what God intended, a helpmate for man, but with totally different duties and vocations'* (Hudson, 1970, p.46). Oakley claims that during the second half of the 19th century these attitudes began to filter down to the working class. Thus, a combination of factors included the ideology, the banning of child labor and restrictions on the employment of women, locked the majority of married women into the mother-housewife role (Haralambos & Heald, 2016, pg. 456).

Each of these approaches shares objectives and purpose that they see their subjects from a women's point of view, yet they vary in the way they are accomplished. Feminist observers are pragmatically dedicated to the investigation of men in the light of woman's view. Women's liberation movement sprung from struggles of women' exploitation. Postmodern Feminism is the term used to depict the fractured replacement to the approach caused by the breakdown of sisterhood and Marxism. It recommends the utilization of Feminist Observation as it endeavors a more extensive and a more sensible clarification to women.

In the current scenario of societies in the world women face dynamic kinds of personal and professional stressors ranging from work deadlines to emotions of guilt and separation from their off springs. Author Kaveree Bamzai's book *No Regrets: The Guilt Free Woman's Guide To A Good Life* (Bamzai, 2019) elucidates on the challenges they face while being a mother and professional all at the same time while maintaining a sane and stable mental health. In order to understand the complexity of a woman we must dig deep into their personal goals, dreams and desires to uncover the true woman.

Since, time immemorial pandemics have devasted generations, dynasties and even civilizations leaving behind profound effects on societies. They have shaped our societies in different aspects. Historically, we have witnessed numerous outbreaks of infectious diseases which were either considered the wrath of gods or a consequence of man's actions. In a long successions throughout history, pandemic outbreaks have decimated societies, determined outcome of wars, wiped out entire populations, but also paradoxically, cleared the way for innovations and advances in sciences (Scheidal, 2017, p.291–313).

Historically, the same premise of quarantine evident in Black Plague, Spanish Flu, SARS, Ebola, Zika Virus has been in play during COVID-19 as well. Despite its successes and failure in containing a pandemic the institution of quarantine still remains in effect presently as a highly regulated, nationally and internationally governed public health measure available to combat contagions (Tognotti, 2013).

Methodology

In the light of the above mentioned circumstances research has been conducted on women (Employed and Homemakers) in order to unveil the life they live in the pressing circumstances of a global pandemic while striking balance between their mental health and their ascribed duties be it personal or professional and how women deliver in such competing circumstances and still remained or tried to remain same in the challenging situations.The study had its focus on review of literature,surveying the affected population in the area and analysing the statistical outcome of survey to conclude the effect of pandemic in the given circumstances.

Results and Discussion

Figure 1 suggests the age group of the surveyed women and shows that 48% of women surveyed lied between the age group of 18–27 years, 28% lied between the age group of 28–37 and 47 and above category was nearly 10%. This age group was choosen keeping in mind that most of the women start working after 18 years of age and work till 60 years of age. This work group was divided into three parts to address different kinds of responsibilities a woman has to bear at different stages of life.

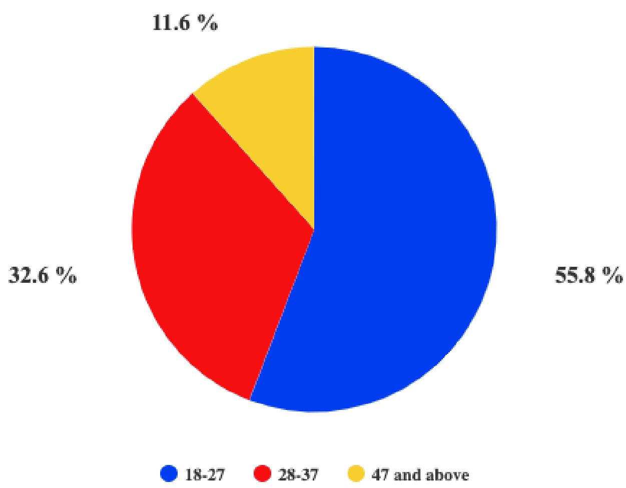


Figure 1

The women selected were divided in four categories as single, married, divorced/separated nd widow to understand the harmony between work -life during different kind of personal circumstances. Figure 2 gives the statistical analysis of the marital status and the data obtained represents that 48% of these women are single, 28% are married and about 16% to 8% are divorced/separated/ widowed women.

After categorising women in four parts according to their different personal circumstances the difference of the type of work they are engaged in was also studied. Figure 3 studies the area of employment women was involved in, which suggests 62% women were employed in private sector followed by entrepreneurs at 18% and public sector workers at 8% along with homemakers at 132% respectively.

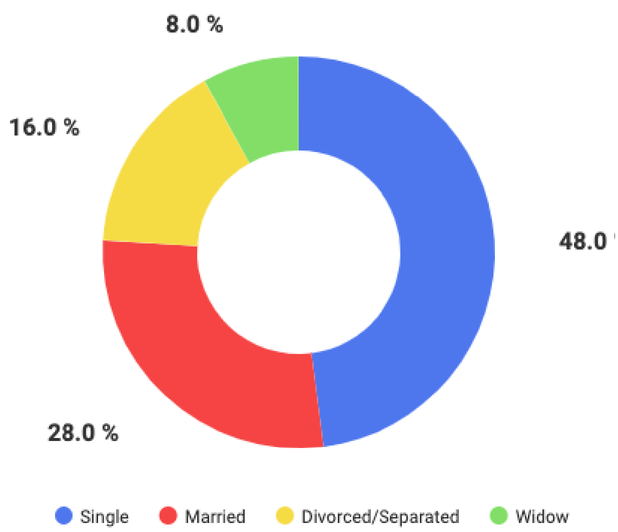


Figure 2

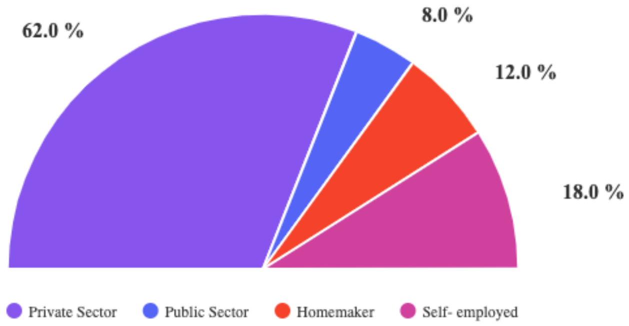


Figure 3

It is a known fact that money solves a lot of problems in the life of a human being. To understand women's struggle between work and life it was also necessary to understand the amount of money they were drawing so they were divided in four categories. Figure 4 indicates that a major portion of women have a monthly salary of 60,000 INR and above depicting a more metropolitan standard of living, encompassing more reliance on life-style and financial independence which supports mental health. However, the sample also covers women from aspirational category with 20% of them drawing monthly salary between 40,000–60,000 INR, 24% of them drawing monthly salary between 20,000–40,000 INR and 6% earning below 20,000 INR.

Children take away a lot of personal time in a women's life. Most of them are worried more about their children than about themselves. To understand their personal engagement it was also studied that how many of them had children to look after apart from all other work. Figure 5 depicts that 68% of women have no offspring and women having offspring are 32% in this study. Therefore, the results showcased would speculate differently ordered priorities for women in terms of the time management and psychological stressors they go through.

Figure 6, 7 and 8 represents that during the worldwide shift in the structure of industry functioning, majority of women i.e. 54% have been working from their respective

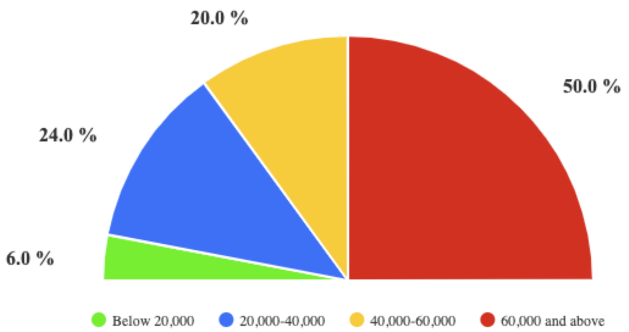


Figure 4

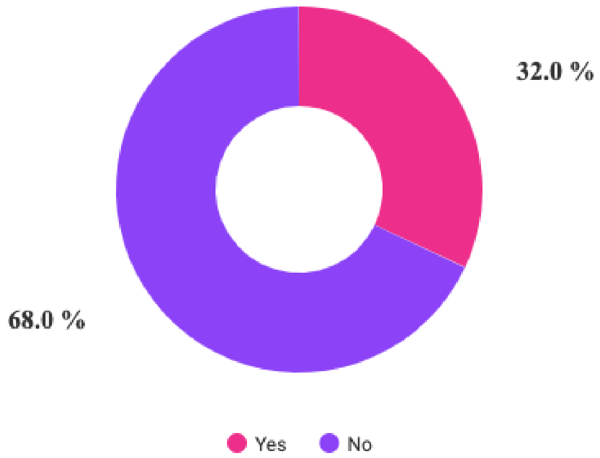


Figure 5

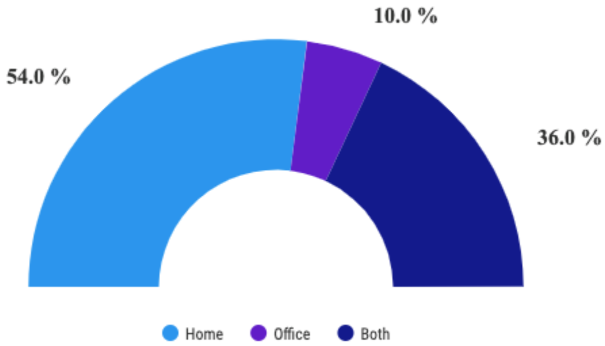
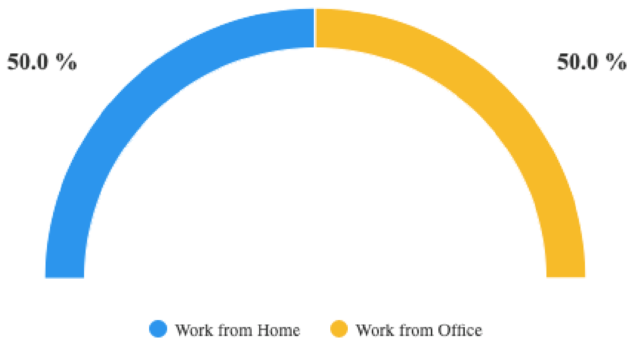


Figure 6



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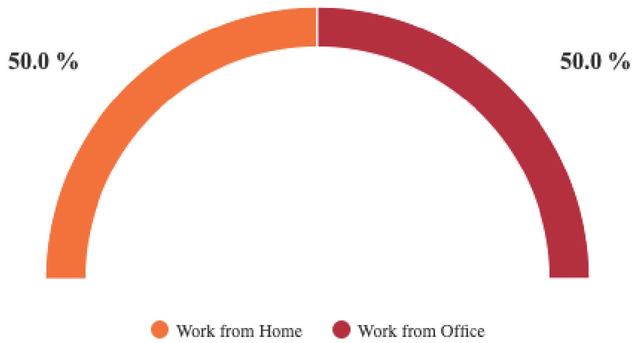

Figure 8

homes. 10% worked from office and 36% worked from office as well as home depending on situation. This survey was made to understand how much time women got to carryout the house hold cores and look after their children.

Figure 9, 10 and 11 represents the time management of the selected demographic in a day in performing varied activates. The results reverted by the respondents suggests that due to the shift of work like situations at home the hours spend on a regular basis have expunged from a minimum of 8 working hours to about 9–13 hours a day as the quote goes "you are practically living at work." With subsequently effect the time devoted to personal needs and household chores had also been shared with immediate members of their own house.

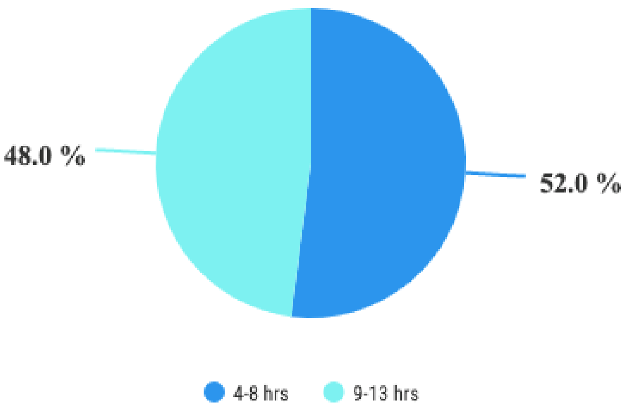

Figure 9

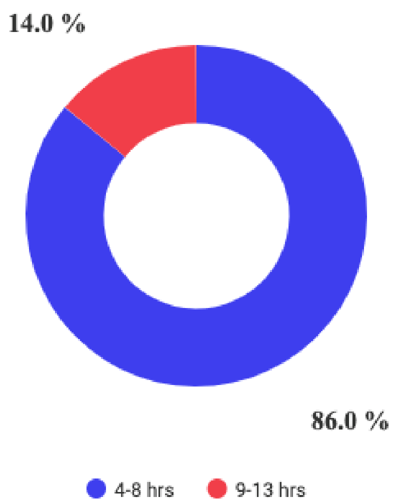

Figure 10

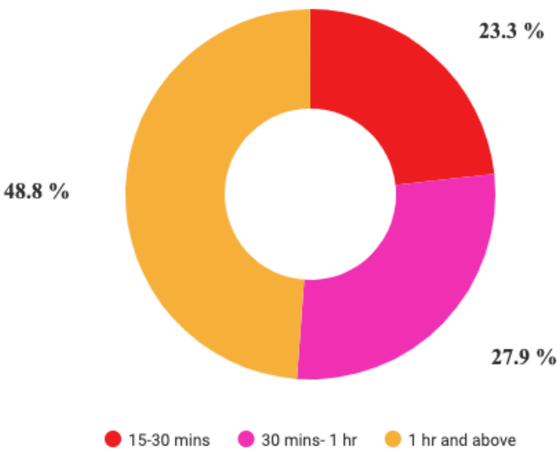

Figure 11

Figure 12 and 13 depict the analysis obtained by the sample which reflects that women have preferred to consciously indulge in more and more physical activities to combat pandemic but also to get mental balance and consequently de-stress in dynamic situations. Moreover, 66.7% of the demographic was successful in performing that as well.

Figure 14 depicts that the selected demographic engaged in varied recreational activities to maintain a healthy mental life during this Pandemic. With this in concern, newer activities like reading, painting, cooking, gardening etc. have also surged. Hinting towards reliance on more holistic wellness approach by workingwomen.

Figure 15 depicts that the data manifested a new need for women to work from home presently also need to

Figure 12

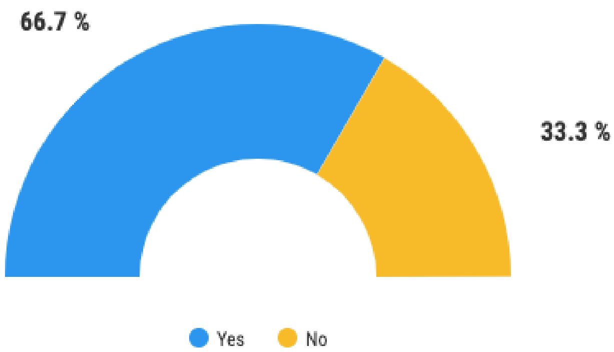

Figure 13

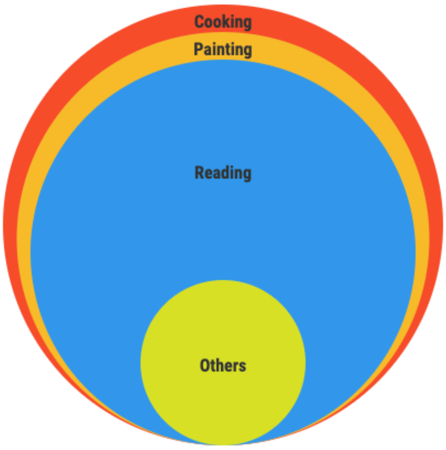

Figure 14

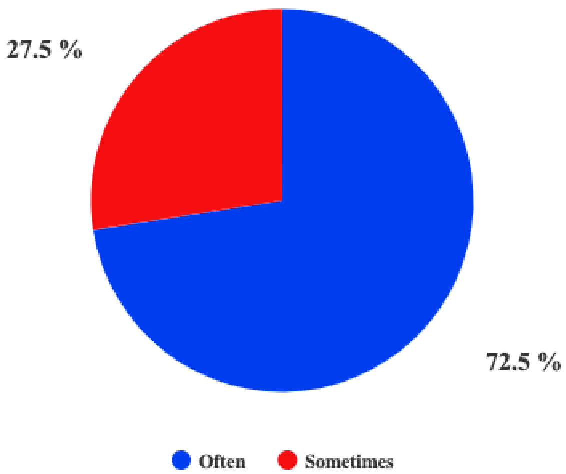

Figure 15

return to site of their office as a part of their old version of normal. Highlighting the pondering nature of the shift in the normal for women and its consequent impact on them.

The result derived from the research done on a wide population of women suggests that, whether they were single, married, widowed or divorced or whichever area of employment they were in, the initial stressor during the Pandemic occurred because of shortfall in money they were spending every month. This directly made an impact on their spending and other lifestyle habits and was further aggravated in the case of women with children as they have to deal with the expenses incurred to homeschool them.

Besides the monetary aspect, women throughout the study were seen to be overwhelmed with the lack of work-life concept as now their office exists inside the house. But with relaxation in lockdown rules, women were again forced to shed away their newly adapted mechanism of working in the house and dwindle between house and office in such trying circumstances which is represented in Figure 6 and suggests that though 54% of women were working from their houses, 10% had to go out and work in the formal environment of an office and 36% women were struggling between both. Besides the stress generated out of adaptability, women were more prone to catching the virus as well adding to their preexisting stressors.

By Figure 9 it becomes evident that on an average woman were spending 4–8 hours of their day on working, moreover, the second task they devoted their most time was on activities pertaining the household like chores, kids and family as depicted in Figure 10, leaving only a window of an hour for their personal needs (Figure 11).

In order to minimize the impact of stressors on their mental and physical health, women took up an array of physical activities like running/walking, yoga/Pilates and home workout to eliminate surface level stressors to cope with the shrunk work-life environment. Moreover, as suggested in Figure 13, 66% of them were successful in performing these activities. Besides this, Figure 14 depicts that women engaged in varied recreational activities as well to maintain a healthy mental life during this Pandemic. With this in concern, newer activities like reading, painting, cooking, gardening etc. have also surged. Hinting towards reliance on more holistic wellness approach by workingwomen.

Conclusion

Nora Ephron in her commencement address at Wellesley in 1996 said, *"Of course you can have it all, as long as you embrace the mess"* (Bamzai, 2019, p.50). Moreover, Vanderkam says, *"We don't build the lives we want by saving time, we build the lives we want, and time saves itself"* (Vanderkam, 2017). These exemplary remarks tell us a lot about not being fanatic about things we cannot perform in a day as we all our humans. One day of laxity would not shatter world peace!

It can be noted that the pandemics have had considerable impact of the lives of women, as they are required to manage the household while juggling with their professional responsibilities. Moreover, in the present circumstances, women are more likely to develop professional anxieties and mental disorders as quarantine due to the pandemic leaves little room for any personal escape when compared to men in society. As per the recent study "The Shadow Pandemic" administered by UN Women committee the report reflected that during quarantine worldwide 1 in 3 women experienced physical or sexual violence by and imitate partner. Alongside women were also eroded by the concerns of well-being of their family members being exposed to the virus that as a result gave rise to a passive stream of anxieties about the new normal around the world. As an attempt to pacify these anxieties women during this quarantine resorted to methods and ways to combat these uncertainties by taking up hobbies and activities to keep them mentally engaged in order to understand the need for positive outlook and balanced mental health rather than resorting to fear of unknown.

According to the *International Labour Organization (ILO),* ‘it is still women who shoulder three-quarters of all unpaid care work’ (Uchoa, 2020), with this remark in light the research uncovers that women with children had to largely take up the task of self-teaching their kids and tend to other family members. It is believed that domestic activities ranging from household chores to tending children is largely considered a woman’s job. This aspect has put women under a lot of pressure to perform tasks adequately especially during pandemics as they face difficulty in managing time to create harmony in their work-life due to the shrinkage in the concept on indoors and outdoors. This aspect is adequately highlighted in BBC World Service article stating: “Mothers are worried that they’re putting themselves at risk of redundancy, or getting into trouble at work because they haven’t been able to perform as well as they usually do and even if women feel their jobs or incomes are relatively safe, many are saying they just cannot carry on like this for much longer” (Uchoa, 2020). Thus, it is putting women under a lot of pressure to perform tasks that were organic to them before this Pandemic and the consequent lockdown.

Furthermore, with the monetary aspect in mind, it can be noticed that women are far more vulnerable to being dismissed from their jobs if a company faces economic crisis during the Pandemic, as also stated in BBC World Service, *‘However, if the company got into trouble or if there was a crisis, they were much more likely to withdraw their support for the female candidate’* (Uchoa, 2020). This also leads to a crippling company image as stated by Corinne Post, from Lehigh University in the US state of Pennsylvania, *“It’s hard to find another explanation, other than those biases around women’s commitments or whether they are really working as hard as they should”* (Uchoa, 2020). Moreover, women lying in lower income category had to undergo the most evident form of hardship that is of financing their household during Pandemic and subsequent lockdown. Though “*the world has made huge improvements towards gender equality in the past 50 years, but it will be at least another century before men and women close the gaps in the workplace, according to the World Economic Forum (WEF)”* (Uchoa, 2020)**.**

It can be evidently inferred out of the research that due to Covid-19 Pandemic women were bombarded with various structural and functional challenges but more or less they devised ways to get accustomed to the new normal to keep the engine running to manage harmony in state of chaos.

Competing Interest Statement

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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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Aesthetics of Beauty in Dramatic Discourse of W. Shakespeare's Plays: A Reader-Response Review

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ABSTRACT

This research identifies and traces the concept of aesthetics of both beauty and ugliness in W. Shakespeare's plays in the light of aesthetic and critical conceptualizing the opposite binaries. The research offers a preface to identify the concept of binary oppositions in Shakespeare's plays; it thematically discusses the aspects of both ugliness and beauty of the major dynamic characters and actions. Meanwhile, *the research adopts the qualitative textual analysis method* to address the significance of the aesthetic quality of beauty for realizing the implications of the aesthetics of ugliness within a modern receptionist theatrical context and aesthetic appreciation.

Keywords: aesthetics, dramatic discourse, beauty, ugliness, Reader-response, W. Shakespeare.

Introduction

Aesthetics is a creative and flexible critical theory that explores the aesthetic values of beauty and ugliness. Critics like Huhn, Mohan, and *Kant* indicate that aesthetics focuses on the euphemism of dramatic discourses to enrich the artistic and theatrical creativity. In Immanuel *Kant*'s usage, aesthetic stands for the experienced object through the senses than artistic lens; he values the viewers' reaction rather than the artistic production. In this sense, beauty doesn't necessitate looking at an object through determinate concepts (2008, 53). In addition, in its modernist sense, the theory of aesthetics "attempts to move beyond the seemingly closed dialectic of beauty and ugliness" (Huhn, 1988, p. 2). Therefore, aesthetic awareness determines the aesthetic norms in human life and art. Beauty itself involves qualities of the beautiful and the ugly in the art of the 20th century which "was not kind to the notions of beauty or the aesthetic" (Zangwill, 2014). So, modern critics such as Rosenkranz, Baker, and Eco keep addressing the aesthetic qualities of the beautiful and the ugly, the comic and the tragic and the lofty and the decadent. Also, the aesthetic codes and artistic paradigms of beauty in literature is a consistent field of modern scholars. Moreover, beauty decides on the rank of human beings; this beauty is classified as moral and physical. The former is a source of comfort and expresses human salvation from the negative impacts of life. The beautiful aspects defend human against the self that defies ugliness, which is fused with human virtue and sincerity. According to Mohan, beauty is not dependent on physical qualities alone; "wisdom, virtue, etc. can also be beautiful, a balance of values is necessary" (2020). For *Kant*, beauty value is quite different from any sort of cognition. He admits that deciding on the beauty of things relies heavily on the act of "imagination to the subject, and its feeling of pleasure or pain," adding that taste does not yield a "judgment of cognition," rather it is "aesthetical." (2008, p. 27).

Again, this research adopts the qualitative textual analysis method to explore the relevant concepts of beauty and ugliness in Shakespearean plays. Critics, mentioned in the references, still argue that ugliness is an aesthetic experience that manifests the close interaction between the dramatic discourses and readers. Ella Przybylo (2010) describes ugliness as "contingent and relational" available due to binary oppositions of contingent beauty and ugliness. Moreover, ugliness is never naturally original; rather it is a deformed beauty of certain value and effect. In this sense, ugliness is explored for its qualitative content and form. While the content embodies the ethical

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and moral aspects socially and behaviorally, the form implies the bodily aspects. In this regard, Karl Rosenkranz indicates that there is no beauty without ugliness and vice versa and that "beauty is an absolute" while "ugliness is a relative" (2015, p. 95). This matter generates a binary tension between the beautiful and the ugly in the characters' soul and body.

Concepts of Beauty and Ugliness in Drama

Generally, dramatic texts include ugly characters that represent the ideological portion of implied ugliness. This ugliness appears in the social relations and behavioral tendencies of such characters. In tragic plays, reconstructing ugliness is a moral aesthetic, in which ugliness is translated into sadness to get "an aesthetical pleasure" of readers (Shiying, 2013, p. 6). Meantime, this view is not negative; it offers a positive tendency to disclose the centers of imperfection and disharmony. Yet, Walter T. Stace confutes that ugliness is against beauty for there is a visionary flaw that painful depression is aroused by ugliness. Stace also argues that beauty is,

> "an all-encapsulating concept including the pathetic, the comic, the sublime … the whimsical, the romantic, the idyllic, the realistic, the impressionistic, the symbolic, the classical, the sad, the melancholy, the graceful, the humorous, the majestic, the pretty, and so forth" (1997, p. 61)

Therefore, ugliness is hostile to beauty and what opposes beauty is its absence. So, the ugly have an exquisite value despite its conceptual psychological effect.

Culturally, beauty and ugliness are traditional binary oppositions. Umberto Eco professes that "beauty could now express itself by making opposites converge, so that ugliness was no longer the negation of beauty, but its other face" (2007, p. 321). Here, beauty may transform into ugliness and vice versa based on the artist's creativity and viewers or readers' taste. Any judgment of human taste or beauty is the main "target of the analysis of aesthetics and not the object of beauty" (*Kant*, 2008, p. 34). Obviously, *Kant* argues that human taste gain its claim of universality from the rule of aesthetics and beauty *Kant*'s aesthetic theory of aesthetics offers a judgment of beauty based on the aesthetic judgments of taste. Meanwhile, Zhang Shiying proclaims that modifying ugliness necessitates confessing that "ugliness has an aesthetic significance" for it uncovers the "true color of life" in arts (2013, p. 1). Accordingly, ugliness is esteemed in arts as it sheds positivity on portraying the ugly. For example, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* the clever Helena esteems the beautiful appearance of Hermia who "has beautiful eyes" that make the former look "as ugly as a bear" (2.2. p. 79).[1] Yet, this attitudinal view is changed into a positive view when Lysander depicts her as "Radiant, beautiful Helena" and he informs her that he feels "like Mother Nature" that enables him to delve into her heart (2.2, p. 80). Here, Shakespeare transfigures the negative sentiment of derision into a beautiful semblance embodied in Hermia's face. Also, this change would suggest that the malformed features metamorphose into pleasing beautiful qualities, creating an oxymoronic image to readers.

Similarly, Rosenkranz asserts that ugliness is "the negation of beauty without being reducible to evil, materiality, or other negative terms used in its conventional condemnation" (2015, p. 25). So, in plays, the qualities of ugliness never critically appear as a contrary value to beauty**.** In this sense, Shiying argues that on being beautified, ugliness signifies the underlying meaning of human life, sustained by the artists' sublime imagination that constructs beautiful implications out of ugliness by means of "color, figure, or languages" (2013, p. 2). Again, ugly objects are viewed disgusting; they are epistemologically identifiers of ugliness, base on human imagination. For *Kant*, aesthetics of the ugly is meaningless (2008, p. 96). Such views imply that the ugly features involve an aesthetic aspect that creates a semantic significance of ugliness. For example, the scenes of killing, burlesque, profligacy, deception, and avarice are realistically different in their ugliness but equal in their aesthetic implications.

Aesthetic Significance of Ugly-Beautiful Binary Oppositions

Widely known, the concept of binary oppositions belongs to postmodern criticism that studies the aesthetic syntactic and semantic aspects of such oppositions. The device of binary oppositions is a center in the receptionist theory that interpretively arouses readers' suspense. For this view, Naomi Baker emphasizes that the binary oppositions of beauty and ugliness are close embodiments of goodness and/or disfigurement in a literary and cultural context, in which "physical ugliness" is connected with "evil character" (2010, p. 43). In a word, ugliness is not the peremptory antithesis of beauty. In arts, ugliness is as significant as beauty for they incentivize writers to evoke their own literary tools. In this respect, ugliness and

[1]All quotations are from Shakespeare's plays are from Hylton, Jeremy. *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. 1 Jan. 1994. Available from http://shakespeare.mit.edu. [accessed 8 March 2019].

beauty in arts classically coexist and binary oppositions explicate the relations between the idea, the aesthetic structure, and their tension. Meanwhile, *Kant* defines beauty as a feeling of pleasure; it is an "aesthetic sense" that every man has (2008, p. 107). Accordingly, Thomas Huhn (1988, p. 8) states that the tension between ugliness and beauty is "supplanted by the harmony that attempts to disown this tension by suppressing the ugly, that is, nature." In this context, Mohan also argues that "The beauty of man does not depend on the soul or the body alone; rather it depends upon the harmony of both" (2020, p. 5).

Ostensibly, several dramatic texts evoke the idea of dissonance between the dramatic features of ugliness and beauty. The fiendish tragic character with the ugly patterns is presented with a wrinkled, gloomy, and sullen face with thick lips, ruthless eyes, and unnatural laugh. In this regard, Baker argues that "ugliness is infused with moral and supernatural meaning repeatedly collides with an emergent understanding of ugliness as a purely physical phenomenon, devoid of spiritual significance" (2010, p. 55). Here, ugliness may share with other features in shaping any character's identity on moral and behavioral levels. For example, Shakespeare presents Othello with an aged black look that negatively decides on his tragic fate, implied in Iago's words, "Even now, now, very now, an old black ram. Is tupping your white ewe. Arise, arise, Awake the snorting citizens with the bell" (*Othello* 1.1. p. 91). Here, Iago asserts his stereotypical view of Othello's negritude that implies ugliness and aberration. Mohan (2020) informs readers that black people were *denigrated* by the whites, "they created a dichotomy between the black and the white, the purity and the filthiness, virginity and sin, virtue and baseness, beneficence and evil, beauty and ugliness, God and the devil." Yet, Othello evokes striking poetic metaphorical images to support his personal beauty and to conceal his hideousness. In addition, when raged, Othello uses a poetic language and transforms into an "ugly, idiotic" figure, embodying the binary oppositions of beauty and ugliness (Rocha, 2013, p. 10). Here, Othello says, "Haply for I am black, and have not those soft parts of conversation (*Othello* 3.3. p. 265). So, Othello's color is a tool for aesthetic evaluation, and the critic Baker admits that "power dynamics of ugliness" classify people on "gender, class, and race" *(2010, p.188)*. Such a stance asserts that ugliness reflects an ideological perception of moral malady.

Furthermore, there are two connected issues: the beautiful body that embodies the quality of the ugly and the ugly body that fails to manifest any other quality. Shiying states that "there is neither pure beauty nor pure ugliness" for they are fused in human realities, arguing that beauty generates a positive and optimistic value (2013, p. 3). In this sense, public readers fail to differentiate between the value of the ugly and that of the beautiful. Stace insists that beauty arouses the beholders' appreciative feelings of "an intellectual content." (1997, p. 149). Clearly, the significance of aesthetics in the study of dramas is presented in the dramatic discourses and their intellectual and aesthetic values.

Dramatic criticism searches for the basic aesthetics of both the structure and content that include the binary oppositions of ugliness and beauty and the various juxtaposed dramatic forms. Moreover, ugliness should not be regarded as a nasty value that deforms or degrades the beautiful for aesthetics is the science of perceptual cognition that values beauty and ugliness. Furthermore, social concepts of beauty vary from a culture to another. Relevantly, Rosenkranz argues that "beauty is the original divine idea, and its negation, ugliness, as it is a negation, has only a secondary existence" (2015, p. 125). This view shows that beauty is a center while ugliness is subcenter in the perceptive mentality of readers. Thus, tragic plays always try to offer their valuable forms to reflect a current reality or create a new one. Meantime, readers can find aesthetic qualities of ugliness in dramas fused with other aesthetic features, creating a significant conflict with beauty. In this sense, Stace asserts that such a conflict may arise from the belief that ugliness is against beauty and that beauty and ugliness are binary oppositions like goodness and evil or sincerity and falsehood (1997, p. 94). Hence, Stace implies that ugliness cannot be excluded from various arts, in which this ugliness constitutes an aesthetic pleasure. Therefore, the ugly arouses a beautiful aesthetic tone instead of a painful one, taking in account the disparity between ugliness as a negative value and beauty as a utilitarian aesthetic value. In this point, *Kant*'s aesthetics widens the idea of "purposiveness" beyond mankind to all phenomena of nature. Kant offers this term "purposiveness" an object of nature "the supersensible realm" that causes human feeling of "disinterested interest or beauty" (2008, p. 111). Moreover, any dramatic discourse entails evoking aesthetics that can judge the discourse in terms of its absolute beauty or ugliness and break the barriers between them. Eco explains that "art has the power to portray [ugly things] in a beautiful way, and the beauty of this imitation makes ugliness" (2007, p. 133). This ambiguous complex relationship between beauty and ugliness is embodied in the ties between ugliness and offense within a philosophical context. For example, the witches' prophecies result in a murder in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, a crime that asserts the significance of talking the value of the ugly based on the aesthetic interconnections. Further, the conceptual mechanisms of this approach and the aesthetics of ugliness in tragic plays are tools to explicate and reconcile the ugly and the beautiful.

The aesthetic theory of beauty argues that the beautiful character is not the familiar beautiful we conceive as an anti-ugly figure, for the ugly may aesthetically be beautiful in an artistic and cognitive context. In this respect, the reality of the ugly in contrast to the beautiful displays the distance between beauty and ugliness that yields a lack of aesthetic prospect. So, natural ugliness may become a positive quality in artistic prettiness. Aestheticians avow that ugliness in arts is a principal aesthetic worry. For Eco, "ugliness can be redeemed by context and restored of its uselessness" (2007, p. 409). This applies to plays that offer aspects of ugliness that may foster readers' feelings of sarcasm, scare, sadness, and disgust to subjectively extract aesthetic embodiments. Concurrently, the contextual aesthetic experience of the reader usually impacts the estimation of beauty and ugliness, in relation to concepts of psychoanalysis, socio-aesthetics, and cultural aesthetic merits.

Dramatic Textual Analysis of Characters' Beauty and Ugliness

Thematically, fusing ugly characters, actions, places in literature entails artistic skills to create moments of suspense among readers. Textually, this view is aesthetic that enables readers to explore the artistic manifestations of ugliness in plays. For example, in *Henry IV*, ugliness is incorporated with moral corruption and ailment manifested in Harry's words: he will "imitate the sun, / . . . / By breaking through the foul and ugly mists" (1.2. p. 175–180). In this sense, "Beauty and ugliness are evaluated linguistically therefore, not only as physical opposites but as moral opposites" (Mohan 2020). Moreover, Henry's words to Kate are indicative of other implications of ugliness,

> … in faith, Kate, the elder I wax, the better I shall appear: my comfort is, that old age, that ill layer-up of beauty, can do no more spoil upon my face: thou hast me, if thou hast me, at the worst; and thou shalt wear me, if thou wear me, better and better'' (5.2. p. 227–230).

These lines suggest that Henry's ugliness negates the contextual "traditional beauty associated with youth" (Zangwill, 2014). Also, Henry tells Kate that his ugliness is incorporated with the conventional beauty of young characters,

> … downright oaths, which I never use till urged, nor never break for urging. If thou canst love a fellow of this temper, Kate, whose face is not worth sun-burning, that never looks in his glass for love… (5.2. p. 137–40)

Here, Henry's speech is an admission of his external and internal conflicts with corporeal ugliness that turns him into a foul. Meanwhile, Richard confesses, "I can add colors to the chameleon, / Change shapes with Proteus for advantages" (3.2. 191–92). This animal code implies an ugly feeling of true prejudice. Likewise, in "Fair is foul, and foul is fair," the witches think that things that men think foul and ugly are beautiful to women for such things personify evil (*Macbeth*, 1.1. p. 12–13). This view arouses readers' ugly insight about the witches who plan against Macbeth; they hate beautiful things. In an aesthetic judgment, *Kant* alludes that the beautiful can integrate "the more cultured and ruder sections of the community" together (2008, p.135). Nevertheless, this rooted feeling of ugliness is not perpetual; it also shows Macbeth's spiritual prettiness that cultivates from his cleverness and charisma. Mohan (2020) states that "Physical beauty is used to symbolize inner moral or spiritual goodness or beauty, so too physical ugliness is believed to symbolize an inner evil." Meantime, human self shows a set of doubts and inconsistencies against both the ugly and the beautiful. For example, both *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* praise ugliness in nature objects like mountains, wilderness, and stormy oceans. In this view, Shakespeare uses ugliness as a source of inspiration and artistry by presenting malformed characters. In other words, Shakespeare depicts tragic ugliness as a blemish to mock human internal dark side that needs the existence of its binary opposite: beauty. Obviously, "Beauty and ugliness are evaluated linguistically therefore, not only as physical opposites but as moral opposites" (Mohan 2020).

Dramatic discourses re-establish the modern aesthetic standards that view ugliness and beauty as a binary opposite with certain thematic and aesthetic values. In this concern, tragedy is manifested by the beautiful death of the tragic character, generating a tragic sense and a lack of harmony between the ideal that the character aspires to achieve and the social and cultural milieu. Huhn affirms that ugliness is the antithesis of beauty and the ugly object turns into "an aesthetic taboo" which disapproves beauty (1988, p. 6). This tragic sense arouses feelings of sorrow and frustration that, however, result in a considerable value incarnate in tragic significant ugly images. For instance, in *Hamlet*, the mad Ophelia endures Hamlet's cruelty and climbs into the willow tree, drops into the brook, and drowns. This event signifies an ugly action of suicide and proves her insanity as she views "violence as beauty and justice" (Foucault, 2001, p. 23). In addition, Ophelia tells Hamlet, "Could beauty have better commerce than with honesty?" and Hamlet replies that beauty weakens honesty (*Hamlet* 3.1. p. 110). Also, in *Othello*, Othello perceives that his murdered wife, Desdemona, is not guilty of disloyalty and stabs him with a dagger. Here, Ana Maria Rocha comments that Shakespeare introduces "an ugly Othello," who is haunted by massive wrath and jealousy and murders his wife (2013, p. 70).

The dramatic bad character in the plays of mysteries has a mask that presupposes human ugliness. Here, ugliness suggests provocative illusions that cultivate man's experiences of repugnant attitudes. In this manner, the carnal qualities of ugliness make the devil grow in the hybrid physical mask that fuses the human and the animal and reflects the ugly side of the former. To exemplify, in *King Lear*, the hybrid persona is evoked when King Lear exposes Goneril's behavior in terms of animal codes, "Thy sister's naught. O, Regan, she hath tied / Sharp -toothed unkindness, like a vulture, here." (2.4. p. 113–14). These ugly animalistic codes refer to an ugly quality of man's behavior and signify a hideous feeling of prejudice. Further, emergent ugliness is manifested in the characters who perpetrate unsightly crimes and bloody violence. For instance, Shakespeare shows his unique characters dramatically through phantoms, witches, storms, revenge, and conspiracies.

Analogously, *Julius Caesar* offers another case of ugliness manifested in blood and violence. This is obvious in Brutus's ugliest utterances to the conspirators,

> And let us bathe our hands in Caesar's blood
> Up to the elbows, and besmear our swords;
> ...
> Let's all cry, "Peace, freedom, and liberty!" (3.1. p. 118–22)

Here, it is the ugliest time that Brutus invidiously incarnates, and Shakespeare exposes human gloomily ugly part that is never beautiful. Also, Eco argues that the incarnations of ugliness comprise "a lack of equilibrium in the organic relationship between the parts of the whole" (2007, p. 19). This idea matches the philosophy of laughter in drama with the human and social, affirming the farcical character of low consistency and ugly vanity. Here, ugliness is a drive to induce feelings of ugliness that culturally cannot defeat beauty. Besides, Shakespeare exposes the mythicized ugliness of some characters with deformed physical semblances.

Additionally, Shakespeare introduces physical and moral ugliness of certain misbehaving characters to create an unfamiliar portrait of his artistic invention. In *Richard III*, the mad Richard indifferently perpetrates ugly crimes of murdering parents, women, and children; he seduces the widows. Meantime, Richard confesses executing ugly crimes,

> Nay, do not pause; for I did kill King Henry,
> But 'twas thy beauty that provoked me.
> Nay, now dispatch; 'twas I that stabb'd young Edward. (1.2. p. 183–85)

Richard's insanity, as a sign of ugliness, exposes a secret of "animality which is its own truth, and in which, in some way, it is reabsorbed" (Foucault, 2001, p. 71). Also, Richard's ugly behaviors create panic and aversion of others and are severely rebuked in the play. For instance, Richard disappointedly describes himself as

> ... a wither'd shrub;
> To make an envious mountain on my back,
> Where sits deformity to mock my body;
> To shape my legs of an unequal size (3.2. p. 147–50)

Here, Richard's overdone ugliness arises from his deformed figure that adjoins mental and moral ugliness. Thence, ugliness, fused with moral ailment, embodies features of abnormality that prevailed during Renaissance (Baker, 2010, p. 11). Richard offers himself as a malformed villain, "And descant on mine own deformity ... I am determined to prove a villain" (1.1. p. 26–30). Such words prove a connection between Richard's bodily abnormality, ugliness, and vicious mood. In this sense, Nick Zangwill (2014) proclaims that the qualities of beauty and ugliness depend on "non-aesthetic properties" for beauty and ugliness are innate qualities of the human world and arts. Thus, Richard's excuses for his execrable behavior parallel his fixed despondency out of his imperfection and insanity. Nevertheless, Richard's rhetorical words are unquestionable and relieve his ugliness.

Briefly, Shakespeare's plays integrate legendary ugly codes by evoking horrifying images that denote his characters' corruption and avarice. Meantime, the conventional comic characters are liars, slanderers, queers, and wantons and embody immoralities and moral ugliness. In this respect, Shiying pinpoints that "sarcastic comedy often makes originally humble and insignificant forms -manifested in ugliness- appear as lofty and serious faces" (2013, p. 4). True, in plays, watchers laugh as a mechanism of disrespecting the ugly. For example, Caliban, in *The Tempest*, epitomizes absurdity in his flagrant ugliness, inhumanity, and moral blindness implied by Prospero's words,

> A devil, a born devil, …
> Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost;
> And as with age his body uglier grows,
> So his mind cankers. (4.1. p. 188–92)

Also, Prospero characterizes Caliban as "disproportioned in his manners/As in his shape. (5.1. p. 290–91). Contextually, Prospero affirms that Caliban is thoroughly ugly "reflecting cultural anxieties, fears, and fascinations" (Przybylo, 2010). Clearly, the notion of ugliness is thematically embodied in the so-called inferior human beings.

Artistically, Shakespeare introduces burlesque characters with ugly manifestations of deformity and physical distortion, deepening the cynical aspects of his plays. In *Othello*, Othello's beauty engenders from his rhetorical discourse that subverts his ugliness manifested by his blackness and deformity. Rocha maintains that the Negroes are "black, ugly, cruel, evil, pagan … and barely human" (2013, p. 57). This view is incarnated in Othello's character that The Duke depicts as "noble signior, if virtue no delighted beauty lack, your son-in-law is far more fair than black" (1.3. p. 328–331). Here, despite the negative implication, the word black denotes a positive reflection in which the Duke refers to Othello as an exception to duality of blackness and ugliness. In addition, Othello has a beautiful spirit embodied in his goodness, and "goodness and beauty cannot be incompatible" or distanced (Mohan 2020). Similarly, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* introduces Bottom and his partners as caricatures of amateur players to carry out the roles of women. In a word, Bottom is as ugly as "an ass-head," presented as a monstrous ugly character (3.1. p. 116). Consequently, ugliness is burlesque results in caricatures with unfamiliar physical and attitudinal features.

Furthermore, black tragicomedy, ugly in nature, is a fair manifestation of the quality of ugliness with its unique themes of death, violence, crime, insanity, and racism. Such black tragicomedies satirize human ugliness; they humorously expose such ugly realities to diagnose human shortcomings and disadvantages. Shakespeare's artistic representation employs irony, sarcasm, and parody to depict the status quo of humanity and foreshadow its future. For example, the deformed absurd characteristics in *King Lear* advocate the ugly disarray in the king's ailed psyche. One of the comical ugly traits is the Fool's humor in a set of positions in the play. For instance, Gloucester imagines that the Fool jumps off the cliff at Dover and utters, "Methinks the ground is even" (4.6. p. 3), and then Edgar adds, "Horrible steep" (4.6. p. 4). Here, Edgar renders a morally ugly and mimic mural. Moreover, in the assumed courtroom, Lear absurdly pursuits his daughters and ridicules them, referring to them as "The little dogs and all...see, they bark at me," (4.6. p. 62–63). This tragic scene implies Lear's impaired mental health and bestows a sarcastic tone on the play. Eventually, Cordelia's death signifies an ugly and contemptible game of fatalism and absurdity. Also, this scene presents features of an ugly comical play in which Cordelia, despite her devotion and goodness, dies in an humiliating way. This event embodies a metaphor for human ugliness of torture, offense, and moral and physical injustices.

To epitomize**,** presenting the ugly and the beautiful is a part of dramatic conceptual techniques, by which readers may recognize the dramatic special features that qualify the realistic and imaginative constituents of both the beautiful and the ugly. In this regard, Zangwill (2014) asserts that once the "beauty is a generic aesthetic value, then, sublimity can be understood as a kind of beauty" which implies that sublimity in arts is an original aesthetic concept. As a result, the features of ugliness address the tragic, the farcical, and the tragicomic; they might transform into aesthetic qualities that embody the skillful dramatic manifestation of costumes and harmonious audio-visual effects. For example, in *Macbeth*, the dialogue between Macbeth and Banquo depicts the witches as aged, feeble, and ugly; they are exceptions. Their dramatic value emerges from their prophecy and its influence on Macbeth based on his ugly crimes. In a sense, human ugliness and beauty are rated in the light of height, complexion, appearance, deformities, and diseases. All such elements impact the dramatic character and affect its psyche and engender its internal and external conflicts. To this end, Eco asserts that ugliness is dulcet and congenial in arts that depict "the ugliness of ugliness" in a comely way (2007, p. 133). Thus, the tragic conflict takes place between the ugly and the beautiful based on the aesthetic standards.

Conclusion

In Shakespeare's plays, ugliness is an aesthetic quality that has a significant role in triggering readers' aesthetic flavor based on their skills of appreciation and predilections. This view emphasizes the significant binaries of the ugly and the beautiful in their modern sense. The aesthetic moment of suspense in plays results from the significant semantic unfamiliarity of ugliness and its conflict with the familiarity of the beautiful. In addition, ugliness has a bifunctional role; it is tension-inducing and influential. Meantime, the quality of ugliness can artistically be evoked as a critical norm based on the theoretical concepts of criticism to elucidate these qualities in semantically and syntactically. Furthermore, deciding on the aesthetic aspects of ugliness in plays may determine the textual extent of creativity and judge the possible metamorphosed and emergent aesthetic qualities and values. This depiction may attain aesthetic consistency and semantic effects. Dramatic texts present aesthetic values manifested in the binary oppositions of the beautiful and the ugly that control the dramatic discourse. Ostensibly, the didactic and attitudinal contexts shape the structures of the aesthetic qualities of physical and verbal ugliness in plays.

The human beauty of soul, mind and conscience is the most influential. For example, the beauty of expression is the highest euphemistic type of arts and controls man's practices in speech, style, and behavior. Consistently, man should achieve gravity in his or her aesthetic expressions. Human life is integrated with passions of love, goodness, lofty morals, and beauty of speech. These qualities of the aesthetic beauty are fused with human truth, in which there is no beauty in lies and turpitude. Additionally, beauty is a means to sustain truth, for moral beauty and euphemism are sustained explicitly and implicitly. Analogously, beauty is a comrade of truth and righteousness; rhetoric is ultimately integrated with beauty. So, when a character feels ugly, his psyche becomes somber, and he might turn into a deviant and apprehend the things of life ugly. Therefore, true beauty is the beauty of human soul and spirit manifested in tolerance, forgiveness, love, and purity.

Competing Interest Statement

The author has read and approved the manuscript and takes full responsibility for its contents. No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The Native's Independence Rhetoric in Translation: Shahnon Ahmad and Noorjaya

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ABSTRACT

Nations are narrated into being; bearing this concept in mind, this research analyses the works of two native Malay writers that have been translated into English and how their writings show the rhetoric of independence that was used in order to gain independence by the Malays in the Malay Peninsula. It will also look at the cultural and emotional effect of the translated independence rhetoric that has been lost through translation. This essay will be read using a postcolonial lens made famous by Edward Said, Franz Fanon, and Homi K. Bhabha. Via this lens, it will analyze how the Malay postcolonial culture has been translated into English. Todd Jones's essay "Translation and Belief Ascription: Fundamental Barriers" (2003) will be used to analyze the text. It will be argued that how epistemology is used to ascribe belief and how cultural epistemology has been translated into the English language via Shahnon Ahmad's "A Merdeka Tale" and Noorjaya's "The Quest for Langkasuka". The translation of cultural epistemology is successful in both the texts because the translation of the text can be easily understood. This understanding permeates especially in the cultural and historical effects.

Keywords: Nations, Malay, postcolonial, lens, epistemology.

Introduction

This essay analyses the rhetoric of two Malaysian writers who are Malay by race. The Malays are natives of Malaysia. Thus, it discusses how the native's rhetoric that deliberates the idea of independence and its history that is translated into English, the language of the British colonizer. This essay concentrates on the effects of translation of fictional texts that are historically based which discusses the Malays and their colonized state, and their quest towards independence. Colonial historical writings on Malaya written by colonial officers like Richard Winsted and Anthony Burgess were written at the peak of colonialism. Their conceptions about the Malays and their rulers were very different from that of the 20th and 21st century Malay and Malaysian native intellectuals' point of view. This essay sets out to look at how the Malay native's rhetoric has been translated into English and the effect of this translation on the meaning and the gist of the text.

Nations are narrated[1] into being; bearing this concept in mind, this research will analyze two native Malay writers that have been translated into English and how their writings show the rhetoric of independence that was used in order to gain independence by the Malays in the Malay Peninsula. It will also look at the cultural and emotional effects of the translated independence rhetoric that has been lost through translation. This essay will be read using a postcolonial lens made famous by Edward Said, Franz Fanon, and Homi K. Bhabha. Via this lens, the essay will

[1]This idea sprouted and came into being from the author's readings of Bhabha, H. K. (1990). *Nation and narration*. Routledge, Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The location of culture*. Routledge and Bhabha, H. K, & Hassan, J. (1996). Aladdin's gift. York University Press.

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analyze how the Malay postcolonial culture has been translated into English. Todd Jones essay Translation and Belief Ascription: Fundamental Barriers (2003) will also be used to analyze the text. It will be argued that how epistemology is employed to ascribe belief and how cultural epistemology has been translated into the English language via Shahnon Ahmad's "A Merdeka Tale" and Noorjaya's "The Quest for Langkasuka". This essay will look at the difficulties that the text has gone through in translating culture.

The Postcolonial Lens

Postcolonialism and postmodernism are two important theories that must be used to discuss postcolonial literatures generally. According to Halimah Mohamed Ali (2011) (pp. 2-3):

> Postcolonialism came into being after World War II because of "new economic importance" of recently independent countries and "the rapid spread of communications and international business during the last third of the twentieth century" (King: 3). The famous postcolonial text *Empire Writes Back* (1989) defines postcolonial as a term that is used to "cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day" (Ashcroft et al., 1989: 2). It is also stated that literatures from all previous colonies should be placed under the label postcolonial (Ashcroft et al., 2002: vii-ix). It can be deduced that the advent of postcolonial or postcolonialism is due to the freedom gained by former European colonies and was born in the 1940s when colonies began to gain their independence.

Since Ashcroft suggests that literature from previous colonies should be placed under the umbrella of postcolonialism, thus it is appropriate to discuss the chosen texts as postcolonial texts. This is because they were written by authors that are postcolonials, who are citizens of Malaya/Malaysia. This country was once under the colony of the United Kingdom.

Postcolonialism[2] is a problematic term to define because it is inter-disciplinary, heterogeneous, and diffuse (Loomba: xii). The problems arise because of the distance between the subjects from the situations that are discussed, i.e. colonialism and they are far from the centre, i.e. the excolonizers and their libraries. The peripheral scholars have difficulty in embodying the colonizer's intelligentsia and the motives that triggered colonialism. Postmodernism is another factor that hinders the total understanding of postcolonialism. Since the West especially wanted to distance itself from modernism and its antiquated ideas, postmodernism came into being. The postmodernists in many ways have influenced postcolonial thinkers. These individuals have resisted the colonizer's cultural makeup which was brought to the Other for the purpose of civilization. This cultural makeup also includes the religion that was brought by the West to the Other, i.e. Christianity (Mohamed Ali, H., 2009). The colonial agenda was the quest for Gold, thus, the West used Gospel to gain its Glory. Therefore, the East i.e. the Other rejected the Western Gospel and took up their own ancestral Gospels in order to debunk and deconstruct colonialism. In the case of Malaya/Malaysia, the nation which is predominantly Malay and Muslim, it took up an Islamic way of life as opposed to Western and Christian values that were instilled by the British colonizers in their colonies including in Malaya. However, Western and Christian values do not differ much from Islamic values because Muslims have to believe in the Bible as well as in Prophet Isa too, whom the Christians call Jesus the son of Mary, and believe that he is the son of God. Muslims part ways with this Christian belief. Their faith demands them to believe in the immaculate conception, that the angel Gabriel blew a soul that God (Allah) sent from heaven into Mary (Mariam's) womb who then gave birth to Prophet Isa. Thus, postcolonialism gave birth to an agency, especially religious agency on the part of the natives which then produced independence. The freedom that was gained included the freedom of thought and land. Postmodernism on the other hand when aligned to postcolonial nations did not influence the Third World as much as it did the West.

Mohamed Ali (2011) discusses the connection between postcolonialism and postmodernism. She states that:

> Postcolonialism's connection to postmodernism has been a major topic of discussion among academicians. These arguments have questioned the validity of the term postcolonial since it relies so much in the formulation of its discourses on Western based theories (Loomba 1998: xii). Yet, Ashcroft et al. accord the emergence of postcolonial theory to the, "inability of European theory to deal adequately with the complexities and varied cultural provenances of post-colonial writing" (p: 11).

Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) that voiced "what might be called 'cultural resistance' to France's African empire" (Barry: 192) triggered postcolonial discourse. It gave birth to Edward Said's *Orientalism*

[2]The father of postcolonialism is Franz Fanon. He influenced later thinkers like Edward Said, Gayatri Charavorty Spivak and Ania Loomba to name a few. His works that have influenced this research are Fanon, F. (1963). *The Wretched of The Earth. Trans. Constance Farrington*. Grove Weidenfeld. Fanon, F. (1952). *Black skin, white masks.* Trans. Charles Lam Markmann. Paladin.

(1978), which inaugurates postcolonial criticism and exposes Western "Eurocentric universalism which takes for granted both the superiority of what is European or Western, and the inferiority of what is not" (Barry: 192). Both texts mentioned above are important for the study of postcolonialism. They represent primary voices that challenged European hegemony of the Other's politics and culture as well as wealth.

Postcolonialism as discussed above gave agency to the Other. The discourses have always been dissenting voices criticizing the West especially, and those that are aligned to the West and colonialism as well as imperialism. Thus, postcolonial criticism has been labeled as a tool used to, "undermine the universalist claims once made on behalf of literature by liberal humanist critics" (Barry: 191). Barry argues that:

> …universalism is rejected by postcolonial criticism; whenever a universal signification is claimed for a work, then, white, Eurocentric norms are being promoted by a sleight of hand to this elevated status, and all others correspondingly relegated to subsidiary, marginalized roles (Barry: 192).

Barry describes postcolonial criticism as works that contrive to grant nonwestern literatures an identity and to distance it from the western all-embracing ideal.

Third world writers and thinkers have played multiple roles in the elitist societies that were created by the Western colonizers in their colonies. The famous postcolonial writer and critique Kwame Anthony Appiah once argues that:

> Postcoloniality is the condition of what we might ungenerously call a comprador intelligentsia: a relatively small, Western-style, Western trained group of writers and thinkers, who mediate the trade in cultural commodities of world capitalism at the periphery. In the West they are known through the Africa they offer; their compatriots know them both through the West they present of Africa and through an Africa they have invented for the world, for each other, and for Africa (quoted in Loomba: 246).

Appiah's skeptic statement about the postcolonial can be refuted in many ways especially vis-à-vis Malaysian postcolonial writers. Postcolonial critiques, writers, and thinkers are no longer the elites who were a minority among the natives that were created by the West to rule over the Other on behalf of the colonizers. Postcolonial writers used to be Anglicized and were middlemen that traded and sold their own culture to the world, especially the Western world. Writers like Salman Rushdie and Arundhati Roy that are of Indian descent can be labeled as panderers to the West. The West views them only as presenters of the Other, and their own people see them as presenters of the West, and their fictions are their own versions of the Other that they want to see and present. However, much has changed since Rushdie's produced his Booker Prize winner *Midnight's Children* (1981). Many third world postcolonial writers write to upgrade their nation and culture and to instill local values into their newly independent countries. Most of these writers fought hand in hand with freedom fighters like Mahatma Gandhi and Muhammad Ali Jinnah in order to gain independence. Writers like Shahnon Ahmad took up the style of Indian writers like Mulk Raja Anand to produce writings that will help their nation to make sense of themselves. The influence of Anand's works through novels like *Untouchable* (1935) and *Coolie* (1936) can be traced in Shahnon's *Ranjau Sepanjang Jalan* (1966). While Anand criticized the West more than his people and country, Shahnon Ahmad took up the project of criticizing the West as well as his own people. His rhetoric has always been sympathetic towards the people, but a harsh critique of the political establishment.

Shahnon Ahmad and his contemporaries' rhetoric can be described appropriately through Patrick William's ideas. Williams asserts, "The ending of colonial rule created high hopes for the newly independent countries and for the inauguration of a properly post-colonial era, but such optimism was relatively short-lived, as the extent to which the West had not relinquished control became clear" (Williams 1993: 3). Western influence has continued and can be "located in flexible combinations of the economic, the political, the military and the ideological (but with an overriding economic purpose) …" (Williams: 3). Therefore, postcolonial critics have a problem with the term postcolonial. If the ideological influence is still present, then literature from postcolonial nations may be reiterating western thought and enhancing western influence. However, Shahnon and Noorjaya proved that their rhetoric differs from generally elitist postcolonial writings. Both writers write for their people and nation in order to educate and instill local cultural values as well as local color into their writings.

Translating Culture

This section discusses the theory of translating culture by Todd Jones (2003). According to him:

> Translation is hard. Anyone who's ever tried to converse beyond asking for directions in a language other than one's own is well aware of this. Many scholars have written about

> how much is lost in the process of translating one language to another. Venuti has even described this process as being like "terrorism," in its ability to "reconstitute and cheapen foreign texts" (1991) (Todd Jones, 2003: p. 45).

Based on Jones's arguments above, this essay, as stated in the introduction, will look at the difficulties that the text has gone through in translating culture.

Translating cultures also means ascribing beliefs to an audience that does not know the mother culture/original culture of the text. Jones discusses the idea of ascribing beliefs. He argues that it "…is a much more difficult epistemological task than is commonly appreciated and is especially difficult in the sorts of situations that translators are in (Jones, 2003: p.45). Jones argues that a translator who uses his own language which he labels as "home language" cannot successfully understand and explain what the Other believe in or translate it using his own language. Unwittingly, Jones argues, the translator changes the meaning of the text because he cannot translate an *alien belief ascription* (Jones, 2003: p.45). Thus, it can be deduced that a text that is not translated well will have problems in putting forth and translating alien beliefs from the original culture and language into a foreign language.

Translating cultures is a process of uncovering beliefs, especially foreign beliefs. Todd argues that this is a difficult process. According to him the belief system which is a state of mind that is unobservable is difficult to translate (Jones, Todd 2003: p. 16). Translation of cultures means translating belief ascriptions that are psychological mindsets. The translation of psychological mindsets is indeed a very difficult process because the culture is often a way of life and it becomes embedded in an individual's psyche by the time he/she reaches the age of 21, and it becomes a way of life.

Jones also argues that we cannot decipher wholly the belief system of an individual that is foreign and exotic. According to him:

> A central problem for the kind of belief ascription a translator needs to do, how- ever, is that often the people whose language we want to translate hold beliefs that are quite different from our own. We can't assume we can uncover the beliefs of exotic people just by imagining what we would believe were we in their shoes (Jones, 2003: p. 52).

It is not enough to assume the Other's personality in order to translate a culture. Jones argues that we need more than that skill in order to translate a belief system.

> Jones describes the problems that translators might face in translating an ascribed belief system that is exotic. According to Jones, People interested in ascribing beliefs to exotic peoples and translating their utterances can also be thrown off the track by a lack of familiarity with the local conventions about when it is permissible to make assertions using non-literal meta-phorical language. In everyday English, for example, it is quite permissible for us to talk using words that seem to imply we believe that luck is a person determining the outcome of games of chance (Keesing 1985) or that we make decisions with our stomachs (see also Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Our familiarity with this convention means that none of our compatriots takes this verbal behavior to signal an underlying belief that chance, or decision-making works this way (Jones, 2003: 52).

In the above excerpt, Jones outlines the conventions of translating culture by using nonliteral metaphorical language. He gives two examples of such translation of culture.

However, Jones indicates that translators have to worry about being unfamiliar with linguistic conventions. He argues that translators worry about linguistic conventions, surrounding beliefs, and inference of underlying beliefs in relation to metaphorical phrases. In relation to these, there are inaccurate attributions by translators that Jones thinks are terrifying and common (Jones, 2003: 52). Jones argues about the inaccuracies of translating the culture of the Other due to linguistic inadequacies. Thus, it means that one must be a master of the foreign language in order to be able to translate the culture precisely and adequately.

Jones also discusses the Other's belief system. He aligns it with translation skills. According to him, a translator has to be able to uncover and communicate their exotic beliefs. The project of doing both is difficult because translators use themselves as models. This is a classical translation theory. In most cultures, this theory does not work. Thus, we have to understand that the foreign readers' minds do not work like the translators and the native's mind does (Todd Jones, 2003: p. 56). Therefore, we have to work and translate based on this praxis. Jones argues that even when we use a model to translate from a foreign language and culture most of the time, the model does not work. He argues that this is because the Other's psyche might not function similarly to the translator's psyche due to linguistic and cultural differences.

This essay will determine whether this theory is accurate. The translator of both texts is a Chinese woman, Wong Soak Koon that resides in Malaysia and was a literature lecturer. The texts that have been translated have been written by Malays that are sons of the soil (Bumiputera) of the country. Thus, the translator is familiar with the language, race, and history of Malaysia.

Analysis

This section will discuss two short stories: "Mencari Langkasuka" by Noorjaya and A Merdeka Tale by Shahnon Ahmad. The first story to be analyzed is "Mencari Langkasuka" using the theories outlined above.

"Mencari Langkasuka" is a story that is a reminiscence of the Malayan past. It relates nostalgically to the glorious Malay empire called Langkasuka. This story is the narrator's psychological journey of finding the glory of Langkasuka and a physical journey towards the independence of his country. According to the text:

> On the 10th of March 1909, when the border treaty was signed, he and his people had been colonized. That was almost 90 years now. No use remembering all the suffering and humiliation. No need for pointing fingers trying to lay the blame on someone. No need. Because the ones to blame were his people themselves (Noorjaya, 2009: p. 353).

The Malayan colonization and the Siam-Malay (Thai-Malay) colonization began when the British signed the border treaty with Siam in 1909. The narrator states that most of the blame is on his people themselves. Colonization brought suffering to his nation and people. The text shows that they are fighting to redeem their independence.

According to the narrator, the city that he is in which is Alor Setar in a state called Kedah in Malaya (Malaysia) was the seat of Malay civilization, i.e. the centre of the civilization of the nation of people called the Malays. According to the text:

> His eyes gazed longingly at a modern city that had been new in the time of Langkasuka, which had once been the seat of a Malay civilization, whose language and culture were Malay, and which had been divided since the 18th century (Noorjaya, 2009: p. 353).

The author describes the narrators longing for independence when he views the city which was once the centre of culture and power of the Malays. He narrates that the Malay's language and culture had been divided and torn apart due to colonization since the 18th century. Historically, it can be dated back to when Francis Light arrived in Pulau Pinang and signed a treaty with the Sultan of Kedah to buy Pulau Pinang from the Kedah government in exchange for protection for Kedah against Siam. However, when Siam attacked Kedah Francis Light refused to help the Sultan to defend Kedah. That was when the people were torn apart and colonialism began in the northern part of the Malay peninsula.

Due to colonialism of the Siam and colonialism of the British too the Malays were subjugated. According to Noorjaya,

> In the colonized southern province, the people lived a life of oppression. Today he sought to leave that boundary behind to trace the origins of the Malays up to Kuala Indera Kayangan, and this afternoon he was here in Kedah to reconnect the broken bloodline, and to close the rift that had developed (Noorjaya, 2009: p. 353).

The narrator has crossed the boundary that was created by the British and Siam for the Malays. Borders and colonizers separated the race. Families that were separated live on both sides of the border in Thailand, Southern Thailand predominantly, and Kedah.

Thus, the narrator states that he has decided to reconnect with the Malays on the Malayan side of the border in order to mend the harm that the British and the Siam had done to the Malay race.

Langkasuka is an ancestral land of the Malays. It exists historically although the name no longer does because it has not been as lucky as Melaka. According to the text:

"A long time ago, the Malay ancestors had built the civilization of Langkasuka from the Isthmus of Kra right down to northern Perak in the south" (Noorjaya, 2009: pp. 353-354). The empire of Langkasuka is described to be from Segenting Kra which is now a part of Thailand until the northern part of Perak. Colonization is a very painful experience for the colonized subjects. The pain can be felt through the text. According to Noorjaya, "Colonized people cannot forget pain and sadness just like that, except when they are free from the fetters that chain them and their souls" (Noorjaya, 2009: p. 354). The pain of colonization and the humiliation that comes with it can only be cured with or through independence. The Malays and the people of Malaya fought hard for Malaya's independence. The plans that transpired before independence can be gauged from the excerpt below.

Noorjaya very cleverly describes how independence was planned. According to the text,

> "The Northern Rulers wanted to create a single national identity, which in effect would efface my identity. Doesn't

> that infringe on one's basic human rights?" Kusing puts forth many questions which I could not answer. "What should my answer be?" "Show me Langkasuka." "Langkasuka?" "An Independent Malay civilization, stretching from the Isthmus of Kra to Perak". "That Langkasuka had vanished in history." "Langkasuka will not be lost as long as you, my friend, and I are Malays." (Noorjaya, 2009: p. 355).

Independence was created or planned by the royal rulers of the Peninsular because the nation and its people are their dignities. The dialogue is that there is no physical Langkasuka anymore. Thus, the narrator argues that as long as the Malays are alive as long as that the spirit of Langkasuka will remain because the nation and its people are synonymous.

The narrators meandering thoughts lead him into a dream state. He finds himself in the past. According to the text:

> Kusing was startled. Suddenly he found himself in a Throne Room. On the throne sat a man who wore the ceremonial garments of a Malay ruler. The man held a long kris and a shorter one was slipped into the sash at his waist. Was he really a Malay ruler? Kusing was familiar with Malay ceremonies. He sat properly cross-legged. But where am I now: He thought. History unfolded in his mind. Kusing was familiar with the history of his people and the kingdom named Langkasuka. He went over it in detail." (Noorjaya, 2009: pp. 355-356).

The narrator cannot place himself in any temporal or geographical location. He tried to use his historical knowledge to make sense of the situation that he was in. He started to mule over his historical knowledge in detail.

The man in the royal dress who is sitting on the throne tells Kusing that he is now in Kedah. The narration states,

> "We suppose you are new here in Kedah," the voice of the man on the throne was gentle and kind. These must be the words of a supreme ruler. There were many rulers in Kedah though Kusing, I wonder which one he is. "I am Sultan Muzaffar Shah, this is the kingdom of Kedah Darul Aman. What is your name? Where are you from and why are you here?' That answered Kusing's question. Sultan Muzaffar Syah was the first Malay prince to convert to Islam, he remembered. Now it became clear to him that he was in the year 531 of the hegira calendar. "You have not answered my question," "Forgive me, sire. My name is Ku Husain from Patani, and I came here to find Langkasuka, sire." "Patani? Is not Patani ruled by a king?" "That is true sire, but a hundred years from now, Patani will be annexed by the northerners and the last king Tengku Abdul Kadir Kamaruddin, will be forced to abdicate the throne." (Noorjaya, 2009: p. 356).

Kusing finds the answer to his meanderings. He is in Kedah and the individual in front of him is the first Muslim ruler of Kedah.

The dialogue between Kusing and the Sultan reveals that Langkasuka will be ruled by his descendants. Kusing then states that the city of Langkasuka was built by his ancestors. According to the text,

> "Hmm, we know the ways of these northerners. Kedah, too, will be annexed by them several times in the future, when it will be ruled by my descendants. Err...did you mention Langkasuka?" "Yes, Your Majesty." "The city of Langkasuka was built by my grandfather, Maharaja Derbar Raja, at a place upstream called Sok." (Noorjaya, 2009: p. 356).

Thus, via the text historical facts are translated for us so that we understand our nation's history. Fiction is more widely read than historical texts. History is a closed subject and very objective while literature is fluid and subjective. Thus, Noorjaya, the author very intelligently uses the objective to create something that is fluid and subjective. However, the subjectivity is objectified and authenticated via historical data, historical figures, and temporal space as well as geographical settings.

Nations are narrated into being. This is what the author is trying to put forth through his fiction. The narrator states that history educates us. It teaches us the meaning of suffering, i.e. other peoples', of those that have lived in the past. According to the text:

> History teaches the meaning of suffering and backwardness in all aspects. The Northern Curriculum artificially created a new national language and culture. What it did in reality was to create a new 'nation' that destroyed the heritage of a great people. (Noorjaya, 2009: p. 358).

The new nation was created through a curriculum, that the narrator labels as the Northern Curriculum. He states that the purpose of the curriculum was to create a new nation that destroyed the heritage of the Malays which he calls great people. Thus, the tradition and religion of the Malays were destroyed because of a nation that was narrated into being through rhetoric and philosophy. The new nation was theorized into being after it was narrated.

In the end of the narration, Kusing finds himself amidst an army of people that were moving northward. According to him:

> Suddenly it all happened very fast. Kusing found himself on the vast Padang Jangam. Before his eyes, hundreds of thousands of torches were carried by people accompanying warriors riding elephants and horses. Kusing approached the army. He saw Sultan Muzaffar Syah, Tengku Kudin...and the Malay warriors accompanied by a few hundred thousand people. They were moving north. Kusing followed the great Malay army. Clearly he was no longer searching for Langkasuka, but instead fighting to build a new Langkasuka that had been lost for so long" (Noorjaya, 2009: 358-359).

Thus, the narrator portrays that a nation that had lost its identity through narration, and philosophy is trying to rebuild it with might. The might of the people and its rulers. The search for a Langkasuka was over. Now it was the duty of the people and its rulers to rebuild a nation that is more powerful than Langkasuka on the ashes of the old castles and myths as well as historical facts of a nation state that is long gone but a people that still live on. We have to bear in mind the philosophy of Hang Tuah that surfaces in Hikayat Hang Tuah and Sejarah Melayu, "Tak akan hilang Melayu di dunia". Borders and countries might disappear, but the people and the spirit of the lost nations remain. As long as the Malays live and breathe as long as that the spirit of the great nation Langkasuka will live on and exist.

The next story that will be discussed is "A Merdeka Tale" by Shahnon Ahmad. The narrative begins with these words "Merdeka! Merdeka! Merdeka!" "Merdeka" a Malay word which means freedom or independence. In this story, it is also the name of a person.

Merdeka in this story is the name of a beggar. He comes to the house of a child named Yuri. He is depicted to be,

> "Only when Merdeka stood straight at the gate, showing his chipped-alms bowl, only then did Yuri react. She would stare at the thin body on the other side of the imposing gate. Really the body was so thin – as thin as a bamboo pole. The hair was thick long and uncombed. The ends of the hair were so knotted and twisted like a piece of old, hardened latex. The eyes were sunken, and the shine was no longer there. And the face, the exposed chest, the arms, the neck and the bottom which were three quarter exposed, were all thickly covered with black dirt, dark blotches everywhere, similar to the saliva stains, the maps, as they are called, found on dirty pillows. (Shahnon Ahmad, 2009: pp. 386-387).

Shahnon through this character criticizes the idea of Merdeka/ independence. This character who is a beggar symbolizes the frailty of the concept of independence. The state or country that is impoverished which is struggling for independence is portrayed via the character. To portray the futility and absurdity of the act of independence the word Merdeka in this text is repeated by a child and a half-senile beggar (386-387).

Shahnon Ahmad is well known for his criticism of the Malaysian way of life and politics. He has always been through his writings as a social critic. This surfaces in the short story discussed in this essay. According to Shahnon Ahmad:

> Datuk Mahbub was an old hand at party politics; he had gone through five different eras. "This is an experienced Datuk. During the Japanese Occupation, this Datuk had many samurai swords. During the Malayan Union, it was also this Datuk who spat on many white men. In 1957 it was also this Datuk who climbed trees, shouted and screamed. Now this Datuk has a seat, many wives, and is old" (p. 392).

Datuk Mahbub is depicted as a freedom fighter. He was pro-Japanese during the Japanese occupation, fought against the idea of the Malayan Union that was going to annihilate the power of the Malay Sultans. This man is depicted as vocal and rude. It shows that in spirit he practices the Japanese slogan that 'Asia is for Asians'. In his association with the British colonizers, he used brawn rather than the brain.

Datin Rahimah is Datuk Mahbub's third wife. She is depicted to give him strength and support throughout his political career. According to the text:

> Datin Rahimah was quick to grasp how the *rakyat* would receive her husband each time he visited their kampong [village]. The applause would be thunderous each time he jokes. And this continued from week to month, from one kampong to the next. In fact, even the party leaders and even ministers would burst out laughing. ADUN [Members of the State Legislative Council] meetings, or other branch meetings or even the unofficial meetings with central party leaders would become happy occasions (p. 393).

Datuk Mahbub had the knack of putting people at ease with his jovial character. His wife is very perceptive about his influence on the people and how they receive him.

Shahnon discusses Datin Rahimah's relationship with Datuk Mahbub. The portrayal of Datuk Mahbub and his third wife by Shahnon Ahmad is a critique of the Malay elite and political establishment. According to the text:

> Some time ago, before Rahimah became Datuk Mahbub's third wife, she remembered reading on the front page about Datuk Mahbub's antics is an ADUN meeting. From this satirical speech, she could not decipher what connection it had with the opposition party. If she remembered rightly Datuk Mahbub also jokes about "filling the stomach, and marrying more". Rahimah barely remembered. In her school, everything was chaotic for it was obvious that there was a joker in the ADUN assembly; in fact, in another newspaper, it was explained that there was a jester in the house of the people's representatives. And this was surely a healthy politics development (p. 394).

Malay politics have always been elitist. However, through the characters of Datuk Mahbub and his third wife Shahnon Ahmad downgrades it. The political figure that is portrayed by Shahnon Ahmad is a man who thrives on the Malay culture of having many wives, and this surfaces in his political agenda, as well as through his marriages. He is not a serious man and is depicted as a joker which shows that Shahnon openly criticizes or mocks the elitist Malay politicians by creating such a character as Datuk Mahbub. This character of Datuk Mahbub when translated into English cannot be easily defined by the native speaker of English who is unfamiliar with Malay culture and politics as well as Islam. The depiction of this character needs to be clearly explained to the native speaker of English who with the advent of independence lost touch with his ancestors' colonies.

The character Merdeka, a beggar, shows us the ills of independence. This man fought hand in hand with Datuk Mahbub to achieve the nation's independence. While a man like Datuk Mahbub has a parliamentary seat and lives in comfort with his three wives and many children, Merdeka lives in poverty and is senile.

> When Merdeka came yet nearer, she could see his skeletal body completely uncovered, except for his private parts. His hairs, loose on top was knotted at the bottom almost like the moss-covered plank. His face was thin, and his blood-shot eyes seemed be sunken in the face. His nose was dirty and his cracked lips which were seldom closed tight would reveal a few dirty stained teeth (p. 394).

Merdeka represents the futility of the concept of independence. It shows that independence does not necessarily mean prosperity. Merdeka is only one figure in this story that represents the many other freedom fighters that have been forgotten and that suffer in poverty. Shahnon in his own way criticizes the opportunist that took advantage of people like Merdeka for their own ends. These are represented through the figure of Datuk Mahbub.

Conclusion

Bearing the concept that 'Nations are Narrated into Being' this research has analyzed writings of two native Malay writers that have been translated into English and how their writings show the rhetoric of independence. Both writers' fiction has been employed as rhetoric that helped the nation to gain its independence from Britain. The research has discussed and described the Malays in the Malay Peninsula as well as the cultural and emotional effects of the translated independence rhetoric that has been lost through translation. This essay has read the texts using a postcolonial lens created from the works of postcolonial theorists like Edward Said, Franz Fanon and Homi K. Bhabha. Via the created lens this essay has analyzed how the Malay postcolonial culture has been translated into English. Todd Jones' essay "Translation and Belief Ascription: Fundamental Barriers" (2003) has also been a major help in the analysis of the texts and cultural effects that they have produced. It has been argued that epistemology has been used to ascribe belief. The research has described how cultural epistemology has been translated into the English language via the critical analysis of Shahnon Ahmad's "A Merdeka Tale" and Noorjaya's "The Quest for Langkasuka".

It can be concluded that the translation of cultural epistemology is successful in both texts because the translation of the text can be easily understood. This understanding permeates especially in the cultural effects and historical effects that are predominantly native to the Malays and Malaysia.

Competing Interest Statement

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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University of Malaysia Sarawak, Malaysia

Victor Terence King, *Professor Dr.*
University of London, U.K.

Yasser Issa Al-Shboul, *Dr.*
Al-Balqa Applied University, Jordan

While every effort has been made to include a complete list of referees for the period stated above, however if any name(s) have been omitted unintentionally, please notify The Chief Executive Editor, Horizon Journals at CEE@horizon-jhssr.com.

HORIZON JOURNALS

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

(Manuscript Preparation & Submission Guide)

Revised: May 2020

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**.

MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

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.

Submission Preparation Checklist

As part of the submission process, authors are required to check off their submission's compliance with all of the following items, and submissions may be returned to authors that do not adhere to these guidelines.

- ✓ The submission represents an original work that has not been published elsewhere nor submitted to another journal in any language for publication;
- ✓ 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;
- ✓ The submission adheres to word count and APA 7 stylistic and bibliographic requirements; and
- ✓ All identifying information has been removed from all documents and file names.

Checklist for Manuscript Submission

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

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

Manuscript Types

Horizon accepts submission of mainly **four** types of manuscripts for peer-review.

1. **Regular article**

   Regular articles are full-length original empirical investigations, consisting of introduction, materials and methods, results and discussion, conclusions. Original work must provide references and an explanation on research findings that contain new and significant findings.

   Size: Generally, these are expected to be **around 6,000** words (excluding the abstract, references, tables and/or figures), a maximum of 80 references, and an abstract of 100–150 words.

2. **Review article**

   These report critical evaluation of materials about current research that has already been published by organizing, integrating, and evaluating previously published materials. It summarizes the status of knowledge and outline future directions of research within the journal scope. Review articles should aim to provide systemic overviews, evaluations and interpretations of research in a given field. Re-analyses as meta-analysis and systemic reviews are encouraged. The manuscript title must start with "Review Article".

   Size: These articles do not have an expected page limit or maximum number of references, should include appropriate figures and/or tables, and an abstract of 100–150 words. Ideally, a review article should be **around 3,000 words**.

3. Short communications

They are timely, peer-reviewed and brief. These are suitable for the publication of significant technical advances and may be used to:

(a) Report new developments, significant advances and novel aspects of experimental and theoretical methods and techniques which are relevant for scientific investigations within the journal scope;
(b) Report/discuss on significant matters of policy and perspective related to the science of the journal, including 'personal' commentary;
(c) Disseminate information and data on topical events of significant scientific and/or social interest within the scope of the journal.

The manuscript title must start with "*Brief Communication*".

Size: These are usually **between 800 to 1,500 words** and have a maximum of three figures and/or tables, from 8 to 20 references, and an abstract length not exceeding 150 words. Information must be in short but complete form and it is not intended to publish preliminary results or to be a reduced version of Regular or Rapid Papers.

4. Others

Book reviews, Brief reports, case studies, comments, concept papers, Letters to the Editor, and replies on previously published articles may be considered subject to the discretion of the journal editors.

PLEASE NOTE: NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE FOR PAGE LENGTH.

Manuscript Format

Horizon 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.

- **File Type**: MS WORD; Font-type: Times New Roman, Size 12 pts and 1.5 line-spaced.
- **Word count**: Adhere to the stipulated word-count. Regular articles: not more than 6,000 words, and Review articles: 3,000 words max. Headings: Ensure that they are clearly formatted throughout.
- **Manuscript structure**: The journal uses IMRAD style.
- **Title**: Should be attractive and indicative. No more than 30 words.
- **Running-head**: No more than 40 character spaces.
- **Abstract**: Should describe your entire study at a glance. No more than 150 words (maximum).
- **Keywords**: Must provide as many as 8.
- **Introduction**: It should provide sufficient background about the work carried out.
- **Methodology**: This should include details of any experiments conducted or data collected.
- **Results and Discussion**: This section should answer the question you raised in the introduction.
- **Conclusion**: Here you should include your findings.
- **Results and Discussion:** This section should answer the question you raised in the introduction.
- **Conclusion**: Here you should include your findings.
- **Competing Interests Statement**: e.g. The authors have declared that no competing interest exists.
- **Acknowledgements**: This usually follows the Discussion and Conclusions sections. Its purpose is to thank all of the people who helped with the research but did not qualify for authorship.

  This could be someone from a sponsoring institution, a funding body, other researchers, or even family, friends or colleagues who have helped in the preparation. Individuals and entities that have provided essential support such as research grants and fellowships and other sources of funding should be acknowledged. Contributions that do not involve researching (clerical assistance or personal acknowledgements) should not appear in acknowledgements.
- **References**: Lists every source (no limitation) but list those that may be of interest to readers and are current. "**Each reference cited in text must appear in the reference list**, and each entry in the reference list must be cited in text". There is no reason to include uncited sources in the reference list. **Cite what you use**, use what you cite. The references are to be alphabetized by the fist author's last name, or (if no author is listed) list by the organization or title. Ensure that in-text citations and references are complete and consistently styled and formatted as per the journal's in-house style (APA Edn. 6 or 7) failing which your article will **not be accepted for peer-review**. You may refer to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association for further details (http://www.apastyle.org/).

  Horizon takes unethical publishing strictly and reports each case of "ghost referencing" or "phantom referencing" to the Committee on Publication Ethics or COPE.

- **Biographical Statement of Authors**: Authors should submit a biographical statement to be included in the manuscript to be published by JHSSR. The biographical statement should include the author(s) full name, affiliation, email. In addition, it is also appropriate to discuss your personal history, academic program and/or field placement, and interest in the article's subject. The biographical statement may **not exceed 75 words**. The author biography should be **separately** accompanied with a **high-resolution picture** *(in JPEG file format)* of each author listed in this manuscript as this would be published along with the article ***(not pasted in a word file)***.
- **Appendix**: Includes additional data.
- **Footnotes**: Include necessary additional information.
- **Tables, Figures, Graphs**: Are complete, clear, attractive and of high-resolution. Avoid too long tables. Do not forget Table titles, figure and graph legends, and image captions. All Figures/ photographs to have a reference to the original source, unless created by the author.

Manuscript Structure

Most scientific papers are prepared according to a format called **IMRAD**. The term represents the first letters of the words **I**ntroduction, **M**aterials and Methods, **R**esults, **A**nd, **D**iscussion. IMRAD is simply a more 'defined' version of the "IBC" [Introduction, Body, Conclusion] format used for all academic writing. IMRAD indicates a pattern or format rather than a complete list of headings or components of research papers; the missing parts of a paper are: ***Title, Authors, Keywords, Abstract, Results & Discussion, Conclusions***, ***Competing interests statement, Acknowledgement, References*** and ***Biographical Statement of Author(s)***. Additionally, some papers include Appendices or Supplementary data.

The *Introduction* explains the scope and objective of the study in the light of current knowledge on the subject; the *Materials and Methods* describes how the study was conducted; the *Results* section reports what was found in the study; and the *Discussion* section explains meaning and significance of the results and provides suggestions for future directions of research. The manuscript must be prepared according to the Journal's style.

Manuscript Organisation

Manuscripts for submission to Horizon should be organised in the following order:

Page 1: Running head or title (No more than 40 character spaces).
This page should **only** contain the running title of your paper. The running title is an abbreviated title used as the running head on every page of the manuscript. The running title should not exceed 60 characters, counting letters and spaces.

Page 2: This page should contain the following:
Author(s) and Corresponding author information*.*
This page should also contain the **full title** of your paper not exceeding 30 words, with name(s) of all the authors, institutions and corresponding author's name, institution and full address (Street address, telephone number (including extension), hand phone number, and e-mail address) for editorial correspondence. First and corresponding authors must be clearly indicated.

The names of the authors stated must be **in full** (no initials).
e.g. Victor Terence King, Percival Bion Griffin, James William Chapman, Neelambar Hatti and Taher Badinjki.

Co-Authors: The commonly accepted guideline for authorship is that one must have substantially contributed to the development of the paper and share accountability for the results. Researchers should decide who will be an author and what order they will be listed depending upon their order of importance to the study. Other contributions should be cited in the manuscript's Acknowledgements.

Authors' Affiliation: The primary affiliation for each author should be the institution where the majority of their work was done. If an author has subsequently moved to another institution, the current address may also be stated in the footer.

Authors' addresses. Multiple authors with different addresses must indicate their respective addresses separately by superscript numbers: Aimee Henderson[1] and Nayan Kanwal[2]

[1]Department of English Studies, Texas University, Dallas, USA., [2]Department of the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Texas University, Dallas, USA.

A **list** of n**umber of black and white / colour figures and tables should also be indicated on this page.**

Page 3: Abstract
This page should **repeat** the **full title** of your paper with only the **Abstract** and **Keywords***.*

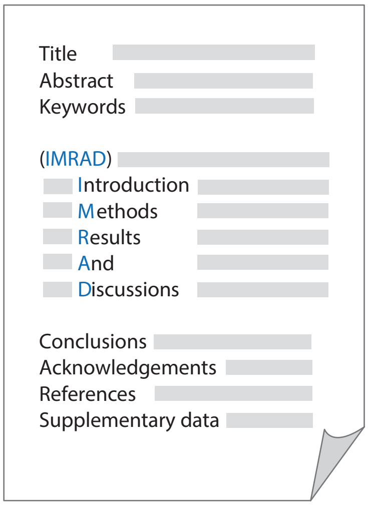
Abstract: The abstract should be around 150 words for a Regular Paper and up to 100 words for a Short Communication.

Keywords: Not more than eight keywords in alphabetical order must be provided to describe the contents of the manuscript.

Page 4: Introduction
This page should begin with the **Introduction** of your article and followed by the rest of your paper.

Manuscript Style

The manuscript should be written using the **IMRAD** style of writing. Regular Papers should be prepared with the headings INTRODUCTION, MATERIALS and METHODS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, REFERENCES, and SUPPLEMENTARY DATA (if available) in this order.



MAKE YOUR ARTICLES AS CONCISE AS POSSIBLE

Most scientific papers are prepared according to a format called IMRAD. The term represents the first letters of the words Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, And, Discussion. It indicates a pattern or format rather than a complete list of headings or components of research papers; the missing parts of a paper are: Title, Authors, Keywords, Abstract, Conclusions, and References. Additionally, some papers include Acknowledgments and Appendices.

The Introduction explains the scope and objective of the study in the light of current knowledge on the subject; the Materials and Methods describes how the study was conducted; the Results section reports what was found in the study; and the Discussion section explains meaning and significance of the results and provides suggestions for future directions of research. The manuscript must be prepared according to the Journal's instructions to authors.

Equations and Formulae

These must be set up clearly and should be typed double spaced. Numbers identifying equations should be in square brackets and placed on the right margin of the text.

Tables

All tables should be prepared in a form consistent with recent issues of Horizon and should be numbered consecutively with Roman numerals. Explanatory material should be given in the table legends and footnotes.

When a manuscript is submitted for publication, tables must also be submitted separately as data - .doc, .rtf, Excel or PowerPoint files- because tables submitted as image data cannot be edited for publication and are usually in low-resolution.

Figures & Photographs

Submit an **original** figure or photograph. **All Figures and/or photographs must include a reference to the original source**, unless you have created it yourself. Line drawings must be clear, with high black and white contrast. Each figure or photograph should be prepared on a new page, embedded in the manuscript for reviewing to keep the file of the manuscript under 5 MB. These should be numbered consecutively with Roman numerals.

Figures or photographs must also be submitted separately as TIFF, JPEG, or Excel files- because figures or photographs submitted in low- resolution embedded in the manuscript cannot be accepted for publication. For electronic figures, create your figures using applications that are capable of preparing high resolution TIFF files. In general, we require **300 dpi or higher resolution** for coloured and half-tone artwork, and **1200 dpi or higher for line drawings** are required.

Failure to comply with these specifications will require new figures and delay in publication.

NOTE: Illustrations may be produced in colour at no extra cost at the discretion of the Publisher; the author could be charged USD 50 for each colour page.

General rules on Figures and Tables

- All Figures and Tables should be numbered sequentially (e.g. Table 1, Table 2 etc.) and cite each one in your writing as Table 1 or Figure 1.
- All tables should be referenced in the text of the paper and in the reference list.
- Each table should have an individual title. Each word in the title should be italicized and capitalized except with, of, in, and, etc.
- **Figure captions must be placed at the bottom of each figure**.
- **Captions for tables must be placed at the top of each table**.
- All Figures/ photographs **must include a reference to the original source**, unless you have created it yourself.

General Guidelines

Abbreviations: Define alphabetically, other than abbreviations that can be used without definition. Words or phrases that are abbreviated in the introduction and following text should be written out in **full the first time** that they appear in the text, with each abbreviated form in parenthesis. Include the common name or scientific name, or both, of animal and plant materials.

Authors' Affiliation: The primary affiliation for each author should be the institution where the majority of their work was done. If an author has subsequently moved to another institution, the current address may also be stated in the footer.

Co-Authors: The commonly accepted guideline for authorship is that one must have substantially contributed to the development of the paper and share accountability for the results. Researchers should decide who will be an author and what order they will be listed depending upon their order of importance to the study. Other contributions should be cited in the manuscript's Acknowledgements.

Originality: The author must ensure that when a manuscript is submitted to Horizon, the manuscript is an original work. The author should check the manuscript for any possible plagiarism using any software such as **TurnItIn**, **iThenticate** or any other similar program before submitting the manuscripts to the Horizon journal.

All submitted manuscripts must be in the Journal's acceptable **similarity index range**:

< 30%– PASS; **30-40%–** RESUBMIT MS; **> 40%–** REJECT.

Copyright: Authors publishing the Journal will be asked to sign a copyright form after acceptance of their article. In signing the form, it is assumed that authors have obtained permission to use any copyrighted or previously published material. All authors must read and agree to the conditions outlined in the form, and must sign the form or agree that the corresponding author can sign on their behalf.

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Footnotes: Current addresses of authors if different from heading may be inserted here.

Page Numbering: Every page of the manuscript, including the title page, references, tables, etc. should be numbered.

Spelling: The journal uses American or British spelling and authors may follow the latest edition of the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary for British spellings. The spellings must be consistent with the same style throughout the manuscript.

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 or CEE@horizon-jhssr.com

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