



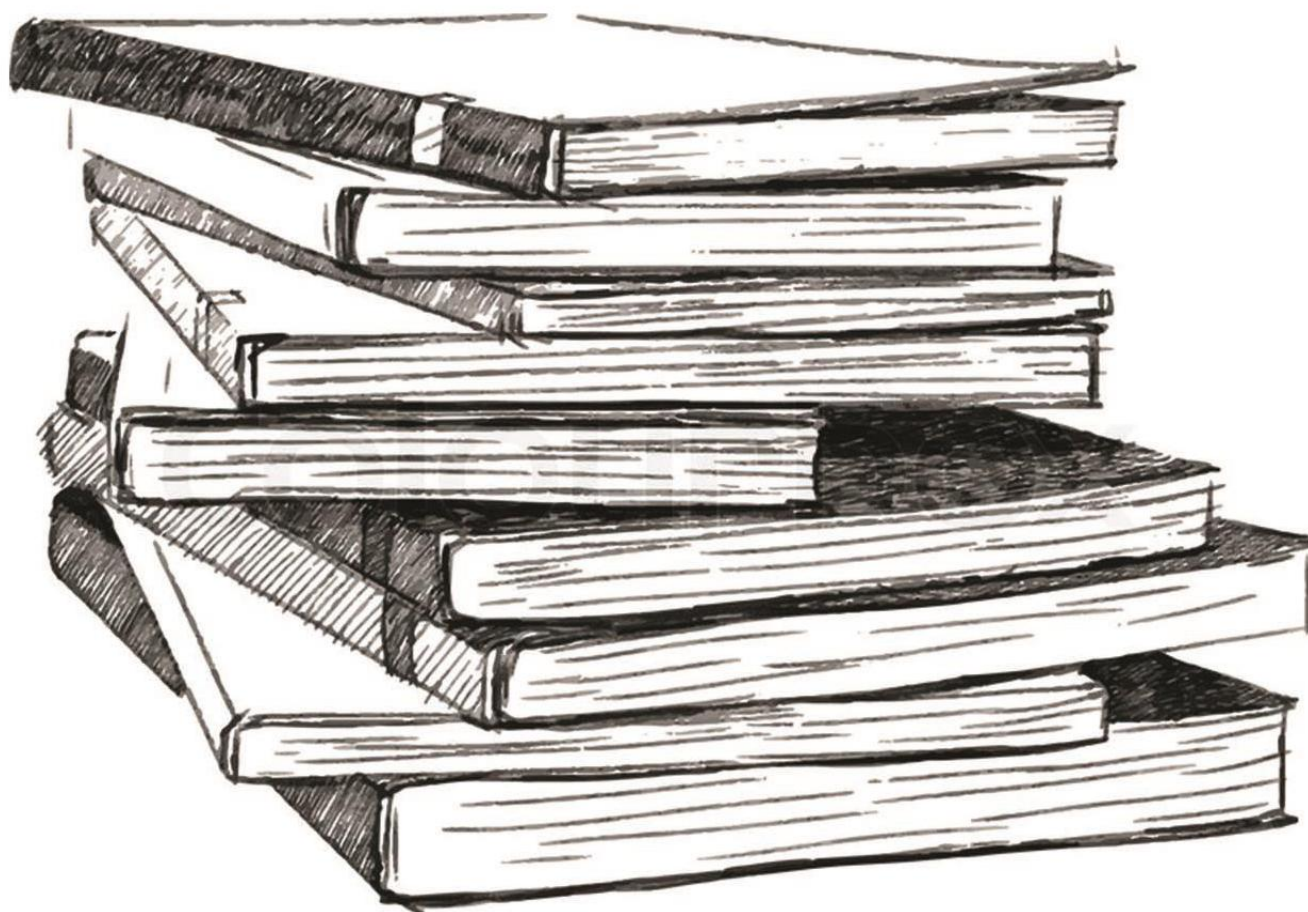
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Dr. Manoj Kumar

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# FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure that we present this issue of the International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences (IJELS). As an esteemed peer-reviewed journal, IJELS is dedicated to advancing scholarly research and fostering intellectual dialogue in English literature, Education and Social Sciences.

Our journal is a dynamic platform for academics, researchers, and practitioners to share their insights and findings. This issue encompasses a diverse range of topics, reflecting the multifaceted nature of our disciplines. From in-depth literary analyses to innovative social science research, our contributors provide valuable perspectives contributing to the broader understanding of cultural and social phenomena.

At IJELS, we are committed to upholding the highest academic rigour and integrity standards. Each submission undergoes a meticulous peer-review process, ensuring that only the most original and impactful research is published. Our editorial team, comprised of experts from around the globe, works diligently to maintain the quality and relevance of our journal.

We are particularly excited about the current issue, which includes groundbreaking studies and thought-provoking articles that challenge conventional wisdom and open new avenues for exploration. We believe these contributions will inspire further research and foster meaningful discussions within the academic community.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our authors for their dedication and contributions, our reviewers for their insightful feedback, and our readers for their continued support. As we strive to expand the horizons of knowledge, we invite you to engage with the content of this issue and participate in the ongoing dialogue that shapes our understanding of literature and social sciences.

Thank you for being so committed to scholarly excellence.

Sincerely,

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**Author:** M. Janardhana Rao

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**Author:** Dr. Lina Fathi Sidig

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# Unveiling the depth of Satire in Abubakar Adams Ibrahim's *Season of Crimson Blossoms*

Balogun Folasade

Department of Literature and English Studies

kkitnah@gmail.com

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**Abstract**— Contemporary African writers have addressed their countries' social, political and economic problems using satire to crystallise the malaises and irregularities affecting their societies. Satire is seen as a tool for expressing their disillusionment on the burgeoning prevalence of political, economic, religious and social abnormalities in the dysfunctional setting of African countries. One of such African writers is Abubakar Adams Ibrahim who uses his novel, *Season of Crimson Blossoms* to expose not just the societal maladies but also the follies and ineptitudes of mankind, and religion hypocrisies. This study critically scrutinizes the place of satire in achieving the aforementioned in the writer's fictional rendering. Emphasis is laid on political irregularities, cultural dissonances and hypocrisies associated with religion and the effects they have on characters and the society at large. The groundwork for these are squeezed out of the psychological make-up of characters, characters' conversation with one another, actions and inactions of characters. The aforementioned will be considered using satire as a tool to demystify the aspects that the writer advocate for change. Inadvertently, in the study of satire as a tool for viewing a work of art, sociological approach or criticism is inevitable as a framework because the society that gave rise to the book must be thoroughly understood before satire can come in to advocate for social transformation and revitalization.



**Keywords**— Satire, African Writers, Societal ills, malaises, Political ills

## I. INTRODUCTION

*Season of Crimson Blossoms* by Abubakar Adams Ibrahim has continued the trend of championing social causes which is quite synonymous with notable African writings. African writers are absolutely dedicated and intentional about utilizing the power of their pens to trigger social change, transformation and reformation. This justifies the reason why their works are replete with issues affecting their countries. They believe their writing should have some impact in changing the society they live for good.

It is important to note that most early African literature fiction and non-fiction works drew their strength and subject matter from the process of colonization and the fight for independence. During the colonial era, the social reality of this era was properly documented and condemned in the works produced in the era. There was an incarnation of a

dominant tendency of reaction against colonialism. The consciousness of writers at this period was to 'write back' to the Europeans who viewed them and their cultures as barbaric. There was a direct reaction against the notion of primitiveness and barbarism. However, the warped portraiture of African characters, society and environment propelled this era and the desire to correct these misrepresentations. They were consumed with creating social and cultural awareness about Africans.

As noted by Helen Chukwuma (2010); The subject matter of the African novel is realistic and socially-conditioned". To talk about African novels is to talk about "historical context in terms of the reality that has shaped and continues to shape the consciousness of the writers and their responses in the novels they write." (12)

These responses vary due to so many factors and issues affecting different geographical territories in Africa. Helen Chukwuma observed; While the Anglophone writers wrote about their home culture and life before the advent of the whiteman as a way of reclaiming their identity... Francophone writers were combating the assimilation policy of the French colonialists by introducing the political and cultural movement of Negritude in the thirties.(12)

Thus far, it has been established that most African novels are socially-conditioned. That is, they take their roots and thematic thrusts from societal issues. Contemporary writers gingerly followed the trend they met and resorted to using their works to ignite change. The preoccupations shifted from fighting against colonialism and fighting for independence to corruption, socio-political maladies and irregularities. The preservation and awareness of cultural and national identity was no longer the subject matter, rather the current happenings that realised social reality. Hence, since African writers are not one to keep mute about wrong happenings in their society, it is expected that beyond the aesthetic value of an African work, it should attempt to address some issues. African literature has been used overtime as a weapon of social transformation, reformation and societal change. The impact of African literature in the current shape of Africa States is very significant. Through works of literature, consciousness is quickened and awareness about so many wrong activities are exposed with the main motive of restructuring them.

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Abubakar Adams Ibrahim's *Season of Crimson Blossoms* will serve as the primary text and in achieving a better understanding and prognosis, there will be a close and in-depth reading of the novel and there will be an interrogation of the novel's narratives, its themes, characters and socio-historical context. In this research study, textual evidence has taken precedence over speculations. Interviews granted by the author will be thoroughly used and incorporated in this study which will lead to an overall satisfactory conclusion rather than speculations.

Nevertheless, this will not dissipate the place of secondary materials and sources of collecting information for this essay shall include the use of textbooks, novels, newspapers, fiction and non-fiction, magazine, dramas, critical articles and essays, journals and various literary pieces.

## III. WHAT IS SATIRE?

The word satire originated from the Latin word, *satur* which means 'full' and its subsequent phrase *Lanx satura* which

means 'a full dish of various kinds of fruits'. Satire has been defined by many scholars differently but one feature that remains constant through the numerous definitions would be the unflinching focus satire gives to unsatisfactory attitudes, beliefs, practices and ills in the society. Satire is a genre of literature, and sometimes graphic and performing arts, in which vices, follies, abuses and shortcomings are held up to ridicule, ideally with the intent of shaming individuals, corporations, government or society itself into improvement. (Wikipedia).

LeBoeuf Megan (2007:1) aptly describes satire as the exposure of "deficiencies in human behaviours and social issues...(8). Following this trajectory, we see that satire has a burning goal which is to expose that which is not acceptable and right. One important reason why satire is widely accepted and used in different societies is the protection of the satirist from culpability from criticism. This is made possible because satire does not state things directly, rather things are implied. Satire provides an avenue for its users through which they can say everything without giving offences.

Abioye Taiwo (2009:138) asserts that; An object is criticized because it falls short of some standard which the critic desires it should reach. The correct purpose, which is basic in every satirical text is expressed through a critical tone, which ridicules or otherwise attacks those conditions needing reformation in the opinion of the satirist.(3). This was also affirmed by Raj Kishor Singh (2012:68), that the improvement of mankind and humanity triggers the criticism of human's "follies and foibles"(9). In other words, satire is governed by a purpose which is the betterment of humanity and in achieving this, "wit, humor, irony, exaggeration and ridicule" are employed, Raj Kishor Singh.(9)

As seen above, satire does not point towards a person that is one of the main unique feature and characteristics of satire. The intended person does not feel threatened directly, and this is great because those who have the intent of indulging in those shortcomings are properly discouraged before exhibiting it. The role of satire is to ridicule or criticise those vices in the society which the writer feels need improvement.

Raj Kishore Singh also believes that satire is a potent tool for national development; What better tool than satire exists for voicing criticisms in those unstable times? Satire is more alive today than ever before, finding outlets in literature, television, the internet, comics and cartoons. Messages that would be ignored or punished if overtly declared are reaching millions of people in satirical form, and making a real difference. It may be the most powerful



tool that critics have to get their opinions out into the world" Raj Kishor Singh(9).

If satire had not proven to be a potent tool, it would have seen a great decline in its usage but because it reaches out to both ends, it's very valid. It's important to note that what necessitates satire is the growing number of issues which are affecting citizen's lives and national development and yet show no sign of coming to an end.

Sharing the same view, Iwuchukwu (2009:20) asserts that; Any literary work which holds up a society to ridicule or shows the foolishness or weakness of an idea or custom and towards its attitude of amusement, contempt or scorn is called a satire (15). This definition has been described as profoundly misleading, however, this shouldn't come off as a surprise because just like literature, there is scarcely any definition that can fully satisfy the complexities of satire. Its versatility also buttresses that because satire is not restricted to literary renderings only, even in human communication and interaction, satire abides there. Satire has been seen by some scholars as the "mocking tone or spirit". This made its presence felt in virtually every human interaction such as political debates, sermons, talks, movies, television, internet, comics, cartoons, artwork and paintings.

David Worcester argues that satire is criticism, whether subtle or overt. This is how he puts it in *The Art of Satire*; the content of satire is criticism and criticism may be uttered as direct rebuke or as impersonal logic. Innumerable intermediate stages, by combining emotion and intellect in different proportions, lead from one pole of blind human feeling to the opposite pole of divine or inch man attachment. The spectrum analysis of satire runs from the red of invective at one end to the violet or the most delicate irony on the other. (14). In other words, satire is criticism and criticism can come in many ways, ranging from direct confrontation to indirect or impersonal logic yet satire can come in many ways, ranging from direct confrontation to indirect or impersonal logic yet satire can be made more artistic or aesthetic and consequently subtle by the use of style.

As stated by Worcester; In the formation of any kind of satire, there are two steps. The author first evolves a criticism of conducts ordinarily human conduct but occasionally divine-then he contrives ways of making his readers comprehend or remember that criticism and adopt it as their own. Without Style and literary form, his message would be incomprehensible without wit and compression, it would not be memorable, without high mindedness, it would not 'come to men's business and bosoms.'(14).

The connection between criticism and style cannot be denied, according to Worcester because the writer will always make his readers understand and comprehend his

message and the method a writer does this is style. Style varies based on what a reader intends to achieve and he's at liberty to discern the one that will prove to be more effective and achieve his intended result. Style is basically the manner in which criticism is relayed. Intricately linked to satire is style because the variations found in satire are induced due to style, the style that a writer chose to communicate to his readers.

To my mind, satire is an escape weapon that allows a satirist to shoot at a target without being caught or apprehended. To actualise that, a satirist must persuade his readers effectively in order to sell his point or ideas to them. Therefore, satire must be convincing enough, so that the reader will perceive a situation the very way the satirist sees it. Hence, the satirist must be skillful in his use of language to 'get' his audience.

#### IV. THE THRUST OF SATIRE IN THE BOOK

##### 4.1 Socio-cultural satire.

After careful study of the book, it can be deduced that the text, *Season of Crimson Blossoms* took its major root from the cultures, traditions, norms and beliefs of the northern society which the writer intends to improve. Various elements of satire like irony, contrast, sarcasm, scorn, ridicule are employed to satirise shortcomings, follies and wrong orientation with the intent of improvement and social reformation. To make this analysis coherent, it shall be divided into two: narrative analysis and thematic analysis.

##### 4.1.1 Narrative Analysis

In the novel, there are a lot of obvious instances of satirical statements that were made to change the psyches of the northern society on various issues. Extracts that correctly depict this objective will be highlighted, foregrounded and analysed. The following aspects of the contemporary life in Northern Nigeria are tactfully ridiculed with a view to re-awakening new social consciousness:

##### 4. 1.1.1 Fashion

The latest and fashion sense of the present generation is satirised in the novel. The old tradition was decent and appropriate clothing but unfortunately, this trend has been adjusted with a huge accepted berth. Outfits that are in vogue are those that barely cover one's nakedness and the exposure of private organs has become the order of the day. Using the conversation between, Binta and her granddaughter, we see the writer's mind.

"Come, wipe off that silly lipstick. It makes you look ill and

your uniform is too tight around the hips. You should be ashamed wearing it so tight"



Fa'iza replied her grandmother

"Ashamed? But Hajiya, this is the fashion now. You are so

old school, wallahi, you don't know anything about fashion

anymore" pg 4.

This scenario chronicles the daily struggles faced by parents concerning their children, particularly young adults. Teenage years are unforgettable for many people because they represent their transition from childhood to adulthood. It's a period where many teenagers desire to feel heard, approved and follow the trend of their peers. We see the manifestation of this in the above excerpts where Faiza accused Binta of being ignorant of the current 'fashion'. It is important to note that change is constant and to a very large extent needed for development. Fashion styles that were in vogue in the late sixties are outdated in this present 21st century.

Despite the change in fashion wears, shoes and outfits, there are some principles of dressing that must never change or go into extinction. Especially, the principle of propriety and shamefacedness which guided the older generation. Binta was confronting her granddaughter of her not being ashamed of her skirt being so tight at the hip side because she knew during her heydays, shame wouldn't allow her to put such on. This short conversation shows the different perspectives where both ladies were talking from. Binta, being elderly knows the traditions of appropriateness and decency when it comes to fashion while Fa'iza, the fifteen years old teenager was in tune with the present fashion. Through the use of ridicule, the author uses the scenario to call attention to the recent fashion decadence that is dominant not only in the northern society, but also the world at large.

#### 4.1.1.2 Kunya.

This is the socially prescribed modesty that restricts a mother from calling her first child by his/her name or even show open affection or acknowledgment. This northern custom forbids open expression of love to a mother's first child. Binta, with her primordial attachment to ancient custom and tradition adheres to this rule and rather call Yaro, her first child 'Boy' instead of his real name. Even when she talked about him briefly, it felt like a sacrilege, a taboo.

"Do you think of him sometimes?"

"Munkaila?"

"The other one"

"Yaro?" Pg.13

The conversation between Binta and Hadiza, her daughter shocked her to the bone marrow because her mother had never made any reference to Yaro, even after his death. So strange was their conversation that when Hadiza recounted it to Munkaila, her elder brother, his countenance immediately changed. It was like a topic that must never be broached. During the conversation, Binta still couldn't bring herself to mention his name. It shows the importance attached to this custom.

However, the author through the use of contrast, is trying to reverse this age-long tradition that has caused so many untold hardships for family and even the society at large. Using Hadiza to condemn and break free from the shackles of the tradition by openly showing affection to Kabir, her son. Binta envied this liberty and freedom and inquired,

"Don't you ever feel...strange calling him like that? By his name?"

Your first son?"

"Hajiya, this is the twenty-first century. I shall not subject myself

and my child to the shackles of the old ways like you did" Pg.57

In advance of AfricaWrites 2015, Abubakar Adams Ibrahim who happens to be the festival guest talks to AfricanWrites's author Emma Shercliff about a lot about his novel. In the interview, he said,

"...My step-mom had a similar relationship with her mom[to that of

Binta, the main character in the novel], who because of culture and

tradition, is not supposed to acknowledge her daughter. So, she

treated her like a stranger, she never mentioned her name, she never

talked to her directly and that, that was the norm. And it really affected

her because sometimes there were things she wanted to talk to her

mother about but she never had the opportunity of doing that...

And I thought, you know it's doing a lot of damage to people and to the

way they relate with their children and nobody's acknowledging that."

The author's stepmother made a conscious effort to call her first son by name publicly and she relates well with her children through her brutal defiance.

Kunya is not only damaging but brutal to the children who yearn to be loved, cherished, adorned and treated specially. It's quite funny that the arrival of first child is always laced with eager anticipation but with the practice of Kunya, the affection that is supposed to be given to such child is terminated. At childhood, a child needs motherly love, they need it so much that they can't survive adequately without such. The writer satirises this act or custom in the northern part of Nigeria because of its damaging effect. Instead of giving birth and treating the innocent child like an unwanted being, they shouldn't give birth either.

Kunya also brings about discorded relationship between mothers and their offsprings. A child that is not acknowledged by his/her mothers can't open up about things that are troubling him/her to such mother. This manifestation could be seen in the way Yaro relates to Binta. Yaro's case was that of an innocent young boy with great reverence for his mother who wouldn't show or express any affection to him. The outcome was that he sought for love, affection and warmth from the wrong set of people (young boys) who made him feel at home, showered him with love in their own little way and he was eventually killed. If Yaro had been acknowledged by his mother, the desire of joining bad gangs might not occur to him, but because he wants to be loved, he strayed to the wrong set of people.

Infact, so horrible is the northern custom that when Yaro's father flogged him mercilessly over a little offence, Binta couldn't stop him or pleaded her husband to stop but rather she focuses on her cooking where she pounded yam with a great aloofness, it was their Yoruba neighbour that rushed in to rescue Yaro. Welts shone brightly on Yaro's back and Binta snuck out at night to apply medicine to his back with accurate secrecy of not being seen. Yaro was surprised and cried while Binta joined and out of accumulated love called Yaro by his name for the first time.

Hadiza, who had observed the entire proceedings of Kunya from a very little age, vowed not to subject her children to such hostility in the name of tradition. She defiantly reversed the customs for a better relationship with her children, which was what the writer's stepmother did too. Hence, the writer is beckoning on young mothers to disregard this destroying and horrible custom through sheer defiance to create a long-lasting relationship with their children.

Through contrast, the writer tries to reverse this cultural attitude that has been instilled in northern women. Even, Binta admitted the fact that some women do not acknowledge their second or third born. Hadiza, refused to be restrained by the tradition of the old ways. Unfortunately, this despicable act is still in vogue in the northern society.

The writer suggests a reversal of this tradition through the present-day mothers and by encouraging them to tread the path of Hadiza by showing love, care and affection to their first child.

#### 4.1.1.3 Education.

Despite the uncertainty that comes with education in our contemporary age, its importance cannot be overemphasised in an individual's life. Education has a way of curbing one's innate excesses and it also has a way of shaping and moulding one's thoughts in the right direction. Hence, monetary gain of going to school should be de-emphasised and the acquisition of knowledge should be deliberately emphasised. The place of education in the novel cannot be denied. Great emphasis was placed on it. Reza, the main character in the novel was expelled out of school for dealing in drugs and even after ten years, disdained going back to school because, according to him, he has 'too much metal in my head, too many fights, too much weed, too much...stupidity'

Not even Binta's entreaties of going back to school after getting married could persuade him.

"What purpose is there in going to school if not to make money?"

"It is to get an education"

"And what use is an education without money?"

"Money isn't everything, you know"

"You understand, all these people going to school, it's because they

want to become big men someday. Look at Bulama with his useless

diploma, he can't even feed his wife" Pg 189.

The above conversation between Binta and Reza is both disheartening and discouraging. Through the voice of Binta, the writer was able to pass the message that the end-result of education should not be in material gain. Money shouldn't be the main motive for getting education but for the purpose of being educated, the purpose of thinking correctly and having a developed way of seeing things. Simply put, the end-result of getting education should be in the rational perspective of viewing everything that goes on around one. In our contemporary world, youths are constantly disregarding degree, education and higher institution for internet fraud which has become the norm of the society. They believe that the only usefulness of education is to get money and since they are getting the money through dubious means, education is not needed.

The writer aspires to correct this prevailing societal mentality because everybody can earn a decent income, but not everybody can make a reasonable contribution to

improve the society which such lives in. This is the significance of education and it spans beyond the certificate. Education equips one to contribute to economic growth and development and helps to improve the quality of life and living. It also equips one with the spirit of competitiveness which is a vital tool for the societal's growth.

Reza was preoccupied with his weed business, running errands and doing dirty works for a politician, Senator Buba. It is crucial to note here that money got from these sources are short-lived but he refused going back to school and not even the registration for Waec examination which Binta paid for him could change his mind.

He retorted sarcastically,

"Have you seen how many graduates there are running around

with their silly ties and stupid file-holders looking for jobs?

People are just wasting their time when they could have been

doing something else with their lives" Pg 190.

However, it is quite ironical that someone who mocked and scorned education could ever spend a dime and encourage someone else to get an education. At a point in the novel, Reza painfully remember that his life(without education) has been a waste, with nothing meaningful to make out of it and while handing over some money to Sani Scholar, an ambitious seventeen years old who wanted to be a doctor before working for him, he admitted some things.

"Here, take this. Go and register for the exam, you understand

You will be useful to your mother that way" Pg 302

The shock on Sani Scholar prompted Reza's next statement,

"Scholar, don't be like me. Go to school. Make something of

of your life. Don't let someone else mess with your head, you

understand? Now, get out of here." Pg 302

Reza himself admitted that his head has been messed up. When he first thought about the idea of going back to school, he brought it before Senator, who discouraged him out of his selfish political objectives by recounting sad tales of graduates who had no job.

"You are doing better than them who spent all those years in school,

all that money gone, all that time wasted, for what? That is why I think

young people like you who are entrepreneurs, who have business acumen,

should not waste your lives chasing illusions..." Pg. 178

It is important to note that money got through ill means can never sustain a man, hence youth who condenses education at the expense of internet fraud are simply ignorant of the days ahead.

#### 4.1.1.4 Adventures in sex-life

It is a known fact that the north of Nigeria is overly conservative when it comes to sexual activities. This accounts for why we see little representation of such in their literature. The northerners are very reserved when it comes to sex and love-making. The case of pleasure and sex in the North is an in-built following to a certain doctrine or custom which most members of the community(women) have nothing to say about. Contrary to the popular opinion that this lifestyle is at home with the Northerners, the novel depicts something contrary to that. The Northern society is strictly patriarchal, that is a system that is run by males, rather than females. This, coupled with the 'forced' conservatism of sex has made any open discussion of sex a taboo.

The females in this society are expected to be modest, and never show their sexual desires outwardly or make it known even to their husband. This act is grossly satirised by the author as this could be seen in the novel when Binta, who wanted a different sex life with her husband but unfortunately the society does not permit deviation from the the accepted couple's sex life; the conventionals. Worst still, she couldn't bring herself to tell her husband and when she depicts it in her actions, she was brutally rebuked by her husband. Through the marriage counsellor, Dijen Tsamiya, the author exposes the age-long belief and tradition about sex.

"See, how you look into my eyeballs. Don't look your husband in the eyes

like that, especially when you are doing it. Don't look at him down there.

And don't let him look at you there, either if you don't want to have

impious offering"

"And don't go throwing yourself at him. You wouldn't want him thinking

you are a wanton little devil now, would you?"

In other words, a woman must not demand for sex when she needs it. Binta wanted a different sex life and when she tried to practise what had been eating her up, she was

condemned by her husband in a brutal way, "What the hell are you doing?"

The author condemns the act of repressing women and their innate sexual desires and believes women should be able to express their desires and fantasies and no society should restrain them. It is important to know that human beings are sexual beings and sex is a vital aspect of marriage that brings intimacy, love and oneness between couple. Hence, for something as vital as this, each parties concerned should have a say about when to have it or when not to have it, how to go about it, how not to go about it and the likes. Discussions should thrash out those questions because sexual intercourse is not for individual's gratification but for dual enjoyment. Concession should be reached from both parties involved and not just the needs and desires of a particular individual(males) should be given precedence to because the females also have active roles to play.

The novel satirises the traditional stereotype that a woman should not express or show her sexual desires openly. This has caused so many damages to the Northerner, especially women as seen in Binta who has to express or satisfy her innate sexual desires with Reza. It is quite possible that such act would have been avoided if she had been thoroughly satisfied during her husband's lifetime.

The society is implored to take into consideration, the women's innate sexual desires because they are humans with equal right to life, sex and everything that pertains to them. Brutal objectification of the female folks should be reconsidered because they are not for the men's gratification and delight only. They also need to be gratified and delighted.

Also, emphasis should not be laid on the male counterparts only, it should be shared across both genders. The right a man has to ask his wife for sex should be mutual and not one-sided, because if a man feels he doesn't need his wife's opinion on sex-related matter, he should gratify himself, excluding the activities of his wife.

The writer is trying to dig out the heavy thrust and culture of silence from the Northern society. In an interview with *AfricanWords*, the author when asked about having a reader in mind when writing said,

"...sometimes, because of the complexities involved in the story

and narration, especially when it explores issues that have to do

with culture, you have to be conscious of what you are doing. Do

you want to provoke people or provoke thoughts or provoke even

a revolt or something against the norm or the culture? So, you have

to sort out your priorities and figure out exactly what you want to

achieve with your story"

Going by what he has done so far in his novel, it is obvious his intent is to provoke thoughts about Northern customs especially their conservative sex life and he allows his readers to chew on the reason why women cannot demand for sex and the males can do that and the damage that has incurred to his society. He himself explaining sexual activities in details in the book was a bold move on his part as Northern writers consider this a sacrilege. Hence, if the writer can choose to break the shackles of old traditions that might prevent him from giving the best to his readers, Northern women can also break free from any traditional stereotypes.

At Madrasa, Binta has to feign interest in a pair of slippers but her major interest was in the booster pills and vaginal creams and ointments that was displayed on the table for sale. As quoted, "women with husbands contemplated these, unscrewing the lids and sniffing the contents" pg 133. Binta wanted to check out those booster creams but because she has no husband, she couldn't. By default, widows are culturally restrained, not even from buying alone but also from checking it out. The writer tries to reverse this status quo that is dominant in the north.

#### 4.1.1.5 Drug and Drug Abuse.

Despite the obvious emphasis of drugs like weed, joint, mixtures, tramol, solution and other assorted mixtures, they are massively condemned in the novel. The author through the voice of some characters spoke on drug abuse.

"You know, you people are just killing yourself with all these

useless chemicals you consume..." Pg 173.

Youths under the influence of drugs are prone to several misbehaviours, ill-mannerisms and outspoken rebellion. Seventy percent of youths have been wrongly exposed to drugs and many have become so addicted to it, such that leaving it becomes not only an arduous task but an impossible one. In the novel, we see Reza who not only consume drugs but also sell them. The writer's disposition to this mind-altering act is very negative as he uses some characters like Binta and Senator Makurdi to vehemently oppose the act. Although, it was implied humorously, we see the overtone of slight mockery in the sentence made by Senator Buba to Reza. The form of satire used here is the Horatian which condemn ills with humor.



The heavy use and reliance on drug has become the trend for youths of this generation and this has triggered so many social vices like rape, gang-rape, illegal acts like stealing, picking fights and disrespect to elders. Drug affects one's psychological state and it paves way for all these vices to have full manifestation in the society.

Another scenario where drug abuse was condemned was when Binta found out that her son was smoking right under her nose. She angrily addressed him for smoking his life away while others are praying in the mosque. This is to say that the act of consuming drugs must be condemned in the society and not encouraged.

"Under my roof, Yaro? Is this what you want to teach your brother

You useless boy! Men are at the mosque praying while you are

here smoking your useless life away under my roof!" Pg. 174

Obviously, drug abuse was not condoned, rather it was condemned. Through the author's depiction of youths who are so addicted to smoking and drug abuse, one could see that it affects their way of thinking. The author even added, 'A life seen through cannabis fumes' which means excessive consumption of drugs has a way of influencing one's thoughts and actions.

#### 4.1.1.6 Society's mode of confrontation

Another important aspect that was satirised was the way society handles issues which always leads to zero impact. The norms, cultures, values, tradition, customs, doctrines and societal's lifestyle are what guide a particular community. By default, every member of a particular community is socially-conditioned to a robotic followership to these ways of life. Hence, deviation from these long-held tradition are highly frowned upon and seen as rebellious act because of the in-built self-censorship mechanism which the society has been operating under. A widower in the Northern society is not expected to be in a sexual rendezvous with a guy half her age. If she wants to marry, that is fine but a mere affair is not allowed. When Binta broke the society norms, there was confrontation from various angles. Binta's affair with Reza sparked some controversies in her immediate society. Expectations were in place and her deviation from the societal expectations were deeply frowned upon.

Now, the mode of confrontation was what was satirised. Members of the society which she belongs to jumped hard at her and made her feel inferior through the use of harsh words and comments, bickering and the likes. Worst still, this type of confrontation was not direct to say the least.

For instance,

"See how people turn saints overnight. They don't realise that you

need to come to God with a pure heart before he answers your prayers"

And also,

"Imagine all these shameless sugar mummies running after young

boys, taking them to hotels and doing iskanci with them" Pg. 274

The surprising part is the fact that these comments were made right in Binta's presence making her feel depressed, embarrassed and ashamed. Direct and constructive confrontation was not employed but rather a destructive form of confrontation. It was obvious from the novel that such was not effective and couldn't bring her to change. But the author through the voice of Ustaz Nura, Binta's Madrasa teacher shows a better way of handling issues like this. Through the use of contrast as a satirical technique, we saw the most effective and efficient way of handling issues like this. Constructive criticism that was employed by Ustaz Nuru was able to provoke a change in Binta's heart.

Ustaz Nura heard about Binta's affair with Reza but went about it in a very civilized manner instead of harsh confrontation that speaks condemnation to the soul. He made her to understand that he believed nothing of the filthy rumours. With the right words, Binta was shedding sincere tears out of personal conviction. Ustaz Nura noticed it and said,

"Masha Allah, Hajiya Binta, I hope these tears are cleansing

your heart. Whatever you have done, or not, you will find

Allah, most forgiving and most merciful. Repent and you

find his arms open to receive you." Pg.306

The best way to confront deviation in the society is definitely not through harsh words as seen because it could only make the victim feel isolated and inferior without igniting a change. Hence, it should be avoided. Nigerian societies should tread the path of Ustaz Nuru when it comes to handling issues like this because it has been proven to bring in great result without condemning the victim involved.

#### 4.1.1.7 Cultural Rigidity

In following societal traditions and customs as described above, one should endeavour not to get lost with it. There should be room for openness and proper thought before acting. Commitment and adherence to these traditions

should be rational and not trigger an irrational act from us. This was actually manifested when Munkaila out of sheer devotedness to culture broke into a fight with Reza. He was trying to defend his societal legacy, his father's legacy and even his mother's legacy. We should know that his death could have been avoided if a proper discussion had been tabled with his mother, making her to understand why she can't be in an affair with Reza, due to her position in the society and how detrimental that could be to her children and her grandchildren who are looking up to her for guidance, counselling and advice, but he broke into a fight and ended up being killed. Hence, the author is trying to say that culture should not make us do things arbitrarily. He encourages openness before acting, flexibility with cultural beliefs and how rigidity to society customs and traditions should not overwhelm our sense of reasoning and the likes. Munkaila's death was just the aftermath of rash decision and action.

#### 4.1.2 Thematic Analysis

In this section, we shall be looking at the themes that permeate the novel and the message the writer wishes to pass through them. It is important to know that the themes in the novel satirize or speak to a particular attitude.

##### 4.1.2.1 War

Central to the novel is the political riot of Jos and its devastating effect on victims. Fa'iza, Binta's granddaughter suffered the most from the war. Through her, we see the raw effect of political war depicted by always getting traumatized at the sight of blood and meat. We saw how the effects of war have no respect for age, gender or one's achievement. In the novel, the trauma was so strange that her sister, Hureira thought she was possessed by demon and djinns. Even her close relatives couldn't understand her plight. She battled everything by herself. In an interview with Elizabeth Olaoye, the writer was asked how the trauma theory explains Faiza's predicament but seems to repudiate the seeming superstitious aspects of genies, he said,

"I have said before that my point of interest is not necessarily in the

proof of their existence, not of djinns or other supernatural beings

but in interrogation of peoples' beliefs in their existence and how

they act and behave as a result of these beliefs. I am not trying to

prove their existence. I am only trying to mirror how people behave

because of the belief they have or don't have about these things.

Are there logical explanations of strange occurrences? Yes, sometimes

there are. Sometimes, there aren't...Does the constant stream of assorted

violence that people here are subjected to have an impact on their psyche?

Yes. They may be mentally stronger but they do suffer, a lot and the sooner

we acknowledge this; the better"

In faiza's case, there was an explanation, what she has witnessed in the past drove her to that junction. At a point, she struggles to remember the face of her brother Jamilu by drawing some sketches and regardless of how much she tries, she couldn't get his face. Hence, she keeps shedding paper after the attempt of trying to sketch their faces on the paper fails. This happened because she witnessed the gory scene of the bloody massacre of her father and Jamilu. The author uses the plight of the poor girl to satirize war in its entirety because its effects can never be fully eradicated.

Also, her failed attempts at sketching her brother's face was literally taken as a manifestation of how society wants us to think irrationally. The author wants us to look at things rationally and seek for a logical explanation for strange occurrences before veering into the spiritual realm because some things are not really associated with spirits, demons and djinns, but they might be trigger out of past failures, experiences and mistakes.

Another effect of war in the novel could be seen in the life of Binta who had to leave Jos where she had spent the early years of her life, but had to go to Abuja for safety. We need to understand her dilemma because for someone who had grew up in a place, leaving all her properties, friends and family and migrating to another place is not easy. Hence, by emphasising the effects of war, the author consciously satirises it.

##### 4.1.2.2 Love.

Another theme in the novel can be traced to mutual emotions and feelings. Human beings have the tendency to love others and desire to be loved in return. Despite this innate desire, it is extremely important that we channel our emotions within the right context to avoid tragedies. Binta's affair with Reza ignited a lot of reactions from her immediate environment and it had to be done with utmost secrecy. Whenever Reza wants to visit her, he has to walk twice or thrice before approaching Binta's house. Now, the writer though fully aware of the need to feel love was able to capture and imagine the likely consequences of such adventure. Hadiza, at the beginning of the novel admitted that her mother was lonely. The writer satirizes this improper affair and predicts the likely consequences. Binta



was a respected widow but that respect dissipated quickly the moment she started her illicit affair with Reza. Fa'iza's friends who saw Binta with Reza disregarded her softly in their greetings to her.

She also lost her respect amidst her contemporaries and colleagues. Young women who were far beneath her talked to her out of contempt. If Binta had married Alhaji Buba in the proper way expected of her, the indignation and lack of respect that shadowed her would have been averted. Another consequence of Binta's improper and illicit affair was the tragic death of her son, Munkaila. By capturing the likely consequences, the writer was able to satirise this act in the society.

#### 4.1.2.3 Political Satire

This was greatly addressed in the novel. The unacceptable and oppressive practices of political leaders were highlighted through scorn, ridicule and sheer contempt. The filthiness of politics was also exposed and condemned.

#### 4.1.2.4 Bad Leadership.

Through the use of ridicule, the author satirises bad leadership in Nigeria. In the novel, the oppressive practices that are perpetuated by political leaders were emphasised. A very key conversation to the realisation of this was when Sadiya came to visit her mother-in-law, Binta.

"I hear the queues are back at the stations"

"Back? They never left"

"And we produce oil in this country, saboda, Allah fa!"

"Bad leadership, that's all"

Speaking with UbuntuFm on bad leadership, the author said,

"...These are people who inherited the flawed colonial structure that

Nigeria was established on, not as a country but as a business enter-

prize for Britain. They inherited that system and as nationalists instead

of modelling the system and fashioning Nigeria into a country, they

maintained the status quo and continued running as a colonial outpost

that benefits only them and their families and cronies. The same men

who started the Nigerian civil war in their twenties and thirties are still

running the country today in their seventies and eighties and have no

intention of stepping aside."

The writer's thought could be seen in his book and could be related to. Bad leadership has ruined Nigeria. To be precise, a country that is blessed with natural resources and mineral resources is still underdeveloped as a result of bad governance and sheer greediness of political leaders. In the novel, we saw Senator Makurdi whose son was pleading with his father to sponsor his one-week trip to Spain to learn a language because he was bored. Despite the weak resistance, his father agreed and we have citizens who could barely feed themselves even in his jurisdiction.

Hence, the present set of politicians that we have are just there for themselves, their families and to represent their selfish interests. The annoying fact is that they love what they have achieved, that they kept going back to contest regardless of their age or the money acquired. In the novel, we could also see the despicable state of a country like Nigeria, that produces oil but lacks fuel at the station. For a country that produces oil, there should not be scarcity of fuel. It shouldn't be heard of but ironically that is the present case of the country. Such country should be able to sell oil to its citizens at a little price but Nigerians cannot even benefit from the fact that oil is being produced in their country. Just as the writer opined in UbuntuFm's interview, the present and past leaders of the country see the country as a business enterprise, not as a country with expectant citizen but as a business enterprise that must be scooped of her riches as much as possible, without fear or remorse.

Through the use of ridicule, scorn and sarcasm, we saw what the author is trying to say about bad leadership and the expectations which the citizens have. Ordinarily, an oil-producing country should naturally have abundance but ironically, what we have is scarcity of that which we produce because of political leaders' selfish objectives and motives.

Another popular notion that was satirised by the writer is the dependence and confidence attached to some leaders. Most African states are deep in the dilemma of bad leaders because political leaders do not see their citizen as anything, rather the focus is on their selfish motives and not the general interest of the people. And worst still, the gullible citizen always tribalise politics believing that their own person would come through for them. Many citizens believe that southern leaders or northern leaders is what Nigeria needs, but the writer mocked this notion through Mallam Haruna in the novel.

"Northern leaders, southern leaders, what good have they done the country?"

In an interview with UbuntuFm, the author commented,

"The moment an Igbo man and an Hausa man and a Yoruba man get into power,

they speak a new language, the language of those in power which excludes those

being governed. When we realise this, we will have a better understanding of

which direction to channel our anger"

Here, we see the ridiculing of such notion because in actual sense, no leader regardless of their geographical location has actually made significant impact in the state of the country. So, the writer is trying to implore citizens to forget about a southern or Northerner leader to come through for them in changing the situation of things because the realm of power has no regard for tribes and regions. In that realm, all politicians are the same. In the writer's interview, he made it so glaring that all politicians speak a language that exclude citizens, but which they understand regardless of their tribe, hence, it is the language of power.

#### 4.1.2.5 Corruption.

This was given great emphasis in the novel. The author satirises the mode of election in Nigeria; its adulteration and invalidity in determining who emerges or not. Strong ridicule is employed in achieving this when Binta pledged support for the presidential candidate. In satirizing the general elections in Nigeria, the author shows that the involvement of citizens through voting has absolutely nothing to do with the final results or outcomes of the election. Although, the people are mobilized to vote for political parties, it is just to fulfil all formalities because when it comes to election results, the top government officials, especially from electoral committee and the ruling parties are the one with the final say and decision.

The electoral officers that are supposed to be at the helm of affair and to be totally unbiased and selfless are the most corrupt individuals. The voting process is more or less like a mere formality or a game as it has proven to be an invalid factor in any electioneering procedure. It is this state that corruption takes upper hand and that is after general elections, the opposition parties (the loser) always rant about the election not being free and fair and they insinuate that the ruling party used money to bribe their ways.

"But, we the people are behind him and we are going to make sure

he wins."

"Don't delude yourself, Hajiya, we all know how elections are held

here. You vote, they announce whomever they want to announce

as winners. You can go jump in the well if you don't like it. Nobody

gives a damn really" Pg. 129

The electoral committee always neglect their duties in upholding integrity and they always sell their people for huge amount of money and leave them to their fate for the next four years. It is important to note that any candidate that 'buys' his/ her mandate into any political position or office would embezzle a lot of money to make up for the 'bills' he had incur. This always began the era of suffering for the people.

One can boldly say that the lackadaisical attitude towards the people emanates from the fact that political leaders are aware that it was not the citizen's vote that got them in, but their resources. Hence, they have little or no sympathy for the citizens.

The writer definitely is not happy with the corruption in the electioneering process. Citizen's votes do not matter but leaders are appointed out of selfish interests of the leaders in power. This was ridiculed as a way of evoking reformation in the electoral board.

Another area of emphasis in the book was the preposterous notion that a single man with the right intentions can eradicate corruption in a country like Nigeria. Instead, he proposes a collective reformation that will include virtually every citizen.

"...there's an honest man at the electoral commission. He will

make sure elections are free and fair" Pg. 130

"What can one man do against a corrupt system?"

A single honest man in the middle of corrupt officials can barely invoke change because of the severe opposition, attacks, threats that such will face. His/her supposed good intentions and mindset will quiver at a point in time. If care is not taken, he might be assassinated, killed or even implicated as the case may be. Honesty in one man's hand is not a sufficient weapon to restructure a corrupt system like the electoral commission, but all hands must be on deck in order to effect a flawless system.

In the novel, we see various shades of corruption even amidst the law enforcement agencies. It is quite ironical that these officers who are expected to uphold justice, are confidently doing exact opposite and will even demand, 'protection fee' which is not written in the constitution. As a matter of fact, Reza's refusal to pay this fee led the officials to physically harass and humiliate Reza's boys and they even made way with Reza's goods(weed)which was later sold to some guys at the junction.

Weed is not legalised in Nigeria and youth/people who sell it, do so with utmost secrecy but because police officers have been collecting protection fee, they can't take proper action. At a point, Reza said the previous officer cooperated with him and never bothered their boys. It is so obvious that

instead of proper action to be effected and the fight against the consumption of local drugs, police officers would rather collect whatever is available and look the other way and neglect their primary duty of upholding justice and truth in the society.

"This is a small matter. If you had been paying the protection fee,

None of this would have happened. When your boys started fighting

and trying to kill each other, we would have gone and settled the matter

No need for all this, eh"

He later named his price and collected what could be described as bribe. The ridicule here is that, after collecting the money from Reza, he no longer commands respect as he ought to.

#### 4.1.2.6 Deception

It is a known fact that politicians are naturally deceptive. In the political realm, importance is given to their families, interests and themselves above anything else as already established in this essay. We see the raw manifestation of this when Reza brought the idea of going back to school before Senator Buba, his ambition was not encouraged by the Senator telling sad tales of graduates who had no jobs and encourage him to continue his weed business. But, ironically, when his son, Hamza was concerned, he wanted the best for him and had different opinion.

"...he just finished his first degree. I want him to go for his

Masters immediately"

If he truly has good intentions for Reza, he would have set him up for good with a proper and decent business but because he wanted the services of Reza in handling his dirty business and behind the scene engagements, Reza to him is better than 'unemployed graduates'. For someone who knows the end-result of education is unemployment, he should be non-challant about it but It is so shocking that someone with best ideas for his children could actually discourage others.

"...too many people these days going to all sorts of school and there

are no jobs for them to do. "

"You're doing better than them who spent all those years in school, all.

that money gone, all that time wasted. For what? That is why I think

young people like you who are entrepreneurs, who have business

acumen, should not waste your lives chasing illusions..."

But when his son was concerned, entrepreneurship was not welcomed. This goes to say that politicians have no genuine interest in other people's affair. Hypocrisy and deception of political leaders cannot be denied as it stinks all through. How could one ask someone else not to go to school because of unemployment and he is making ways for his own? It goes to say that political leaders have no genuine love for their merchants that work for them. It is more saddening that Reza was used as a political thug and the senator knew that him going to school would project to him knowledge that would enlighten him and maybe free him from his shackles of ignorance and he might decide not to work for him again. That was the main motive of the senator discouraging Reza and it is not borne out of genuine love. It is just not in line with his political agenda and selfish interests as well.

#### 4.1.2.7 Misplaced Loyalty

Anyone who is loyal to politicians has his or her loyalty misplaced because they do not appreciate loyalty. In the novel, we see some obvious instances where loyalty to a particular political leader was not acknowledged.

"...politics is like chess. You move your pieces randomly sometimes.

Other times, you use your pawns to hold down aspects of play. And,

sometimes, you sacrifice the pawns. But you always keep your eye

on the big picture. There is a bigger picture here..." Pg. 288

Hence, loyalty or not, if an individual is not in the big picture, he or she might be sacrificed to keep the overall motive unshaken. In politics, the big picture will always prevail. Reza served the senator with every fibre of his being but when the need arises, he had to be sacrificed. Politicians can reward loyalty momentarily but the second such individual becomes a threat, he or she has to die. Reza served the senator well, even the senator admitted it but because he knows too much about his dirty engagements, he had to be killed.

"...like I said the first time we spoke on phone, there are no permanent

friends in politics but permanent interest" Pg.34

"Even Reza sir? Considering you have a special relationship with him?"

"He is the priority. He must never be allowed to talk. If you can ensure

that never happens. I will make sure you are set up for good"

Reza's years of loyalty and obedience to Senator Buba didn't even matter because he was no longer an asset, rather he had become a liability. Senator Buba never doubted the loyalty of Reza but just couldn't keep him alive because he had performed some dirty errands which need to be kept silenced and unexposed. As a matter of fact, Reza ate with the senator in his bedroom. This is to show the level of intimacy between them has nothing to do with the game called politics. The only thing that must be preserved is their own, anything else can die or be sacrificed to attain anything desired. That is why most political leaders secure their families abroad to fight the dirty game here without mercy. It is highly undiscerning for youths to pledge their support for politicians because they mean so little to them and they can be used as a ladder for attaining the next level without flinching a bit.

#### 4.1.2.8 Religious Satire

As minute as this could be in the novel, it is necessary for our present time. The writer satirizes the harsh and outright condemnation of fanatics who had seeing believers to feel inferior. Binta went for Madrasa teaching, even after the news had gone round that she was having an affair with Reza. Unfortunately, what she got at the Madrasa was not what she expected.

Midway into the teaching, her colleagues started insinuating a lot of things which made her to feel terrible.

"What is that God-awful smell?"

"It's the smell of Zina, wallahi. I could perceive it anywhere!

There's a fornicator in this class"

Following that statement, Ladidi who commented spat on the floor and as if planned, the pregnant young bride that was in class with them, rushed out to throw up. All these were heavily criticised and are obviously not the best way to bring an erring believer back to the right path. Satire is employed to criticise the way Binta was treated amidst her brethren of the same faith because of a deviation from their religious doctrines and precepts.

In addition to that, the writer also satirises the notion that evil is strictly associated with a particular religion. Many citizens believe that a particular religion is synonymous with killings, bombings and massacres but this was clearly refuted.

"My husband , God rest his soul was killed by some Christian boys

he employed. They were people he called by their birth names and

did business with. My sister's husband and her son were hacked

to death by their christian neighbours because a woman urged them to.

But my sister and her daughters were saved from being raped and

murdered by a Christian woman whose husband had been killed

by some Muslim youths" Pg.27

The supposition of the above is that all human beings whether Christians or Muslims are liable to commit murder based on primordial objectives. The Jos religious crisis resulted in the brutal loss of lives of Christians and Muslims. In the novel, the writer is interested in reflecting the pains and trauma it inflicted on his sentiments, executing a single story agenda where Muslims are portrayed as victims and Christians as predators. He shows that evil is not a preserve of a single ethnic group or religion. This purports that hate and love is a shared human experience.

Following this brief explanation from Binta it is obvious that no religion is naturally associated with evil. It is the inherent evil of humanity that takes cover from religion.

## V. CONCLUSION

In this essay, we have been able to present in a more glaring terms, motive behind the writing of the novel, *Season Of Crimson Blossoms*, which is to emphasise and expose everything destroying a seemingly upright society, using satire as a lens.

Abubakar Adams Ibrahim has said in one of his interview with UbuntuFm,

"...writers have a great role to play in the political and social sphere

across the continent both as writers and citizens. At the same time,

we must not forget that there is so much more that writing can

accomplish and it is fine if some writers don't feel like championing

causes and it is fine if they choose to."

<https://mediumcom/@UbuntuFm/interview-w-abubakar-adam-ibrahim-writer-journalist-from-nigeria-93f75939645a>

From the excerpts above, the author confirmed the claims of critics that his novel was produced out of a burning desire to champion causes. These causes by implication are practices that have affected not just the northern aspects of



Nigeria but the country as a whole and his book is basically an exposé on that.

*Season of Crimson Blossoms* explores in no small measure the barbaric culture of silence that has been super-imposed on Northern women. The novel is laced with many thought-provoking scenarios which are dominant in the Northern region of Nigeria. We see the manifestation of Kunya -the social modesty that disallows a woman to acknowledge her first child- and why it should be avoided. Also, the culture of silence of women in the Northern community and the havoc it has wrecked. It is quite possible that Binta's controversial affair with Reza might have been avoided if her husband had respected her pleas but because her sexual desires were not met despite taking actions to effect that.

The selfish interests and desires of our political leaders have been established in various shades in this essay. We see how the big picture or main focus always take precedence over anyone working with them, we see the evils and heartlessness of political leaders towards their citizens. It was also established that one man cannot effect change in a corrupt system of governance like Nigeria because it has to be collective and not an individual adventure. Through this, we see that the author is beckoning on all and sundry to all and sundry to come together and fight the war of corruption which has crippled and is still crippling the growth and development of Nigeria as a whole. Implied in the novel and the essay is the fact that one man can do nothing to change the state of Nigeria.

Through this essay, the northern society has been thoroughly scrutinized and the barbaric traditional stereotypes have been exposed with a view to effect restructuring and reformation.

In an interview with Elizabeth Olaoye, Abubakar Adams Ibrahim speaks,

"This is not about the unconscious mind of the Hausa people. This is

about the prevalence of these practices across ethnic and religious lines

on the continent..."

[www.africabooklink.com/an-interview-with-abubakar-adams-ibrahim-by-elizabeth-olaoye/](http://www.africabooklink.com/an-interview-with-abubakar-adams-ibrahim-by-elizabeth-olaoye/).

Hence, *Season of Crimson Blossoms* is not just an exploration of the Northern society but any society that indulges on these practices. The author uses his novel to communicate to thousands of community where such traditional stereotypes are being perpetuated.

This essay also reveals some socio-cultural practices in Northern society which are long overdue for restructuring and change. It is quite refreshing that a Northerner was

speaking up on these practices with a clear cut, unbiased representation of the region because should it have been a Non-Northerner who writes about these barbaric traditions, many would consider it as an insult to their tradition. Hence, the fact that the author is a Northerner makes his quest for change a feasible one because in a way or the other, the practices must have affected him.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Abubakar Adams Ibrahim deserves to be commended for a terrific job done in his novel, *Season of Crimson Blossoms* and for leaving a wonderful legacy for upcoming fiction writers. However, in the novel, it was observed that there was no glossary section for the Hausa words that laced the book which makes it a bit difficult for Non-Northerner to comprehend some words but overall, the meaning without the interpretation of the Hausa words were still intact.

Fiction writers should endeavour to speak to their societal's problem and not lay much emphasis on the aesthetic aspect of their society or rather strike a balance between the two but it is important to note that relevance in the literary world especially in Nigeria can only be achieved through championing a social cause. I daresay that it's because of the various social causes that were demonstrated in *Season of Crimson Blossoms* made it possible for it to have clinched the 2016 awarded for NLGN. Upcoming writers should speak to their society in order to effect rapid improvement.

In a nutshell, literature has once again proven its refractive power in the novel by first reflecting the various ills and proffering a way out.

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# Austen's Double-Edged Sword: Unveiling Irony and Interiority in Her Narratives

Lata Tripathi

Lecturer (Selection Grade), Department of Science and Humanities, Government Polytechnic College, Damoh, Madhya Pradesh, India

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**Abstract**— Jane Austen, often regarded as a “literary rebel” within the landscape of English literature, challenges conventions while embracing them in her novels. This paper delves into Austen's role as both a conformist and a revolutionary figure in the realm of literature. Beginning with an exploration of Austen's place within the English novel tradition, the paper examines her unique approach to storytelling, characterized by a focus on domestic satire and heroine-oriented narratives. Austen's commitment to social criticism, achieved through a realistic portrayal of everyday life, distinguishes her from her contemporaries. The analysis extends to Austen's distinctive style, marked by a Johnsonian influence and an innovative use of irony and comedy to expose societal shortcomings. Austen's mastery of dialogue further accentuates her ability to capture social nuances and class distinctions. Despite her self-proclaimed “ignorance,” Austen's works resonate with a profound understanding of human nature and societal dynamics. Through meticulous characterization and narrative technique, Austen achieves a timeless quality in her prose that continues to captivate readers.



**Keywords**— Jane Austen, literary rebel, domestic satire, social criticism, irony, dialogue, style, characterization, narrative technique, conformity.

## I. BEYOND THE MARRIAGE PLOT: AUSTEN'S HEROINES AND THE CHALLENGE TO THE STATUS QUO

Jane Austen, a novelist active in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, occupies a unique space in literary history. While her works adhere to many conventions of the novel during her time, particularly focusing on marriage and social mobility within the landed gentry, they also exhibit a subtle rebellious streak. Unlike some of her contemporaries, like the Gothic novelist Ann Radcliffe, who reveled in the macabre and the supernatural, Austen found her drama in the intricate social dances of her characters.

Austen left behind no formal literary manifesto outlining her creative vision. However, her private correspondence, particularly letters to her sister Cassandra, offers occasional glimpses into her thoughts on writing. As Mary Lascelles observes in “Jane Austen and the Novel,” Austen's letters, “beyond a few pleasantries in letters to a

scribbling nephew or niece, and a few sides to Cassandra, have left little indication of the scope and aim of the novel as she saw it” (Lascelles 235). Therefore, to understand Austen's position as a potential “literary rebel,” we must primarily examine her novels themselves.

A close reading of Austen's works reveals a keen observer of societal norms and expectations. Her witty dialogue and sharp social commentary expose the absurdity of class prejudices and the often-suffocating constraints placed upon women during her time. Despite her characters' immersion in the marriage plot, a staple of the Regency novel, Austen doesn't shy away from portraying strong-willed heroines like Elizabeth Bennet in “Pride and Prejudice” who challenge societal pressures and prioritize personal happiness and intellectual connection over mere financial security. This subtle rebellion against the status quo, masked by her seemingly conventional narratives, is a hallmark of Austen's work.

By focusing on the domestic sphere and the everyday lives of the landed gentry, Austen made a seemingly unassuming genre—the comedy of manners—a powerful tool for social commentary. This is where her potential literary rebellion lies. Through her witty observations and the quiet defiance of her heroines, Austen challenged societal norms and offered a fresh perspective on love, marriage, and female agency within a society that often sought to restrict them.

## II. CRAFTING CHARACTERS, CRITIQUING SOCIETY: THE ART OF JANE AUSTEN

### 2.1 Beyond Love and Marriage: Social Commentary in Austen's Novels

While the novelistic form was firmly established by the time Jane Austen emerged on England's literary scene, her engagement with the genre skillfully blended adherence to tradition with her distinct flair for innovation. As Lascelles notes, Austen embraced the existing norms of novel-writing without significant objection, maintaining a balance between conventional expectations and personal creativity ("the centre holds, the rim does not constrain," Lascelles 238). Characterized by Walter Raleigh as 'domestic satire,' this genre predominantly focuses on feminine perspectives regarding love, courtship, and marriage, a theme previously explored by authors like Richardson and Fanny Burney.

However, Austen's approach to these themes introduced subtle shifts, primarily highlighting heroines who also act as moral and emotional guides to their male counterparts. Her characters, including Catherine Morland, Elinor, Elizabeth Bennet, Fanny Price, Emma, and Anne Elliot, are portrayed with a remarkable resilience and firmness of will. They navigate through their romantic and social challenges, eventually leading their male partners to recognize that love outweighs the superficial allure of wealth and status.

Austen's narratives extend beyond romance, delving into the realm of social critique, a literary domain she shares with the likes of Charles Dickens and Elizabeth Gaskell, who each examined their respective social milieus. Austen's depictions stand out for their realism and detailed observation of societal norms, effectively speaking "the language of the country about the people of the country" (Lascelles 241). Distinguished from other novelists, many of whom came to fiction from backgrounds in journalism or history, Austen dedicated herself exclusively to the novel. Despite early rejections and dismissive treatment from publishers, her unwavering commitment to her art was evident. She persistently crafted

her narratives, demonstrating her dedication to fiction as an art form, not merely a career.

Austen's focus in her literary work eschewed overtly political or philosophical themes, concentrating instead on the intricacies of personal and social relations. Her nephew James Austen-Leigh remarked that her life was "singularly barren" of events (4), a statement reflecting the quiet but intensely observant nature of her existence. Jane worked meticulously on what she described as a "little bit (two inches wide) of ivory" (Austen 337), using a fine brush to explore the subtleties of human behavior within the confined settings of a few country families. This minimalistic canvas was not indicative of a lack of awareness but rather an artistic choice to delve deeply into the social fabric of her community through nuanced, intimate portrayals. Austen's deliberate limitation to 'domestic' spheres elevates and scrutinizes the everyday experiences of women, making her narratives both a reflection of and a commentary on the societal values of her time.

### 2.2 Austen's Art: Plot, Character, and Everyday Life

Jane Austen's novels achieve a harmonious balance between plot and character, showcasing her adept artistry that reflects a realistic, non-romanticized portrayal of life. Austen consciously steers clear of melodramatic elements such as guilt, murder, or excessive emotional displays. Her debut, "*Northanger Abbey*," playfully critiques gothic tropes, while "*Emma*" epitomizes realism, capturing the nuances of daily life. According to literary historian E. Albert, Jane Austen's narratives are compelling without relying on intense moments of passion or violence. Albert emphasizes that creating engaging stories under such restrained circumstances is a mark of truly exceptional art, a standard that Austen consistently meets in her work (342).

Character development is another area where Austen excels, with characters that are vivid and drawn from everyday life, resonating with authenticity. Her detailed portrayals often include clergymen, inspired by her father, reflecting a respectful and sober depiction of this community. Key characters like Mr. Collins, Miss Bates, and John Thorpe are distinctly crafted with unique traits, ensuring they remain unforgettable. Although Austen's heroines often outshine the male characters in terms of depth and constancy, her portrayal of male figures like Mr. Darcy and Mr. Knightley are equally robust and lifelike, fully realized within their own rights.

Despite the intricate personal and social explorations in her novels, Austen's works seldom delve into the major historical and political events of her era, such as the French Revolution or the Napoleonic Wars. According to Tony Tanner, these significant events "seem to have left very little

mark on her fiction, and yet of course she knew what was going on" (2). This absence is not due to ignorance but rather a deliberate choice to focus on themes of love and marriage, which she believed to be pivotal to societal cohesion.

Austen's treatment of marriage is nuanced and critical, reflecting the complexities of real-life relationships rather than idealized unions. Her narratives emphasize the importance of making judicious marital choices, echoing Tanner's observation that her heroines must "struggle for the right kind of marriage, which is so central to society" (10). This focus underscores the significance Austen places on marriage, not merely as a social contract but as the culmination of personal development and societal expectation in her narratives.

### III. THE CHAMELEON QUILL: AUSTEN'S ADAPTABLE VOICE AND SOCIAL COMMENTARY

#### 3.1 Austen's Witty Pen: Irony and Social Commentary

Jane Austen's distinct style is a defining element of her literary charm. Her narratives, often filtered through the consciousness of her characters, are succinct yet profound. Austen acknowledges her stylistic debt to Dr. Samuel Johnson, whom she refers to affectionately in a letter to her sister Cassandra dated February 8, 1807, adopting a "Johnsonian" standard in her prose, balancing abstraction with precision (Wright 173).

Austen's writing is also characterized by a masterful use of irony and humor to critique social mores and individual shortcomings. While irony and comedy have long been staples in English literature, used by figures from Chaucer to Fielding, Austen's application is uniquely innovative. She not only inherits these techniques but also refines and redirects them, earning her a place as a trailblazer in literary style. Professor Andrews H. Wright suggests, "We should appreciate Jane Austen's style by recognizing both her innovative approach and her awareness of her literary predecessors" (174).

Her use of comic irony is evident in her vivid characterizations and the situations she crafts. For instance, in "Sense and Sensibility," Austen portrays Mrs. Jennings with a touch of irony, noting that as a widow with a comfortable income, she had seen both her daughters married off and now seemed inclined to play matchmaker for everyone else (48). This showcases Austen's skill in using understatement to highlight the trivial pursuits that occupy her characters' lives.

In "Pride and Prejudice," Austen subtly critiques the Bingley sisters' superficial admiration for Jane Bennet,

portraying them as pronouncing her a "sweet girl" whom they would not mind knowing better, thus establishing her as such and allowing their brother to form his own opinions (48). Austen's choice of words such as 'established' and 'authorized' reveals her critical perspective on their shallow and manipulative nature. Further exemplifying Austen's ironic wit, Caroline Bingley writes to Jane Bennet (Austen 64). The letter playfully suggests that spending a whole day alone together could lead to animosity, implying the opposite—a potentially dull encounter. Caroline extends an invitation for Jane to join her and Louisa for lunch, mentioning their male companions will be elsewhere.

This passage masterfully oscillates between comical exaggeration and biting social critique, encapsulating the pretentiousness and rivalry that often underpins genteel society.

Austen's ironic lens is not just a stylistic choice but a profound vehicle for social commentary, capturing the essence of her era's social dynamics and individual behaviors.

#### 3.2 The Art of Austen's Language

Jane Austen's mastery over language is one of the key elements that lend her prose its compelling charm. Her ability to evoke precise emotional effects through the deliberate choice of words and meticulously crafted sentences is central to her narrative technique. Austen often achieves her intended impact through the use of single, impactful words, as seen in her strategic deployment of 'compassionate' and 'hating' to create a stark contrast in Caroline Bingley's invitation in "Pride and Prejudice." At other times, she layers complex words to underscore the irony in her descriptions, exemplified in her portrayal of Miss Elizabeth Elliot in "Persuasion": "...would have rejoiced to be certain of being properly solicited by baronet-blood within the next twelve month or two" (Austen 6). This selection highlights Elizabeth's obsession with status and her snobbish nature, reflective of her father's influence.

Professor Andrews H. Wright suggests that Austen occasionally "out-Johnsons Johnson" with her "deliberately rococo use of words" (178), enhancing her prose through balanced sentence structures and precise syntax. Mary Lascelles commends Austen for her linguistic precision, stating that she "never misuses words," and noting that her sentences, clear and well-constructed, reflect the neatness and briskness of her own demeanor (94). Even when sentences appear abruptly clipped, Austen manages them with such skill that clarity remains intact.

In dialogue, Austen excels at revealing character and social distinctions. She tailors the speech patterns of her characters to reflect their societal positions and personal traits. For example, Miss Steele's language betrays her

vulgarity, while Mr. Shepherd speaks in the measured tones of a lawyer, and the Crawfords converse in a polished manner. Jane's skill in crafting 'tolerable English' for her heroes and heroines highlights her nuanced understanding of linguistic appropriateness in social interactions.

Mary Lascelles, praised by Wright, inquires into the origins of Austen's "mastery of dialogue," suggesting that Austen possessed a "fine and true ear" for human speech (96). Austen's acute observational skills likely allowed her to absorb and reproduce the varied speech patterns of those around her, effectively mirroring the stratified social structures of her time in her novels.

Austen employs mimicry for comedic and critical effect within her narrative. In "Emma", Mr. Elton's constant use of "exactly so" becomes a target for Emma's amusement. Reflecting on his supposed gallantry, Emma thinks with a hint of irony that Mr. Elton might be "almost too gallant to be in love" (Austen 39). By mirroring his speech pattern, Emma not only exposes Mr. Elton's affectations but also subtly critiques his shallowness.

Austen's adept use of language—whether through the precision of individual words, the structure of her sentences, or the voices of her characters—contributes significantly to the depth and enduring appeal of her novels. Her linguistic artistry not only entertains but also provides keen insights into the social fabric of her time.

### 3.3 Austen's Evolving Voice and Narrative Technique

Jane Austen's narrative technique, referred to as 'style' by Miss Lascelles, exhibits a remarkable versatility that adapts fluidly to her diverse characters and their unique circumstances. This adaptability is what Lascelles praises as Austen's "chameleon-like faculty" in "Jane Austen and Her Art," noting that Austen's style "varies in colour as the habits of expression of the several characters impress themselves on the relation of the episodes in which they are involved, and on the description of their situations" (102). Such flexibility, rooted in the "essential simplicity of its staple," often masks the subtle intricacies and emotional depths of Austen's prose (Lascelles 103).

H.W. Garrod discusses the evolution of Austen's prose style, emphasizing that her early work, "Pride and Prejudice," already showcased a mastery comparable to her later novels. He quotes Austen herself, who described the novel in a letter to her sister Cassandra as "rather too light, and bright, and sparkling;" yet lacking in "shade" and "sense" (212). This self-assessment from February 4, 1813, reflects her critical self-awareness and evolving narrative ambition.

Scholars, including A.H. Wright, observe a notable progression in Austen's later novels—"Mansfield Park"

(1814), "Emma" (1816), and "Persuasion" (1818)—which exhibit greater tonal variation and incisive social critique. Conversely, Dr. Chapman expresses skepticism regarding the distinctiveness of Austen's style, suggesting that outside her dialogues, her prose represents merely "the ordinary correct English that, as Johnson had said, 'everyone now writes'" (209). This perspective challenges the notion of Austen's stylistic individuality.

However, Prof. Andrew H. Wright counters this view, asserting that Austen's style is as original and innovative as any other aspect of her work. He argues that style is far from a peripheral element in literature, citing Bacon's emphasis on the integral role of stylistic devices, which Austen employs to various ends, both ironic and sincere—from playful wit to serious judgment (192-193).

The consensus among literary critics leans towards Wright's viewpoint, recognizing style as a cornerstone of Austen's literary artistry. Her nuanced command of language and syntax not only enhances the efficacy of her prose but also contributes to the lasting impact and appeal of her novels. In Austen's hands, style is not merely a tool for aesthetic expression but a vital means of engaging with and critiquing the social dynamics of her time.

## IV. JANE AUSTEN'S NARRATIVE POINTS OF VIEW

Jane Austen employs a diverse array of narrative points of view throughout her works, contributing to the richness and complexity of her storytelling. According to Prof. Andrew H. Wright, Austen's narrative technique encompasses at least six characteristic points of view, each serving distinct novelistic purposes (97). A comprehensive understanding of Austen's narrative viewpoint is essential for appreciating the nuances of her narrative technique, as it shapes the unity and coherence of her works.

### 4.1 Unveiling the Facade: Objectivity and Irony in Jane Austen's Narratives

Austen, a meticulous chronicler, adopts a historian's role in her narratives. Her impartial gaze observes present and past with discernment. This objectivity allows for clear introductions, like Catherine Morland's in "Northanger Abbey." We learn her background and appearance wouldn't suggest a heroine's destiny (Austen 7).

Here, Austen adopts the guise of a chronicler, providing a candid assessment of Catherine's unsuitability for heroic exploits. The straightforward depiction of her father's unremarkable traits echoes the narrative style of Oliver Goldsmith in "The Vicar of Wakefield," emphasizing Austen's commitment to objective storytelling.



Austen avoids personal bias through her objective viewpoint, allowing events to unfold naturally. This is evident in "Emma," where the wedding of Emma Woodhouse and Mr. Knightley is described through the eyes of Mrs. Elton, who finds the ceremony lacking in grandeur compared to her own extravagant one (Austen, 392). This contrast between Mrs. Elton's disappointment and the genuine joy of the true friends present highlights Austen's skill in using irony and satire. The passage showcases the happiness of the couple despite Mrs. Elton's shallow perspective.

Through these techniques, Austen's objective narrative viewpoint illuminates the complexities of human behavior and social dynamics, inviting readers to engage critically with her characters and their world.

#### 4.2 The Whisper Within: Austen's Art of Sub-Textual Storytelling

Jane Austen masterfully employs indirect commentary to add depth and nuance to her narratives, often conveying subtle insights through carefully chosen words or phrases. These sub-textual elements serve to enrich the reader's understanding of characters and situations without overtly intruding upon the storyline.

In "Northanger Abbey," Austen employs indirect comment to highlight the reunion of Mrs. Allen and Mrs. Thorpe, former schoolmates who have not seen each other in fifteen years: "Their joy on this meeting was very great, as well it might, since they had been contented to know nothing of each other for the last fifteen years" (30).

The phrase "as well it might" carries a subtle irony, suggesting that their joy is understandable given their long separation. Austen's indirect commentary here adds a layer of depth to the scene without explicitly commenting on the characters or their circumstances.

Similarly, in "Persuasion," Austen utilizes indirect commentary to reflect on the character development of Anne Elliot: "How eloquent could Anne Elliot have been! how eloquent, at least, were her wishes on the side of early warm attachment, and a cheerful confidence in futurity... She had been forced into prudence in her youth, she learned romance as she grew older: the natural sequel of an unnatural beginning" (35).

The concluding sentence, "the natural sequel of an unnatural beginning," offers Austen's indirect commentary on Anne's emotional journey. Here, Austen subtly interjects her own perspective, acknowledging Anne's evolution from prudence to romance as she matures.

Through these instances of indirect commentary, Austen demonstrates her mastery of sub-textual storytelling, subtly weaving her own observations into the

narrative fabric. This technique allows her to convey profound insights and commentary while maintaining the integrity of her characters and plotlines.

#### 4.3 Unveiling the "I": Jane Austen's Narrative Voice

Occasionally, Jane Austen adopts a narrative viewpoint where she employs the first-person pronoun "I," although she does so sparingly and with subtlety. This narrative technique allows Austen to offer glimpses of her own perspective within the story, albeit often in a veiled or ironic manner.

In "Mansfield Park," Austen employs the first-person narrative voice to express a desire to move away from themes of guilt and misery: "Let other pens dwell on guilt and misery. I quit such odious subjects as soon as I can, impatient to restore everybody, not greatly in fault themselves, to tolerable comfort, and to have done with all the rest" (592).

While some scholars interpret this statement at face value, Austen's use of the first person here may carry deeper implications. Indeed, Austen rarely dwells on themes of tragedy or melodrama, preferring instead to focus on comedies or parodies of human behavior.

Another instance of Austen's use of the first-person narrative voice can be found in "Northanger Abbey," where she humorously critiques the obsession with sensational novels:

"Alas! If the heroine of one novel be not patronised by the heroine of another, from whom can she expect protection and regard? I cannot approve of it. Let us leave it to the reviewers to abuse such effusions of fancy at their leisure, and over every new novel to talk in threadbare strains of the trash with which the press now groans. Let us not desert one another; we are an injured body." (Austen 36)

Here, Austen playfully mocks the characters' fascination with Gothic novels, highlighting the absurdity of their obsession. While the passage may seem to reflect Austen's own views, it should be noted that she was well-read in the literature of her time, including the works of essayists like Dr. Johnson and Swift. Thus, her use of the first person can sometimes be misleading, blurring the line between authorial perspective and narrative voice.

Through these instances of the first-person narrative voice, Austen adds depth and complexity to her storytelling, offering subtle insights into both her characters and the societal norms of her time.

#### 4.4 Unveiling Universality: Jane Austen's Use of Maxims and Proverbs

Jane Austen skillfully incorporates maxims and proverbs into her narratives, using them to express common-sense viewpoints and universal truths (Wright 77). These age-old sayings add depth to her prose and resonate with readers by capturing timeless wisdom.

In "Pride and Prejudice," Austen famously opens with the maxim: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife" (29). This statement, while presented with a hint of irony, reflects societal expectations and norms regarding marriage. However, Austen swiftly contrasts this supposed universal truth with the more localized reality, emphasizing the narrowness of the perspective. The juxtaposition creates an ironic effect, revealing the gap between societal conventions and individual experiences.

Similarly, in "Northanger Abbey," Austen employs the maxim "what is fated can't be blotted" to underscore the inevitability of certain events. Referring to the heroine Catherine Morland, Austen playfully observes: "But when a young lady is to be a heroine, the perverseness of forty surrounding families cannot prevent her. Something must and will happen to throw her in the way" (11). This use of the proverb highlights the genre conventions of the novel while also poking fun at the predictability of heroine's journey in romantic fiction.

Through her adept use of maxims and proverbs, Austen adds layers of meaning to her narratives, inviting readers to reflect on the enduring truths embedded within societal customs and individual destinies.

#### 4.5 Unveiling the Dramatic: Dialogue and Suspense in Jane Austen's Novels

Jane Austen's adeptness in the dramatic mode is prominently showcased through the dialogues of her characters, as well as in moments of suspense throughout her novels. Prof. Wright praises her as "a master-dramatist - - with a perfect ear, a perfect sense of timing, a shrewd instinct for climax and anti-climax" (79-80). Austen demonstrates her skill in modulating conversations to match her characters' personalities and objectives, infusing them with tension and depth.

An exemplary display of Austen's mastery of dialogue can be found in "Pride and Prejudice" during the interaction between Mr. and Mrs. Bennet upon hearing news of a new tenant at Netherfield Park:

"My dear Mr. Bennet," said his lady to him one day, "have you heard that Netherfield Park is let at last?"

Mr. Bennet replied that he had not.

"But it is," returned she; "for Mrs. Long has just been here, and she told me all about it."

Mr. Bennet made no answer.

"Do not you want to know who has taken it?" Cried his wife impatiently.

"You want to tell me, and I have no objection to hearing it."

This was invitation enough. (Austen 29)

Through this exchange, Austen masterfully contrasts the personalities of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet. Mrs. Bennet's eagerness to discuss marriage prospects for their daughters is met with Mr. Bennet's indifferent demeanor, creating a scene ripe with insight into their characters and the dynamics of their relationship.

Austen masterfully employs dialogue and suspense in a pivotal scene from "Pride and Prejudice" (Austen 394). Elizabeth's initial disbelief ["How could I ever think her like my nephew" (Austen 394)?] sharply contrasts with Lady Catherine's self-assured tone ["You can be at no loss, Miss Bennet..." (Austen 394)], highlighting their contrasting personalities. The dialogue reveals a power struggle as Lady Catherine attempts to intimidate Elizabeth with her social standing. However, Elizabeth maintains her composure despite her surprise ["unaffected astonishment" (Austen 394)].

Suspense builds as Lady Catherine delays revealing the purpose of her visit. Her vague statements like "a report of a most alarming nature" (Austen 394) pique Elizabeth's curiosity. The reader, aware of the developing relationship between Elizabeth and Darcy, experiences dramatic irony. We understand the "alarming nature" of the report, while Elizabeth remains in the dark, creating a sense of anticipation for her response to Lady Catherine's accusations.

Here, Austen skillfully builds tension through Lady Catherine's accusatory dialogue and Elizabeth's composed responses, culminating in a confrontational scene charged with dramatic intensity.

Through these examples and many others, Austen's narrative comes alive with vivid dialogue and suspense, showcasing her prowess as a masterful storyteller.

#### 4.6 Unveiling the Inner Self: Exploring Interior Disclosure in Jane Austen's Novels

Jane Austen's novels often contain passages that seemingly reveal the innermost thoughts and feelings of her characters, particularly her heroines and heroes. These moments of interior disclosure offer readers glimpses into the complexities of Austen's characters, yet they should not



be mistaken for direct reflections of the author herself. As Mary Lascelles astutely notes in "Jane Austen and the Novel":

"This man is almost too gallant to be in love," thought Emma. "I should say so, but that I suppose there may be a hundred different ways of being in love. He is an excellent young man, and will suit Harriet exactly; it will be an 'Exactly so', as he says himself; but he does sigh and languish, and study for compliments rather more than I could endure as a principal..." (Austen 39)

In this passage from "Emma," Austen provides insight into Emma's thoughts regarding Mr. Elton, showcasing her character's wit and discernment. However, these reflections should not be conflated with Austen's own perspectives; rather, they serve to deepen our understanding of Emma's complex psyche.

Similarly, Austen employs interior disclosure to explore the inner workings of her characters throughout her novels. Whether it's Elizabeth Bennet's introspection in "Pride and Prejudice" or Anne Elliot's contemplations in "Persuasion," Austen offers readers nuanced portrayals of her characters' inner lives.

However, it's crucial to recognize that Austen maintains a certain distance from her characters, allowing them to exist independently of her own viewpoints. While her narrative may provide glimpses into their inner thoughts, these disclosures should be interpreted within the context of the story rather than as direct reflections of Austen's own beliefs or experiences.

In essence, Austen's use of interior disclosure adds depth and complexity to her characters, enriching the reading experience and underscoring her skill as a storyteller.

## V. JANE AUSTEN: A MASTERFUL NEGOTIATOR OF CONVENTION AND INNOVATION

Jane Austen occupies a unique position, straddling the realms of conventionality and rebellion within the literary landscape. While her thematic material may not be groundbreaking, her approach to convention and her satirical stance towards fashionable novels of her time mark her as both a conformist and a critic. Mary Lascelles, in "Jane Austen and the Novel," aptly notes:

"...there is an artistic convention which she (Jane Austen) discernibly accepts—which she would no more despise and ignore than a poet would propose to write a sonnet and produce eleven lines of irregular verse ending in the middle of a sentence.

This convention is clearly distinguishable from the conventional artifices and false values of the transient, the merely fashionable novels of her own day, to which she reacted in hilarious mockery..." (236).

Lascelles' observation underscores Austen's nuanced relationship with convention. While she operates within certain artistic norms, she sharply critiques the superficiality and artifice of contemporary literary trends. Rejecting the sentimentalism of Sterne, Richardson, and Mrs. Radcliffe, Austen instead focuses on the realities of everyday life, particularly the social dilemmas faced by women. Her novels, as Tanner suggests, do not romanticize society but rather complicate it with nuanced observations and social commentary (12). Moreover, Austen can be seen as a literary rebel in her own right. At a time when women writers faced considerable prejudice, she fearlessly wielded her pen alongside other talented female authors like Hannah More, Fanny Burney, Maria Edgeworth, and Susan Ferrier. Despite societal expectations, Austen carved out a space for herself in the literary canon, infusing her works with a unique tenderness and feminine perspective. While not the first to introduce these qualities to English fiction, she undoubtedly became its most influential female voice of her era (Mazzeno 185). As Mary Corringham poetically reflects, Austen's artistry was characterized by subtlety and restraint, devoid of the vanity and exaggeration often associated with women writers (79). In essence, Jane Austen's negotiation of convention and innovation epitomizes her enduring significance in English literature.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Through her masterful negotiation of convention and innovation, Jane Austen emerged as a powerful voice in the literary landscape. While acknowledging established literary traditions, she distinguished herself from the superficiality of her contemporaries. Her focus on social issues, particularly the challenges faced by women, positioned her as a writer of insightful social comedies. Furthermore, by daring to enter the literary sphere at a time when women's artistic pursuits were discouraged, Austen became a prominent voice among a generation of talented female novelists. Her distinct blend of reserve, delicacy, and social commentary continues to resonate with readers, solidifying her place as a literary icon.

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# Learning English as a Second Language through basic Approaches and Methods

K. Annal Girija Theivarani<sup>1</sup>, Dr. K. Nagarathinam<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>M.A., M.Phil., B.Ed., Ph.D., - Research Scholar in English, RVS College of Arts and Science, Suler, Coimbatore, India

<sup>2</sup>M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D., Associate Professor & Head, Department of English, RVS College of Arts and Science, Suler, Coimbatore, India

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**Abstract**— This paper is aimed to find out how school and college teachers use the Approaches and Methods in their teachings. This qualitative study analyses how teachers have to be aware in picking Approaches and Methods before they deliver certain materials and treat their students. They teach in schools considering English as a Foreign Language. This study found that the teachers only used several Approaches and Methods like Grammar-translation Method which discuss language rules of first language and target language, Audio-lingual Method where drilling is used, and so on. Later, this study is expected to help teachers in preparing their teaching in the classroom, and which teaching Methods and Approaches they should use in teaching the students.



**Keywords**— Methods, Approaches, Teaching, Learners.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Richards (2013) concluded that teaching should be done in certain ways, so that a teacher can achieve learning objectives. One of them is by delivering instruction in certain manners. The manners are called methods and approaches. There are several kinds of methods and approaches used in teaching. Teachers should be aware of manners in how they treat their students. Whether she/he teaches young children or adolescents, she/he needs to find appropriate kinds of teaching methods. Once she/he gets the right way to teach the students, she/he would be able to establish a good atmosphere in the classroom, a good communication with the learners and a smooth learning process. A right method or approach also generates effective classroom activity.

This study aims to describe what teaching methods and approaches are applied by the teachers. This study gives a clearer explanation to teachers about the used teaching methods and approaches wherever they are going to take classes.

### Types of Teaching Methods and Approaches

#### 1. Grammar- Translation Method

This method is also called the Classical Method. Richards and Rogers define it as, “A way of studying a language that approaches the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by application of this knowledge through the task of translating sentences and text into and out of the target language” Richards and Rogers (2002, 5). Just as its name suggests, this method of teaching English is grammar- heavy and relies a lot on translation. This is the traditional or ‘classical way of learning a language and it is still commonly used when learning some languages. Some countries prefer this style of teaching, and the main idea behind this method is that the students learn all grammar rules, so that they are able to translate several sentences. This is particularly common for those students who wish to study literature at a deeper level. This method was the most popular and widely used method for language teaching between the years 1840 and 1940. This was used for teaching Latin. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was criticized intensively because it was considered that it could not fulfil the demands.

#### Principles:

- Translation interprets foreign phraseology best,
- Interpretation helps better assimilation,

- The structure of a foreign language is best learnt when compared with the mother-tongue, and
- Grammar is the soul of language.

**Procedure:**

- Meaning of every word interpreted in the mother tongue,
- Meanings of phrases/sentences clarified through translation, and
- Simultaneous explanation of grammar rules.

**Merits:**

- Vocabulary development,
- A better understanding of context,
- Based on 'Apperceptive Theory',
- Textbook becomes the most important aid,
- Develops the art & skill of translation, and
- Helps in testing Comprehension.

**Demerits:**

According to H.E. Palmer, this method is replete with several weaknesses. He catalogues these weaknesses: "It is the one which treats all languages as if they were dead and as if each consisted essentially of a collection of ancient documents to be deciphered and analyzed. It is the one that categorically ignores all considerations of phonetics, pronunciation and boldly places language on a foundation of alphabets, 55 spelling and writing systems. It assumes translation to be the main or only procedure for the learning of vocabulary. It assumes that word and sentence structure is to be attained mainly through the memorizing of the so-called rules of grammar". (Palmer, 1966).

- No/less emphasis on Speaking, Reading & Writing,
- Literal translation,
- A habit of translation can inhibit thinking in English,
- Quite artificial, and
- Not holistic.

## II. THE DIRECT METHOD

The direct method of teaching English is also known as the Natural Method. It is used to teach several different languages and not just English. The main idea of the Direct Method is that it uses only the target language that the students are trying to learn. Its main focus is an oral skill and it is taught via repetitive drilling. Grammar is taught using an inductive way, and students need to try and guess the rules through the teacher's oral presentation. Today, popular forms of the Direct Method are Callan and Berlitz.

It is the outcome of the reaction against the Grammar translation method. This method focuses on

telling the meaning of the words through action, demonstration or real objects. This method focuses on direct thinking, doing discussion and conversation in a second language. It is an attempt and effort to form a link between thought and expression and between experience and language.

Webster's New International Dictionary says: "Direct Method is a method of teaching a foreign language, especially modern language through conversation, discussion and reading in the language itself, without the use of pupil's language, without translation and the study of formal grammar. The first words are taught by pointing to objects or pictures or by performing actions". (Quoted in Dr. Mowla, 2004).

According to Felix Franks, "The moment a concept (meaning) and foreign words are intimately brought into contact without the intervention of the native word, we have the direct method" (Tiwari, 2010).

**Features:**

- Translation banished,
- Grammar, when taught, is taught inductively,
- Oral teaching precedes reading/writing, and
- Meanings through objects/context.

**Principles:**

- Establish a direct bond between word/phrase/idiom and meaning,
- More emphasis on listening and speaking,
- Less importance to mother-tongue,
- Follows full sentences, and not words,
- Vocabulary is used directly,
- Grammar is 'Grammar of use' and not 'Grammar of rules',
- Follows maxims- Simple to Complex; Concrete to Abstract,
- Pronunciation is taught on phonetic lines, and
- Questioning is used more often.

**Merits:**

- Encourages thinking,
- Enables expression,
- Develops language sense,
- Interesting,
- Rote learning discouraged,
- Develops language mastery, and
- Ample scope for activity, teaching aids.

**Demerits:**

- Does not work with higher classes,
- Reading and writing are sacrificed for speech,
- Expensive,

- Requires a small-sized class, and
- Time-consuming.

### III. THE ORAL APPROACH

A child learns the mother-tongue with speech. The child tries to speak without knowing the meaning of the words. We need a constant practice of speech to learn a language. The learner learns the language without big effort in oral practice. It is a natural way to learn to read and write.

#### Merits:

- It is easy for the students as well as teachers,
- Time and effort are saved; several repetitions are possible,
- Pupils cannot do writing work before the oral practice,
- Correction can be done then and there before they pronounce the words wrongly,
- The entire class is benefitted when one of the students is corrected,
- Slow learners are motivated to learn and they come out of their shyness and fear,
- Students automatically speak by listening to others, and
- The teachers can evaluate and take measures for improvement while teaching.

#### Demerits:

- It is impossible to correct the pronunciation for the entire class,
- Well trained faculty is hard to find,
- This can be used for primary school, and
- Adults feel shy and awkward.

Oral work has been summarized by Earl W. Stevick as, 'hearing before speaking, speaking before reading, and reading before writing' Dr. Prabhavati (1992). The statement shows the emphasis given to hearing and speaking in the early stages of language learning. First comes oral, and then comes written. Each language has its structure. So, the languages differ from one another. Language is learnt by repeating. Drilling is a good way of learning. Structure describes a language. A child learns his mother-tongue by imitating. The teacher makes effort to teach the students new sounds, and thus the child learns the correct pronunciation.

### IV. SITUATIONAL APPROACH

A child learns its mother-tongue through the situational approach. We create a meaningful situation to teach English. For June Derrick (1992), teaching situationally means, "Both grammar and content words will be taught and used as parts of whole utterances or

sentences used in meaningful situations". In a real situation, the child learns the mother-tongue. To learn a language, we need to create a situation and the child connects his own life.

#### Features:

- Series of incidents,
- It is oriented on material,
- New words are learnt, and
- Pupils and teachers' actions are focused.

#### Procedure:

The teacher can make use of the things which she finds in the classroom to learn new words. For example, pointing to a pen she can come out with all types of sentences:

- This is a pen. (Declarative Sentence)
- Is this a pen? (Interrogative Sentence)
- Give me your pen. (Imperative Sentence)
- What a beautiful pen is! (Exclamatory Sentence)

F.L. Billows (1961) in the "Techniques of Language Teaching" divides the classroom situations into four phases:

**First Phase:** it is called the classroom situation. This situation includes what pupils can see, hear and touch directly in the classroom. Here, real objects are used by the teacher. For example, the teacher says: "My shirt is red." Then, he/she can ask the pupil: "What is the colour of my shirt?" The teacher can further put several questions by creating various situations. For example: "Do you like it?" "Do you have the same colour?" etc...

**Second Phase:** It consists of the daily experience of the pupil. It relates to what the pupil has seen or heard directly but cannot be seen or heard at the moment in the classroom. The teacher helps pupils to recall their memories or visualize their daily experiences. For example, (i) "I am wearing a red shirt today."

(ii) "He studied English in the morning".

**Third Phase:** It consists of what the pupil has not experienced directly but what the pupil can imagine with the help of pictures and various aids. For example, by showing the picture of Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the teacher will give detailed information about his life, dress and victories. Moreover, the gestures or dramatization will create an interesting situation.

**Fourth Phase:** It consists of what is brought to his mind through the spoken, written and printed word alone without any help through audio-visual aids. Here, the teachers help the pupils to acquire the command of language and ask them to produce the sentences with the help of the keywords.



**Merits:**

- A child experiences pleasure while learning this approach,
- It is a simple method,
- Repetition and action make the class active and alive,
- It's rewarding while using the teaching aids, and
- A child can learn to pronounce the words.

**Demerits:**

- This approach can be used only in the classroom,
- It is only for certain words and patterns,
- It can be dull and monotonous when repetition continues,
- It cannot be used for poetry, prose and composition, and
- It is difficult to find teachers who are good at pronunciation.

The above demerits can be overcome by:

- Presentation of the new words,
- Giving students enough repetitions,
- They also should have enough activities to be engaged in, and
- Implementing continuous revision.

## V. STRUCTURAL APPROACH

The British Council has done researches on the structural approach in London's University and other places. The aim of this is, to learn a foreign language, one has to learn the structure which is more important than acquiring vocabulary. The structural approach is arranging words in a correct way that makes complete sense.

The structural approach consists of two terms. Structural means structure, and approach means to come close. This means that by using the structure a person learns English or any other language. Menon and Patel in "The Teaching of English as a Foreign Language" say, "The structural approach is based on the belief that in the learning of a foreign language, mastery of structures is more important than the acquisition of vocabulary" Pahuja (2009). This approach is also known as the 'New- Approach' or 'Aural-Oral Approach'. When we use this approach to teach English, one needs to think of the child's ability, age, mental situation, and amount of time given for teaching English. We also need to think of the teacher's ability and access to the teaching material. Some structures have many meanings according to the situations. One needs to select based on frequency, simplicity and the ability to teach. We need to move from simple to complex. The Structural Approach is used for teaching English.

Fries describes this: "The fundamental feature of this approach to language teaching is a new basis, to build the teaching materials. This new approach to the selection and ordering of materials rests upon a scientific descriptive analysis of the language of the learner, a scientific descriptive analysis of the language to be learnt and a systematic comparison of these two descriptive analyses to bring out completely the difference of structural patterning of the two language systems" Fries, C.C., (1955). Brewington defines the structural approach as, "a scientific study of fundamental structures of English language, their analysis and logical arrangements". Pahuja, N.P., (2009).

**What is a structure?**

A structure is a means for learning English or any other language. To teach grammar we do not need structure. For learning the language, we need structural approaches.

"Structures may be complete patterns or they may form a part of a large pattern." C.S. Bhandari defines it as "the different arrangements or patterns of words". (86).

Generally speaking, the structural approach to the teaching of English refers to the language material organized for presentation. It is a new way of learning grammar through language use. J.B. Burton, in a working paper presented at Nagpur Seminar in 1958, summarizes the assumptions of the Structural

**Approach:**

- "The English language is primarily a spoken thing and therefore, our approach to a foreign language should in the first instance be through its spoken form,
- Mastery over the signalling system of a language is more important than detailed knowledge of the forms of language,
- This mastery is best acquired by the repetition of various components of a system in varied forms,
- Since the language arises from the situation, the teacher's task is to create meaningful sentences from which language will arise easily and naturally, and
- Mastery of a given range of structures and confidence in their use are best imparted by concentrating on the teaching of one item at a time.

**Merits:**

- The students are happy and contented when they can speak by using the structure. The structured approach motivates them to learn more,
- This also helps the students learn vocabulary which is also useful in their daily speech,
- This approach provides many opportunities to learn many methods and techniques,
- It also helps them to imitate and drill in the sentence

patterns,

- It helps the teachers to acquire mastery over teaching,
- Language learning becomes natural because it is an oral and situational approach,
- In this approach, the teachers simplify, select carefully the material and present it systematically to the pupils,
- As we train the students drilling orally the students can remember all they have learnt,
- The teacher does not find difficulty in controlling the whole class,
- The students can express their ideas and feel free,
- The teachers can use this method for all the stages of education,
- It creates a good atmosphere to learn the language, and
- Both students and teachers are active and energetic in this method.

#### Demerits:

- In a large class, this cannot be used.
- Overuse makes it dull and uninteresting.
- It is useful mostly for the lower classes.
- A proper selection of sentences is needed.
- Prose, poetry, grammar and vocabulary cannot be taught in this approach.
- The teacher has to present the topic to the students well.
- Sometimes it may be difficult to finish the syllabus in time.
- Reading and explanation of vocabulary are neglected in this approach.
- Structures alone will not give the fluency of speech.

## VI. AUDIOLINGUAL METHOD

The Audiolingual Method is also known as the 'Army Method', because, after the outbreak of World War II, the army soldiers decided to be proficient in the languages of their enemies. So, a new learning method of foreign languages which is known as the Audiolingual Method was discovered. This method is based on linguistic theory and behavioural psychology. The Audiolingual Method was widely used in the 1950s and 1960s. The emphasis was not on the understanding of the words, but on the acquisition of structures and patterns in common everyday dialogues (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). The teaching of oral skills with accurate pronunciation, grammar and the ability to respond quickly and accurately is the main objective of the Audiolingual Method. Reading and writing skills may be taught but they are dependent on oral skills (Richard and Rodgers, 1986).

During the last few decades, there is a development in science and technology; the need of speaking a foreign language emerged in various countries. Now, there is a worldwide awakening on the importance of English to achieve the target. At present, the method that we are using to achieve the goal of communication is called, "The Aural Oral Method". This method aims to develop listening and speaking skills first as the foundation. As 'Aural and Oral' was difficult to pronounce, the method was given another name, viz., 'Audio Lingual Method' by Nelson Brookes of Yale University. However, the origin of the Audio-Lingual Method is found in the work of American Structural Linguists and Cultural Anthropologists who were working at the beginning of the twentieth century on the line of the behaviourist school of psychologists. Williams Moulton, a linguistic scientist and a foreign language teacher, has summarized the "five slogans of the day" (Dr Pabhavati, 1992). These are the assumptions that guided the experts in applying the results of linguistic research to the preparation of materials and classroom teaching.

They are:

- A language is a speech, not writing,
- A language is a set of habits,
- Teach the language, not about the language,
- A language is what its native speaker says, not what someone thinks they ought to say, and
- Languages are different.

Wilga Rivers (1968) examines these principles to see what bearing they have. Based on the above, the aims of the foreign language teaching as advocated by the Pioneers of the Audio-Lingual Method are indicated below:

- For an Audio-Lingual teacher, grammar is a means to an end. To quote Moulton Williams, (1961) "The real goal of illustration was an ability to talk the language and not to talk about it."
- The advocates of the Audio-Lingual Method emphasized the primacy of speech on the ground that all normal children learn to speak much before they learn to read and write. Its pedagogic implication is that oral presentation should precede written presentation. It shifts an emphasis from reading and writing and leads to a radical change in the type of material selected as a basis for teaching in the early stages.
- B.F. Skinner (1957) finds language as verbal behaviour. For him, like the social behaviour of the child, linguistic behaviour is also modifiable.

#### Features:

- This method recommends teaching the language skills in the order of listening, speaking, reading and

writing.

- The development of communicative skills. The dialogues are constituted by day-to-day expressions, basic structures and a useful but controlled vocabulary. The process which is used in this method to learn the dialogue is mimicry-memorization.
- The method uses pattern drilling to teach the basic structures. While using this method practically, the students listen to their teacher or model on tape until they can distinguish the sound and the intonation pattern. Then students go to repeat in groups first and then individually. This could be a playful activity, where children repeat in rows, exchanging their roles. After the dialogue has been learnt, a personal situation should be contrived to facilitate practical application or use of that particular expression, which will consolidate learning. By using the expression and conversations, the students are introduced to reading and writing to find out their weaknesses.

#### Merits:

- Students get highly motivated to learn a foreign language. They get enjoyment in daily communication. In the Audio-Lingual Method, more emphasis is laid on listening and speaking in the early stages, because they are considered the basis of the rest of the skills. In the middle and the higher stages, emphasis is laid on reading and writing.
- Teaching materials in this method are scientifically and systematically developed. Pupils spend more time in contrasting L1 and L2 features, which pose problems to the learner due to the inference from the mother-tongue.
- This method emphasizes the development of the four basic skills- listening, speaking, reading and writing. Moreover, it endeavours to develop the understanding of foreign culture and foreign people, and
- This method helps to develop comprehension and fluency in speaking. From the beginning, the student learns segments of language. He/she is also trained to understand and produce foreign language utterances.

#### Demerits:

There are certain drawbacks of this method, but they can be avoided if the teacher is aware of them.

- The Audio-Lingual Method is blamed for its criterion of only well-trained parrots, who repeat the utterances promptly without knowing their meaning them. As a result, the child will be lacking in the ability to transfer learning to practical situations. To avoid these, pupils must be trained even from the

beginning to apply what they have memorized or practised in pattern drills,

- It has also been objected that the techniques of memorization and drilling in this method can become intensely tedious, causing fatigue and disinterest on the part of the students. An unimaginative teacher who has staunch faith but is not sensitive enough to the students' reactions can very well aggravate this problem. As a remedy for this, the teacher should necessarily be inventive and resourceful in creating situations and presenting the structures,
- In this method, the students are trained to make variations on language patterns by a process of analogy. So, they do not understand the possibilities and limitations of usage that fail the particular drill,
- The Audio-Lingual Method pre-supposes a homogenous group with mental attitude and aptitude. But the pupils do differ in their capacity to learn the language and the method through which they can learn easily. Some students feel more insecure when they are forced to depend on the ear alone as they lack auditory memory, and
- There is objection regarding the time lag which exists between the presentations of language material orally and the presentation of the same in printed or written form. Experiments in it offer twenty-four-hour oral work before the students are introduced to graphic form. Here, the lag obviates the interferences of the mother-tongue in pronunciation through the written symbols.

However, the Audio-Lingual Method is not apt for all types of students. Experience has shown this method to be very useful for younger children who mimic the act out roles and learn through explanations and facts. This method makes considerable demands upon the teacher. This method also calls for sustaining energy to carry on oral practice for three or more classes.

## VII. COOPERATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING

CLL is a learning technique which depends on activities that enhance the student – student interaction (Arendale 2005; Heba and Nouby 2007). McCafferty et al. (2004) defined CLL and highlighted the importance of equal opportunities in order to make the process of CLL more effective. Today's children are tomorrow's citizens and destiny shapers of any country.

The Kothari Education Commission (1964-66) observed and said, "The destiny of India is being shaped in their classrooms." Therefore, it is essential to develop the logical and creative thinking of children optimally inside the

classrooms through CLL with each other. The students are responsible for one another's learning, and the success becomes inter dependent. The concept of a Cooperative Classroom promotes either to Sink or to Swim together, entirely different from the traditional classes which are individualistic and highly competitive. Cooperation and helping in team spirit is the soul of this method, thus creating an atmosphere of team achievement. CLL trends to organize classroom activities into an academic and social learning experience.

Students work through the assignments until all group members successfully understand and complete them. Thus, CLL practices share learning materials, divide up the work to complete the assignments, help the other team members of the group, receive awards based on the group's performance, and enjoy the fruit of the labour together.

In CLL, all the members of the group have to work on the common principle of 'Sink or Swim together', i.e., all the group members can earn the mutual benefit for all group members from each other's efforts, and feel proud and celebrate together when an individual is recognized by his/her achievement.

CLL is an organized strategy for small groups of students in which they work together to identify the solutions to the given problems. The students automatically organize their own learning with the distribution of tasks among themselves rather than following the instructions from teachers. The students intensely feel their own responsibilities and learning is no more a burden, and instead converted into more fun. It is like using multiple intelligences, interests, attitudes, aptitudes, achievements, etc, at a single time. Despite these individual differences, students take the opportunity unknowingly to learn from individual instructions for their development to the optimum level of their own potential.

In this way, CLL stimulates creative thinking, divergent thinking, decision making, and problem-solving skills in students. CLL also utilizes diversities of academic abilities, ethnic background, race and gender, regardless of which students choose to assist each other using their own individual perspective, strategy and approach to complete given assignments, laboratory experiments, and projects. CLL thus, facilitates the improvement in quality of decision-making abilities, interaction with others, finding a variety of solutions to different problems, and generating new ideas. At the same time, it naturally creates conflicts of ideas, opinions, conclusions and theories. Besides, the cooperative learning activities also encourage the development of essential communication skills, positive self-esteem, social awareness, motivation, positive attitude

towards subject and school, tolerance for individual differences, group interaction, social skills, and self-confidence.

Team is a group of individuals coming together in an organized form for achieving some common goals, where each members has equal accountability. It focuses on accomplishment of goals of entire team. There is a democratic nature in the team management; they work collectively to accomplish certain goals.

Team members share the responsibility and have high visibility. There are fewer conflicts because of small groups and common goals. There is more scope, praising and rewards due to recognition of individuals.

### **Definition of Cooperative Language Learning**

First, here are some definitions of cooperative learning (also known as collaborative learning):

The instruction uses small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1993, P.9).

Principles and techniques for helping students work together more effectively (Jacobs, Power, & Loh, 2002, p. 1).

The point is that cooperative learning involves more than just asking students to work together in groups. Instead, conscious thought goes into helping students make the experience successful.

### **Benefits of Cooperative Learning**

A cooperative situation helps create that atmosphere, because, participants give encouragement and support to one another. Cooperative has been linked to greater learning, emotional maturity and strong personal identity.

**Leadership Skills:** For a cooperative learning group to succeed, individuals within the group need to show leadership abilities. Leadership skills that can be taught and practiced through cooperative learning include:

- Delegating,
- Organizing work,
- Supporting others, and
- Ensuring that goals are being met.

Natural leaders become quickly evident in small groups, but most students will not feel naturally inclined to lead. Assign leadership roles of varying prominence to every member of a group to help all individuals practice leading.

**Teamwork Skills:** All cooperative learning activities help students practice working in teams. As Bill Gates, Co-founder of Microsoft says: "Teams should be able to act with the same unity of purpose and focus as a well-motivated individual."



Teamwork-building exercises teach students to trust each other to achieve more together than would otherwise be possible.

**Communication Skills:** Effective teamwork requires good communication and commitment. All members of a cooperative learning group have to learn to speak productively with one another to stay on track. By teaching students to share confidently, listen intently, and speak clearly, they learn to value the input of their team mates and the quality of their work soars.

**Conflict Management Skills:** Conflicts are bound to arise in any group setting. Sometimes these are minor and easily handled, and at other times they can rip a team apart if improperly managed. Give students space to try and work out their issues for themselves before stepping in. With that said, always monitor class during cooperative learning. Teach students how to work things out with each other when disagreements present themselves.

**Decision-Making Skills:** Make sure that each student has his/her responsibilities in cooperative groups. Thus, the classroom often offers a student first experience in practicing most life skills. Teachers should deliberately create opportunities for students to cooperate, share responsibilities, solve problems, and control conflict. These opportunities can be found in cooperative learning, which differs from individualistic or traditional learning where students work independently, and sometimes even against each other. Cooperative learning activities require students to work together in small groups to complete a project or activity, operating as a team to help each other succeed.

#### Merits

- Achieving Excellence,
- Building Teamwork,
- Effective Communication,
- Time Management,
- Higher Self-esteem,
- Better Attitudes towards Teacher and School,
- Retention Increase,
- Improved Academic,
- Higher Level Thinking Skills,
- Personal Responsibility,
- Self-awareness,
- More Positive Relationships and a Wider Circle of Friends,
- Greater Intrinsic Motivation,
- More on- task behaviour,

- Build Positive Relationships among Students,
- Reduce Violence,
- Openness, Trust and Safety,
- Self-worth and Personal Power, and
- Well- being.

#### Demerits

- Lack of Social Skill,
- Time Requirements, and
- Arguments among Students.

### VIII. CONCLUSION

This study was aimed to seek and find out the teaching methods and approaches applied by teachers, especially those who teach young learners. Teachers may have a plan and follow the plan, but they still need to be flexible while teaching. Language teaching approaches and methods have cast light on the language teaching theory and practice. This paper tries to analyze their effectiveness and weakness of several most influential teaching Approaches and Methods. Grammar-translation method, Direct method, Oral Approach, Situation Approach, Structural Approach, and Audio-lingual Method, create a better understanding and application in teaching practice. CLL is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. CLL promoted academic achievement is relatively easy to implement and is not expensive. The result shows that this is one of the best methods comparing to methods and approaches.

In summary, an approach is a general way of thinking about a problem or situation, while a method is the specific way of putting that approach into action. An approach is abstract and conceptual, while a method is more concrete and specific.

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# A Brief Analysis of Chinese-English Subtitling Translation of the “NEZHA” from Cultural Translation Theory

Yang Weina<sup>1</sup>, Wang Qun<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Master Degree Candidate, School of Foreign Languages, North China Electric Power University, Beijing, China.

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor and Research Supervisor, School of Foreign Languages, North China Electric Power University, Beijing, China

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**Abstract**— In recent years, China has made significant breakthroughs in animated films. Qualified domestic films have been highly praised domestically and gained popularity in Western countries. Based on Cultural Translation Theory, the paper takes the film “NEZHA,” rich in elements of excellent traditional Chinese culture, as an example, examining its English subtitles and putting forward several suggestions on Chinese-English subtitle translation, with the hope to promote Chinese animated films to spread overseas.

**Keywords**— cultural translation theory, subtitle translation, NEZHA

**摘要**— 近年来,我国动画电影发展迅猛,高质量的国产影片不仅在国内备受称赞,在西方国家也很受欢迎。本文以饱含中华优秀传统文化元素的《哪吒之魔童降世》为例,以文化翻译观审视该电影英译字幕,并在此基础上提出几点建议,以期推动中国动画电影更好更快地“走出去”。

**关键词**— 文化翻译观;字幕翻译;哪吒

## I. INTRODUCTION

Released on July 26, 2019, the film “NEZHA” depicts a famous Chinese mythological tale in animation. Its innovative character designs and dialogue imbued with contemporary relevance have captivated many viewers in China, garnering praise from them. Upon its release overseas, the film also attracted numerous viewers from Western countries. The mythical and historical backdrop of the film, “NEZHA,” along with its protagonist’s unwavering personalities, offered a refreshing perspective for viewers from diverse cultural backgrounds, allowing them to appreciate a different aesthetic charm. The character Ne Zha’s unwavering commitment to righteousness in the film represents the national spirit that has persisted in China

for thousands of years. However, the different historical and cultural backgrounds of China and the West have led to numerous differences in thinking patterns, language structures, lifestyles, and religious beliefs. How can Western viewers appreciate the charm of Chinese culture based on their understanding of the film’s content? Avoiding cultural conflicts, ensuring translation quality, and fully leveraging the excellence of traditional Chinese culture depend on the “integrative perspective” of cultural translation, which is essential in subtitle translation.

Having “cultural translation theory” as the keyword, the author searched for the CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure) platform to examine the publication status of related journals. The result indicates

that since 2011, there have been over fifty papers published annually based on this theory, reaching as high as eighty papers in 2021. The applications primarily include the translation of classic literary works, external propaganda translation, and subtitle translation, among others. It is evident that in the past decade, there has been an increasing emphasis on “culture” studies among inter-lingual translations. However, there are only about five academic papers on subtitle translation on average per year, indicating insufficient attention from various sectors of society towards subtitle translation.

### **Theoretical Basis**

Since the 1980s, culture has gradually gained attention from scholars as one of the external factors influencing translation. Susan Bassnett (1990), in her collection of essays titled *Translation, History, and Culture*, discussed the “cultural turn” in translation which redefines translation not merely as a linguistic activity but as a cultural one. In 2014, in her *Translation Studies*, she proposed the concept of “cultural translation theory,” suggesting that scholars in the translation field should pay attention to the differences between distinct cultures and strive to convey cultural emotions as much as possible. This viewpoint challenged the traditional emphasis on the language in translation and caused quite a sensation at the time. Cultural translation theory comprises four parts. Firstly, the translation should take culture as its unit rather than remaining confined to previous discourse. Secondly, translation is not merely a straightforward process of decoding and reassembling but an act of communication. Thirdly, translation should not be limited to describing the original text but focus on achieving functional equivalence of that text within the target language culture. Fourthly, translation in different historical periods adheres to distinct principles and norms. However, these principles and norms serve to meet various needs. Translation serves the cultural needs and requirements of diverse groups within a culture. The cultural translation theory asserts that translation activities should be based on culture as the fundamental unit to facilitate cultural exchange rather than being limited solely to the linguistic aspects of words and sentences.

In *Collins English-Chinese Dictionary*, “subtitles are a printed translation of the words of a foreign film that are show at the bottom of the pictures.” Gottlieb (1994)

proposed that in any diagonal - and thus interlingual - subtitling, one must, on top of translating utterances from one language to another, transfer the dialog from one sub-code (the seemingly unruly spoken language) to another (the more rigid written language). In China, research on subtitling translation has traditionally been less prominent than those of on literary translation. The reasons include lower costs and longer production cycles associated with subtitling translation, inconsistencies in the skills of translators, and a lack of established translation standards. Furthermore, the scarcity of the written or printed script of English subtitle translation directly contributes to the neglect of subtitle translation among researchers. Additionally, subtitling translation itself presents difficulties and possesses its distinct characteristics. Ma Zhengqi (1997) suggested that subtitling translation should adhere to five basic principles: colloquialization, emotionalization, character portrayal, synchronization with lip movements, and popularization. Qian Shaochang (2000) identified five key features of language in audiovisual works: audibility, comprehensiveness, momentariness, populism, and lack of annotation. Li Yunxing (2001) pointed out two unique aspects of subtitles. Firstly, the language information provided by subtitles closely corresponds with visual and auditory information. Secondly, the language information in subtitles is progressive. Chai Meiping (2003) mentioned strategies for subtitling synchronization and translation in terms of “vocabulary,” “sentence,” and “discourse.” In summary, subtitling translation is subject to various constraints, including temporal and spatial factors, linguistic ambiguity, cultural differences, character development, and film style.

The film, “NEZHA,” is adapted from the Chinese mythological tale “Nezha Conquers the Sea.” It tells the story of “Ne Zha,” who is supposed to reincarnate in Li Jing’s family as a hero to help King Wu attack King Zhou but transforms into a despised demon child due to a twist of fate. Because of his fierce and ugly appearance, he suffered from misunderstanding and ostracism. However, under the guidance and education of his father (Li Jing), he perseveres against his fate and eventually earns his recognition. This film embodies traditional Chinese culture and values, and incorporates many popular elements, making it understandable for Chinese viewers. However, how to make

Western viewers gain the same aesthetic enjoyment and psychological effect as Chinese people do is based on understanding the content of the film?

The importance of subtitles is self-evident. The function of subtitle translation is to fully convey the original text's information within time and space limitations while also achieving cultural transformation between the source and target languages. By taking the advantage of “NEZHA,” the paper studies its subtitle translation from the perspective of Cultural Translation Theory, comparing both Chinese and English translations to explore ways to translate cultural information and bring enlightenment to the future development of China's film and television industry.

### English translation of “NEZHA”

Bassnett's cultural translation theory emphasized the culture in source text, prioritizing the cultural transplantation over adherence to the form. The theory plays a significant guiding role in the research and practice of film subtitle translation. Under the guidance of the cultural translation theory, the most widely used strategies in film subtitle translation are domestication and foreignization. Domestication refers to the translator's initiative-taking approach to bring the translation closer to the reader, catering to the preferences of the target language readers by using vocabulary, syntax, and other linguistic elements that are familiar to them, facilitating their understanding and acceptance. The foreignization strategy advocates for readers to approach the translator, emphasizing cultural aspects from the source country as much as possible to maintain authenticity. As for the relationship between domestication and foreignization, they are not mutually exclusive, instead, they offer flexible choices for translators in specific translation activities. Translators can select different translation methods flexibly to achieve the goal of cultural dissemination while preserving the uniqueness of their national culture. Therefore, under the guidance of the cultural translation theory, the paper combines domestication and foreignization, two different translation strategies, to analyze film subtitles in four parts: cultural transformation, cross-cultural communication, functional mapping, and historical norms.

## II. CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

例 1: 将来还有机会封神登天。And my child will become a god.

改译: And my child will become a Celestial Being?

例 2: 闭关编撰封神榜什么的 They are compiling the investiture of the gods.

改译: They are compiling the investiture of the Celestial Beings.

“天庭”<sup>1</sup> originates from the *Records of Grand Historian*, which is also known as “天廷” and refers to the celestial palace of the Heavenly Emperor, where the Jade Emperor rules over numerous deities and immortals. In ancient China, from where Taoism prevailed, “天庭” sometimes abbreviated as “天”, served as the supreme ruling center in Taoist mythology. As supernatural existence, “神”(immortal) possess magical powers, and are capable of aiding humans in curing illnesses, warding off disasters, and protecting humanity from the persecution of demons and monsters. Furthermore, different “神” possess different powers and shoulder diverse responsibilities. For example, “门神” (the immortal of door) are tasked with guarding homes, prohibiting monsters from entering, and so forth. In Western countries, Christianity predominates “God” as the sole deity who governs all things in the universe. There are significant differences in religious practices between Eastern and Western cultures. Followers in Western countries typically attend church weekly for prayers, while Chinese people believe that deities can influence fortune, so they often set up altars at home. Translating “神” as “God” is a literal interpretation, which disconnects the cultural information behind the words. “神” represents an abstract concept, not only referring to a particular deity but rather indicating reverence for mysterious forces. Translation of such culture-loaded words should take culture as its basic unit, taking into full account the similarities and differences between Chinese and Western religions, rather than simply staying at the linguistic expression of the original text. Therefore, it is more appropriate to translate “神” as “Celestial Being” referring to a deity in the heavens. Additionally, “celestial” inherently implies “of or relating to the heavens,” thus eliminating the need for the adverbial of place “in the

<sup>1</sup>[https://baike.baidu.com/reference/23458935/533aYdO6cr3\\_z3kATPXYyKjNS3EP92q7baGBLVzzqIPmGapB4bkVJEnrtU-](https://baike.baidu.com/reference/23458935/533aYdO6cr3_z3kATPXYyKjNS3EP92q7baGBLVzzqIPmGapB4bkVJEnrtU-)

9\_NyWgJEvdd4adUc2fv1TR9I-4IVZJwxV8QriAP6RkGz3M-S7I1k3oAd\_9cWCfM

paradise.” Capitalizing the initial letter denotes a proper noun, making it easier for Western viewers to understand the essence of “神”.

In Example 2, “封神榜”<sup>2</sup> originating from the Chinese Ming Dynasty supernatural novel *The Legend of Deification*, is a treasure jointly formulated and discussed by the leaders of the three major religions: “禅教”(the religion of Chan), “截教”(the religion of Jie) and “人道”(the religion of Chan Ren). Jiang Ziya presides over the investiture. “榜” refers to publicly posted documents or lists. “上榜” implies being listed, signifying success. Translating “封神榜” as “the investiture of the Celestial Beings” can reduce cultural barriers and minimize cognitive difficulties for foreign viewers, thus facilitating cross-cultural communication and understanding. The phrase “The Investiture of the Celestial Beings” breaks through the literal translation at the discourse level, reducing cultural barriers and minimizing cognitive difficulties for foreign viewers. The revised translation accurately conveys the original meaning and carries similar effects and impacts in the target language.

### III. CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

例 3: 不...不成功, 便成仁。 I cannot ... cannot be defeat.

改译: No sacrifice, no victory.

The phrase “不成功便成仁” is derived from the *Analects of Confucius* and is used to describe those who are willing to make great sacrifices, even including their lives, for their ideals or beliefs. It was uttered by Shen Gongbao when he accepted the task of teaching Ao Bing entrusted to him by the Dragon King, representing his extreme determination. In the film, Shen Gongbao has a slight stutter, and his lines often have opposite meanings before and after. He also serves as the comic relief in the play. Therefore, the translation presents considerable difficulty. Translation is an act of communication, so it is necessary to make the translation meaningful in the communication process. While balancing the colloquial nature of subtitle translation and the humorous implications of Shen Gongbao’s lines while conveying the cultural connotations of the dialogue, translating “不...不成功, 便成仁” into “No sacrifice, no

victory” might be much better. It fits Shen Gongbao’s stuttering character by repeating the “no.” It is not merely about converting words and facilitating effective communication and transmission between different languages and cultures.

例 4: 急急如律令 Obey my command.

改译: “All immortals swiftly appear.”

The phrase “急急如律令” is a spell used in Taoist rituals, often accompanied by talismans. Taoist priests draw talismans, recite spells, and perform rituals to vanquish demons, punish evil, and promote goodness. These rituals serve the cultural function of maintaining psychological balance and life confidence in the face of uncontrollable external forces. “律令” originally refers to “laws and regulations,” but in Taoism, it stands for immortals adept at walking. The phrase summons these immortals to appear quickly and generate power to combat demons. It is typically used in urgent situations when confronting demons. This is why the sentence is short and easy to speak. The subtitled translation “Obey my command” lacks clarity regarding the recipient of the action, which may confuse Western viewers with the doubts like: Who needs to follow the command? English subtitle translation is never a simple translation from Chinese into English, but an effort to convey the cultural context, feelings, and scenes of the original language to the target language viewers as much as possible. It enables people to communicate across language barriers and makes communication meaningful. Therefore, translating it as “all immortals swiftly appear” is more appropriate. Because it retains the magical tone of the spell and facilitates Western viewers’ understanding of its true meaning. It preserves the cultural uniqueness while promoting the dissemination of excellent traditional Chinese culture.

### IV. FUNCTIONAL MAPPING

例 5: 就因为我是豹子精修炼成人 Because he knows I was born a lowly jaguar spirit.

改译: Because he knows I was born a lowly leopard bogey.

In the film, Shen Gongbao spoke this phrase to Ao Bing. “妖精”<sup>3</sup> originates from *The Scholars*,

<sup>2</sup>[https://baike.baidu.com/reference/14585510/533aYdO6cr3\\_z3kATPWMz6hYC\\_NYtql7byFURZzzqIPmGapB5nyTcY15MAn\\_fk](https://baike.baidu.com/reference/14585510/533aYdO6cr3_z3kATPWMz6hYC_NYtql7byFURZzzqIPmGapB5nyTcY15MAn_fk)

pFwTG\_59meMVakPuzQ1Q

<sup>3</sup><https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E5%84%92%E6%9E%97%E5%>



metaphorically referring to enchanting women with captivating looks or glamorous beings possessing magic or sorcery. It carries negative connotations in Chinese culture, and the choice of vocabulary should align with both the literal meaning and the cultural implications behind it. In other words, “妖精” refers to creatures, whether animals or plants, that have undergone cultivation and transformed into human-like forms. They typically possess magical powers, whose immortals are “妖术”. There is a distinction between the good and evil “妖精”, and those who are devoted to goodness can achieve enlightenment. “精” is a shortened form of “妖精” and is often used in combination with various objects to denote specific entities or categories, such as “蛇精” (bogeys cultivated from snakes) “蜘蛛精” (bogeys cultivated from spiders) “树精”(bogeys cultivated from trees) and so on. “Spirit” is a neutral term primarily referring to a person’s thoughts, feelings, and character, which can be translated as “精神” or “感觉” and so on, into Chinese. Given the negative connotation of “妖精”, an appropriate translation for “妖精” in this context could be “bogey.” Therefore, “豹子精” should be translated as “leopard bogey” to preserve both the literal meaning and the cultural connotations. Indeed, “spirit” can also denote a person’s soul, representing the ethereal essence separated from the body upon death. While “精神” and “妖精” are intangible concepts, they represent fundamentally different entities. Translating “精” as “spirit” may mislead Western viewers and lead to a misunderstanding of the character of Shen Gongbao. Furthermore, “jaguar” has two meanings, representing tiger or leopard in different contexts. Subtitle translation should focus on conveying the intended meaning of the original text, matching the translated message and its impact in the target language and culture with those of the original text. Translating “豹子精” as “leopard bogey” would accurately convey that Shen Gongbao is a “豹子精” rather than a “老虎精”(bogeys cultivated from tigers), achieving function equivalence in the target language.

例 6: And then instead of him, the relative will go boom. 天雷就会移到血亲身上

改译: The thunder will strike on the blood relative.

In ancient times, Chinese people have placed great emphasis on family ties, valuing collective interests and the rise and fall of the family. “血亲” refer to “people with

blood ties.” Western societies prioritize individual interests, with a weaker sense of familial bond. “Relative” means “亲戚” in Chinese, not necessarily blood-related. In the film, Ne Zha’s father, Li Jing, willingly endures heavenly punishment in place of his son, even at the cost of his life, to ensure Ne Zha’s safety throughout his life. Only those with the deepest familial love would make such a choice. Therefore, “血亲” should be translated as “blood relative.” English translation of subtitles should not be limited to merely describing the original text but to transcending the original text. With a thorough understanding of both language and culture, the translator should ensure that the translated text effectively conveys the meaning and emotions of the original text in the target language culture. The sentence “And then instead, the relative will go boom” takes a mechanical word-for-word approach and it tends to be verbose. Given the constraints of subtitles and the inherent ambiguity of language, the translating of this sentence as “The thunder will strike on the blood relative” is appropriate and the word “strike” makes the sentence more vivid. The enhanced translation conveys the original meaning vividly and the emphasis on blood relations in Chinese culture. It can also provide Western viewers with a visual and emotional impact.

## V. HISTORICAL NORMS

例 7: “哪吒”“太乙”“李靖” “Ne Zha,” “Tai Yi,” “Li Jing.”

In the film, many mythological characters are familiar to Chinese people and known for their images, magical abilities, and other traits. Since such imagery is not present in Western cultures, during the initial stages of introducing Chinese culture to Western viewers, it’s common to use transliteration accompanied by explanations. This approach facilitates a more detailed understanding of unfamiliar Chinese cultural elements like character backgrounds and relationships for Western viewers. Or it could be directly corresponding to Western names to be swiftly accepted. The principles and norms of translation vary across different historical periods, influenced by the social, cultural, and intellectual environments. In contemporary China, the comprehensive national strength continues to grow, and cultural confidence is also rising. “Tell the Chinese Story

and Make China’s Voice Heard” is a significant initiative to promote cultural outreach, and it has made progress in the practical stage. With the increasing number of mythological stories spreading to Western nations, these mythological figures are becoming somewhat familiar to the foreign viewers. Given the limited duration of subtitles on-screen, it is impractical for translators to provide lengthy explanations on characters. Therefore, the film resorts to phonetic transliterations of their names rather than lengthy explanations. So it translates the characters, like “哪吒” “太乙” “李靖”, as “Ne Zha,” “Tai Yi,” and “Li Jing” to preserves the phonetic characteristics and cultural connotations, making it easier for viewers to understand and appreciate the cultural sentiments and historical backgrounds embedded in the story. Additionally, phonetic transliterations facilitate Western viewers in accurately searching for related information, enabling them to gain a quicker and deeper understanding of Chinese culture. Overall, the phonetic transliterations for characters and place names in the film do not hinder Western viewers’ comprehension of the film. Instead, it sparks their curiosity about Chinese culture, thereby achieving the goal of promoting traditional Chinese culture.

例 8: “我命由我不由天。” “I’m the master of my destiny.”

改译: I’m the master of my destiny, not the heaven.

This line, widely circulated in China after its release, embodies the core ideology of the film. It perfectly portrays the protagonist as one who refuses to accept defeat rejects predetermined fate and goes against the heavens. “我命由我不由天” is a significant teaching in Taoism, emphasizing that through relentless personal effort, one can control his or her destiny rather than leaving it to divine intervention. While respecting the value of life, practicing benevolence, diligence, and continuous learning, one can coexist with the universe and never perish. It also indirectly reveals the protagonist’s broad-mindedness, insight, and courage. The film translates this line as “I’m the master of my destiny,” which resonates with the famous last two lines of the poem “Invictus” by William Ernest Henley, “I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul.” It is a remarkable similarity in their essence. Henry, the author of “Invictus,” struggled with illness throughout his life, yet he never gave up on himself. Despite the hardships, he composed

“Invictus,” brimming with hope, inspiring those in tricky situations. Both experiences, though similarly harrowing, resulted in positive outcomes through the protagonist’s unwavering perseverance. In this context, “天” refers to the concept of “way of heaven,” signifying natural order or destiny. However, the film only translates the first part of the line, omitting the latter part, which results in a loss of the intended meaning. The principles and norms of translation are not fixed but evolve and adjust with changes in time and context. In contemporary society, cooperation and exchanges between countries continue to deepen, leading to increasing cultural collisions. Different religious cultures result in varying religious beliefs among people. To enable Western viewers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of Chinese religious culture and to help them grasp the plot more clearly and accurately, the author believes that translating “我命由我不由天” as “I’m the master of my destiny, not the heaven” better aligns with contemporary principles and norms of translation. It is fluent for Chinese viewers and accurately conveys the protagonist’s emotions and inner world. Additionally, it easily triggers associations for Western viewers, aiding their understanding of the character’s fearless struggle and unwavering character.

The animation film “NEZHA” is imbued with elements of Chinese culture. Subtitle translation faces challenges in conveying its cultural connotations and emotional expressions. From the above analysis, it is evident that whether adopting strategies of foreignization or domestication, the goal is to facilitate cultural exchange. They are not mutually exclusive, but compatible. In practical translation, translators choose appropriate strategies based on specific contexts, purposes, and viewers. Sometimes, foreignization and domestication methods may be employed to achieve the best translation results.

## VI. SUGGESTIONS

Film and television productions are a complex art form that transcends cultures, languages, and societies. The success or failure of translation research directly impacts the development of China’s film and television industry. Translators must recognize the complexity of translating subtitles for film and television, paying close attention to the characteristics of both languages and the cultural

connotations behind words and phrases. And they should employ various translation strategies depending on different purposes and requirements. Guided by a cultural translation theory, this paper presents four recommendations for subtitle translation as:

Firstly, language and culture are closely intertwined. Subtitle translation should not only adhere strictly to the literal meaning of words but rather prioritize cultural exchange on a deeper level. Subtitles should be based on the film, striving to achieve maximum cultural equivalence.

Secondly, subtitle translation should align with the style of the film and the characters' personalities. The choice of words and sentences should vary depending on the roles' situation and specific personality traits.

Thirdly, it is essential to be mindful of the cultural differences between Chinese and English. And explain cultural connotations and metaphors appropriately, ensuring that target language viewers obtain the most accurate information with minimal effort, thus reducing cognitive barriers.

Fourthly, due to the instantaneous, mass-oriented, non-annotative, and comprehensive nature, translations should strive for simplicity and clarity while avoiding verbosity.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The cultural translation theory, combined with the subtitling translation of the film “NEZHA,” points out that conveying the essence of the film requires a focus on preserving traditional elements within specific cultural contexts. It emphasizes the importance of considering various constraints on subtitle translation and making judicious choices of words to maintain a colloquial style and humorous effects. Additionally, the connotations of the original lines should closely relate to the story and the characterization of animated figures. By employing both domestication and foreignization strategies, the cultural connotations and emotional expressions within the film “Ne Zha” can be better conveyed, enabling viewers to understand and appreciate this film, which is brimming with the charm of Chinese culture. In conclusion, further opening of China is an inevitable trend, and the film and television translation industry must seize this opportunity to actively accelerate the pace of cultural outreach, allowing viewers worldwide to experience the unique charm of Chinese

culture. Through ongoing exploration and guided by a cultural translation theory, domestic films will continue to improve and make contributions to the international dissemination of Chinese culture.

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# Exploring Gender Biasness in selected works of Mahesh Dattani

Lavanya Pandey<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Rashi Srivastava<sup>2</sup>, Prof. Dr. Kumkum Ray<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>MA English, Amity School of Languages, Amity University Lucknow Campus, Uttar Pradesh, India

[lavanyapandey1201@gmail.com](mailto:lavanyapandey1201@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Amity School of Languages, Amity University Lucknow Campus, Uttar Pradesh, India

[rsrivastava5@lko.amity.edu](mailto:rsrivastava5@lko.amity.edu)

<sup>3</sup>Head of the Department, Amity School of Languages, Amity University Lucknow Campus, Uttar Pradesh, India

[kkray@lko.amity.edu](mailto:kkray@lko.amity.edu)

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**Abstract**— For decades the world has had rigid gender roles and constraints. This research paper examines instances of gender prejudice in the selected works of Mahesh Dattani, with a particular emphasis on his well-known plays *Tara* and *Dance Like a Man*. Using a multidisciplinary methodology, the research breaks down the complex layers of gender representation in these dramatic narratives by employing feminist theory, queer theory which aims at analyzing of gender roles in the society. The study examines how Dattani's characters negotiate power relationships, identity development, and societal expectations in the setting of Indian culture using in-depth textual analysis and theoretical frameworks. The research seeks to expose underlying prejudices, disprove normative presumptions, and promote a deeper comprehension of the nuances surrounding gender discourse in modern Indian theatre and literature by examining the production of gender within these works. This paper aims to investigate into gender prejudice and queer theory, which is crucial because it exposes structural injustices, questions normative assumptions, and promotes inclusivity. Through the analysis of these problems, society may deal with prejudice, support underprivileged groups, and advance a more diverse and equal conception of gender and sexuality.



**Keywords**— Gender roles, Feminist theory, Queer theory, Gender prejudices, Modern Indian theatre.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Within Indian theatre, Mahesh Dattani is regarded as a great artist whose plays go beyond traditional narrative structures to tackle relevant societal concerns, especially those related to gender roles and feminist ideology. Indian playwright Dattani skillfully negotiates the nuances of gender identity, social conventions, and interpersonal interactions in his theatrical works. His examination of feminism-related topics reveals a thoughtful and moving interaction with India's dominant socio-cultural context, where patriarchy and gender bias still influence day-to-day life.

It is essential to place Dattani's work within the larger frameworks of feminist theory and gender theory to

fully comprehend his significant insights into gender and feminism. Feminist theory opposes and analyzes the patriarchal systems that uphold gender inequality, whereas gender theory primarily studies how societies create and understand ideas of masculinity and femininity. These theories can be examined through Dattani's plays, which provide complex portraits of people battling social expectations, power dynamics, and the desire for selfdetermination. Dattani's rise to prominence in Indian theatre matched a time of social unrest and a reassessment of conventional gender norms. Dattani, who was born in Bangalore, India, in 1958, grew up at a time when the feminist movement was gaining ground around the world and sparked discussions about women's rights and gender equality in Indian society. In this context, Dattani's devotion

to using theatre to subvert ingrained norms and the ideology of social transformation moulded his artistic sensibility.

It is possible to credit Dattani's proclivity for feminist themes in his works to his astute observation of the gender dynamics that pervade Indian society. Dattani was well aware of the inequalities and injustices that women had to deal with because she grew up in a society where patriarchal ideals frequently governed social interactions and household expectations. Insightful reflections on these realities may be found in his plays *Tara* and *Dance Like a Man* which give a glimpse into the real-life struggles faced by women in a patriarchal society.

Furthermore, it is possible to interpret Dattani's interest in feminist issues as a conscious artistic decision motivated by a desire to dispel preconceptions and give voice to underrepresented groups. Dattani challenges the audience with difficult facts regarding gender bias through his subtle characterizations and gripping stories, promoting reflection and discussion on topics of social justice and gender equality.

Using theatre as a forum for activism and social critique is central to Dattani's investigation of feminism in his works. Through elevating gender-related concerns to a central position, Dattani encourages audiences to face their prejudices and take proactive steps to build a more just society. By doing this, Dattani joins a long line of socially conscious artists who use storytelling to create significant change. In addition, Dattani's portrayal of female concerns is made more complex by his distinct viewpoint as an Indian dramatist. Dattani infuses his works with a sense of authenticity and cultural identity by drawing from the rich tapestry of Indian culture and tradition. This allows readers/viewers to gain a deeper knowledge of the interconnections between gender, tradition, and modernity. By delving into these topics, Dattani not only refutes Western-oriented ideas about feminism but also adds perspectives from the Indian context to the conversation.

Essentially, the extensive output of Mahesh Dattani is proof of the theatre's capacity to be a transformative vehicle for societal change. Dattani challenges audiences to engage in selfreflection and empathy by examining gender bias and feminist themes in his plays. This forces them to face the challenges of gender identity and the ongoing fight for equality. The pursuit of social justice has a central role as we explore further into Dattani's works and set out on a journey of discovery where the lines between art and activism become hazier.

## II. HISTORY

In India, gender discrimination is not just a modern issue; rather, it is a deeply embedded social construct that has developed over thousands of years. Its roots are deep in religious, cultural, and historical contexts that date back thousands of years. The story of gender inequality in India is intricate and multidimensional, spanning the Vedic era's hierarchical structures, colonial domination, and ongoing post-independence conflicts. Through the eyes of Indian writers, whose writings have functioned as both windows into transformational potential and mirrors reflecting society standards, this investigation explores the beginnings, high points, and current thoughts on gender discrimination.

Understanding the origins of gender discrimination in India requires delving into its rich historical tapestry, where the complex interactions of culture, tradition, religion and socioeconomic factors have created inequality for millennia. Although pinpointing the exact starting point is difficult, the roots of gender discrimination can be traced back to ancient times and can be found in various texts, traditions and social norms. In ancient Indian society, gender roles were strictly defined and women were often relegated to subordinate positions in the family and society. The Rigveda, one of the oldest Indian scriptures, contains hymns that reflect respect for women as well as mothers and goddesses, but also preserves patriarchal norms and gender hierarchies. For example, the famous Rigvedic hymn "Creation of the Universe" describes Purusha, the primordial male being of the universe, whose different body parts symbolize different aspects of creation. While this hymn symbolizes the union of all life, it also reflects a hierarchical worldview that places man as the ultimate creator.

As Indian civilization developed, so did the manifestations of gender-based discrimination. The caste system and its rigid social hierarchy continued to exclude certain groups, including women. Lower caste women faced complex discrimination based on both their gender and caste identity. Practices such as child marriage, dowry and purda (separation of women) took root in society, reinforcing the inferior position of women and limiting their right to self-determination. In the Middle Ages feudal structures appeared, which further limited the ability of women to act. Feudal lords held power over their subjects and women were often treated as property, exchanged in marriage for political alliances or financial gain. The practice of Sati, a widow swearing herself on her husband's funeral pyre, although not as widespread as is often portrayed, was still common in certain communities and reflected the extreme extent of patriarchal norms.



The emergence of colonialism in India brought with it new challenges in the field of gender equality. British colonial rule brought Western notions of gender roles that sometimes conflicted with traditional Indian practices. Although British administrators supported the ideals of women's education and reform, their policies often reinforced rather than challenged existing power structures. Missions to "civilize" Indian society often targeted practices such as sati and child marriage, but traditional efforts were resisted because they saw them as interfering with indigenous practices. Indian writers throughout history have wrestled with complex issues of marriage, against gender discrimination, offering insights and criticism through his literary works. Nobel Prize-winning poet and playwright Rabindranath Tagore explored themes of gender equality and social reform in many of his works. In his novel *Chokher Bali* (*Grain of Sand*), Tagore describes the struggle of women in traditional Bengali society and highlights the limitations placed on their autonomy and desires. Binodini, the protagonist, is trapped in a loveless marriage and faces social condemnation when she tries to assert her independence.

Similarly, the writings of Mahatma Gandhi, often considered the father of India's independence movement, contain reflections on gender equality and women's rights. Gandhi advocated the empowerment of women and their participation in the freedom struggle, recognizing their important role in reforming society. He famously said: "To call a woman the weaker sex is an insult; it is an injustice from man to woman. If strength means moral strength, then woman is immeasurably better than man." Recently, Indian writers have continued to struggle. gender discrimination and inequality. Arundhati Roy explores the impact of patriarchy and caste on the lives of women in Kerala in her novel *The God of Small Things*. Through the characters of Amu and Velutha, Roy highlights the intersectional oppression faced by women in marginalized communities and the violence perpetuated by patriarchal norms.

In the field of non-fiction, feminist scholars and activists have also contributed to the debate on gender discrimination in India. Uma Chakravarti's work on gender and caste explores the historical roots of Dalit oppression and the intersections of caste, class and gender in perpetuating inequality. In the essay "What Happened to Veda Das?" Chakravarti questions traditional interpretations of ancient Indian texts and recommends a reevaluation of the roles of women in pre-colonial society. Ultimately, gender discrimination in India is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon with deep historical roots. From ancient texts and traditions to colonial legacies and modern social norms, the forces shaping gender inequality are diverse. Through their literary works and scholarly contributions, Indian

writers have offered insights into the pervasive nature of gender discrimination and the struggle for equality. By exploring these diverse voices and stories, we can gain a deeper understanding of the challenges facing women in India and work to build a more just and equal society.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The exploration of feminism, gender roles, gender discrimination, and queer theory in India has been multifaceted, with numerous scholars, activists, and writers contributing to the discourse. From seminal texts to contemporary analyses, these works have shed light on the complex intersections of gender, sexuality, caste, class, and religion in the Indian context.

One of the foundational works in Indian feminist literature is "Feminism in India" by Maitrayee Chaudhuri. Chaudhuri delves into the historical evolution of feminist movements in India, examining their diverse strands and their intersectionality with other social factors such as caste and class. She writes, "Feminism in India has never been a single-issue movement. It has always recognized the intersecting oppressions of caste, class, and gender."

Another influential text is "Why Loiter?: Women and Risk on Mumbai Streets" by Shilpa Phadke, Sameera Khan, and Shilpa Ranade. This book challenges traditional notions of women's mobility in public spaces and advocates for the right of women to "loiter" without fear of harassment or violence. As the authors argue, "Loitering is an act of reclaiming public space, of asserting one's right to be visible, to be present."

In the realm of queer theory, "Queering India: Same-Sex Love and Eroticism in Indian Culture and Society" edited by Ruth Vanita and Saleem Kidwai stands out. This collection of essays explores the rich history of same-sex love and desire in India, challenging heteronormative narratives and highlighting the fluidity of gender and sexuality in Indian culture. Vanita writes, "Queer desires have always existed in India, but they have often been obscured or marginalized by dominant discourses."

Judith Butler's "Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity," though not specific to India, has had a profound impact on Indian feminist discourse. Butler's exploration of gender performativity and the politics of identity has resonated with Indian feminists grappling with questions of gender and sexuality in a diverse and pluralistic society. As Butler famously asserts, "Gender is not a fact, it is a performance."

Uma Narayan's "Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third World Feminism" critically examines the intersection of feminism, culture, and identity in

postcolonial India. Narayan interrogates the Western-centric assumptions underlying much of feminist theory and calls for a more nuanced understanding of feminism in non-Western contexts. She writes, "Western feminism often overlooks the agency and resistance of women in the Global South, reducing them to passive victims of patriarchy."

Antoinette Burton's edited volume "Gender, Sexuality, and Colonial Modernities" explores how colonialism shaped gender and sexuality in India. The book highlights the ways in which colonial rule reinforced patriarchal norms while also disrupting existing gender and sexual hierarchies. As Burton argues, "Colonialism did not introduce gender and sexual oppression to India, but it did exacerbate and reconfigure existing power dynamics."

"The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India" by Urvashi Butalia documents the experiences of women during the partition of India. Butalia's work sheds light on the gendered violence and displacement that accompanied partition, as well as the resilience and agency of women in the face of adversity. As she writes, "The partition was not just a political event, but a deeply personal and traumatic experience for millions of people, especially women."

These works represent just a sampling of the diverse and rich literature on feminism, gender roles, gender discrimination, and queer theory in India. From historical analyses to contemporary critiques, these texts offer valuable insights into the complexities of gender and sexuality in Indian society and the ongoing struggle for gender justice and equality.

#### IV. THEORETICAL ASPECTS

Mahesh Dattani's plays "Tara" and "Dance Like a Man" are important contributions to Indian literature, shedding light on feminism, gender roles and discrimination. However, they are not the only voices in this debate. Indian writers have created compelling stories that delve into similar themes and offer different perspectives and insights into the complexities of gender dynamics in Indian society.

Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* poignantly highlights the intersections of gender, caste, and social expectations in Kerala. Through the lives of characters like Amu and her daughter Rahel, Roy reveals the suffocating grip of patriarchal norms and the struggle of women to assert their freedom. Amu's rebellion against social conventions and Rahel's search for individuality powerfully reflect the challenges of navigating gender.

Anita Desai's story *In the Light of Day* deals with the complexity of family dynamics and the limitations that it imposes. traditional gender roles. Through the character of

Bimi, Desai sheds light on the suffocating expectations placed on women within family structures. Bimi's journey to self-fulfillment highlights the inherent tensions between personal aspirations and social obligations, offering a nuanced picture of women's autonomy within the confines of patriarchy.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *Palace of Illusions* reimagines the Feminist Indian epic

*Mahabharata* from a lens that focuses Draupadi's point of view. Divakaruni skilfully unravels Draupadi's complex identity and presents her as a symbol of determination and defiance against patriarchal oppression. Through the story of Draupadi, the novel interrogates concepts of power, agency and the construction of femininity in a feminine narrative.

*The Long Silence* by Shashi Deshpande offers an honest exploration of the limitations placed on women in traditional Indian families. Deshpande navigates the themes of marital discord, social expectations and self-fulfillment through the character of Jaya. Jaya's inner struggles and ultimate journey to self-emancipation is a moving commentary on the spread of gender discrimination and the ongoing search for individual autonomy.

*Ladies Coupe* by Anita Nair provides a compelling story of women's solidarity and empowerment. In the background of Indian society. Through the character of Akhila, Nair explores themes of marriage, sexuality and the search for personal fulfillment. Akhila's encounters with various women during a train journey serve as a microcosm of the myriad challenges and triumphs that women experience in various socio-cultural contexts.

Unique views and perspectives: Dum Tara and Mahesh Dattani's *Dance Like a Man* offer deep explorations. of gender roles and discrimination in Indian society, these other literary works enrich the conversation by offering unique insights and perspectives, from Arundhati Roy's suffocating hold on patriarchal norms in Kerala to Chitra Banerjee's reimagining of ancient epics. Divakaruni's *Palace of Illusions*, each work contributes to understanding gender dynamics and the search for female agency.

#### V. TARA

Mahesh Dattani's play 'Tara' offers a rich tapestry of themes including feminism, gender roles, gender discrimination and queer theory. Through character interactions and story arcs, Dattani illuminates the complexities and challenges faced by people who defy social norms and expectations. We will explore these themes in depth using relevant quotes from the play. Feminism is a central theme of "Tara" as the play grapples with issues of women's rights, autonomy and empowerment. Tara, the main character, embodies feminist

ideals, defying traditional gender roles and striving for self-fulfillment. One of the central quotes of this issue is Tara's statement: "Am I just a collection of roles, Chandan? Daughter, wife, daughter-in-law?" This statement reflects Tara's frustration with societal expectations and highlights her desire to transcend conventional gender roles. Throughout the play, Tara challenges patriarchal norms and defends her right to autonomy and self-expression. Her refusal to conform to the roles assigned to her as a woman in Indian society underlines her feminist stance. Tara's journey is a testament to the tenacity and strength of women who dare to defy society's boundaries and forge their own paths. Gender roles play an important role in shaping the identities and relationships of Tara's characters. The play explores the expectations of individuals based on their gender and the consequences of deviating from those norms. Chandan, Tara's husband, embodies traditional masculinity and expects Tara to fulfill the role of a dutiful wife and daughter. His frustration with Tara's indiscipline is evident in his statement: "It's not just what she does that bothers me, it's what she refuses to do." Chandan's insistence on maintaining traditional gender roles creates tension in their marriage and highlights the dominant power dynamic. Tara's struggle to protect her independence in the face of societal expectations reflects the pervasive influence of gender roles in the lives of individuals. The play questions the limits set by rigid gender norms and defends greater freedom of expression and choice. Gender discrimination is a recurring theme in Tara as the characters struggle with unequal treatment based on gender. Tara faces criticism and judgment from family and society for her unconventional behavior, highlighting the double standards and prejudices that women often face. Nandini, Tara's mother-in-law, embodies the misogyny and gender bias embedded in Indian society. Her disapproval of Tara's actions highlights the challenges faced by women who dare to challenge the status quo. The play also explores the intersection of gender discrimination and other forms of oppression such as class and caste. Tara's marginalized position in the family is further compounded by her lower social status, further complicating her struggle for acceptance and respect. Through Tara's experiences, "Tara" sheds light on the systemic inequality and injustice perpetuated by gender discrimination and calls for greater gender equality and social justice. Queer theory is the lens through which "Tara" explores themes of sexuality, desire and identity. Tara's relationship with Maya, a female friend from her past, challenges traditional notions of sexuality and romantic love. Although the nature of their relationship is unclear, their emotional connection transcends social norms and expectations. Tara's feelings for Maya disrupt the heteronormative narrative and blur the lines between

friendship and romantic love. The play subverts traditional narratives of heterosexual romance and explores the fluidity of sexual desire and identity. Tara's exploration of her feelings for Maya reflects the complexities of human sexuality and the limitations of binary classifications. Through its interactivity, "Tara" invites the audience to question normative assumptions about love, lust, and intimacy and embrace the diversity of the human experience.

## VI. DANCE LIKE A MAN

Mahesh Dattani's *Dance Like a Man* is a moving study of family dynamics, societal expectations and the pursuit of individuality against the backdrop of gender norms. Set in present-day India, the play delves into the lives of three generations of the Rao family and their struggles with identity, ambition and acceptance. Through the lens of feminism, gender roles, gender discrimination, and queer theory, Dattani creates a compelling story that challenges traditional notions of masculinity and femininity by illuminating the complexities of human relationships. Feminism is a central theme in *Dance Like a Man* as the play explores the limitations placed on women's lives and aspirations by a patriarchal society. Ratna's character embodies feminist ideals as she defies society's expectations and pursues a dance career despite her family's opposition.

One of the key quotes from this issue is Ratna saying, "I refuse to be just a wife and mother. There is more to me." This statement reflects Ratna's desire to exercise her right to self-determination and engage in dance, challenging the traditional roles assigned to women in Indian society. Throughout the play, Ratna's struggle for recognition and respect as an artist highlights the pervasive sexism and gender bias that women often face in male-dominated fields. Her decision to challenge gender norms and follow her dreams is a powerful testament to the tenacity and strength of women striving for equality and self-fulfillment. The play explores the expectations placed on individuals based on their gender and the consequences of deviating from them. Ratna's husband Jairaj embodies traditional masculinity and expects Ratna to prioritize her role as a wife and mother over her career goals. Her frustration with Ratna's hobby of dancing is evident in her statement, "I've had enough of this dance. It's time to learn to behave like a proper woman." Jairaj's insistence on maintaining traditional gender roles creates tension in their marriage and stand out. The power dynamics at play. Ratna's struggle to protect her independence and pursue her passion for dance despite societal expectations reflects the challenges faced by people who dare to challenge gender norms and defend their right to

selfdetermination. Sexual discrimination is a recurring theme in *Dance Like a Man*. . struggle with unequal treatment based on their gender. Ratna is criticized and scolded by family and society for her unusual behavior, highlighting the double standards and prejudices that women often face. Jairaji's disapproval of Ratna's career as a dancer highlights the challenges faced by women who dare to defy the status quo and realize their ambitions. The play also explores the intersection of gender discrimination and other forms of oppression such as class and caste. Ratna's marginalized position in the family is further compounded by her lower social status, further complicating her struggle for acceptance and respect. Through Ratna's experiences, "Dance Like a Man" sheds light on the systemic inequality and injustice caused by gender discrimination and calls for greater gender equality and social justice. Queer theory is the lens through which "Dance Like a Man" examines related issues. . to sexuality, desire and identity. The character of Ratna and Jairaj Viswas' son struggles with his identity and gender identity. Viswas' journey of selfdiscovery and acceptance challenges normative assumptions about masculinity and heterosexuality, emphasizing the fluidity of sexual desire and identity. Viswas' exploration of sexuality and his relationships with other male characters disrupts traditional narratives of heterosexual romance and masculinity. Her struggles with societal expectations and her desire to gain acceptance and understanding reflect the complexities of queer experience in a heteronormative society.

## VII. REFORMS AND CHANGES IN INDIAN SOCIETY

In recent decades, both the Indian government and the judiciary have taken significant initiatives to promote gender equality and empower marginalized communities, including girls, women and the third gender. These efforts include a variety of legislative reforms, welfare systems, and legal initiatives designed to reduce systemic inequality and ensure the realization of the rights of all citizens. One notable initiative is the *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao* (Save a Daughter, Educate a Daughter) campaign launched by the Government of India to address female feticide and promote education and empowerment of girls. Through this program, financial incentives are provided to families, especially in rural areas, to promote girls' school attendance and participation, as well as awareness campaigns to challenge gender stereotypes and promote the value of girl child.

In addition, the Indian judiciary has played a central role in promoting the rights of women and marginalized groups through progressive legal interpretations and landmark decisions. In the field of Islamic personal law, the Supreme

Court's decision in the Shah Bano case in 1985 marked an important step towards gender justice when it established the right of divorced Muslim women to receive maintenance after the idda (waiting period after divorce). Later decisions, such as the Shayara Bano case in 2017, led to triple talaq (talaq-e-biddat) being declared unconstitutional, providing relief to Muslim women who were subjected to the arbitrary practice of divorce. In addition, the judicial system has played an important role in recognizing the rights of transgender people, strengthening their right to equality, non-discrimination and protection against violence. An important decision of the Supreme Court in the case of *NALSA vs. A 2014 Union of India* case upheld the fundamental rights of transgender people, including the right to legally identify and recognize their gender identity, paving the way for greater inclusion and dignity of transgender people in Indian society.

The joint efforts of the Government of India and the judiciary for gender equality and the rights of marginalized communities, including women and transgenders, represent a deep commitment to social justice and inclusive development that promotes a more just and empowered society for all. Change is slow but effective.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

Looking at Mahesh Dattani's plays *Tara* and *Dance Like a Man*, one cannot ignore the deep exploration of gender roles, feminist theory, queer theory and gender bias that are intricately woven into the fabric of the story. Through multifaceted characters and complex interpersonal dynamics, Dattani deftly navigates the nuances of social expectations, individual autonomy and identity searches. As the curtains fall back on these compelling dramas, it becomes clear that the resonance of these themes extends far beyond the confines of the stage, prompting reflection on the wider human experience. In both *Tara* and *Dance Like a Man*, Dattani presents *Vigla* a scene of the gender roles embedded in the social fabric of contemporary India. Patriarchal structures that dictate norms and expectations for men and women are revealed, exposing the stifling restrictions placed on individuals who dare to challenge or deviate from prescribed roles. *Taras* and *Dance Like a Man*, Ratna and Jairaj Dattani confront the audience with the harsh reality of gender expectations and the arduous demands of personal fulfillment and emotional wellbeing. Feminist theory is a powerful lens through which to analyze Dattani's exploration of gender dynamics. . At the heart of this theoretical framework is the questioning of power structures and the subversion of traditional gender norms. In *Tara*, the title character's journey from oppression to rebellion describes the feminist struggle for freedom and



autonomy. Likewise, *Dance Like a Man* is Ratna's defiance of social conventions and her quest to invoke her passion for dance against the limits of patriarchal hegemony. Dattani's presentation of these women as agents of change emphasizes the transformative potential of feminist resistance in presenting and shaping oppressive social paradigms. Call theory appears as a provocative undercurrent in Dattani's research of gender and sexuality. Although "Tara" and "Dance Like a Man" do not directly focus on LGBTQ+ issues, they subtly question heteronormative assumptions and highlight the fluidity of gender identity. Chandan's role in "Tara" and the nuanced portrayal of relationships in "Dance Like a Man" break binary notions of gender and challenge the hegemony of heterosexuality. Through these narrative threads, Dattani invites the audience to question preconceptions about sexuality and embrace the diversity of the human experience. Dattani's exploration of gender roles and biases is central to the pervasive influence of social norms and expectations. The characters in both plays struggle with the weight and fear of social judgment when they deviate from their assigned roles. Be it Tara defying family expectations or Ratna's struggle to balance her passion for dance with social responsibilities, Dattani reveals the profound impact gender bias has on an individual's life. With these stories, he challenges the audience to face their own complicity in perpetuating harmful stereotypes and encourages empathy and understanding for those who dare to challenge social norms. As the final act unfolds and the characters' journeys come to an end, Dattani leaves the public's moving reflection on the constant struggle for equality and the search for the right to self-determination. Through the lens of feminist and queer theory, she invites us to reimagine a world where individuals are free to define themselves on their own terms, freed from the shackles of gender expectations and prejudices. In "Tara" and "Dance Like a Man", Mahesh Dattani offers not only a compelling theatrical experience but also a powerful appeal for a fairer and more equal society.

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# Unveiling Nationhood and Historical Incidents in Salman Rushdie's 'Midnight's Children' and Khushwant Singh's 'Train to Pakistan'

Aditi Verma<sup>1</sup>, Prof. Dr. Kumkum Ray<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Rashi Srivastava<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>MA English, Amity School of Languages, Amity University Lucknow Campus, Uttar Pradesh, India

[umraoaditi@gmail.com](mailto:umraoaditi@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Head of the Department, Amity School of Languages, Amity University Lucknow Campus, Uttar Pradesh, India

[kkray@lko.amity.edu](mailto:kkray@lko.amity.edu)

<sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor, Amity School of Languages, Amity University Lucknow Campus, Uttar Pradesh, India

[rsrivastava5@lko.amity.edu](mailto:rsrivastava5@lko.amity.edu)

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**Abstract**— History is the backbone of mankind. This research paper sheds light on the hidden aspects of Indian history through literary texts *Train to Pakistan* and *Midnight's Children*. This paper provides us the outcome of the partition of India and Pakistan; and the role of the political leaders after the partition. India gained its freedom in August 1947. The aim of this research is to examine the relationship between knowledge of the political historical fact of the partition and the features of national identity and postcolonial fear. Both novels depict themes of nationalism and historical events. The paper explores how both novels deal with the intricacies of nation-building, identity, and the effects of post-colonial India's partition. This paper seeks to emphasize the many viewpoints and thematic complexities that arise from these literary investigations of nationhood and historical consciousness by looking at the socio-political context and the individual travels of the characters.



**Keywords**— Partition, Post Colonial, Freedom, British, India, Pakistan.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The partition literature tells about human misery, their experiences, suffering, and how they dealt with the partition and its outcome. The collection of partition literature can rightly be said as 'The Saga of Pain or the Literature of Anguish'. It is also known as Riot literature. Partition literature gives us a description of all the historical incidents and everything that is related to them. It shows the visuals of terror. It shows how people managed to deal with the partition and how they dealt with their lives after the great migration. The partition of India is one of the most horrifying events in history. Kushwant Singh tried to depict the horror of the partition and the suffering of people. Kushwant Singh is recognized as an Indian novelist, historian, critic, and excellent observer. He himself was an

eyewitness to the terrors of the partition. When questioned once, he said, "Partition was a traumatic experience for me. I had gone to Lahore expecting to live there, to become a lawyer or judge; I was then brutally torn out and never really being able to go back. That was what put me into writing. I wrote *Train to Pakistan*." (Amir Ch. 3) Kushwant Singh creates a story around village life in Mano Majra, transforming it into a microcosm that symbolizes a large world.

Warren French says, "Singh's fable suggests a profound disillusionment with the power of law, reason, and intellect in the face of elemental human passions. Singh is a brilliant, sardonic observer of the world undergoing convulsive changes, and his novels provide a unique insight into one of the major political catastrophes of this country

“(French 818–20). Singh portrays the division of a unified country into Hindu Hindustan and Muslim Pakistan. Singh depicts the people belonging to minor areas having no knowledge of either freedom or even partition. There is stark realism in ‘Train to Pakistan’ and the great misery of the partition of India and Pakistan. The train to Pakistan was originally named Mano Majra. Trains represent groups of people traveling to different places. Millions of non-Muslims from Pakistan yearned for a journey to Hindustan.

Trains to Pakistan are appreciated for their uniqueness, even by Salman Rushdie. Amitav Gosh has considered it a classic. Suja Alexander, in her work ‘Personal Concerns Go Public in Train to Pakistan’ writes, “The beliefs that Singh had cherished all his life were shattered. He had believed in the innate goodness of the common man, but the division of India has been accompanied by the most savage massacres known in the history of the country. He had believed that Indians were peace-loving and non-violent. After the experience of the autumn of 1947, he could no longer subscribe to those views.” (Alexander, 44). Alexander brought Singh to light. Kushwant Singh shared his opinion about ‘Train to Pakistan’; he writes, “It is a masterly portrayal of peasant character and a skillful handling of a theme where pastoral peace rapidly moves to a tragic climax of communal massacres. It is refreshingly free from bias.” (Singh, 198)

Salman Rushdie is an Indian, British, and American writer. Born in 1947, he often combines historical fiction with magic realism. His novel, *Midnight's Children*, is a blend of historic events and magic realism. He won the Booker Prize for ‘*Midnight's Children*’ in 1981. *Midnight's Children* is an imaginative story of a postcolonial country attempting to strike a balance between society and individuals. Rushdie's book operates on a number of tiers of reality, encompassing the factual, political, and personal. Rushdie reveals in an interview, “What made me become a writer was the simple desire to tell stories governed by the principles that stories didn't have to be true—horses were expected to fly, and so were carpets. I found that I was writing within a literature that for a long time had shaped an opposite view—a novel had to be mimetic, to imitate the world, the rules of naturalism and realism.” (Abraham 7) . Apart from being a postcolonial work, *Midnight's Children* is a historiographic metafiction as well. Saleem Sinai is the protagonist as well as the narrator of the novel. Saleem says that “I had been mysteriously handcuffed to history, my destinies indissolubly chained to those of my country.” (MC 9) Saleem was born at the stroke of midnight on Independence Day.

## II. HISTORY

In August 1947, after 300 years, India got freedom. After World War II, Britain simply did not have the resources to maintain control over its most valuable imperial asset, and Britain's retreat from India was chaotic. The polarization of Muslims and happened during just a few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but by the middle of the century, it had become so strong that many on both sides thought it was impossible for the followers of two different religions to coexist peacefully. The subcontinent was divided into two different nations: Hindu-majority Hindustan and Muslim-majority Pakistan. Bapsi Sidhwa writes in ‘Ice Candy Man's’, “The earth was splintering, breaking into pieces beneath their feet, and so were their hearts” . ( Sidhwa 76)

At that point, one of the largest migrations in human history began. Communities that had coexisted for over a millennium on the Indian subcontinent engaged in terrible acts of sectarian violence against one another, with Muslims on one side and Hindus and Sikhs on the other. Mass kidnappings, forced conversions, killings, brutal sexual assaults, and other atrocities marked the horrific tragedy. Historical documents reveal that 14 million people migrated during the split. Out of which, 8.3 million people went missing during the division. Nisid Hajari says in *Midnight's Furies* pendowns that “gangs of killers set whole villages aflame, lacking to death men, children, and the elderly while carrying off young women to be raped. Some British soldiers and journalists who had witnessed the Nazi death camps claimed the Partition's brutalities were worse: pregnant women had their breasts cut off and babies hacked out of their bellies; infants were found literally roasted on spits”.(Hajari 22)

Under the English's divide and rule policy, they first captured the victory at the Battle of Plassey in 1757. This fight was fought by the East India Company and Nawabs 5000 soldiers. Locals became more dissatisfied as a result of the company and its officials increasing their influence over them. The approach that the British imposed throughout India was not only to seize local authority but also to incite Hindus against Muslims from a sectarian standpoint. The British had consciously established the Muslim League and supported the demand for Pakistan since 1940. Gandhiji believed that if we want to achieve freedom from the English, then it is very important to maintain communal harmony. That is Hindu-Muslim unity, but this could not be achievable because the Muslim fundamentalists dismissed it and the nation of Pakistan kept on with the demand. The division of India and Pakistan is the outcome of factors like British rule, the Muslim League, Jinnah fundamentalist communal policy, and the Indian

National Congress. The Congress Party failed to address this communal problem. The Muslim League and Muhammed Ali Jinnah established the framework for an independent Islamic country. The division left the two nations with political structures that had no precedent or establishment, as well as economies in ruins.

In March 1947, the English Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, arrived in Delhi to end British rule in India, under which it was declared that India would be partitioned in August. Following that, a border committee was established under the direction of British attorney Cyril Radcliff, and on August 14, 1947, at midnight, Pakistan got independence and India got independence on August 15, 1947. India came into existence as a Hindu nation and Pakistan as an Islamic country. A significant migration occurred. Hindus and Sikhs moved to India from Pakistan, and Muslims moved to Pakistan from India. It was a massacre, which is hard to express in words. It is believed that during the division, around 2 lakh people were killed. Historian Patrick French demonstrates in "Liberty or Death" how much of the period's political turmoil sprang from the personality clashes between Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the Muslim League's head, and Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhi, and others.

However, their relationship had become so toxic by the early 1940s. Ali Jinnah was the most responsible for the division of India and Pakistan. He is the father of the nation of Pakistan. In the first constituent assembly of Pakistan in August 1947, he states, "You may belong to any religion, caste, or creed that has nothing to do with the business of the state.". Jinnah had declared himself a loyal friend of the English and protector of Muslim interests against Hindu supremacy. Jinnah did not promote the unity of the nation against the British hegemony. The British continue with the decide and rule policy.

Pakistani historian Ayesha Jalal declared partition "the central historical event in 20th-century South Asia." (Mourya 4) She writes, "A defining moment that is neither beginning nor end, partition continues to influence how the people and states of post-colonial South Asia envisage their past, present, and future." (Mourya4) Due to the massacre, the soil of both nations had turned red. The train known as the Samjhauta Express was running in both nations, full of dead bodies. According to the deadly legacy of India's partition, there were bodies of refugees on the railway that connected India and Pakistan. He called this train the "blood train." It is a disgrace to human existence to be released from the massacre of such defenseless and unarmed individuals. The Sutlej River was filled with the bodies of the refugees. Division does not mean that people

from all the Muslim communities were willing to go. Some Muslims consider India their birthplace, and they were willing to stay. The writer of the deadly legacy of India's partition, Nisid Hajari, states that "the subcontinent was rapidly transformed into riots and bloodshed. Not only people's houses were burned, but women and children were treated inhumanely. Even as women were raped and the body parts of children were cut off". (Hajari 64)

‘ Pak in Urdu means pure, and ‘Stan' means place or land, so Pakistan stands for 'land of pure'. After division, there is the success of one country and the failure of another. "If India and Pakistan are to be judged by the decade following 1947, then India is a success and Pakistan is a failure. India in those years succeeded in holding all the territory left to it by the British, while Pakistan lost its more populous half, East Bengal, to a secessionist movement in 1971. India was governed by a form of parliamentary democracy, while Pakistan's efforts to maintain democratic reforms repeatedly failed to be replaced by military rule" (Lapping 138–9). The Congress Party remained influential in India. Nehru was appointed Prime Minister. When Nehru died, Indira Gandhi, his daughter, "soon routed the congress bosses who had brought her to power" (Lapping 140). She ruled the Indian Politics from late 60s until 1984.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Partition literature has several prominent works, such as Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, Bapsi Sidhwa's *Cracking India*, Shauna Singh Baldwin's *What the body Remembers*, Dominique Lapierre's *Freedom at Midnight*, Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*, Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance*, and so on and so forth.

In the speech at the prayer meeting Mahatma Gandhi states "I have heard that many women did not want to lose their honour and chose to die. Many men killed their own wives. I think that is really great because I know that such things make India brave. After all, life and death is a transitory game. Whoever might have died are dead and gone; but at least they have gone with courage. They have not sold away their honour. Not that their lives were dear to them, but they felt it was better to die with courage rather than be forcibly converted to Islam by the Muslims and allow them to assault their bodies. When I hear all these things, I dance with joy that there are such brave women in India." (Abidi 5) In the novel *What the body Remembers*, Shauna Singh reconstructs a narrative whereby subjectivities such as Partition may be perceived from the perspective of a woman. Novel deals with the difficult time of 1937 - 1947.

*Freedom at Midnight*, written by Dominique Lapierre. This novel deals with the shift of power from English to the Indians. This novel also visualizes the after effects of Independence and its complexities. One of prominent work of Partition literature, *Ice Candy Man*, written by Bapsi Sidhwa with the help of child narrator Lenny, writer shows the harsh condition during Partition. Lenny narrates the destiny of people in Lahore. Lenny states, "I feel such sadness for the dumb creature I imagine lurking behind the wall" (Satya2). In this novel, Violence between Muslims and Sikhs escalated from large cities to little villages like Pir Pindo. Sikhs and Hindus left their houses behind and migrated to Amritsar. In *The Shadow Lines*, Amitav Ghosh deals with the historical movements such as the Freedom movement in Bengal, World War 2, Division of India and the Communal riots.

#### IV. THEORETICAL ASPECTS

The supremacy of the British regime left a dark memory in the minds of the natives. East India Company was established in India for trade purposes, but soon things changed. "Seeking trade, not territory," but the situation turned differently. The British started establishing colonies. Western and Indian cultures came into the spotlight. Englishmen present their culture and education as very exotic, and the natives can't match their standards. "It required the aggression of nationalist traditions to break this pattern." Frantz Fanon's 'On National Culture' goes deeper into the psychology of the natives. By attacking the economy of the country, the British make natives feel that they do not have sufficient means to sustain their basic needs. The British make natives feel that God has cursed them and that they are inferior. In order to justify colonial supremacy, western intellectuals attached metaphors like fanaticism, superstition, beasts, and degraded humans.

Fanon asserts the implications of English supremacy and also the change fashioned by the English. Edward said he explores the relationship between orientation and occident. Orient and Occident differ from each other in aspects of power, dominance, complex hegemony, and supremacy. One aspect of the electronic, postmodern world is that there has been a reinforcement of the stereotypes by which orientation is viewed. The British won the Battle of Plassey, and they established their supremacy in India. They follow the idea of divide and rule. They started creating conflicts between Hindus and Muslims. The British promoted the idea of the partition of India and Pakistan. The British lost in World War 2 after starting to lose their colonies. In 15th August India got Independence. British left, but the third space was created in the minds of natives. Homi Bhabha presents the concept

that the third space does not have any concreteness of thought or action. The space of thirdness in postmodern politics opens up an area of interfection. In the novel 'Train to Pakistan' Despite being aware of the atrocities committed by the British, some individuals nevertheless held the opinion that the English provided India with a system and a structure that would never have existed in India. Natives suffer from postcolonial anxiety, third space, and self-doubt.

Iqbal responds to Meet Singh's question on why the English left India by saying that it was because they were afraid the nation would turn against them sooner. Iqbal says the English is "a race of four twenties" regarding Section 420 of the Indian Penal Code, which "defines the offense of cheating.". Frantz Fanon mentions that, for the suffering natives and the repressed, colonialism kills the soul. The native loses his identity and sense of self because he can only see himself through the lens of white men. Natives start practicing western religion, food, language, and practices and reject their own culture. According to Fanon, they put a white mask 'over the 'black skin'. As a result of this duality, natives experience a schizophrenic situation.

Nationalism is an ideology. Salman Rushdie projects this imagination of the idea of nation. He writes, "After all, in all the thousands of years of Indian history, there has never been such a creature as a United India. Nobody ever managed to rule the whole place—not the Mughals, not the British. And then, at midnight, the thing that had never existed was suddenly free. But what on earth was it? On what common ground (if any) did it stand?" (Abraham 1).

In the series of essays on cultural studies, Stuart Hall persuasively argued for changing numerous identities by applying deconstructive tactics. The work of cultural studies explores the frightening intersections of national identity and race. Stuart Hall provides us with a glimpse into the intrinsically dark nature of English identity. "People like me who came to England in the 1950s have been there for centuries; symbolically, we have been there for centuries. I was coming home. I am the sugar at the bottom of an English cup of tea. I am the sweet tooth—the sugar plantations that rotted generations of English children's teeth. There are thousands of others beside me that are, you know, the cup of tea itself. Not a single tea plantation exists within the United Kingdom. This is the symbolism of English identity. I mean, what does anybody in the world know about an English person except that they can't get through the day without a cup of tea?" (Nayar 233). Stuart highlights the blackness at the heart of all English.



### Henry Dorozio: A catalyst for nationalism in Post Colonial literature

Henry Dorozio is an Anglo – Indian Poet, known for his radical thinking. He played a prominent role in the Bengal Renaissance. He advocated education for all, regardless of caste and creed. It was admirable how dedicated he was to India. Despite the fact that his own society would have disapproved of his mixed ancestry at the time, he decided to contribute something to India, which he refers to as his own home, despite being of Eurasian descent. He writes of India's magnificent history before colonization and how it was regarded and worshipped as a deity in his sonnet *To India-My Native Land*, but he also laments the fact that that splendour and that devotion are no longer there. He makes it his mission to rebuild India from its fallen state, and all he asks of the place he has chosen, which he refers to as his own nation, is "one kind wish from thee!"—the want to be acknowledged, acknowledged, and regarded as an Indian poet. He bemoans the reality that foreign powers dominate India.

In 'The Fakeer of Jungheera' Dorozio writes, "My Country in the day of glory past / A beauteous hale circled round thy brow". He reminisces about the golden past. He fosters concern for India's independence like a real Indian nationalist. In the poem 'Freedom To The Slave' he states,

"success attend the patriot sword,

That is unsheathed for thee,

And glory to the breast that bleeds,

Bleed nobly to be free!" ( 22-25)

### Train to Pakistan

Kushwant Singh tried to show the terror of the division and suffering of people. *Train to Pakistan* portrays the tragic tale of the division between India and Pakistan. Singh aims to look at the tragic incident from the point of view of the people of Mano Majra. *Train to Pakistan* is an excellent, realistic, and tragic story following the division of India and Pakistan. Kushwant Singh gives an account of the summer of 1947. The author adds greater credibility to the story's narrative by using third-person narration. The novel starts by favouring no religion. The damage caused by the split started in the cities and spread to the small towns and villages. Muslims and Hindus used to blame each other during these times. The author writes, "Muslims said the Hindus had planned and started the killing. According to the Hindus, the Muslims were to blame." (Singh 1)

Singh writes, "The fact is, both sides killed." (Singh 10) The writer shows the days of pre-partition. The peaceful and brotherhood nature of the village is explained as follows: "There is one object that all Mani Manjarans,

even Lala Ram Lal, venerate. This is a three-foot slab of sandstone that stands upright under a keeker tree beside the pond. It is the local deity, due to which all the villagers—Hindu, Sikh, Muslims, or pseudo-Christians—repair whenever they are in special need of blessings" (Singh 10). There are only 70 families in the village, and Ram Lal is the only Hindu villager. Massacres were going on in the country, but Mano Majra was staying in peace and harmony.

The riots that originated in Calcutta swept into the north, east, and west, swallowing a sizable portion of the population. Muslims slaughter Hindus in East Bengal, while Hindus massacre Muslims in Bihar. Mano Majra has a Sikh, Muslim, and Hindu population. The characters of Hukum Chand, Juggat Singh, and Iqbal represent the three sides of division. A Hindu magistrate named Hukum Chand offers a Hindu opinion of the partition event. Juggat Singh is a Sikh rascal, and Iqbal's identity remains hidden throughout. "He could be a Muslim, Iqbal Muhammad... a Hindu, Iqbal Chand Or a Sikh, Iqbal Singh." Kushwant Singh's characters show a natural willingness to coexist peacefully with individuals of other religious beliefs. The caretaker of Gurudwara, Meet Singh, says, "Everyone is welcome to his religion! Here, next door, is a Muslim mosque. When I pray to my Guru, my uncle Imam Baksh calls to Allah" (Singh 1). Different religious groups pray in unison, "Ya Allah. Wah Guru". The closeness of the Gurudwara and mosque suggest peace and brotherhood among different religious groups. The author shows the villagers having no knowledge of either partition or even freedom. The villagers believe that after a while, everything will be normal and they will return to their own land. Kushwant Singh shows the weird behavior of the officers and police department.

Kushwant Singh writes, "It is a masterly portrayal of peasant character and a skillful handling of a theme where pastoral peace rapidly moves to a tragic climax of communal massacre. It is refreshingly free from bias. (Singh 198) " Three brick buildings can be seen in Mano Majra: the Hindu money lender Lala Ram Lal's home, a Gurudwara, and a mosque. There is an incident that leads to Lala Ram Lal's death. Mano Majra is indicative of the whole nation. The writer shows the love story between Juggat Singh and Nooran. Their love story symbolizes the peace and harmony between two religious groups. Division affected Mano Majra at both the individual level and the community level. Juggat Singh and Nooran are more touched at the individual level. The wall that separates them is a partition.. Due to her Muslim faith, Nooran is forced to travel to Pakistan, leaving their love story incomplete. Juggat Singh performs an act of kindness by giving his life in order to prevent a massacre.



Geographical boundaries make up the division of humanity. Singh's characters do not wish to kill in the name of division. As Iqbal said, "Now with this partition, there is so much bloodshed going on that someone must do something to stop it." (Haque2). The underpinnings of India's split were not created by religious demography but rather by the slavish allegiance of religious fanatics. The omniscient narrator demonstrates that there are more ties and connections between the rioting factions than there are divisions. As Bhaktin urges the news for "diversity of languages," Singh suggests in the novel that "each ideology can hold more salience in particular circumstances" (Haque3) by compiling a variety of unique view points.

The trains are the focal point of Mano Majra residents daily lives. A train carrying the bodies of Sikhs and Hindus arrives from Pakistan, and this catastrophe changes people's lives as well as their harmonious relationships. "The village was stilled in a deathly silence" (Singh 100). The administration showed the seeds of communalism, but the outcome was division. In Mano Majra, the rate of death keeps speeding up. Seeing the bodies of men, women, and children in the Sutlej River is a horrible experience. The river, which appeared to be a sheet of paper, stood for violent acts. It seemed like human voices were pleading for help from the river. Again, the villagers saw a train full of dead bodies, but due to the rain, the woods are not accessible and everything is drenched. The bulldozer needs to dig up the corpses. Tales of torture, rape, and murder are being brought back by refugees from Pakistan. "Sikh refugees had told them of women jumping into wells and burning themselves rather than falling into the hands of Muslims. Those who did not commit suicide were paraded naked in the streets, raped in public, and then murdered" (Singh 142). One of the Sikh soldiers gathers people to engage in murders to seek revenge in response to the murders of Sikhs and Hindus in Pakistan. He said to kill "two muslimans" for each Sikh and Hindu. Meet Singh suggests that Muslims of Mano Majra do not have a connection with massacres in Pakistan. People planned to kill Muslim refugees, but Juggat Singh cutting the rope and losing his own life shows an act of kindness and humanity.

### Midnight's Children

Salman Rushdie was born on June 19, 1947, into a Muslim household in Mumbai. He is considered the most controversial and prominent author of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Rushdie places his characters against a real historical background. Rushdie was charged with blasphemy against Islam in several Muslim communities since it was said that the text severely disregarded the Prophet Muhammad. Rushdie was profoundly affected by 'The Satanic Verse'. He is compelled to travel with bodyguards, relocate

regularly, and live as a political exile whose head is valued at a million dollars. *Midnight Children* revolves around the birth of a nation and a child. The birth of the nation and a child go parallel in the novel. It is set in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The novel tells the political and historical scenario of India. The novel received critical appreciation and was regarded as a masterpiece. Besides being postcolonial writing, it's also a metafiction based on history. The use of magic realism is one of the characteristics of post-colonial literature. It is characterized as "a kind of modern fiction in which fabulous and fantastical events are included in a narrative that otherwise maintains the reliable tone of an objective, realistic report. The fantastic attributes given to characters—levitation, flight telepathy, telekinesis—are among the means that magic realism adopts in order to encompass the often phantasmagoria political realities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century" (Oxford Dictionary).

In postcolonial literature, the question of identity frequently arises. The nationalist movement addressed the concepts of blackness and negritude, which are evoked in *Midnight's Children*. *Midnight's Children* is a complicated novel that revolves around the story of Saleem Sinai. Saleem is the protagonist of the text. Saleem was born at midnight on August 15, 1947, at the time of partition and India's independence. A new nation was born in 1947, quite imaginary. Salman Rushdie depicts New India as "a new myth—a collective fiction in which anything was possible, a fable rivaled only by two other fantasies: money and God" (M. C150). The growth of a new-born infant, Saleem Sinai, is compared to that of New India. Saleem is encountered by several characters.

Rushdie accuses the nation as a whole, including the Prime Minister and other powerful individuals, of making mistakes and acting incorrectly after India's independence. "Guilt is a complex matter, for we are not all each of us in some sense responsible for—do we not get the leaders we deserve?" (MC 607). The novel is narrated by grown-up Saleem, who writes his unbelievable story before his death. In the beginning of the novel, the writer informs the reader that Saleem is handcuffed to Indian history. Saleem's remarkable fusion of political and biological nativity makes him the embodiment of Indian nationalism. Three blood drops released by the doctor are the metaphor of several streams. It resembles both the trunk of Lord Ganesh and the Quran's creation tale, which links drips of blood to the beginning of humankind. This incident reminds me of the 1919 massacre at Jallianwala Bagh. British soldiers stain the blood of Indians.

Salman Rushdie claims that the origin of the Indian nation is "an extra festival on the calendar, a new myth to celebrate... a country that would never exist except by the

efforts of a phenomenal collective will, except in a dream we all agreed to dream... India, the new myth—a collective fiction in which anything was possible—a fable rivaled only by the two other mighty fantasies—money and God" (Abraham 1). Saleem's life is tied to Indian history in an inseparable way. Salman Rushdie portrayed that even after India gained independence, the operations of the leaders were the same as under British rule.

Saleem explains that the widow sought to locate all of Midnight's offspring in order to castrate them and prevent them from procreating. Salman Rushdie portrays Indira Gandhi as having "hair parted in the Center of the snow White on one side and black as night on the other, depending on which profile. She presented herself; she resembled either a stoat or an ermine. Recurrence of the Center: Parting in History" (MC 558). Rushdie writes that "the emergency had a black part as well as white." Imprisoning all of Midnight's children provides them with the opportunity to unite against Indira Gandhi. "Let widows do their worst; unity is invincibility! Children: We've won! (MC 610)." In the novel, partially through the perforated sheet, Dr. Adam Aziz initially encounters Naseem Ghani. It was not until the day of their marriage that Naseem revealed herself to Dr. Aziz. This is metaphorically significant since Dr. Aziz's limited vision of Naseem represents a partial history. Analogously, a perforated sheet filters the history that is provided to us as well. The day the world war ended coincided with Aziz's first meeting with Naseem. Ahmed and Amina Senai buy the home of William Methwold; this symbolizes the transfer of authority from an English to an Indian. On the same day that Ahmed and Amina Senai took ownership of the home, the British Raj gave India and Pakistan full sovereignty over the country. Even after gaining possession of the house, Amina Senai remains dissatisfied since she is unable to make any changes. This suggests that even in an independent country, a lot of the things that occurred during British control will still occur.

Saleem's life is a metaphor for India. When country splits into two, there is a rupture in Saleem's body: "I have begun to crack all over like an old jug that my poor body, singular, unlovely buffeted by too much history, subjected to drainage above and drainage below, mutilated by doers, brained by spittoons, has started coming apart at the seams." (MC 260). Saleem's private life is a continual reflection of the political unrest in India.

## V. CONCLUSION

History looks like a favourite subject of the Post colonial authors. The examination of nationalism and historical events in Midnight's Children and Train to

Pakistan reveals that both texts offer insightful analyses of the difficulties associated with forming an identity and survival against the turbulent background of India's Partition and independence. As Jawaharlal Nehru said, "At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes which but rarely in History, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation long suppressed, finds utterance." (Mondal 4). Both the novels portray the turbulent times of India history.

In Midnight's Children, Saleem becomes the metaphor for India. Novel is set in the post colonial period. Rushdie explores the hidden actions of political leaders after Independence. Rushdie depicts the problems an individual faces in forming an identity in Post colonial time. The Novel shows a complex story along with magic realism. Salman Rushdie links the dot between personal history and the larger historical narrative. The Protagonist shows the role of nation in forming the identity of an individual and its consciousness.

On the other hand, Train to Pakistan is a brilliantly realistic story set in the background of India's partition. Khushwant Singh pictures life before and after the partition. The novel depicts the suffering of people in a tragic way. Religion becomes the region of conflict. The nation turned into a battlefield; everyone was killed, be it Hindu, Muslim, or Sikh. As Salman Rushdie writes, "Partition is a take of treachery, horror, and despair, and also one of courage, heroism, and ultimate triumph." (Rushdie 44). Train to Pakistan depicts the massacre and horror of the division of India and Pakistan.

Both novels depict the significance of history in forming the nation's direction. Both novels differ in their style and methodology, but both novels depict the trauma of colonialism and the division of the Indian Subcontinent and its effect on people.

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# Map of Assemblage: Fluid Identity in Donald Barthelme's Postmodern "Snow White"

Shan Zhang

Department of English Literature, University of Chinese Academy of Sciences (UCAS)

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**Abstract**— Postmodernist writer Donald Barthelme in his work "Snow White" reimagines the archetypal characters from the Brothers Grimm fairy tales as disenchanted anti-heroic figures. His multiple rewrites of identities such as the princess, the dwarfs, and the prince not only reflect the de-authoritative characteristic of postmodern literature, but also mirror the map of assemblage consisting of molar lines, molecular lines, and lines of flight proposed by contemporary French postmodernist philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, through which Barthelme not only achieves the fluid identity on the subversive lines of flight but also subtly suggests hope and pathways within the micropolitical terrain of the postmodern society.



**Keywords**— Fluid Identity, Line of Flight, Map of Assemblage, Postmodern, Snow White

## I. INTRODUCTION

In Donald Barthelme's postmodern "Snow White" (1996), the quintessential protagonists of the fairy tale undergo a transformation into disillusioned, anti-heroic characters. Barthelme's reinterpretation of classic archetypes, namely the princess, the dwarfs, and the prince, exemplifies the de-authorization prevalent in postmodern literature. This aspect stands as a central point of interest within the critical discourse surrounding the work. As a result, the literary critique on the postmodern "Snow White" compared to the Grimm fairy tale archetype is numerous and has already presented a macro socio-cultural vista of different creative eras. At the same time, the subversive nature born from "the uncertainty of textual meaning" (Liu 43) and "the loss of word efficacy" (Lei 104) within Barthelme's works has been thoroughly discussed. Yet, there has been little mention of the micropolitical framework behind Barthelme's subversive writing style, which is closely associated with postmodern literature's emphasis on depthlessness and experience-based reading.

Despite postmodern literature's declaration of denying deep interpretative readings of a work's underlying meaning, the ideological imprints of the author's era are embedded within the work in an

unconscious form of expression. Therefore, in Barthelme's "Snow White", the portrayal of fluid identity echoes the map of assemblage consisting of the molar lines, molecular lines, and lines of flight posited by contemporary French postmodernist philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. In crafting this narrative, Barthelme not only captures the essence of fluidity characteristic of the line of flight but also deftly implies the existence of hope and potential pathways within the micropolitical terrain of the postmodern society.

## II. MOLAR LINE AS THE DEAUTHORIZED DISCIPLINE

In Barthelme's parody of "Snow White", the characters are placed in a contemporary urban setting, while their traditionally fixed identities undergo substantial rewriting. For example, Snow White's previously flawless innocence is marred by budding desires, and after losing hope in the prince's rescue, she starts to save herself. The hardworking and kind dwarfs become numb and deluded, transforming from guardians and knights into oppressors and aggressors. The brave and mighty "prince", though of noble lineage, shirks his responsibility to save the princess and descends

into pettiness. The "hunter", despite his lingering conscience and aiding in Snow White's escape, becomes mired in the tangled desires for both the "princess" and the "queen". Even the powerful "stepmother queen" appears to be a prisoner of love. This set of distorted character identities is not only a bold postmodernist movement of de-authorization and anti-tradition, but also Barthelme's unconscious expression of subversion against the molar line of the traditional discipline.

Deleuze and Guattari in "Mille Plateaux" remark that humans are segmented everywhere in all directions, becoming a creature of segmentation (Deleuze and Guattari 290). Segmentation is a key characteristic of the molar line, where the most conspicuous type is the segmentation of binary oppositions, that is, humans follow the binary opposition of the molar line discipline such as opposing classes, male and female, adults and children, etc. In an ever-maturing society, people are segmented in rings or lines, creating larger circles or moving along predetermined lines. For instance, in the postmodern "Snow White", there is a vivid scene description where the "dwarfs" work from a height, looking down the street. The human figure seen from a bird's-eye view can be considered as an abstract creature of segmentation transformed into concrete shapes. As a result, people are no longer in their original form but are composed of circles resembling targets and straight lines like the legs of a compass. In this process of segmentation, the society imposes its power on the segments which it maintains or preserves, possessing and enforcing its segmentation. The postmodern "Snow White" is set within a unified modern political system, where technical rule operates through segmental labor division. In other words, modern life in "Snow White" has not abolished segmentation but instead made it more rigid.

Within the molar segmentation context of the postmodern "Snow White", each segment is corrected, emphasized, and homogenized both in itself and in relation to other segments. For example, the depiction of the seven "dwarfs" in the novel is actually a microcosm of the mid-20th century American male working class, performing repetitive mechanized tasks on the factory assembly line, with a desiring gaze towards the female body, and a life lacking in emotional communication. The seven "dwarfs" often come to a consensus and paint walls together, a testament to the homogeneity of identity which is the result of continual emphasis, correction, and homogenization of segmentary molar lines. The portrayal of the "dwarfs" as male workers not only clearly defines the segmentary binary opposition between the working class and other classes, but also reflects the binary molar discipline of gender. For instance, the four labor cadences

of "HEIGH-HO" mentioned in the novel originate from a song in a Disney animated film, illustrating the concept of male visual discourse complicity (Wei 9). However, unlike the male "dwarfs" who go out to work and provide for the household, Snow White, who represents the female identity, despite having studied courses in sociology, music, literature, and psychology, is still unable to participate in social labor and division of work. Instead, she remains at home to manage the household chores, which mirrors the educated and somewhat autonomous young women of the 1960s and 1970s in America. The different identity expressions of the "dwarfs" and Snow White not only showcase individual differences, but also mark the typical gender expressions under the segmentary molar discipline of the modern society.

Although Barthelme has rewritten the identities of the "dwarfs" and "princess" from the Grimm tales, in effect, this has only placed the traditional fixed identities under the segmentary molar discipline of the 18th and 19th centuries within a modern context. The seemingly distinct identity expressions, which aim to be de-authoritative and merely based on anti-traditional foundations, are in fact another fixed identities under the new segmentary molar discipline of modern society. Thus, the macro sociocultural aspect's attempt to counteract fixed identities has not been able to deviate from the segmentary molar discipline at the political micro-level, as a result, the attempts of characters' postmodern rewriting enter a labyrinth of molecular lines.

### III. MOLECULAR LINE AS A DEAD-END LABYRINTH

Barthelme's parody of the archetype story of "Snow White" goes beyond changing the social and cultural context or rewriting the traditional character identities. His deconstruction of authority and pursuit of anti-tradition are not just breakthroughs but also new starting points. Barthelme expressed that many plot lines in "Snow White" are themed around gender resentment, which reflects and anticipates the feminist movement of the time (Barthelme and Brans 123). This statement confirms the critique that in Barthelme's works "Snow White" gradually gains female consciousness, and it also confirms that the postmodern "Snow White" has not only changed the fairy-tale archetype identity but has also undergone a secondary transformation within the modern context.

The more a collective becomes molar, the more its elements turn molecular, namely, the molecular individual and the molar humanity (Deleuze and Guattari 320). When it comes to female collective, Gilbert and Gubar point out that since the Old Stone Age, women have



worked to emphasize their timeless kinship through carefully styled hair, various adornments, and makeup (Gilbert and Gubar 14), reflecting the collective characteristics of women under molar discipline. Barthelme also noted the special symbolism of women's hair. In the mid-20th century, Barthelme saw many women with unkempt hair disseminating political meetings or anti-war leaflets (Fischer 44). In his postmodern version of Snow White, the "princess" frequently lets down her long hair from the window, a parody of the Rapunzel tale, which seems to reflect the image of women during the second wave of American feminism, actively expressing political stances and striving for agency (Zeng and Jiang 41).

In truth, Snow White recognizes that she has been forced to become an accessory that serves men. The "dwarfs", seemingly providing her with shelter and sustenance, in reality imprison her for their own pleasure. She is thus forced to rely on men, manage household chores for her oppressors daily, and loses her autonomy and free identity. Compared to the well-dressed female collective seeking dependency under molar discipline, Snow White chooses to use her abnormal behavior to strengthen her agency for self-rescue. Hence, by indulging in madness and bizarre behavior that deviates her from molar line, Snow White expresses her rage against patriarchy, stops wearing tight pants favored by men, and changes to bulky blue cotton pants to declare her stop from dressing like the molar female collective and her refusal to become a victim under the male gaze. Instead of the compliance and self-restraint of molar women, Snow White repeatedly lets down her hair to actively express her desires, reflecting an awakening and rebellion from the gaze of men in a patriarchal society and a deviation of the molecular individual from the molar collective.

Barthelme's "Snow White" not only rewrites the fixed identity of modern women, but also breaks through the fixed identity of modern men, deepening the deviation of the molecular individual from the molar collective. For instance, Bill, who is tired of Snow White, begins to refuse the touch of others, and Paul, as the "prince", continually doubts his responsibilities and nobility, satisfied with Snow White's negative critique of his paintings. These changes in male identity actually reflect the doubts of American men in the 1960s about traditional values and masculine virtues after the experience of war, highlighting the dual oppression by patriarchy of both men and women (Aljadaani and Laila 161).

While Barthelme gives his characters a molecular deviation that breaks through their molar identities, he does not lead them onto a positive path. The

awakening female consciousness of Snow White is accidentally disturbed by Paul; Bill, who defects from the dwarfs' molar collective, is ultimately hanged; Paul, who strays from traditional masculine virtue and responsibility, inadvertently drinks the poison meant for Snow White and dies. Thus, it seems that the molecular deviation from the molar line ends up trapped in a dead-end labyrinth, and the molecular individual is re-segmented amidst wavering attempts. However, what appears to be an unchanging ending has already undergone the subversive line of flight in the process, which also presages the fluid identities as well as the hope and way out implied in the chaos of the postmodern.

#### IV. LINE OF FLIGHT AS A ORGANLESS BECOMING

In a given space, three types of lines coexist and are tightly entangled with one another, while the molecular line continuously sways between the molar and the line of flight (Deleuze and Guattari 312). In the postmodern "Snow White", the molecular line that symbolizes the change of identity constantly wavers between the molar line of discipline and the subversive line of flight. From a micro-political perspective, a society is defined by its lines of flight, which are molecular, always in motion and escape, avoiding binary organization.

In the novel, Snow White must first break through the molar boundaries and then tend towards the CsO (organless body), that is, once a body has acquired enough organs and wants to give them up or loses them, the CsO has to form (Deleuze and Guattari 208). The CsO is not the opposite of the organs, instead, it is the opposite of the organized organism which is a layer imposed over the CsO with hierarchical constraints. Breaking through molar lines and dissolving the organism is not suicide but opening the body up outwardly, allowing for the line of flight and fluidity of identity. Thus, the CsO is desire, and it is through this process that desire operates.

Barthelme mentions six moles on Snow White's body at the beginning, which, from a medical perspective, are skin pigmentation due to genetics or environmental factors and can be seen as blemishes or flaws (Nealon 128). However, moles as the negative aspects of bodily organs are attributed beauty in the novel, indirectly affirming the positive significance of the loss of organs. Therefore, Snow White's beautiful organism is dismantled, the molar boundary is broken and her body begins to open outwardly. Thus, the aesthetic value of Snow White as a molar organism no longer maintains meaning, paving the way for her identity to become fluid and marking the beginning of the escape of her desire.

However, the CsO is not an achievable goal, instead, it is a continuous molecular production in the process of "becoming" (Deleuze and Guattari 206). Snow White's molar entity possessing organs and functionalities is controlled by a machine that operates under gender binary opposition. Yet, "becoming-woman" isn't about trying to mimic or transform into this entity but to emit particles into a microfemininity, a molecular womanhood on the body. Therefore, Snow White first recognizes the molar entity of womanhood, separating herself from the male collective, thus reclaiming her organism and identity without being a definable collective. Meanwhile, it is necessary for Snow White to produce the molecular woman, to act as an agent of "becoming", distinguishing herself from the female collective and infiltrating into the molar confrontation. As reflected in the novel, Snow White firstly takes control of the molar female organism and refuses to submit to male aesthetics and plundering, separating herself from the male collective. Secondly, Snow White starts the process of "becoming" towards the CsO through fluid desire and becomes a molecular woman engaging in molar confrontation.

"Becoming-woman" is key to all other "becoming" (Deleuze and Guattari 393). In Barthelme's Snow White, there is not only "becoming-woman" but also "becoming-animal" and "becoming-child" which start from and firstly experience the process of "becoming-woman". For instance, the novel repeatedly addresses Snow White as "horsewife" (a pun on housewife), which not only suggests Snow White's enslavement but also leads her identity towards "becoming-horse" along the line of flight. Thus, on Snow White's molar body, a molecular animal is becoming, which in turn combats the "becoming" agents as human beings, forming a "becoming-animal" on the line of flight. Moreover, when Paul comments on his noble father, he does not reinforce his traditional sense of responsibility as a noble adult male because of his inherited lineage. Instead, he falls into a state of absurd doubt and immature impotence, creating a line of flight that deviates from the traditional adult responsibilities conditioned by molar discipline, and directs his identity towards a "becoming-child". More broadly, if the entire world and all people were to form a "becoming", it suggests the creation of an inevitably interconnected world, clearing away all barriers to fluid identity and line of flight, thereby realizing the continuous flow of identity and the subversion of the line of flight, referring as well to the implicit hope and way out contained within the seemingly chaotic fragmented narrative of postmodern literature.

## V. CONCLUSION

Barthelme's "Snow White" places the archetypal characters of the fairy tale within a postmodern context and rewrites their identities in multiple ways, aligning with the map of assemblage consisting of molar lines, molecular lines, and lines of flight proposed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. These three co-existing "lines" sketch a postmodern micropolitical context for the fluid identity and subversion in the work, pointing to a way out of the postmodernist labyrinth through the molecular CsO and the incessant process of "becoming".

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# Van Dijk's ideological square in sourcing: was the Arab silenced or quoted in the Western media's coverage of the 2011 revolution in Egypt?

Dr. Ayyad Echine

Laboratory of Comparative Humanities and Applied Language Studies (CHALS). Faculty of Economics and Management, Guelmim, Ibn Zohr University, Agadir, Morocco.

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**Abstract**— This paper examines the Western media's coverage of the 2011 revolution in Egypt and its sourcing patterns using Van Dijk's ideological square framework. The study implements the research tools provided by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to investigate the representation of Arab voices and analyzes whether they were silenced or adequately quoted. The findings reveal that the selected media outlets perpetuated power imbalances and social inequalities through their sourcing practices. The media over-quoted statements that supported Western narratives and marginalized or excluded statements that challenged these narratives or portrayed positive aspects of Arab culture and religion. This bias in sourcing patterns reflects a reproduction of dominant ideologies and reinforces the classical Orientalist discourse that positions Islam and Islamists as inferior entities. Furthermore, the study highlights the creation of dichotomous divisions between the Westerner and the Arab. The Westerner is portrayed as powerful and authoritative, while the Arab is depicted as subservient and in need of instruction.



**Keywords**— Ideological square, Sourcing, Editorials, Orientalism

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Arab revolutions, which swept across the Middle East in 2011, had a profound impact on Egypt, serving as a catalyst for widespread social and political change. The revolutionary wave that engulfed the country led to the overthrow of President Hosni Mubarak, who had ruled for nearly three decades. The protests, driven by a desire for democratic reforms, social justice, and an end to corruption, united Egyptians from diverse backgrounds in their quest for a more inclusive and equitable society (El-Mahdi, 2013). However, the aftermath of the Arab Spring in Egypt was marked by a complex and tumultuous transition, characterized by power struggles, political instability, and the rise of various factions competing for influence. The events of the Arab Spring in Egypt continue to shape the country's political landscape and have had far-reaching implications for the region as a whole.

The coverage of international events by news media shape public opinion and construct narratives that influence global understanding. Within this context, the 2011 revolution and aftermath in Egypt served as a significant socio-political event that garnered extensive media attention from various countries, including the United States and the United Kingdom. This paper aims to examine the sourcing patterns in American and British editorials' coverage of the revolution, utilizing the research tools provided by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and drawing inspiration from Van Dijk's ideological square framework. Specifically, the study focuses on analyzing the sourcing patterns in editorials published by prominent media outlets, including the New York Times (NYT), the Washington Post (WP), the Telegraph (T), and the Guardian (G), between the years 2011 and 2018. By investigating these sourcing practices, the study seeks to shed light on the underlying ideological

biases, power dynamics, and potential perpetuation of Orientalist narratives by these media outlets.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides a valuable framework for understanding the intricate relationship between language, power, and ideology in media discourse. By analyzing the social context, and the linguistic choices within discourse, CDA makes it possible to uncover hidden meanings, ideological biases, and power dynamics embedded within media narratives (Fairclough, 1995). In this study, the focus is on sourcing patterns, that are found to have a primordial role in shaping the news narrative and influencing public perceptions. By examining how these influential broadsheets selected and framed their sources during the coverage of the 2011 revolution in Egypt, we aim to reveal the underlying ideological biases and power dynamics at play. The analysis of sourcing patterns through the lens of CDA and Van Dijk's ideological square framework is expected to provide valuable insights into the construction of news discourse surrounding the event under scrutiny. By examining editorials published by the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Telegraph, and the Guardian, we can gain a nuanced understanding of how dominant ideologies and power relations influenced the media's portrayal of this significant event.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the following research questions:

- 1) Do the sourcing patterns in American and British editorials' coverage of the 2011 revolution in Egypt reflect ideological biases and power dynamics?
- 2) Do the sourcing patterns in the coverage of the same event by the same media perpetuate Orientalist narratives?

The paper hypothesizes that the analysis of sourcing patterns in editorials published by the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Telegraph, and the Guardian will reveal significant differences in the selection and representation of sources, reflecting the underlying ideological biases and power dynamics that project the Western and the Arab as two opposing entities.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The influence of Western media outlets in shaping global narratives and perceptions is undeniable. Western media often relies heavily on a limited number of sources, or on specific ones, leading to a narrow and potentially biased portrayal of international events and perspectives. This can result in a skewed understanding of complex issues,

particularly when it comes to regions outside the Western world.

In his seminal work *Racism in News*, Van Dijk (1991) sheds light on the contrasting treatment of white and black individuals in media sourcing. Van Dijk's research highlights how Western media often exhibits a preference for white sources, while black individuals are disproportionately marginalized or underrepresented. This pattern reinforces existing power structures and perpetuates racial inequalities in news coverage. Van Dijk's goes further as to highlight a concerning pattern in Western media sourcing where black individuals are often given the floor to speak primarily on topics such as crime, sport, and music, while white individuals are consulted on more serious issues such as economy and politics. This discrepancy reinforces racial stereotypes and perpetuates systemic biases within media coverage (1991). The media's selective sourcing practices contribute to the marginalization and limited representation of black voices in matters of significant social, political, and economic importance. By relegating black individuals to specific topics, the media reinforces the perception that their perspectives are only relevant in certain limited areas, while perpetuating the notion that white individuals possess the expertise and credibility to discuss weightier subjects.

Building upon Van Dijk's insightful analysis of sourcing disparities between blacks and whites in Western media coverage, it is essential to extend our examination to specific instances where these patterns manifest. In this context, this paper aims to explore the sourcing patterns employed by Western media during the coverage of the 2011 revolution in Egypt, specifically focusing on the differential treatment of Western and Arab voices. By scrutinizing the extent to which each group is quoted or silenced, we can gain further insights into the dynamics of power, representation, and potential biases in the media's portrayal of this significant geopolitical event. While Van Dijk's work provides a foundation for understanding the broader systemic issues of sourcing disparities, applying his framework to a specific case study such as the Egyptian revolution allows us to delve deeper into the complexities of media practices. Through this analysis, we can uncover whether Western media outlets prioritized and amplified the perspectives of Western sources over Arab sources, thereby influencing the narrative and shaping public perception. By examining the sourcing patterns in this particular context, we can identify potential biases, power dynamics, and the extent to which diverse voices were included or silenced.



### ***Understanding Critical Discourse Analysis and Methodology***

In the realm of media analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) developed by Norman Fairclough has emerged as a prominent framework for understanding the relationship between language, power, and ideology (Fairclough, 1995). CDA aims to uncover hidden meanings, ideologies, and power structures embedded within discourse. The review below explores the key principles of CDA and demonstrates its application in analyzing sourcing in news media, drawing inspiration from Van Dijk's ideological square.

This multidisciplinary approach combines linguistic analysis, social theory, and critical thinking to investigate how language functions as a tool for power and social domination (Fairclough, 1995). Fairclough contends that discourse is not merely a reflection of reality but actively shapes and constructs it. CDA seeks to uncover the social, political, and ideological implications of language use, highlighting how power relations are embedded within various discursive practices. It also emphasizes the social context in which discourse occurs. It recognizes that language is influenced by and influences social structures, power relations, and historical contexts (Fairclough, 1995).

For Fairclough, CDA recognizes that discourse is not isolated but interconnected with other texts and discourses. It explores how texts refer to and draw upon existing discourses, ideologies, and cultural frameworks (1995). Analyzing interdiscursivity and intertextuality for example, helps unveil the ways in which power and ideology are reproduced and reinforced within discourse. Linguistically speaking, the approach under scrutiny here uncovers hidden meanings and ideological underpinnings within discourse. It examines linguistic choices, such as lexical choices, metaphors, and rhetorical strategies, to reveal how power is exercised and legitimized through language (Fairclough, 1995).

As a research tool, CDA is particularly relevant in analyzing sourcing practices in news media, which play a crucial role in shaping public perceptions and constructing reality. By applying this approach to sourcing, one can uncover the ideological biases, power dynamics, and hidden agendas that may influence the news narrative. It helps identify power imbalances in sourcing practices. It examines the selection of sources, the framing of their viewpoints, and the degree of access granted to different perspectives (Fairclough, 1995). Through CDA, one can reveal how media outlets may amplify or marginalize certain voices, perpetuating power disparities in public discourse.

Drawing inspiration from Van Dijk's ideological square, I intend to apply this framework to analyze the sourcing patterns in a few selected American and British editorials' coverage of the 2011 revolution in Egypt. Specifically, I will examine whether or not the Arab voice is quoted or silenced, and how and when it is quoted or silenced. Equally, the same attention will be given to how the Western subject was consulted. This approach will help uncover the ideological biases and the hegemonic discourse maintained by these media outlets in shaping the narrative surrounding the revolution. By utilizing Van Dijk's ideological square, I aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of the sourcing practices employed in the coverage of this significant socio-political event. CDA allows for the examination of discursive strategies employed by news media to manipulate public opinion. It uncovers techniques such as selective quoting, framing, omitting, foregrounding, backgrounding, presupposition, modality, and the use of persuasive language that can skew the representation of sources and influence audience interpretation (Fairclough, 1995).

### **III. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

#### ***The Egyptian and the Westerner: Silenced or Quoted***

In Orientalism, Said (1979, p.xi) referenced one of Karl Marx's highly quoted sentences that read: "they cannot represent themselves; they must be represented". Said uses the sentence as an epigraph in his book to show the dialectic representational relationship between the West and the Middle Eastern 'orient' in which the latter is stereotyped and 'Othered' by the former. Similarly, when reporting the Egyptian revolution, the individual Egyptian protester is silenced and never given a chance to voice out his or her version of the story.

The selected papers, more often than not, opt for presupposition instead of giving the floor to those Egyptian people involved in the revolution to give their opinion or evaluation of the events. Egyptians were quoted as a group and referred to as "most Egyptians" think that ... (NYT, 1 Dec 2011 "Egypt's Vote"), "The vast majority of Egyptians regard ..." (WP, 29 Jan 2011, "The U.S. needs to break with Mubarak now"), "many Egyptian analysts believe ..." (WP, 31 Dec 2011, "Misconceptions about the Egyptian crisis"), or the "young protesters" see that ... (NYT, 24 March 2011, "Egypt's Unfinished Revolution"). Here, the Western journalists are assuming the ability to have access to their subjects' minds and reveal their authentic attitude about the revolution. On the other hand, Western officials, such as president Obama, Hillary Clinton, the white house



press secretary, vice president Biden and secretary of state John F. Kerry (quoted by The WP), the White House, Obama, and secretary of state John Kerry (quoted by The NYT), David Cameron and Obama (quoted by The Telegraph), Tony Blair, the Quartet's envoy and The Guardian's former Cairo correspondent Jack Shenker (quoted by The Guardian), are given large space to give their evaluation of the revolution, express their worries of Islamists and of the possibility of losing an ally in Egypt, and threaten to suspend aid and support of Egypt. Sourcing, in this case, is used as a way to achieve hegemony, as Van Dijk's formulation goes, because access to media is not made available to everyone but to "members of more powerful social groups and institutions, and especially their leaders (the elites) have more or less exclusive access" (van Dijk, 1998b, p.5).

However, the analysis reveals that individual Egyptian officials and public figures are quoted by the American papers, but uniquely when they are critical to their own religion, culture and society. Put differently, the Egyptian is not consulted by editorials unless what he or she communicates "will precisely be defined as a confirmation of prevailing stereotypes and prejudices" (Van Dijk, 1996, p.94). Consider the following excerpts for clarification:

- 1) His [Omar Suleiman] recent public statements have been chilling. He said he does not believe it is time to lift the three-decade-old emergency law that has been used to suppress and imprison opposition leaders. Most alarming, he said the country's "culture" is not yet ready for democracy. (NYT, 08 February, 2011, "Mr. Suleiman's Empty Promises".
- 2) "Mr. Suleiman was asked if he believed in democracy." For sure," he answered. But "you will do that . . . when the people here will have the culture of democracy."" (WP, 07 February 2011, "Wrongly choosing Egypt's generals over the democrats".
- 3) "Mr. Suleiman has said Egypt is not ready for democracy." (WP, 10 Feb, 2011, "Hosni Mubarak offers Egyptians far less than they demand"

Clearly, Omar Suleiman, former intelligence chief and former vice president in Mubarak's regime, deserved quoting three times as he reiterated that Egypt was not ready for democracy. The first excerpt shows also Suleiman's statement that it is not high time to withdraw

the emergency law<sup>1</sup>. Suleiman's words imply that time is not ripe yet to stop suppressing Egyptians. Suleiman's cited description of Egyptians as not viable for democracy informs on the stance of editorial boards of the papers; The NYT and The WP. Seemingly, the Egyptian is considered trustworthy, and their utterances are as authentic and value-laden just when he or she is consolidating the West's version of the story; in this case that Egypt is not ready for democracy. Mr. Suleiman's voice has been sourced as a well-informed knower who stresses a purely Orientalist view of the 'other' as, in Bernard Lewis's formulation, 'congenitally undemocratic' (Said 2003, p.343).

Likewise, an entire editorial entitled "Egypt's jailing of democracy activists shows how far it has backtracked", written by The WP's editorial board, is a discussion of an op-ed written by Ahmed Maher, "a founder of the April 6 Youth Movement and one of the leading lights in the Egypt democracy campaign that brought down Hosni Mubarak" (WP, 21 June, 2014). Maher is found worth quoting at length by The WP because the gist of his op-ed suits the line of reasoning the selected papers adopt. Consider the following for clarification:

- 4) Two weeks ago, from prison, Mr. Maher wrote an op-ed for these pages [for The WP] in which he declared, "Egypt is ruled by a military regime that does not tolerate criticism or even advice." ... "There is no path of democracy" in Egypt today, Mr. Maher said, "it is all a comical farce." (WP, 21 June, 2014, "Egypt's jailing of democracy activists shows how far it has backtracked")

Maher's attitude is critical of the Egyptian military regime, and he openly expressed the impossibility of promoting democracy in Egypt. 'Mr.' is always written before his name to make him appear as an informed knower and a reliable source of information. The aim here is not to provide a counter argument that disavows Maher's statements, but to show when exactly the

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<sup>1</sup> The emergency law is a tool in the hands of the executive power to storm many basic rights and freedom guaranteed by the Egyptian Constitution. The emergency law grants to the authority broad power to impose restrictions on the freedoms of assembly, move or residence; the power to arrest and detain suspects or those deemed dangerous, and the power to search individuals and places without the need to follow the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code. (www.fidh.org, 2011)

Egyptian individual's voice is worth quoting and citing in Western media text.

Equally, the selected data do not yield a single voice of the Muslim Brotherhood<sup>2</sup> wherein a positive or a neutral tone is felt. Accordingly, Mr. Mohamed Morsi, the former Egyptian president and one of the Muslim Brotherhood's leaders who led an Islamist government in Egypt, is found worth quoting by the selected media journalists, namely The Guardian. Morsi's utterances were given prominence as long as they confirm by a way or another the Western media discourse. The instances wherein Mr. Mohamed Morsi was referred to are restricted to certain kinds of topics, Sharia, Israel, non-Muslims and women's rights. Consider the following for more elaboration:

- 5) "He [Mohamed Morsi] has called for barring women and non-Muslims from the presidency on the basis of Islamic law, or Shariah." (NYT, 25 April, 2012, "Egypt's Chaotic Election".
- 6) "He [Mohamed Morsi] has made inflammatory statements about Israel, describing its citizens as "killers and vampires." (NYT, 25 April, 2012, "Egypt's Chaotic Election".

The excerpts above position Mr. Morsi as a religious fanatic ("barring non-Muslims from the presidency"), women oppressor ("barring women from the presidency"), and Israel hater ("made inflammatory statements about Israel, describing its citizens as "killers and vampires"). The NYT sees that such attitudes Morsi adopts are based on Islamic law, or Shariah. Quoting Morsi to have said all these serves as a confirmation of the already constructed stereotypes about Muslims and Islamic law, and leaving out stories that might challenge these stereotypes is also a strategy that leads to the same results. This is a technique of silence that is used to conceal the good aspect of Mr. Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood. Van Dijk's ideological square (1998b) is

<sup>2</sup> The Muslim Brotherhood, or *al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* in Arabic, is the world's oldest Sunni revivalist organization in the Arab world. Its model of charity work combined with political activism has inspired similar movements in Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Sudan, Bahrain, Palestine, Jordan, Morocco, Kuwait, and others. Founded by the Egyptian Islamic scholar and teacher Hassan al-Banna in Cairo in 1928, the group began as a small religious and charitable society that aimed at spreading Islamic values and purging Egypt of its British occupiers. Under its famous slogan, "Islam is the solution," the group built religious schools, provided social services, and combatted the spread of Western cultural values. It advocated Islam as a comprehensive system of governance distinct from the secular political systems in the West. (Aljazeera, 2017)

relevant in this regard in the sense that the media keeps on emphasizing how bad are 'them' and understate the opposite.

In the same vein, another Islamist's voice is given room to communicate his opinion in the editorials. It is the conservative Islamist Adel Abdel Maqsood Afifi. Afifi is quoted for blaming the female rape victims at Tahrir square during the street mass protests. He says that "Sometimes, a girl contributes 100 percent to her own raping when she puts herself in these conditions" (NYT, 28 March 2013, "Terror in Tahrir Square"). Afifi's statement is foregrounded in the editorials for it consolidates the Western stereotypical narratives about women's degrading status in the Arab world.

Following the same sourcing patterns, by The WP this time, two public figures in Egypt are found worth quoting by the media. These two men's; Nabil Elaraby, the foreign minister of the interim civilian cabinet, and Amr Moussa, the former head of the Arab League, contribution to the overall content of the editorial gives them the advantage to be referred to by full name and political affiliation in the editorial. Consider the following for more elaboration:

- 7) There's nevertheless a case for concluding that Egypt's policy changes may end up benefiting the United States and Israel. First, both Mr. Elaraby and Mr. Moussa said that Egypt will keep its peace treaty with Israel and continue close relations with Washington. (WP, 10 May, 2011, "Egypt's new foreign policy").

The two Egyptian politicians, quoted in the excerpt, express an attitude that is appealing to the U.S. They are anticipating a scenario wherein the U.S. will benefit and fulfill its ambitions in Egypt and the Middle East. They are given a voice because they prophesied about a political stability for Israel in the Middle East and a promising foreign policy for the U.S. in the same region.

It becomes clear that the Egyptian's voice is excluded from the coverage unless he/she emphasizes and reinforces pre-existing Western rhetoric that defines 'the Other' negatively, or expresses an opinion that serves Western interests. Moreover, the sourcing patterns followed by the editorials' writers unfold also a dichotomy of Muslims versus non-Muslims or Westerners. This is to say that the selected media allows Western voices to provide statement that are always placed in opposition of what Egyptians, namely Islamists, say. Consider the following excerpts for illustration:

- 8) "Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton called publicly on Mr. Mubarak to make reforms and not to block peaceful protests." (NYT, 27 January 2011, "Mr. Mubarak Is Put on Notice".)
- 9) "Ms. Clinton's calls to lift internet controls and respond to the grievances of Egyptians became more strident." (G, 29 January, 2011, "Egypt: A pivotal moment")
- 10) Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton spoke forcefully this week against the street attacks on women, noting, correctly, that "this systematic degradation of Egyptian women dishonors the revolution, disgraces the state and its uniform and is not worthy of a great people. (NYT, 20 December, 2011, "Egypt's Military Masters")
- 11) "There can be no going back on the democratic transition called for by the Egyptian people." She added, "They're doing something they've never done in 5,000-plus years of history. They have had elections." (WP, 2 August, 2013, "No going back on democracy in Egypt")

The excerpts above show some of the American Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's speeches, statements or declarations. Linguistically speaking, the writers, when sourcing Clinton, use the following verbs and phrases: "calls", "called publicly on", and "spoke forcefully against". Calling for something, according to Cambridge English Dictionary, means "to say publicly that something should happen". With such reporting phrases, Clinton is presented as someone equipped with power, authority, courage and ability to call 'publicly' and 'forcefully' for actions. In addition, Clinton's statements are rendered valid and correct by the reporter's evaluation as shown in excerpt 10: Ms. Clinton "noting, correctly, that".

Equally important, Hillary Clinton is positioned as calling solely for favorable actions, such as making reforms in Egypt and tolerating peaceful protests (excerpt 8); lifting Internet control and responding to Egyptians' demands (excerpt 9); and condemning the mistreatment of women in the streets (excerpt 10). Accordingly, Clinton is given the role of guaranteeing the human rights the Egyptian authorities are violating. She is presented as a rescuer and women's rights defender (this is when, as mentioned earlier, the elected president Mohammed Morsi, for example, is quoted to have "called for barring women and non-Muslims from the presidency on the basis of Islamic law, or Shariah" (NYT, 25 April, 2012, "Egypt's Chaotic Election"). Such juxtaposition implies that 'we' are liberating woman while "They" are repressing her, or the Egyptian regime is suppressing its people while 'We' are calling for liberating it.

Relatedly, Clinton is quoted to have considered attacking Egyptian women in the street during the revolution a 'systematic' deed; and, therefore, makes of it an organized, planned and a regular action against the well-being of women. This is obviously a mere reflection of the classical Orientalist discourse that portrays Arab countries as a space wherein women are subjected to constant mistreatment.

Similarly, a comparable amount of coverage was given to the then American President Barak Obama. Obama's statements are tinged with a great deal of modality which positions him as having unlimited authority to address dictations to the then Egyptian head of state. By using modality, especially 'obligation modality' or modal verbs, such as 'must' and 'should', the speaker claims a superior position above others:

- 12) "Mr. Obama said that he had told the Egyptian leader that "an orderly transition must be meaningful, it must be peaceful, and it must begin now."" (NYT, 1 February, 2011, "Beyond Mubarak"; WP, 1 February 2011; T, 02 February 2011, "Egypt: the West must weigh its words carefully").
- 13) "President Obama said the right things last week when he demanded that democratic change in Egypt start "now."" (NYT, 08 February 2011, "Mr. Suleiman's Empty Promises").
- 14) "On Thursday night, a White House statement attributed to President Obama rightly said that "too many Egyptians remain unconvinced that the government is serious about a genuine transition to democracy."" (WP, 10 February, 2011, "Hosni Mubarak offers Egyptians far less than they demand").

Obama's statement in the excerpt 12 shows an excessive use of 'obligation modality' expressed through the use of auxiliary model 'must' three times. This modality signals power and it is the vehicle through which Obama sends his strong instructions and lays out orders. Additionally, the term "now" in the same excerpt assigns urgent action. In fact, quoting Obama giving orders to an Arab president consolidates the pre-existing social inequalities wherein the West is powerful and the Arab world is otherwise.

Needless to reiterate here that there are other ways to express modality than through auxiliary verbs. The use of adjectives (e.g., probable, likely) and adverbs (e.g., supposedly, possibly) by editorials' writers is another form of modality wherein a point of view or an evaluation of a reported item is given. Simpson calls this form of modality an 'evaluative modality' that is based on three patterns: "positive, negative, and neutral shadings" (1993,

p.55). A positive shading occurs when the reported item is proved assertive and strong; negative shading stories are characterized by the use of a word that denotes alienation and uncertainty; and neutral shading stories are stories without modality or modal judgment (i.e. something is or is not") (Lyons, 1977, p.726). In the excerpts above, Obama's statements are made positive shading stories of high value: "president Obama said the right things ..." (excerpt 13) and "a White House statement attributed to President Obama rightly said that ..." (excerpt 14). Obama's speech is therefore accredited, made valid and strong. Similarly, the same shading patterns were used to refer to Clinton's statements.

Like Hillary Clinton, Obama is referenced only calling for what guarantees the Egyptians better life conditions; an orderly transition that must be meaningful and peaceful, and an urgent democratic change. This is while Islamists, as shown earlier, were reported to oppose the Western liberating actions, to violate women's rights and to make inflammatory statements about Israel. Similarly, secular Egyptians are reported only when they are critical of Egyptian culture and Islam, or when they make statements that harmonize with the West's attitudes and ambitions.

In the same vein, the British papers, The Guardian and The Telegraph, sourced the then Prime Minister David Cameron once each. Noticeably, the same quoting techniques, the same point of view of positive shading given by the editorials writers and the same messages that Obama and Clinton were quoted saying are reflected in the following excerpts wherein David Cameron is referenced:

- 15) "[David Cameron] told MPs that the transition to democracy in Egypt needs to be "rapid and credible and it needs to start now"." (T, 02 February, 2011, "Egypt: the West must weigh its words carefully").
- 16) "David Cameron expressed fairly promptly the view that Egyptians are entitled to political freedom." (G, 6 February 2011, "Cairo protests: The west has a duty to nurture democracy").

David Cameron is given authority and power to say what is needed to be done urgently. He is presented solely when calling for the best for the Egyptians; "transition to democracy" and "political freedom". Additionally, the point of view implied in the wording reflects positive shading. Cameron's statement is made also of a high value by the reporter's evaluation of it; it is stated that Cameron expresses "fairly promptly" his views.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The study shows how the sourcing patterns adopted by the selected media reflect a reproduction and reinforcement of relationships of dominance and social inequalities. Additionally, Van Dijk's ideological square is useful to the extent that it shows the way the Westerner and the Egyptian were sourced, over-quoting statements that show how good are 'us' and how bad are 'them', and excluding statements that show how bad are 'us' and how good are "them". This is to say that the selected media finds the Arab and the Islamist worth-quoting when they are either critical to their culture and religion or when they are implicitly giving credit to the classical discourse that sees Islam and Islamists as inferior entities. The analysis demonstrates how, through various ways of modality, the editorials' writers evaluate the quoted statements, consolidate power relations between Western and Arab social actors, and create dichotomous divisions between the Westerner and the Arab. Such divisions are created through giving the Westerner and the Arab opposite roles by referencing the former as powerful and the one who has authority to give instruction to Arab leaders, while the latter is represented as someone who should execute orders. Relatedly, the opinions of both parties are often placed in opposition. For example, when one is repressing women the other is liberating them. It is plausible to conclude that such divisions created by the sourcing patterns employed in the editorials go hand in hand with the classical Orientalist discourse that divides the world into 'us' and 'them', 'superior' and 'inferior'.

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# Salient Features of Tertiary Education Subsidy on University Students' Persistence

Ramil S. Bulilan

Bohol Island State University, Clarin, Bohol

[ramil.bulilan@bisu.edu.ph](mailto:ramil.bulilan@bisu.edu.ph)

[ramilseg.bulilan@gmail.com](mailto:ramilseg.bulilan@gmail.com)

ORCID: 0000-0001-5028-7570

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**Abstract**— *The study determined the extent of awareness of students on the critical features of the Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES) program towards their college persistence. It then sought data on their demographics, determined the extent of awareness of TES salient features and the level of persistence in their studies on the nine factors, and identified the difference between their profile and their persistence. It also determined the correlation between the level of awareness of TES salient features and persistence. The descriptive-correlational survey method and the stratified random sampling technique obtained 171 TES grantees as respondents. It revealed that they were so much aware of TES salient features and were persistent in their studies. There was no significant difference in sex and top priority items spent on their persistence in schooling; however, it resulted in a positive difference between their chosen course and marital status on their persistence level. The study also yielded a significant relationship between the extent of awareness and their persistence. It is indicative, therefore, that being cognizant of any government program for students' welfare would lead them toward better decision-making.*



**Keywords**— *Awareness, salient features, college subsidy, student persistence*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Tertiary Education Subsidy is a major program of the national government and follows with the centrality of awareness among the grantees about their persistence in schooling. The term awareness could be attributed to the knowledge and understanding that something exists. More broadly, it is the state of being conscious of something. As the researchers' observations and experiences, if one is aware of something or someone, then he/she knows what to do and where to go to make changes for improvement and success. Thus, the researchers contend that when someone is aware of the benefits of any program, then he/she is expected to do something in return. Henceforth, in the academe, college students must have enough knowledge on the things that concern their welfare as learners, not only on their roles and responsibilities as such but also on the benefits and salient features of particular grants of the program the government has offered them.

Nowadays, college students are indeed fortunate, especially those in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Qualified students in HEIs would not be only free from their tuition and other miscellaneous fees or can avail of student loans from the program, but have also the chance for a Tertiary Educational Subsidy (TES). With such privilege, most college students enjoying additional subsidies are expected to persevere in their studies to attain their goals in life. However, as observed by the researcher, some do not give their schooling much importance. With such privilege, most college students enjoying additional subsidies should persevere in their studies to attain their goals in life. However, as observed by the researcher, some grantees are not giving their schooling of utmost importance. Some of them got pregnant amidst their studies or left school without enough valid reasons.

Furthermore, most of them bought cellular phones directly upon receiving the grant. Having asked, they insisted that they would have to use them in their studies. With these observations, the present study also wants to find out what items they spent with their received subsidy and whether or not they have something relevant to their studies.

Although various researchers and scholars (Agosti et al., 2019; Kinsey, 2021; Krumboltz, 2000; Virola, 2019,) have conducted a plethora of studies in this area, there is a need to conduct more studies to validate their findings on whether awareness of the salient features of TES is significantly related to students' persistence. And that the findings of the present investigation would contribute to the body of knowledge. Thus, this study is deemed indispensable and in order.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A college education is a financial burden for almost all Filipino families (Virola, 2019). Thus, the Philippine government enacted a law (R.A.10931), on August 13, 2017, mandating all public higher education institutions (HEIs) and government-run technical-vocational institutions (TVIs) to provide free quality tertiary education among eligible Filipino students. For Lim et al. (2018), this law intends to enhance the quality of education, which has four component programs. They are (1) free tuition and other school fees in public higher education institutions, (2) free tuition in TESDA technical-vocational training institutes (TVIs), (3) tertiary education subsidy (TES), and (4) student loan program. It also offers a subsidy worth P30,000 to TES beneficiaries with disabilities, the TES-3A category.

As mentioned earlier, aside from providing tuition-free higher education in public HEIs and TVIs, the law also provides assistance mechanisms to give additional support to eligible and financially disadvantaged students. The Tertiary Education Subsidy program is one of the four component programs in that law which aims to provide additional funding to cover education-related costs of students and shall be identified through a prioritization scheme (Ortiz et al., 2019). As emphasized by Maga-ao et al. (2019), apart from the tuition fee in state universities and colleges (SUCs), a qualified TES recipient will be given an amount of 40,000 pesos for those enrolled in a SUC, which is P20,000.00 per semester. As stipulated in sec.7, RA 10931, the priority beneficiaries for the Tertiary Education Subsidy are those continuing Expanded Student's Grants-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGP-PA) scholars in the SUCs effective AY 2018-2019; students who are part of households included in Listahan 2.0, ranked according to the estimated per capita household income; and students not

part of the Listahan 2.0, ranked according to the estimated per capita household income based on submitted documentation of proof of income to be determined by the Unified Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST) Board. Further, such prioritization shall not apply to Filipino students in cities and municipalities without existing SUC or LUC campuses.

Thus, the scenario shows that not all can avail of the subsidy. Section 28 in the Implementing Rules and Regulation of RA 10931, clearly says that students enrolled in higher education in programs and/or institutions not included in the Registry of CHED-recognized programs and institutions; those who have exceeded the Maximum Residency Rule of their program; learners enrolled in TVET programs, not in the Registry of TESDA; and those enrolled in TESDA-registered programs in any TVI who availed of government-funded stuFAPS other than that of Free TVET are not qualified to such program.

### Theoretical Underpinnings

Speaking of theories, this study has banked on the "Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which grew out of the work of psychologists Edward Deci and Richard Ryan in 2012, who first introduced their ideas in their book: *Self-Determination and Intrinsic Motivation in Human Behavior*. Here, this theory is an empirically derived theory of human motivation. This theory suggests that people can become self-determined when their needs for competence, connection, and autonomy are fulfilled (Cherry, 2021).

Attention and awareness seem to be intimately related. Intuitively, it seems logical that we become aware of events we attend, whereas information outside our attention remains undetected (Gaal & Fahrenfort, 2008). Thus, another theory has been considered to anchor this investigation. This is the Attention Schema Theory of Graziano in 2015 which claimed that without awareness, attention is still possible, but the brain, in essence, lacks knowledge about its state of attention and, therefore, cannot properly regulate that attention. Here, this theory suggests how important awareness of something very significant to someone.

Further, Tinto's Theory of Student Persistence in 1993 emphasizes three major experiences that shape student motivation to stay in college and graduate. *Self-efficacy* refers to a person's belief in their ability to succeed at a particular task or in a specific situation; a *sense of belonging* in which students have to come to see themselves as a member of a community of other students, faculty, and staff who value their membership; and *perceived value of the curriculum* by which students need to perceive the material to be learned is of sufficient quality and relevance to warrant their time and effort (Kinsey, 2021).

Inspired by the thought of the importance of awareness that any individual should possess towards any program that could benefit his/her future, this study dealt with determining the extent of awareness of some salient features of the TES program. Agosti et al. (2019), pointed out the importance of awareness and reflection on everyday life to promote work-life balance and well-being.

At any rate, persistence considered the dependent variable of the present investigation, refers to individuals' continuing efforts and striving amidst difficult situations, trying times, opposition, and failure. Kinsey (2021) claimed that persistence is a key characteristic of successful people across professional and academic disciplines. In higher education, persistence rates show a student's ability to continue to the next term. This is evidenced by the willingness to continue to try in the face of challenges. This persistence can be a driving force to help students achieve their goals. Student persistence measures the student's activity and engagement. To put it simply, student persistence is something the student does to continue their studies (Ericksen, 2020).

Students must be persistent in pursuing their degrees and be willing to expend the effort to do so even when faced with challenges they sometimes encounter (Tinto, 2016). In another study, the researchers found that students with enough financial support can be persistent in school. Students who are satisfied with the support from their parents may tend to perform well academically at school; hence, it indicates that the forms of financial aid in combination with other factors are predictors of persistence (Moneva et al., 2020). Furthermore, Purigay (2020), in his study, found that the respondents strongly agreed that the Tertiary Education Subsidy gave them more motivation to strive harder and served as a source of inspiration to finish their studies.

This study also wanted to determine whether sex, chosen course, marital status, and the top priority items that the respondents spent their money on from their received subsidy are also among the factors that could influence their persistence in their studies. Krambule (2000) claimed that gender and family's monthly income were not related directly to student academic persistence. Woodard, Love, and Komives (2000) claimed that the percentage of women attending higher education institutions increased during the previous two decades and likely will continue to increase and that the rate of attendance for women at higher education institutions continues to grow faster than the rate for men. Bitrus, Apagu, & Hamsatu, (2016) also indicate that the unmarried students had higher mean and standard deviation than the married students.

### III. OBJECTIVES

Primarily, this study wanted:

1. to determine the relationship between the extent of students' level of awareness of the salient features of the Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES) program of the government on their persistence in their studies during the academic year 2021-2022;
2. to determine the profile of the respondents as regards sex, course, marital status, and topmost priority items that they spent their money from their subsidy;
3. to determine the extent of awareness of the respondents on TES salient features; and their level of persistence regarding academic integration, financial strain, social integration, degree commitment, collegiate stress, advising, scholastic conscientiousness, institutional commitment, academic motivation, and academic efficacy; and
4. to determine the significant difference between their profile and their persistence in their studies and the significant correlation between the extent of their awareness of TES salient features on their persistence.

### IV. METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive-correlational research utilizing quantifiable data to ascertain the results. A structured and closed-ended questionnaire was administered to the respondents through Google forms sent via their email addresses. This study was conducted at Bohol Island State University, Clarin, Bohol. Stratified random sampling was employed to determine the sample size. The respondents were those grantees who were second-year up to fourth-year students across undergraduate colleges. In obtaining the data on the student's awareness of the salient feature of the TES program, a researcher-made survey questionnaire was devised. It has 17-item questions wherein the respondents rated each item on the following scales: 4 being "very much aware," 3 being "aware," 2 as "slightly not aware," and 1 being "not aware at all." Though taken directly from RA10931, this instrument was subjected to a dry run on 67 TES grantees for validity and reliability. These students were not part of the actual respondents. As validated by the Statistician, the tool being pilot-tested has been found to have established validity and consistency of results.

Adhering to the research protocols, the respondents were asked to signify their voluntary participation in the investigation through informed consent. Then, the researchers assured them that their identity would be withheld and the data would be used solely for research purposes.

The researchers also adopted the College Persistence Questionnaire (CPQ version 3) of Davidson et al. (2009), but few modifications were made to fit its applicability to the purpose of the study. The researcher sought permission from the authors to use the tool. This instrument has been tested for its validity and reliability (Davidson, et al., 2009) that measure the retention and persistence of college students. Those levels were scaled on a 4-point Likert scale, of which 4 as highly persistent, 3 as persistent, 2, as slightly not persistent, and 1 as not persistent at all.

Per records supplied by the Students' Scholarship Coordinator's office, two hundred ninety-eight (298) TES student-grantees were enrolled that semester. Respondents were then selected using the stratified random sampling procedure to save time, money, and effort. A total of one hundred seventy-one (171) or 57.38% of TES grantees comprised the study's respondents. This study only investigated student-grantees in their sophomore up to senior years or levels to serve its purpose.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic characteristics of the respondents, which include sex, course, marital status, and top priority items that the respondents spent their money on their received TES, were taken into careful consideration since they were considered as intervening variables of the present study. Further, the data derived from this section shall serve as a data bank for the institution.

*Table 1. The sex distribution of the respondents*

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	136	79.53
Male	35	20.46
Total	171	100

As reflected, one hundred thirty-six (136) or 79.53% of the respondents are female, and thirty-five (35) or 20.46% are males. It can be seen that female respondents are dominant in this study. These findings substantiate the study of Woodard et al. (2000,) wherein the percentage of women attending institutions of higher education increased during the previous two decades and likely will continue to increase, and that the rate of attendance for women at higher education institutions continues to grow faster than the rate for men. Thus, Mangahas (2022) reported in a daily newspaper that in most field surveys, women tend to dominate in number over men. *Table 2. The curricular programs of the respondents*

Course	F	%
Bachelor of Secondary Education in Mathematics (BSEd. Math)	20	11.69
Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEEd)	37	21.63
Bachelor in Tech. & Livelihood Educ. in Home Econ. (BTLEd. HE)	24	14.03
Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM)	55	32.16
Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science (BSES)	9	5.26
Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS)	26	15.20
Total	171	100%

Here, the BSHM course has the biggest number of grantees with 55 (32.16%), followed by BEEEd having 37 (21.63%), then BSCS has 26 or 15.21 grantees, while BSES with the least grantees of 9 or 5.26%. It can be deduced that BSHM has more qualified TES grantees than other courses of this institution.

*Table 3. The marital status of the respondents*

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	168	98.24
Married	3	1.75
Total	171	100

The result showed that one hundred sixty-eight (168), or 98.24%, are single, and three (3), or 1.75%, are married. As expected, for them to give more attention to their studies, they should be single at their age level. The study of Bitrus, Apagu validates this result, and Hamsatu, (2016) indicates that the unmarried students had higher mean and standard deviation than the married students.

*Table 4. Top priority items spent on their received subsidy*

	F	%	Rank
Bags	21	12.28	10
1. Boarding house rentals	60	35.08	5
2. Capital for business	12	7.01	11
3. Cellular phones	76	44.44	3
4. Clothes/pants	42	24.56	7
5. Food and groceries	126	73.68	1
6. Given to parents	110	64.32	2



<b>7. Jewelry</b>	0	0	14
<b>8. Laptops</b>	67	39.18	4
<b>9. Medicine</b>	54	31.57	6
<b>10. Motorcycle (down payment or monthly installment)</b>	7	4.09	12
<b>11. Paid debts</b>	27	15.78	9
<b>12. Shoes</b>	28	16.37	8
<b>13. Treat friends, relatives, classmates, etc.</b>	5	2.92	13

This table shows that one hundred twenty-six (126) or 73.68%) of them spend on buying foods and groceries as the topmost priority items (rank 1); followed by buying “given to parents” (110 or 64.32%), and on “cellular phones” (76 or 44.44%) from their received TES. This indicates that the grantees have used their subsidy wisely, as they spend items considered necessities, essential, and related to their studies, as stipulated by the said program (par. b, sec.7, RA 10931). This finding is supported by Maga-ao’s (2019) study where he reported that the students prioritized products, they found helpful to their studies but were not affordable without subsidy.

Table 5. The salient features of the TES program

Statements of the TES Program Salient Features	SD	Mean	Description
<b>1. TES is one of the four programs under R.A. 10931.</b>	0.47	3.74	VMA
<b>2. TES aims to give additional support to eligible financially-disadvantaged students.</b>	0.57	3.76	VMA
<b>3. As a grant-in-aid, TES shall cover students in both public and private higher education institutions.</b>	0.53	3.73	VMA
<b>4. Not all college students can avail of this subsidy.</b>	0.61	3.67	VMA
<b>5. TES shall prioritize beneficiaries continuing Expanded Student’s Grants-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGP-PA) scholars.</b>	0.61	3.51	VMA
<b>6. Students who are part of households included in the National Household Targeting System or Listahanan 2.0, ranked according to the estimated per capita household income, are prioritized for this TES.</b>	0.62	3.48	VMA
<b>7. Students not part of the Listahanan 2.0, ranked according to the estimated per capita household income based on submitted documentation of proof of income to be determined by the Unified Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education Act (UniFAST) Board, are also prioritized</b>	0.69	3.23	A
<b>8. Such prioritization shall not apply to Filipino students in cities and municipalities with no existing SUC or LUC campus</b>	0.78	3.09	A
<b>9. TES grantees enrolled in higher education programs will enjoy a full academic year of the grant amount, subject to yearly renewal based on their continued studies</b>	0.66	3.56	VMA
<b>10. As a TES grantee in BISU Clarin, you will be given an amount of 40,000 pesos for the whole school year.</b>	0.51	3.83	VMA
<b>11. TES grantees with disabilities are given an additional subsidy worth P30,000 to be divided in accordance with the number of academic terms.</b>	0.92	3.04	A
<b>12. TES may use to support the cost of tertiary education or any portion thereof to cover allowance for books, supplies, transportation, miscellaneous personal expenses, including a reasonable allowance for the documented rental or purchase of a personal computer or laptop, and other education-related expenses.</b>	0.52	3.70	VMA
<b>13. TES may use to cover allowance for room and board costs incurred by the grantees.</b>	0.65	3.56	VMA



14. Students enrolled in higher education in programs and/or institutions not included in the Registry of CHED-recognized programs and institutions are not qualified for the program.	0.80	3.15	A
15. Students who have exceeded the Maximum Residency Rule of their program are not qualified for such a program.	0.84	2.95	A
16. Students enrolled in TVET programs, not in the Registry of TESDA are not qualified for such programs.	0.90	2.82	A
17. Students enrolled in TESDA-registered programs in any TVI who availed of government-funded stuFAPS other than Free TVET are not qualified for such a program.	0.89	2.87	A
<b>Total mean</b>		<b>3.39</b>	<b>VMA</b>

This table shows that the respondents are very much aware (mean=3.39) of the TES program's salient features. This means that they have enough knowledge and a conscious understanding of those given salient features of the program. Out of 17 salient features, they rated 10 items as "very much aware," and the rest rated "aware." Surprisingly, no items are rated "slightly unaware" or "not aware at all." This is true precisely because they are given annual orientation about the program. And probably during such orientation, they paid much attention to the program

features. Much more, their parents were also oriented on this program.

Specifically, on statement number ten (10): "*As a TES grantee in BISU Clarin, you will be given an amount of 40,000 pesos for the whole school year*", this gets the highest mean of 3.83 described as "very much aware." In contrast, statement number 16 (*Students enrolled in TVET programs, not in the Registry of TESDA are not qualified in the program*) gets the lowest mean of 2.82, described as "slightly aware."

Table 6. Student's persistence concerning the identified nine factors

ITEMS	MEAN	SD
<b>Factor 1: Academic Integration</b>		
1. On average, across all your courses, how interested are you in what is said during class discussions?	3.60	0.56
2. How satisfied are you with the instruction you receive here?	3.47	0.58
3. How well do you understand the thinking of your instructors when they lecture or ask students to answer questions in class?	3.33	0.51
4. How satisfied are you with the extent of your intellectual growth and interest in ideas since coming here?	3.38	0.54
5. How much connection do you see between what you are learning here and your future career possibilities?	3.32	0.67
6. How concerned about your intellectual growth is the faculty here?	3.44	0.55
7. How would you rate the quality of the instruction you receive here?	3.49	0.52
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>3.43</b>	
<b>Factor 2: Financial Strain</b>		
8. How often do you worry about having enough money to meet your needs?	3.49	0.66
9. How difficult is it for you or your family to be able to handle college costs?	3.38	0.58
10. When considering the financial costs of college, how often do you feel unable to do things other students here can afford to do?	3.22	0.69

11. How much of a financial strain is it for you to purchase the essential resources you need for courses, such as books and supplies?	3.19	0.56
<b>Total Mean</b>	3.32	
<b>Factor 3: Social Integration</b>		
12. What is your overall impression of the other students here?	3.12	0.53
13. How much have your interactions with other students impacted your personal growth, attitudes, and values?	3.36	0.62
14. How strong is your sense of connectedness with others (faculty, students, and staff) on this campus?	3.06	0.57
15. When you think about your overall social life here (friends, college organizations, extracurricular activities, and so on), how satisfied are you with yours?	3.31	0.57
16. How much have your interactions with other students impacted your intellectual growth and interest in ideas?	3.25	0.60
17. How much do you have in common with other students?	3.01	0.63
18. How often do you wear clothing with this college's emblems?	3.25	0.58
<b>Total Mean</b>	3.19	
<b>Factor 4: Degree Commitment</b>		
19. How supportive is the family of your pursuit of a college degree in terms of their encouragement and expectations?	3.68	0.53
20. At this moment, how strong would you say your commitment is to earn a college degree, here or elsewhere?	3.57	0.54
21. When you think of the people who mean the most to you (friends and family), how disappointed do you think they would be if you quit school?	3.50	0.70
22. There are so many things that can interfere with students' progress toward degrees that feelings of uncertainty about finishing are likely to occur along the way. At this moment in time, how certain are you that you will earn a college degree?	3.49	0.58
23. After beginning college, students sometimes discover that a college degree is not quite as important to them as it once was. How strong is your intention to persist in your pursuit of a degree, here or elsewhere?	3.48	0.59
24. When you consider the benefits of having a college degree and the costs of earning it, how much would you say that benefits outweigh the costs, if at all?	3.40	0.56
<b>Total Mean</b>	3.52	
<b>Factor 5: Collegiate Stress</b>		
25. Students differ significantly in how distressed they get over various aspects of college life. Overall, how much stress would you experience while attending this institution?	3.08	0.61
26. How much pressure do you feel when trying to meet deadlines for course assignments?	3.18	0.67
27. How often do you feel overwhelmed by the academic workload here?	3.23	0.53
28. How much do other aspects of your life suffer because you are a college student?	3.11	0.67
<b>Total Mean</b>	3.15	
<b>Factor 6: Scholastic Conscientiousness</b>		
29. College students have many academic responsibilities. How often do you forget those that you regard as important?	2.98	0.72
30. How often do you turn in assignments past the due date?	2.78	0.91

31. How often do you arrive late for classes, meetings, and other college events?	2.37	0.95
32. How often do you arrive late for classes, meetings, and other college events?	2.44	0.96
<b>Total Mean</b>	2.64	
<b>Factor 7: Institutional Commitment</b>		
33. How confident are you that this is the right college or university for you?	3.53	0.64
34. How much thought have you given to stopping your education here (perhaps transferring to another college, going to work, or leaving for other reasons)?	2.48	1.04
35. How likely is it that you will reenroll here next semester?	3.10	0.99
36. How likely is it you will earn a degree from here?	3.57	0.56
<b>Total Mean</b>	3.17	
<b>Factor 8: Academic Motivation</b>		
37. In general, how enthused are you about doing academic tasks?	3.30	0.53
38. Some courses seem to take a lot more time than others. How much extra time are you willing to devote to your studies in those courses?	3.23	0.61
39. How inclined are you to do most of your studying within 24 hours of a test rather than earlier?	3.12	0.56
40. How often do you read educationally-related material not assigned in courses?	2.93	0.61
41. Students vary widely in their view of what constitutes a good course, including that the best course asks students to do very little. In your view, how much work would be asked of students in a really good course?	3.24	0.54
42. How often do you encounter course assignments that are enjoyable to do?	3.09	0.63
43. This semester, how much time do you spend studying each week relative to the number of credit hours you are taking? Assume each credit hour equals one hour of studying per week.	3.15	0.57
44. How much time do you spend proofreading writing assignments before submitting them?	3.15	0.61
<b>Total Mean</b>	3.15	
<b>Factor 9: Academic Efficacy</b>		
45. How confident can you get the grades you want?	2.99	0.70
46. How good are you at correctly anticipating what will be on tests beforehand?	3.08	0.52
47. When you consider your study techniques, how effective are your study skills?	3.19	0.49
48. How much doubt do you have about being able to make the grades you want?	2.86	0.63
49. When you wait for a submitted assignment to be graded, how assured do you feel that the work you have done is acceptable?	3.01	0.57
50. How much doubt do you have about being able to make the grades you want?	2.80	0.67
<b>Total Mean</b>	2.98	
<b>Composite Mean</b>	3.17	
<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Persistent</b>	

As shown in this Table, the respondents are slightly persistent in their studies, which means they have less determination to finish their studies, with a composite

mean of 3.17. It is manifested in their “persistent” choice of six (6) factors out of nine (9), which are: social integration, collegiate stress, scholastic conscientiousness, institutional

commitment, academic motivation, and academic efficacy). However, they expressed very much persistence in the three (3) factors; i.e., 1, 2, and 4 (academic integration, financial strain, and degree commitment), which means that they are strongly committed to earning a degree, very interested, and satisfied with the quality of instruction they are receiving from this institution, and not that strained anymore due to financial support from the government. It indicates that financial aid from outside the family's threshold also increased the respondents' desire to finish tertiary education (Fuentes, 2021). In the whole analysis, the results of this study suggest that aside from financial constraints, other

factors such as those of the school, quality teachings, contact with peers, support from family members, scholastic potentials, performance and aspirations, and schooling stress are all contributory towards their persistence in their studies. Much more, Tinto's Theory of Student Persistence (1993) emphasizes the *sense of belonging* in which students have to come to see themselves as a member of a community of other students, faculty, and staff who value their membership; and the *perceived value of the curriculum* by which students need to perceive the material to be learned is of sufficient quality and relevance to warrant their time and effort (Kinsey, 2021).

Table 7. The difference between courses and the level of persistence

Variables	$\chi^2$	Df	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Level of persistence and course	13.32	6	.038	Significant	Reject the $H_0$

This table shows the difference between their chosen course and their level of persistence. It shows that there is indeed a significant difference between the level of persistence and their course, of which the p-value of .038 is lesser than the .05 level of significance; hence, the statement of the null hypothesis is also rejected. This means that these

two variables influence each other, which further suggests that their level of persistence is affected by their chosen courses. Their courses, such as education, environmental science, hospitality management, or computer science courses, this has something to do with their persistence in their studies.

Table 8. The difference between marital status and the level of persistence

Variables	$\chi^2$	Df	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Level of persistence and Marital status	3.37	1	.026	Significant	Reject the $H_0$

The above table shows the significant difference in marital status and the level of persistence, where the tabular p-value of .026 is lesser than the .05 level of significance; hence, the statement of the null hypothesis is rejected, which means that these two variables do influence each other, which further suggests that their persistence or non-persistence is affected by their being single status. Simply put, their marital status affects their persistence level in their

studies. It cannot be refuted that single status has fewer personal problems than married life. They do not have children to feed, shelter, or clothe. It is presumed that the unmarried should persist in their studies to prepare for their brighter future. However, this finding goes contrary to the study of Krambule (2000), where a positive association was noted towards academic persistence.

Table 9. The extent of awareness on TES salient features and the level of persistence

Variables	t	Df	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Awareness of the salient features and level of persistence in their studies	3.4507	0.26	<.001	Significant	Reject the $H_0$

This table indicates a positive correlation between the extent of grantees' awareness of TES salient features and the level of persistence in their studies,  $(r(169)=0.26, p= <.001)$ . Hence, the statement of the null hypothesis is rejected. This simply implies that awareness of the salient features of the

TES program has something to do with the sustaining power of their desire to finish schooling. In other words, the more awareness, the higher the persistence the students become. Thus, the claim of Harrison(n.d.) supports this result which says that if one is aware of something or someone, then

he/she knows what to do and where to go to make changes for improvement and success. Tinto (2016) claimed that students must be persistent in pursuing their degrees and be willing to expend the effort to do so even when faced with challenges they sometimes encounter. Further, this finding is guided by the "Attention schema theory" of Graziano (2015), which claims that awareness is part of the control mechanism for attention and that without awareness, attention is still possible, but the brain, in essence, lacks knowledge about its state of attention and therefore cannot properly regulate that attention. This theory, therefore, suggests that awareness is indispensable in one's control of the action. This connotes the indispensability of possessing enough knowledge of something necessary to attain one's goal in life, and that is finishing their studies.

## VI. CONCLUSION

A positive correlation between the two main variables led the researcher to conclude a significant result. This means that the more awareness the respondents have of the salient features of the TES program, the higher their persistence in their studies. In other words, acquiring enough knowledge about the program the respondents enjoy would bring them to persevere and finish their degrees. Simply put, the more they are aware or knowledgeable of the program, the more persistent they become. Precisely, awareness or having enough knowledge of something indispensable for the grantees is a factor in their desire to be persistent. To add more, if one is aware, such awareness would guide him/her in making the right moves. Therefore, it is indicative that being cognizant of any program the government has offered students would shed light on better decisions. With all these, TES grantees shall spend their subsidy on buying items such as laptops and cellular phones, which are considered indispensable in their studies; shall strive more to become highly persistent in their studies; they should develop their scholastic consciousness and academic efficacy to succeed in their studies easily; and future researchers will be encouraged to get the significant differences among the nine factors of college persistence, and correlating them would be a good study to delve into.

## VII. PLAN FOR RESEARCH DISSEMINATION AND UTILIZATION

This study is intended for the TES grantees and their parents. A plan has been conceptualized to include the parents in the orientation of the student-grantees at the beginning of classes for their awareness of the program. And that proper monitoring of their sons/daughters as TES grantees will be maintained.

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# Capitalism and the Depression

Tvrtko-Matija Šercar

Institute of Information Sciences (IZUM), Maribor, Slovenia

Email: [tvrtko.sercar@ext.izum.si](mailto:tvrtko.sercar@ext.izum.si)

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**Abstract**— *The promising project of proving the influence of capitalism as a cause of depressive disorders, including suicide, will be morally, legally and politically compromised if it is not theoretically and methodologically carried out at the level of the possibilities of modern science in the field of psychiatry, (industrial) psychology and philosophy of existence. Pre-industrial society was based on the passive possession of land, industrial society on the active exploitation of capital. Modern professional society is based on human intellectual capital, which is created by the affinity, talent and education of the individual. The basis of capitalism is a class society, and this socio-economic formation is a "terminal patient" also according to this line, since the class structure has been replaced by a "professional society" and in this way capitalism is losing ground under its feet. In developed countries, already half of the GDP refers to the part of the social fabric that, in addition to capitalism, is occupied by the professional society. The biggest shortcoming of scientists dealing with the connections between capitalism and depression, including suicide, is that they have not yet recognized it. In a professional society, "capitalists" by profession should also be "entrepreneurs" in a vertical business hierarchy with appropriate competencies (attitudes, knowledge, skills), but not members of the ruling class horizontally! The main theoretical-methodological problem for any empirical scientific research is to define the variables in a way that enables operational procedures of the given study, including measurements.*



**Keywords**— *capitalism, depressive disorder, professional society, psychology*

## I. INTRODUCTORY NOTE

### *Law of one variable*

"Capitalism" has been recognized by the monistic theory of cause and effect (the law of one variable) as the independent variable and the cause of the incidence of depression, and depression as the dependent variable and as a consequence and symptom of the noogenic neurosis<sup>1</sup> caused by capitalism [2]. But in the given case, the capitalists and their managers are also "Marxists", they

just do not realize it, because they are convinced that in the world as it is, the driving force of behavior in society is the will to profit, property and the domination of the class of the rich, who have become rich on foreign account.

According to the law of one variable, an effect can be attributed to a certain factor as a cause only if all other factors are constant.[3] [4] The main problem with using the law of one variable is that, in the case of the supposed monistic causal relationship between capitalism and depression, there are actually too many factors "in play" to hold all but one factor constant in an experimental setting.

### *Professional society*

In the contribution "Enclosure to the critique of technological determinism and globalism", published in 2001, [4] I summarized and explained in my own way the theory of professions and modern professional society by the English social historian Harold Perkin, which he gave

<sup>1</sup> Neurosis is a psychologically conditioned disorder that affects the personality structure, and its symptoms in the mental and physical functional areas are a direct consequence and a symbolic expression of a pathogenic mental conflict that remains outside of the consciousness. psychoneurosis; noogene neurosis occurs when a person falls into spiritual distress, if he loses the meaning and validity of his existence. [1]

in the book »The Rise of professional society : England since 1880« (First published in 1989 by Routledge). [5]

The 20th century is not the century of the common man, but the century of the atypical and increasingly professional expert, said the famous US President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

At the end of the twentieth century, in developed countries, the texture of professional society already dominates over the class structure, despite the existence of class rhetoric and despite class-based political parties.

Professionalism permeates society from top to bottom. The reach of the professional hierarchy in the social pyramid is greater than the reach of capital. More and more jobs require specialized education and expert competences in terms of knowledge, skills, abilities, ethics, to the extent that members of a profession exclude members of other professions as laymen and include the ideal of the social model according to which society should be organized.

In pre-industrial society, the dominant aristocratic ideal was based on ownership and patronage. Passive ownership, mostly of land, was a material guarantee of the ideal citizen: an unemployed gentleman who contributed to political rules and morality and supported art, literature and sports. Patronage allows him to choose the holders of those positions of power and influence that are not based on property. The entrepreneurial ideal of the industrial society was based on active capital and competition, on business investment as the driver of the economy managed by the owner-manager, ideally a "self-made man", who increased wealth and influence and won in open competition on the economic market. The ideal of the working class (never achieved in practice) was the collective ideal of work and cooperation, of work as the only source of value and of co-operative efforts as the fairest mode of exploitation and payment, and of the worker's right to the entire product of labour.

The professional ideal, which is based on expert knowledge and selection according to actual values, differs from the previous three ideals. The professional ideal emphasizes human capital rather than passive or active possession, is distinguished by work that is highly skilled and specialized rather than by a simple labor theory of value, and by selection based on actual values validated as schooled expert knowledge. Just as not all landlords were benevolent gentlemen or capitalist "self-made men" or wage-earners in solidarity with their class, so not all professionals are prepared to accept the fact that success is determined solely by actual value without the aid of kinship, family wealth, or privileged education. Professional society is definitely based on the actual

values of a person, but some people arrive at these values more easily than others.

Ideals compete in a broader context, such as the economic marketplace, and the social marketplace of income, power, and status.

The social structure is the three-dimensional equivalent of a tetrahedron, a three-sided pyramid, and its faces represent class, power and status. These plots are just three ways of seeing the same social reality, from an economic, political and ideological point of view. No factor is more important than the other two; they all have the same meaning until one of them wins the battle. The origin of wealth, power and status can be in any face of the pyramid. The social structure is dynamic and has a fourth dimension of change over time<sup>2</sup> from the inside of the pyramid. The three forces - economic, political and cultural - are different forms of energy that transform into one or both of the other forms. During transformation, a part of the energy that is transferred is inevitably lost.

Professions refer to the indispensability of their specialized products and services to clients, employers, society and the state. Through these means of persuasion, professions seek to raise their status and, through status, income, authority, respect, and self-esteem. In pre-industrial society, only a few managed to transform their human capital into material wealth. In an industrial society, only a few individuals achieved visible wealth with the help of human capital (Bernard Shaw). Only in a post-industrial society are professions fully capable of consolidating human capital (knowledge, skills and abilities = competences) as the dominant form of values.

The question arises as to how professions can transform their services into income producing ownership. Ownership is not a thing or money as we usually think, but a right to rent, interest, profit, service or natural goods. Some theoreticians tend to assume that the investment in specialized education itself brings a differential return without any market influence (except for economic and demographic changes in the supply and demand for specialized work, which cannot be predicted). From the point of view of these theories, a specialized education can only produce a salary, a payment for an immediate service, and this money can be less than the cost of implementation if the supply of a service is oversupplied and undervalued. A profession cannot create ownership - except incidentally

<sup>2</sup> The most famous idea of the Greek sage and philosopher Heraclitus the Dark (535 BC - 470 BC) from Ephesus in Anatolia reads: "παντα ρει και ουδεν μεν". Everything flows, nothing stands still! Changes are the fourth dimension of everything that exists, because everything that exists also changes over time.

- without a mechanism to transform income into a resource that is in short supply. This transformative mechanism is the control of the market by the profession. If a profession, with the active help of the public and the state, has control over the market for an individual service, it will create a certain artificial deficit of supply, and this deficit will produce a rent-bearing effect. A monopoly of individuals is not a necessary condition for earning an annuity, because a deficit supply can appear long before the formation of a monopoly. However, the size of the rent depends on the degree of control over the market, so organized professions are better paid than unorganized professions.

Professional capital, which is more material, e.g. than shares and less vulnerable than most forms of tangible property, capable of self-renewal through the development of expert knowledge and skills, it is therefore the most serious type of ownership, even though it depends on the provision of services. This type of ownership guarantees its owners independence, certainty, the right to criticize without fear of consequences, a position in society that is easy to defend, a position in society that also enables changing society or securing one's own place in society, and above all, individual security and self-confidence to create their own social ideal, the vision according to which society should be organized.

The gradual triumph of the social ideal of professions over the past hundred years has led to the hegemony of human capital and the emergence of a professional society. There is an essential difference between the hegemony of the professional ideal and the hegemony of the aristocratic or capitalist ideal. Aristocratic and capitalist ideals can concern only landowners and capitalists<sup>3</sup>, while the professional ideal applies in principle to every citizen.

Professional status and income depend primarily on the ability of the profession to convince society of the value of professional services, and less so on the market. The professional ideal contains the principle of recognition of all professions necessary for the well-being of society, and the principle of social justice, which applies to the population as a whole, and includes the rights to security and income, equal opportunities for education, decent housing, a clean environment, and work.

The welfare state and basic social security for individuals without professional status (excluded) are a practical expression of the social ideal of the profession. A

<sup>3</sup> "Capitalists" in a professional society are supposed to be "entrepreneurs" by profession in a vertical business hierarchy with appropriate competencies (attitudes, knowledge, skills), but not members of the ruling class in a horizontal social hierarchy!

professional society is not an egalitarian society. All professions are equal, but some are more equal than others. Professional society is not a class society of a binary model with a small ruling class and a large subordinate class, but is a collection of parallel hierarchies of unequal height. Each of these has its own ladder with many slats.

Inequality and rivalry between these hierarchies dominate the class struggle in modern professional society. There is no society in which there is no struggle for income, power and status. The new society is primarily organized hierarchically vertically, but not horizontally according to social classes. The main struggle is between the direct user of budget funds and those who see themselves as the source of these budget funds. Doctors, civil servants, soldiers, social workers, university and government researchers, etc. compete for funds from public funding sources. Managers in private corporations are primarily interested in limiting these resources as much as possible by cutting taxes, but they also lobby the government for contracts, investments, protectionism against foreign competition, support for labor recruitment, etc.

In the system of professions, the state plays an important role as a mediator between competing interest groups, mainly because it disposes of more than half of the GDP, which is especially true for developed countries<sup>4</sup>.

The main conflict in a feudal society was between the aristocracy and the peasantry, in an industrial society between capitalists and workers, and in a professional society the main conflict was between professional groups in the private and public sectors.

There is also a large and important group of non-market-oriented professions in not-for-profit organizations such as universities, churches, charitable trusts, voluntary

<sup>4</sup> In Slovenia, there are differences in salaries between the public and private sectors. The public sector salary system is regulated by the Public Sector Salary System Act (ZSPJS), which defines the basic rules and uniform methodology for calculating and paying salaries. In 2024, salaries in the public sector were adjusted in the amount of 80 percent of inflation, which meant an increase of 3.36 percent. The average gross salary in the public sector was 4.1% higher in March 2021 compared to February 2021. In 2020, the wage gap between men and women in Slovenia was 2.2%, while the gap in the private sector was lower (6.5%) than in the public sector (10.7%). In general, salaries in the public sector are slightly higher than in the private sector, but there are fewer opportunities for promotion and higher positions in the public sector. [6] Workers' participation in company profits and worker participation in company ownership is the biggest project of the Social Democrats of the Republic of Slovenia this year. [7]



organizations, etc. Universities and many research institutes are almost entirely financed by government funds. Trade unions and employers' associations are more closely related to industry. Which of the two main sides will be chosen by workers from non-profit organizations depends on their view of how their income is generated and where their interest lies. As a rule, they identify with professions in the public sector, firstly because in their eyes the state is the last hope, and partly because in the eyes of managers in corporations they are a "overhead costs" like the state itself and an expense that the private sector must take care of.

The clash of interests between professions in the public or non-profit sector and in the private sector helps to explain one of the most vexing questions of modern society: Why do we continue to speak in terms of Ricardo and Marx in the face of global corporate capitalism at the turn of the 21st century, which has very little in common with industrial capitalism from the 19th century? Neo-Richardists (on the right) preach a free market that is, in fact, completely irrelevant to a corporate economy in which very few firms produce most of the output and even fewer dominate a single industry, and the public sector employs a quarter to half of the total workforce. Neo-Marxists also attack the free market, saying it is made up of individual capitalists who own more value than an outrageously sleepy and incomprehensibly unrevolutionary proletariat. At the same time, political parties based on social classes continue to sell their programs in terms of the class division of society, but in fact they represent coalitions of different professional interests.

The answer to the conundrum is that the old class rhetoric just happens to suit the protagonists in the main conflict in professional society very well. Free market ideology suits the profession of corporate managers and their allies because it protects them from the accusation they most fear, viz. that they themselves represent the main threat to competition and the freedom of citizens. They try to hide the fact that competition in the free market excludes inferior competitors and leads to the formation of monopolies, with the aim of portraying themselves as the guardians of consumers and providers of the widest choice of products and services at the lowest price. By associating free choice in the market with the idea of political freedom of individuals, they succeed in portraying themselves as guardians of individual freedom against the tyranny of the state. However, there is no free market without a state and without laws on market conditions, on buyers and sellers, on the understanding and transfer of ownership, on contracts, etc. Without all this, the market would turn into chaos, and the strong would take from the weak everything

they like. The source and origin of freedom is the state itself. Civil society exists thanks to the state, without which we would return to the state of nature described by Hobbes as the war of all against all. Free market ideologues place the laws of nature before the laws of human society. It is the same with political freedom. There can be no freedom without laws, and no laws without the state. Adherents of an absolutely free market deny the right of the state to limit market competition, regardless of the fact that it may end up in a monopoly and restricting the freedom of others. In short, they want to have their cake and eat it themselves, the protection of the country for themselves and not for others against them. After all this, it is easy to understand why professional groups in the private sector are comfortable with the rhetoric of liberalism from the first decades of the 19th century, as this rhetoric promises them a heroic stance against the state, while at the same time benefiting from that same state.

The rhetoric of classical economists is even more suited to professional groups in the public sector. With his theory of value, Ricardo and his socialists, who anticipated Marx's theory of "surplus value" and the right to the entire product of labor, see market competition as a source of inequality and exploitation, and cooperation and collectivism as a cure.

The role of the social ideal is to provide motivation for one path rather than another. For people, interest is the main driving force, but interests themselves and all human affairs are mainly governed by beliefs, wrote David Hume.

The professional ideal motivates members of professional groups to act in the direction of building a society that should correspond as closely as possible to their interests and social role. The members of professional groups are in principle opposed to the evaluation of their competences (knowledge and skills) on the market, but they demand from society to ensure the conditions that the evaluation, which can only be guaranteed by their education and qualifications, is carried out by the profession itself. Not all professions have reached these positions, but all professions strive for it without distinction.

More and more professions have socially agreed pay scales and stable career patterns. The place of agreement should be the social market of prestige and the social value of professional services as a criterion, not the sale of their work on the economic market. This mainly refers to those professions in the old class society whose services were related to society as a whole or to users who could pay the full cost of these services, namely the clergy, the military, doctors, teachers, academics, social workers, librarians, civil servants, etc.

With the exception of managerial tycoons who depend on unpredictable capital gains, most of the managerial profession has also become dependent on pay grades and a stable career hierarchy.

The modern bifurcation of two rival groups of professions in the private and public sectors is definitely based on the incompatibility of interests. Professional groups in the private sector prefer that success be measured by salary and fringe benefits, while in the public sector non-monetary rewards and recognition of honor, fame, influence and prestige that come with the possibility of promotion to a head of a government department play a stronger role. in the army, in the church, in college, etc.

Their different attitudes towards the role of the state are expressed as enmity and alliance with the state. For professional groups in the public sector, the state is a source of wages and financing and a guarantee of their status and prestige, but for professional groups in the private sector, it is a threat to their income and capital and a factor that limits their activities and arbitrariness. Both sides want to gain control of the government: one to secure and expand its work, the other to escape its obstructive control.

The industrial revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries was a social revolution. The professional society of the post-industrial age also represents a new social system. In addition to employers' associations and trade unions, the predecessors of the professional society were primarily professional associations; these are the consequence and symptom, but not the cause, of the development of an increasingly complex and interdependent professional society.

The concentration tendency is typical for the entire economy and also for most other social structures (e.g. trade unions). The opposite trend applies to professional associations. There are more and more of them. Although their membership is generally smaller than that of trade unions, they are very successful in organizing their professional groups. There are more and more schools and universities, hospitals, social institutions, insurance companies, banks, prisons, correctional facilities, the military, etc. State budgets of modern countries amount to around 50 percent of GDP today.

The social division of labor is a common feature of industrial and post-industrial - professional societies and the key to the wealth of all nations. Industrial society was a society of mass industrial production, while post-industrial society is increasingly based on services. Economic growth is associated with the migration of workers from agriculture to industry and the service sector

(Petty's Law<sup>5</sup>). What happened to agriculture in the industrial revolution (deagrarianization of the population; a small number of farmers became able to feed the majority of the population instead of a minority of the non-farming population as before) happened to industry in the post-industrial society (robotization and computerization of production and all major social structures and the deindustrialization of the population: with the use of robots, computers and telecommunication networks, industry has become so productive that a minority is able to produce the necessary goods for the unproductive majority of the population, which is also mostly unemployed). After the "green revolution" in Western Europe and North America, agriculture became even more productive. The green revolution, robotization, computerization and networking have caused major structural changes in the economy, namely unemployment for the majority and opportunities for the minority, especially for information producers.

We know two aspects of the division of labor: specialization and (re)integration.

Specialization leads to professionalism and organized professions. However, it requires greater division and specialization of work, organized in the form of ever-larger companies and institutions, more and more coordination and integration of specialized work processes, i.e. their (re)integration. The need for (re)integration led to the emergence of management not only as a profession, but also as a science (since Taylorism) and the development of business schools. The enormous expansion of the government sector in developed countries demanded the development of such

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<sup>5</sup> Petty's Law, also known as the Three-sector hypothesis, is an economic theory that categorizes economic activities into three distinct sectors: primary sector (involves directly using natural resources; it includes agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining; these industries extract raw materials from the environment; secondary sector (focuses on processing these raw materials to create "higher level" goods; under this category fall manufacturing, construction, and industrial production; fall under this category; think of factories turning raw materials into finished products; tertiary sector encompasses services.; it includes professions like banking, education, healthcare, entertainment, and tourism; services are intangible and often involve interactions between people. The Three-sector hypothesis was developed by economists Alan Fisher, Colin Clark, and Jean Fourastié in the 1930s. Clark drew inspiration from a speech given by Sir William Petty back in 1690, which is why it is also referred to as Petty's Law. [8]

professions as well as educational institutions and science for this part of the public sector.

The following professions are crucial for a professional society that is also an information society:

- information producers (computer and telecommunications engineers, information specialists and scientists decisive for the development of technological innovations, developers of theoretical knowledge),
- managers,
- civil servants of various profiles.

## II. HOW TO DISTINGUISH DEPRESSION FROM NORMAL MOOD STATES?

Not every depressed mood is depression. We all experience a depressed mood from time to time after any kind of loss (eg, loss of a loved one, financial breakdown, loss from natural disasters, serious illness or disability, end of a significant relationship). The grieving process involves symptoms very similar to depression. Such a depressed mood usually encourages problem solving and action. However, if the symptoms of bereavement do not subside within 6 to 12 months and the suffering and malaise continue, the person may fall into a depressive episode with symptoms of psychosis, suicidal thoughts, feelings of worthlessness and psychomotor retardation, and it is then necessary to seek professional help. [9]

## III. DEPRESSION

Kuster [10] lists eight symptoms of depression: fatigue, insomnia, poor concentration, chest tightness, sadness, irritability, loss of appetite and interest in sex. The cause of depression is the accumulation of stress in the body.

Stress is a state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation, and is thought to be a natural human response that motivates us to deal with challenges and threats in our lives. Everyone experiences stress to some degree. The way we respond to stress has a strong impact on our general well-being. [11]

The number of people with depression and anxiety disorders in the world has been constantly increasing for the last two hundred years. In 1990, there were 416 million sufferers, and in 2013, 615 million. After 2020, depression became the second global health problem, and the number one problem in the female population.

Depression is a disease that affects people of all ages, all walks of life, all occupations and all countries of the world and increases the risk of developing other uninfected diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease,

Depression and anxiety disorders cost the global economy more than a billion dollars annually. [12]

Depression, like other mental illnesses, is usually accompanied by stigma and discrimination in the immediate social environment, which can have the worst consequences, such as suicide<sup>6</sup>.

The blame for suicide lies with the people who were blamed by the suicide for his own death<sup>7</sup>. [14]

## IV. AN UNUSUAL HISTORY OF AN UNUSUAL TEXT

Habent sua fata libelli.<sup>8</sup> [15]

Almost forgotten, and today a real curiosity, is Marx's "unusual text"<sup>9</sup> on suicide [16], which includes in extenso

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<sup>6</sup> During my military service in the "former Yugoslavia", the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ), in 1966 I got a reassignment in the Department of Mental Health and Military Psychology of the Military Medical Academy - VMA in Belgrade, where as a psychologist I was involved in a suicide project in JLA. Allegedly, according to a CIA report, the JLA saw a significant number of conscript suicides due to discrimination on a national basis! The results of the project confirmed the theoretical-methodological assumptions that the cause of suicides was mental disorders, aggressiveness (e.g. tendency to hunt) turned towards oneself, and neurotic frustration of shame caused by enuresis nocturna in adults. I conducted research to determine the clinical and psychological anamnesis of suicides in the field, which included visits to the families of suicide soldiers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo and Metohija, and participated in the statistical processing of the collected data for over thirty cases. [13]

<sup>7</sup> Kierkegaard's thought originally reads: "I declare that you are responsible for the guilt, which I will in a certain way bend by holding you guilty of my death."

<sup>8</sup> Terentianus called Maurus (a native of Mauretania) was a Latin grammarian and writer of prosody (metrics) which flourished probably at the end of the 2nd century AD. (Pro captu lectoris) habent sua fata libelli. (Terentianus Maurus, 2nd century AD, verse 1286) (Books have their destiny if we follow the original metrical scheme: "Mysterious are the paths of our books." According to the capabilities of the reader, books have their destiny, depending on the ability of the reader, books have their own destiny).

<sup>9</sup> A good review article, as a rule, has a complex and/or rich "bibliographic curriculum", as it is created from many different sources and, from this point of view, is not "original" like an article by "everyday people" who create their works "by sucking their own little finger". That is why D. J. de Solla Price, a British physicist, historian and information scientist, known for quantitative studies of scientific publications and as a precursor of scientometrics

material by Jacques Peuchet, chief of the Paris police, "On Suicide" and "Suicide and Its Causes."

Marx's essay also has a "unusual history." After it was first printed in the *Gesellschaftsspiegel* in 1846, it was not published again during Marx's lifetime. At the time of publication, the writing was not mentioned in Marx's surviving correspondence. In 1932 it was reprinted in German with extremely sparse notes in volume I.3 of the complete edition of the Marx-Engels Collected Works (MEGA). This volume also contained the much more famous "Economic Philosophical Manuscripts" and "Holy Family". Peuchet's texts on suicide were not included in the Marx-Engels Collected Works (Works Edition, MEW) published in the GDR between 1956 and 1968. MEGA was discontinued in the 1930s. The first English translation appeared in volume 4 of the Moscow edition of the Collected Works of Marx and Engels in 1975, again with very sparse annotations. As part of the second MEGA, which began in Moscow and East Berlin in 1975 and continued under new editorial guidelines under the leadership of West Berlin, the volume containing this text had not yet been published at the time that E. A. Plaut and K. Anderson wrote introductory editorial note to Karl Marx's work "On Suicide".

In 1983, Maximilien Rubel published an abridged French version in Volume 3 of the Gallimard (Marx, *Œuvres*) edition, to which he also added four pages of editorial notes. In 1992, a French edition was published under the title Marx/Peuchet, *A propos du suicide*. The slim volume contains an introduction by the editor Philippe Bourrinet, editorial notes and additional materials such as the preface published in 1838 by the editor of the *Memoirs from the police archives* (*Memoires tires des archives de la police*) by Peuchet, then chief of the Paris police, from which Marx draws biographical information about abused women who committed suicide. *Memoirs from the police archives* have never been republished. Eric A. Plaut and Kevin Anderson, the editors of the edition I cite, rely primarily on Marx's original 1846 publication and Peuchet's 1838 text, but they also consider all later editions.

In bold type, the editors have highlighted all of Marx's additions to Peuchet's original text. Marx's own emphases are in italics. Where Marx omits Peuchet's material, they have added the missing French text (in translation) as a footnote. A note appears where the discharge begins. For example, if Marx omits words from Peuchet's material at the beginning of a paragraph, the footnote precedes that

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(herald of scientometrics), proposed over a hundred references as a minimum for scientific review articles!

paragraph. They use symbols as annotation symbols. Their explanatory notes are indicated by note numbers and can be found in the footnotes section below.

## V. CAPITALISM

One of the causes that influence the constant increase in the incidence of depression in the world are capitalist socio-economic and political interpersonal relations, especially capitalism in today's neoliberal form. [17]

The characteristics of capitalism (lat *caput*, *capitis*) are private property of capitalists, wage labor of workers, market economy<sup>10</sup>, rapid technological development and industrial revolution, property in money, profit (lat *profectus*), i.e. the profit that the capitalist owns from surplus value by exploiting the workers' wage time expressed in monetary form as a means of increasing the already existing wealth of the capitalists, which affects the ever-increasing social differences between people. The causes of permanent crisis and its own collapse are immanent to capitalism<sup>11</sup>.

Schuster says that modern neoliberalism actually represents "socialism for capitalists and bankers, and capitalism for everyone else"<sup>12</sup>. [20]

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<sup>10</sup> Nobel laureate in economics Joseph E. Stiglitz is known as a critic of "market fundamentalism". The reason the market, like Adam Smith's "invisible hand," often seems invisible is because it often isn't.

Capitalism alone cannot correct its "behaviour". The unrestricted market, that "invisible hand of Adam Smith", often not only does not lead to social justice, but also does not create optimal results, and governments in a democratic society, in addition to the development of democracy, are primarily called to eliminate the shortcomings of markets, because in the political discourse it has a simplified "market fundamentalism" continues to be a huge influence.

<sup>11</sup> For those who are particularly interested in the critique of capitalism and political economy, I recommend the following works: Marx, K., 1867, 1885, 1894. *Das Kapital. Kritik der politischen Oekonomie*. Verlag von Otto Meisner [18]; Piketty, T. 2013. *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* [19] on the concentration and distribution of wealth over the past 250 years; the rate of return on capital in developed countries is persistently higher than the rate of economic growth, which leads to increasing wealth inequality; "Capital and Ideology" from 2019 on income inequality in various historical societies; in 2022 "A Brief History of Equality" on the same topic for a wider audience.

<sup>12</sup> Almost nothing better illustrates this play on words than the existence of a capitalist club to replace Thirdhome millionaire vacation homes. Thirdhome is a community of members from the ranks of home-



Capitalism as a historical socio-economic formation is allegedly the main factor in the destruction of the ecological unity of plants, animals and people and the degradation of the basic conditions for the preservation of life on planet Earth. [21]

George Monbiot said on one of Frankie Boyle's New World Order shows: "We can't do this by just skirting around the problem. We must go straight to the heart of capitalism; and overthrow him". [22]

Monbiot followed up his televised statement in a column in the Guardian with an article with the promising title Dare to Declare Capitalism Dead – Before it Takes us all Down with it. He began with a confession:

"For most of my adult life I have been opposed to 'corporate capitalism', 'consumer capitalism' and 'crony capitalism'. It took me a long time to realize that the problem is not an adjective but a noun."

The Capitalist system is incompatible with the survival of life on Earth. It is time to design a new one. [23]

Capitalism alone cannot fix capitalism!

## VI. "WHY DIDN'T YOU KILL YOURSELF?"

Viktor Emil Frankl started the psychotherapeutic process with the aim of finding and finding the meaning of life with the question "Why didn't you kill yourself?" [24], which is also the title of the book he wrote in 1945, after three years of living in four Nazi camps!

In the context of logotherapy, the concentration camp is a "model", a pattern. Life has its meaning in all conditions and in all circumstances, even in a concentration camp like Auschwitz, pol. Auschwitz.

Frankl is the founder and main exponent of logotherapy, the third Viennese school of psychotherapy next to psychoanalysis (Freud) and individual psychology (Adler). According to Freud, the primary motivating force in man

is the "will to pleasure", according to Adler "the will to power", and according to Frankl the "will to meaning" (Greek logos).

Logotherapy, the treatment of the psyche by discovering meaning on the spiritual level in addition to deficits on the physical (biological) and mental (psychic) levels in the context of depressive disorder, is Frankl's version of existential analysis with the aim of finding the meaning of life in the mental state of depression as a type of noogenic neurosis, which is related with the patient's failure to find meaning and sense of responsibility in life.

Frankl sees the source of an individual's mental distress in the so-called "living emptiness" or "existential vacuum", which manifests itself as an increasingly strong sense of meaninglessness, which is associated with dangerous tendencies of self-destruction, escalated up to suicide.

Capitalism as an alleged cause must be "observed from within"<sup>13</sup>, through personal experiences (noogenic neuroses), i.e. it is necessary to seek an answer to the question of how the life and work of a wage worker in a capitalist society reflects on the mental health of an average salaried "outsider" within the framework of differential diagnosis.

A large number of syndromes require the use of differential diagnosis. Differential diagnosis of a disease is a method of "sorting" the symptoms that have appeared to make a single, correct diagnosis. Even experienced doctors under certain conditions have doubts that need to be confirmed or refuted.

The unconditional meaningfulness of life arises already at the level of intuitive knowledge<sup>14</sup>, which is also scientifically proven with empirical logotherapy methods (tests).

According to logotherapy psychology, every person is capable of finding the meaning of life, regardless of age,

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sharing capitalists who are interested in sharing luxury residences with members (members-only home-sharing community). The club has over 15,000 members in more than 100 countries. THIRDHOME Private Exchange Club offers luxury second home owners unique benefits and exclusive experiences that other short term rental sites cannot provide. The club was founded in 2010 by Wade Shealy and is based in Brentwood, Tennessee, United States. The company operates internationally and positions itself in a unique way to cater exclusively to vacation home owners.

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<sup>13</sup> We humans are hostages of our own embodiment and must internalize everything in the external world in the form of perceptions, ideas and memories.

<sup>14</sup> DEMONSTRATIO: Primum virtutis fundamentum est suum esse conservare (per corollarium propositionis 22 hujus) idque ex ductu rationis (per propositionem 24 hujus). Qui igitur se ipsum ignorat, omnium virtutum fundamentum et consequenter omnes virtutes ignorat. (Illustration: the first foundation of virtue is the preservation of its being (consequently from proposition 22 of this work) and this from the guidance of reason (according to proposition 24 of this work). Therefore, whoever does not know himself does not know the foundation of all virtues and consequently of all virtues. [25])



gender, character, environment, intelligence quotient, education, religiosity and creed.

Anyone who is psychologically attuned to the future, either to a meaning whose realization they expect, or to a person who is waiting for them with love, has a chance to preserve their mental health.

Frankl was also interested in the study of depression and suicide, and founded several youth counseling centers in Vienna with the goal of reducing the number of suicides among teenagers.

## VII. RECOGNISED THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CAPITALIST WORLD OF WORK AND DEPRESSION

The credit for recognizing the connection between the capitalist world of work and depression, and that the connection between capitalist everyday life and depression is a timely, current socio-political issue, part of the left-wing political agenda par excellence, belongs above all to the British anti-capitalist scientist and writer Mark Fisher.

Mark Fisher (1968–2017), an English writer, music critic, political and cultural theorist, philosopher and professor based in the Department of Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths University, London, was initially known in the early 2000s for his blogging and writing about radical politics, music and popular culture.

Fisher has published several books, including the bestselling *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (*Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?*) in 2009 [2] and has contributed to publications such as *The Wire*, *Fact*, *New Statesman* and *Sight & Sound*. He was also the co-founder of *Zero Books* and later *Repeater Books*. After years of battling depression, Fisher died by suicide in January 2017, shortly before the publication of *The Weird and the Eerie*<sup>15</sup>.

In particular, he wrote about the causal connection between neoliberalism as the worst modern form of capitalism and depression and other mental illnesses.

<sup>15</sup> The painting *The Sad Old Man* ('At the Gate of Eternity') by Vincent van Gogh, 1890 or the painting *The Scream* by the Norwegian expressionist painter Edvard Munch, 1893 are particularly evocative images of depression. The famous Mexican painter Diego Rivera (1886 - 1957) is known as an ideologically and politically very left-oriented painter of "murals" on the subject of wage labor in a capitalist society, which encourages the audience to experience depression and revolutionary anger..

With the concept of "capitalist realism," Fisher describes the widespread feeling that capitalism is not only the only sustainable political and economic system, but also that it is now impossible to even imagine a coherent alternative to it.

That the world we live in is not the best of all possible<sup>16</sup>, it will only prove itself if/when we create a better one through a revolution of consciousness [28], in a democratic way according to laws and without personal revenge, violence and material damage<sup>17</sup>.

The first project tasks of the feasibility study of the project of establishing a "new ecological social society"<sup>18</sup> they are

<sup>16</sup> In particular, there is a well-known attempt to solve the theodicy, the justification of God for evil in the world, by the German philosopher and polyhistor Gottfried Leibniz in the work *Essais de Théodicée sur la bonté de Dieu la liberté de l'homme et l'origine du mal* (from 1710., more commonly known as *Theodicy*. (Eng. *Essays of Theodicy on the Goodness of God, the Freedom of Man and the Origin of Evil*) and the phrase that our world is actually "the best of all possible worlds" (French *Le meilleur des mondes possibles*; German *Die beste aller möglichen Welten*; English *The best of all possible worlds*). "168. Metaphysical considerations are also brought up against my explanation of the moral cause of moral evil; but they will trouble me less since I have dismissed the objections derived from moral reasons, which were more impressive. These metaphysical considerations concern the nature of the possible and of the necessary; they go against my fundamental assumption that God has chosen the best of all possible worlds." [26]

Rogerius Josephus Boscovich (1763) contradicted Leibniz's belief that this world was the best of all possible worlds and wrote these immortal words: "Mundum non esse possibilium optimum, cum in possibilibus nullus terminus sit ultimus: nec officere sapientiae, ac bonitati infinitae, quod non fecerit, nec potentiae, quod non potuerit id facere." [27] (The world is not the best of possible worlds, because there is no last member among possible worlds; therefore we must not reproach infinite wisdom and goodness for they didn't make him that way, or the power that she couldn't make him that way).

<sup>17</sup> Chaos, human casualties, material damage, deepening of the hatred of opposing parties, mutual accusations, revenge and other forms of frustration as the inevitable consequences of the violence of armed civil wars (social revolutions) and international wars, can only be prevented by developing the critical faculties of reason of the dominant number of individuals. The real revolution is only a revolution of the consciousness of individuals in a society of direct democracy, self-government in the administrative units of the state (self-government) and self-management (self-management) in companies.

<sup>18</sup> Albert Einstein wrote the article "Why Socialism?" [29] for the first issue of the *Monthly Review* (MR), which began publication in May 1949, in which he gave an

above all the principles and conditions for the realization of a society of just inequality<sup>19</sup> [30], the ecological unity of plants, animals and people, the development of a professional society based on the intellectual capital and moral integrity of each individual person [4], "property" as a concession (lat. *concessio* from *concedare* to permit, permission, grant of right, concession) for a certain period of time, the inalienability of each person's monetarily valued working time ("time is money")<sup>20</sup> [31], the supremacy of the public society over the private, ... The closest to this social ideal in the modern world is the Republic of Finland (Suomi in Finnish).

The connection between the capitalist everyday - especially work - and depression is often proclaimed. Usually, she apologizes rather briefly and superficially, without paying attention to the two phenomena – wage labor and depression. "Stress at work leads to depression" - this statement in itself is something common that can be read in the daily newspapers. Political persuasiveness requires an in-depth scientific study that can substantiate both the connection between capitalism and the capitalist mode of production and socio-economic formations and depression as a mental disorder.

Now is not the time for a simple "Scooby-Doo"<sup>21</sup> quasi-Marxist exercise in unmasking the villain to reveal that it was indeed capitalism that caused the depression all along!

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uncompromising critique of capitalism and advocated a socialist society with all the weight of his authority!

<sup>19</sup> Free healthcare, legal protection (lawyers), schooling and an education system that treats everyone equally also perpetuates the inequality that exists between individuals in terms of their inherited talents.

In addition to the fact that we wage laborers are completely dependent on capital and capitalists who compete with each other, we also feel the full force of mutual competition. We compete with each other to get a job at all, but also to get the most pleasant and well-paid workplace possible.

<sup>20</sup> "In short, the road to wealth, if you want it, is as simple as the road to the market. It depends chiefly on two words, industry and thrift; i.e. waste neither time nor money, but make the most of both. He who honestly gets all he can, and saves all he gets (except for necessary expenses), is sure to become "rich"; Unless this Being, who rules the World, to whom all should seek Blessings for their honest endeavors, in his wise Providence, ordains otherwise." <...> "Without industry and thrift, nothing will succeed, and with them everything."

Time (work) as a part of life time cannot be returned to the worker as time, but only in monetary form, since time can only expire as an irreversible part of our lives. [32]

<sup>21</sup> A talking dog named Scooby-Doo, who uses a series of antics and missteps to solve mysteries involving supposedly supernatural creatures.

Sure, capitalism is to blame – but how exactly does the socio-economic sphere connect to the psychological, and what deeper lessons might be drawn from the whole experience? [17]

## VIII. CLINICAL AND SCIENTIFIC APPARATUS FOR CLASSIFICATION, DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF DEPRESSION!

Today there is a powerful clinical and scientific apparatus available for the classification, diagnosis and treatment of depression!

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, published by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) is used in the world today to recognize the disease. It contains categorized mental disorders and criteria to establish a diagnosis. The manual is widely used, from clinics and researchers, to insurance companies, pharmacists and so on. DSM was first published in 1952. The last major change is DSM-5 from 2013.[33]

It is used mainly in the USA for clinical and research purposes, for the regulation of psychiatric drugs, the formation of health insurance policy and more widely, in law and politics.

Major depressive disorder (MDD), also known as clinical depression, major depression, unipolar depression, or unipolar disorder, or recurrent depression in the case of repeated episodes, is a mental disorder characterized by pervasive and persistent depression accompanied by low self-esteem and loss of interest or pleasure in normally enjoyable activities. The term "depression" is often used for this syndrome, but it can also mean other mood disorders or simply bad mood. Major depressive disorder is a condition that renders the affected person helpless; negatively affects the person, their family, time at work or school, sleep, eating habits and general health. [33]

The etiology of depression is not unambiguous. Medical etiology (Gr. αἰτία, *aitia* cause, λογία, *logia* veda, etiology) is a branch of medicine that studies the causes of disease. The intertwining of biological, psychological and social factors in the development of depression indicates a multifactorial disease state, in which the causes are not always the same. Biological factors are an inherited tendency (disposition), neurobiochemical changes in the brain (neurobiochemical hypothesis), endocrine disorders (excessive activity of the adrenal gland). Psychological factors are the causal connection between personality structure, provocative circumstances and clinical manifestations, stressful life events and chronic stress. The

role of sociocultural factors in the etiology of depression has not yet been well studied.[34]

In other parts of the world, the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, published by the World Health Organization (WHO), with a special chapter on mental disorders, is more widely used in epidemiology, health management and for clinical purposes. The abbreviated International Classification of Diseases (ICD) is commonly used. The latest, 11th revision came into force on January 1, 2022. [35]

However, there is nothing in either the DSM or the ICD that makes any explicit allusion to “capitalism” as a cause in the etiology of depression.

In terms of onset, major depressive disorder can begin at any age, but the likelihood of first onset increases significantly with puberty.

In the US, about 7% of the population develops depression in a year, which is about 1 in 15 people. One in 6 people (16.6%) will experience depression at some point in their life. The incidence of depression in the 18-29 age group is three times higher than the incidence in people aged 60 and over. In childhood, boys suffer from depression more often than girls. After early adolescence, females have a rate 1.5 to 3 times higher than males. About 3.4% of people with major depression decide to commit suicide, and among those who commit suicide, up to 60% have had depression or another mood disorder.

The reason for the higher frequency of depression in women are hormonal causes (women are exposed to strong hormonal changes during so-called biological crisis periods): puberty, changes in the menstrual cycle (PMS), pregnancy, baby blues (postpartum depression), perimenopause and postmenopause. Women are more willing to admit and seek help, so the number of women suffering from depression is seemingly on the rise. Men may hide or “mask” their depression behind other problems such as alcoholism and drugs.

Major depressive disorder is diagnosed by a psychiatrist in collaboration with a psychologist after a clinical interview and psychodiagnostic tests, which indicate the presence, intensity, duration and frequency of symptoms. The person's level of functioning, the presence of social support, important events in the person's life, and the presence of other illnesses and diseases among family members are also checked.

There is no laboratory test that confirms the presence of major depressive disorder, but laboratory testing can rule out physical disorders that cause similar symptoms.

## IX. THE NATURE AND MECHANISME OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY AND DEPRESSION

Personality is an important diagnostic feature.

In the DSM-5, which is valid in America, and in the ICD-11, 2022, which is valid in Europe, the diagnostic criteria for a major depressive episode should be found.

However, these diagnostic systems, in addition to the lack of theoretical and empirical validity of the diagnostic criteria and the poor applicability of the diagnosis for choosing treatment and predicting the outcome, have major shortcomings, especially for diagnosing and classifying personality disorders, namely:

- high degree of overlap and comorbidity between different personality disorders and
- inadequate capture of important aspects of personality pathology that are not included in existing categories.

Hakulinen et al. in an extensive study started from the assumption that personality is the main risk factor for depression. [36]

Data from 10 prospective community cohort studies with 117,899 participants (mean age 49.0 years; 54.7% female) were pooled for an individual participant meta-analysis to determine the association between Five Factor Model personality traits and risk of depressive symptoms.

In a cross-sectional analysis, they found low extraversion (overall standardized regression coefficient (B) =  $-.08$ ; 95% confidence interval =  $-.11, -.04$ ), high neuroticism (B =  $.39; .32, .45$ ) and low conscientiousness (B =  $-.09; -.10, -.06$ ) were associated with depressive symptoms. Similar associations were observed in longitudinal analyzes adjusted for baseline depressive symptoms (n = 56,735; mean follow-up 5.0 years): low extraversion (B =  $-.03; -.05, -.01$ ), high neuroticism (B =  $.12; .10, .13$ ) and low conscientiousness (B =  $-.04; -.06, -.02$ ) were associated with increased risk of depressive symptoms at follow-up. On the other hand, depressive symptoms were associated with personality change in Extraversion (B =  $-.07$ ; 95% CI =  $-.12, -.02$ ), Neuroticism (B =  $.23; .09, .36$ ), agreeableness (B =  $-.09; -.15, -.04$ ), conscientiousness (B =  $-.14; -.21, -.07$ ) and openness to experience (B =  $-.04; -.08, .00$ ).

Based on meta-analyses, they came to the conclusion that personality traits are prospectively related to the development of depressive symptoms. Depressive symptoms, on the other hand, are associated with changes in personality, which can be temporary or persistent.

Personality traits are permanent patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving that determine a person's character. Depressive symptoms are signs of low mood, such as sadness, hopelessness, guilt, or loss of interest. Personality traits are associated with depressive symptoms, but the link is complex and not fully understood.

The five-factor personality model (Big Five) describes five broad dimensions of personality: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. [37] [38] People with high neuroticism scores tend to experience more negative emotions, such as anxiety, anger, and depression, and are more susceptible to stress. People who score low on conscientiousness have poorer self-control, organization, and motivation, which can also contribute to depressive symptoms. People with high extraversion scores are more open, sociable, and energetic, which may protect them from depression by providing them with more social support and positive experiences. People who score high in agreeableness are more cooperative, trusting, and compassionate, which can also protect them from depression by improving their interpersonal relationships. People with high openness scores are more curious, creative, and flexible, which can help them cope with depression by fostering a sense of meaning and purpose.

Relationships between personality and depression are not deterministic, as there are other factors that influence the relationship between personality and depression, such as genetic, biological, environmental, and situational variables. The causal relationship is bidirectional: personality influences depression and depression influences personality. Personality traits act as risk factors or protective factors that predispose to or prevent depression. Depression changes people's personality traits over time, either temporarily or permanently. For example, people suffering from chronic depression may become more neurotic, less conscientious, less extraverted, less agreeable, and less outgoing due to depressive symptoms. [39]

Personality is an integrated pattern of relatively enduring characteristics that distinguish individuals from one another and a very important diagnostic characteristic that influences clinical practice, research, and policy.

Lee and Ashton added the H factor to the five-dimensional personality model that included surgency, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and intellect/imagination.

The "H" in the term "H factor" stands for "Honesty-Humility", one of the six basic dimensions of human personality. People who have a high level of H are sincere and humble, people who have a low level of H are

hypocritical and arrogant and think they are better than they are! The level of H depends not only on genes and is not only biologically determined, but also on free will and personal responsibility. It is not intuitively obvious that the traits of honesty and humility are related, and until recently the H factor was not recognized as a basic dimension of personality. But scientific evidence shows that the traits of honesty and humility form a single group of personality traits that are separate from the other five trait groups identified decades ago. The importance of the H dimension is related to various aspects of people's lives, their attitudes toward money, power, and sexuality, their propensity to commit crimes or obey the law, their attitudes toward society, politics, and religion, and their choice of friends and spouses. . There are ways to identify people with low H factor as well as ways to increase H levels. [40]

The relationship between normal personality and personality disorders is one of the important issues of personality and clinical psychology. The classification of personality disorders (DSM-5 and ICD-11) follows a categorical approach that views personality disorders as separate entities distinct from each other and from normal personality. In contrast, the dimensional approach takes the alternative view that personality disorders represent maladaptive extensions of the same traits that describe normal personality.

Depending on the diagnosis, severity and the individual and the job itself, personality disorders can be associated with difficulty coping with work at work, which can cause problems with others due to interpersonal disorders. Indirect effects also play a role; for example, impaired educational progress or complications outside work, such as substance abuse and co-occurring mental disorders, may be problematic. However, personality disorders can also result in above-average work skills by increasing the competitive drive or causing the individual with the condition to take advantage of their co-workers.

In 2005 and again in 2009, psychologists Belinda Board and Katarina Fritzon of the University of Surrey in the United Kingdom interviewed and administered personality tests to senior British executives and compared their profiles to those of criminal psychiatric patients at Broadmoor Hospital in the United Kingdom. They found that three out of eleven personality disorders are actually more common in leaders than in disturbed criminals:

- Histrionic personality disorder: including superficial charm, insincerity, self-centeredness, and manipulation
- Narcissistic personality disorder: including arrogance, self-centeredness and lack of empathy



for others, exploitative tendencies and independence.

- Obsessive-compulsive personality disorder: including perfectionism, excessive dedication to work, rigidity, stubbornness, and dictatorial tendencies. [41]

## X. DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS

In order to confirm the presence of major depressive disorder, the presence of other disorders, diseases and conditions that have similar symptoms must be ruled out with the help of a differential diagnosis.

Major depressive disorder is distinguished from hypothyroidism, HIV, other viral infections, chronic diseases, cancer, drug-induced depression, Parkinson's disease, dementia, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, disorders related to the effects of psychoactive substances, schizoaffective disorder, eating disorders, somatoform disorders, anxiety disorders, adjustment and bereavement disorders.

## XI. THEORIES OF DEPRESSION

There are six schools or theories of depression: cognitive theory of depression, tripartite model of anxiety and depression, behavioral theories of depression, evolutionary approaches to depression, biology of depression and epigenetics of depression.

### *A cognitive theory of depression*

From a cognitive perspective, depressive disorders are characterized by people's dysfunctional negative views of themselves, their life experiences (and the world in general), and their future.

People with depression often see themselves as unlovable, powerless, condemned, or flawed. They tend to attribute their unpleasant experiences to their perceived physical, mental and/or moral deficiencies. They tend to feel excessively guilty, believe that they are worthless, reprehensible and rejected by themselves and others. They don't see themselves as people who can ever succeed, be accepted, or feel good, which can lead to withdrawal and isolation, which worsens mood.

Beck's cognitive triad, also known as the negative triad, is a cognitive-therapeutic view of three key elements of a person's belief system that are present in depression. He proposed it in 1967. The triad is part of his cognitive theory of depression and the concept is used as part of CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, especially in Beck's "Treatment of Negative Automatic Thoughts" (TNAT) approach. [42]

The triad includes "automatic, spontaneous, and seemingly uncontrollable negative thoughts" about "self" ("I'm worthless and ugly" or "I wish I was different"); about the world or environment ("No one appreciates me" or "people they ignore me all the time"; and the future ("I'm hopeless because things will never change" or "things can only get worse!")

### *A tripartite model of depression*

Clark and Watson proposed a tripartite model of anxiety and depression to explain the comorbidity between anxiety and depressive symptoms and disorders. This model divides symptoms of anxiety and depression into three groups: negative affect, positive affect, and physiological hyperarousal. These three sets of symptoms help explain the common and different aspects of depression and anxiety. [43]

### *Behavioral theories of depression*

Behavioral theories of depression emphasize the role of maladaptive actions in the onset and maintenance of depression. These theories stem from work on the principles of learning and conditioning from the early to mid-20th century. [44] Ivan Pavlov and B.F. Skinner are credited with establishing behavioral psychology with their research on classical conditioning and operant conditioning, respectively. Their research has shown that certain behaviors can be learned or unlearned. These theories have been applied in a variety of contexts, including abnormal psychology. Theories specifically applied to depression emphasize individuals' responses to their environment and how they develop adaptive or maladaptive coping strategies. [45]

A depressive episode is ultimately caused by a combination of a stressful event in an individual's life and their reaction to the event. Individuals with depression may exhibit socially aversive behavior, not engage in pleasurable activities, ruminate on their problems, or engage in other maladaptive activities. According to the BA (Behavioral activation) theory, these behaviors most often act as avoidance mechanisms while the individual tries to cope with a stressful life event, resulting in a decrease in positive reinforcers or perceived control. Rumination is especially important in the onset of depression. There are two main coping mechanisms, rumination and distraction. Ruminators focus on the stressful event and their feelings, while distractors engage in activities that take them away from the event and their feelings. Ruminants are much more likely to become depressed than ruminants.[46] [47]



Lack of social skills and positive social interactions has been empirically proven to be a major factor in maintaining depression. Individuals with depression tend to interact with others less often than non-depressed individuals and their actions tend to be more dysfunctional. [48] One theory of social skills revolves around the lack of interaction-seeking behavior exhibited by the depressed individual. This lack of interaction results in social isolation, which promotes the development of negative self-image, loneliness, and isolation. [49] An alternative theory of social skills attributes difficulties within interactions with the maintenance of depression. A “happiness-supportive social norm” causes people to approach social interactions with the expectation of a positive exchange; however, individuals with depression typically violate these expectations. The lack of responsiveness shown by depressed individuals becomes disruptive to their interaction partners, causing interaction partners to avoid interactions with the depressed individual or approach them more negatively in future interactions, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy of further negative social outcomes. interactions for both individuals. A depressed individual often sends ambiguous social cues that lead to misinterpretation by the interaction partner, such as a lack of responsiveness that may be interpreted as personal resistance. This misinterpretation leads to a decrease in positive interactions, which results in a further decrease in social interactions, which facilitates the maintenance of depression. [48]

Reinforcement contingency theory posits that depression results from the loss of relevant contingent rewards. Specifically, when positive behaviors are no longer rewarded in ways that are perceived as appropriate, those behaviors occur less frequently and eventually die out. The eventual extinction of a wide range of behaviors reduces an individual's behavioral repertoire, resulting in the lack of responsiveness and arousal associated with depression. The loss or ineffectiveness of reinforcement can be attributed to various causes:

- A booster event can be removed. This is usually associated with the loss of an important or rewarding role, such as a job.
- The behavioral abilities of the affected individual may be reduced. This refers to the individual's ability to perform activities that previously elicited positive reinforcement. This can be affected by events such as a traumatic injury or event.
- The number of events that are awarded may be reduced. This is usually related to the biological aspects of depression, including a lack of serotonin and dopamine,

which results in a decrease in positive emotions during previously rewarding experiences.

After the reinforcers are removed, the affected individual begins to interpret their behavior as meaningless due to the lack of obvious consequences. This interpreted lack of control in a given area is usually generalized and develops into learned helplessness. Learned helplessness is defined as a feeling of having no control over outcomes, regardless of one's own actions. This may mediate the phenomenon of hyporesponsiveness and arousal observed in depressed subjects following a perceived change in positive reinforcers. [50]

#### *Evolutionary approaches to depression*

Evolutionary approaches to depression are attempts by evolutionary psychologists to use evolutionary theory to shed light on the problem of mood disorders from the perspective of evolutionary psychiatry. Depression is generally considered a dysfunction or mental disorder, but its prevalence does not increase with age in the same way that dementia and other organic dysfunctions tend to. Some researchers theorize that the disorder may have evolutionary roots, in the same way that others suggest an evolutionary contribution to schizophrenia, sickle cell anemia, psychopathy, and other disorders. Evolutionary explanations of behavior have not generally been accepted by psychology and psychiatry, and proposed explanations for the development of depression remain controversial.

#### *The biology of depression*

Scientific studies have shown that different areas of the brain show altered activity in people with major depressive disorder (MDD), and this has encouraged proponents of different theories that try to identify the biochemical origins of the disease, as opposed to theories that emphasize psychological or situational causes. [51] Factors that encompass these causal groups include nutritional deficiencies of magnesium, vitamin D, and tryptophan with situational origins but biological influence. Several theories have been proposed over the years about the biological cause of depression, including theories revolving around monoamine neurotransmitters, neuroplasticity, neurogenesis, inflammation, and the circadian rhythm. Physical illnesses, including hypothyroidism and mitochondrial disease, can also trigger depressive symptoms. [52] [53]

#### *The epigenetics of depression*

Epigenetics of depression is the study of how epigenetics (inherited characteristics that do not involve changes in the DNA sequence) contribute to depression.

Major depressive disorder is strongly influenced by environmental and genetic factors. These factors include

epigenetic modification of the genome, which can cause a persistent change in gene expression without changing the actual DNA sequence. Genetic and environmental factors can affect the genome throughout life; however, the individual is most susceptible during childhood. [54] Early life stressors that may lead to major depressive disorder include periodic maternal separation, child abuse, divorce, and bereavement. [55] [56] These factors can cause epigenetic marks that can alter gene expression and affect the development of key brain regions such as the hippocampus. Epigenetic factors, such as DNA methylation<sup>22</sup>, could serve as potential predictors of the effectiveness of some antidepressant treatments and also show associations with depressive symptoms. Antidepressant use may also be associated with changes in DNA methylation levels. Identification of a gene with altered expression could lead to new antidepressant treatments.

## XII. BULLYING AND MOBBING

Bullying in the workplace always begins with a conflict (lat. conflictus from configere, clash, quarrel, opposition). Conflict does not mean workplace bullying. After a certain time, the conflict can develop into "excessive conflict", bullying. The relationship between workplace bullying and harassment is similar. The verb "harass" is defined as "to persistently disturb or annoy", to annoy (an enemy) by repeated attacks.

American experts are also familiar with the term "mobbing", which is used in Germany, Italy and Sweden. In the UK, this phenomenon is called "bullying in the workplace" and simply "bullying". Mobbing as a sociological term means the bullying of an individual by a group, in any context, such as family, peer group, school, workplace, neighborhood, community or online. [57] The more psychological nature of workplace bullying is characterized by the French term "harcèlement moral" (moral harassment). In the article, the terms mobbing and mistreatment at the workplace are used as synonyms. In the US, the definition of the word "mobbing" can be found as malicious, non-sexual, non-racial harassment. The European Commission defines sexual harassment as conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on gender that affects the dignity of women and men at work.

<sup>22</sup> DNA methylation is the most common way to chemically modify DNA.

A specific and frequent example of victims of harassment are whistleblowers<sup>23</sup>, a profession "in the making".

A whistleblower is an employee or ex-employee who discloses information to the police, journalists, employees, etc. misconduct, alleged unfair, unethical, discriminatory, inappropriate or illegal activity occurring within the organization by current or former members. The alleged violation can be classified into several areas: violation of laws, rules, regulations and/or direct threat to the public interest, such as fraud, violations of health and safety at work, and corruption. Whistleblowers can make allegations internally (to other individuals in the accused organization) or externally (to regulators, law enforcement, the media). One of the most famous whistleblowers is Jeffrey Wigand, who exposed the tobacco industry; his story is described in the 1999 film *Insider*. Famous examples include Edward Snowden and WikiLeaks representative Julian Assange.

As a result of reporting wrongdoing, a whistleblower often experiences an adverse management decision and then retaliation, even though the latter is prohibited by law. An unfavorable administrative decision can be disciplinary punishment, humiliation, dismissal. Retaliation can also take the form of harassment, which is also prohibited. Harassment can include termination of employment, denial of promotion, withdrawal of privileges such as training opportunities, and marginalization due to loss of authority.

The scientific study of the connection between capitalism and depression must be based on the experience of research on bullying at the workplace (bullying or mobbing), where depressions caused by "capitalism" as a system mainly occur.

The main theoretical-methodological problem for any empirical scientific research is to define the variables in a way that enables operational procedures of the given study, including measurements.

## XIII. MOBBING IN THE WORKPLACE

In the 1980s, Heinze Leymann (1932-1999), a Swedish industrial psychologist, trained as a educational

<sup>23</sup> According to Etimoline and Wordorigins, the term "whistle-blower" comes from the "whistle", which the referee "blows" to indicate an illegal position and a foul in the game. With this, Wikipedia refers to New Scientist of 9/12/1971, p. 69. In the early 1970s, Ralf Nader gave the term a positive connotation. The truth must be told <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/whistle-blower>

psychologist, professor and researcher, began researching mobbing in the workplace and in schools. His initial research in this area was based on case studies of a number of nurse nuns who committed or attempted suicide due to workplace harassment. He developed the world-famous LIPT (Leymann Inventory of Psychological Terror) questionnaire. The questionnaire lists a total of 45 actions, which are divided into five categories of effects (attacks): on self-expression and communication, on social contacts, on personal reputation, on professional conditions and quality of life, and on physical health.

Although he preferred the term bullying in the context of school children, some understood mobbing as a form of group bullying. As a professor and psychologist, Leymann also warned that one of the side effects of mobbing is post-traumatic stress disorder, which is often misdiagnosed. These 45 acts were based on 300 individual interviews between 1981 and 1984. When no further acts were discovered in the 1984 interviews, the interviews were stopped.<sup>24</sup> [58] [59] [60]

#### *Leymann Inventory of Psychological Terror, LIPT)*

##### 1. Effects on self-expression and communication:

- Your superior restricts the opportunity for you to express yourself.
- You are constantly interrupted.
- Colleagues restrict your opportunity to express yourself.
- You are yelled at and loudly scolded.
- Your work is constantly criticized.
- There is constant criticism about your personal life.
- You are terrorized on the telephone.
- Oral threats are made.
- Written threats are sent.
- Contact is denied through looks or gestures.
- Contact is denied through innuendo.

##### 2. Effects on social contacts:

- People do not speak with you anymore.
- You cannot talk to anyone; access to others is denied.
- You are relocated to another room far away from colleagues.

- Colleagues are forbidden to talk with you.
- You are treated as if you are invisible.

##### 3. Effects on personal reputation:

- People talk badly about you behind your back.
- Unfounded rumors about you are circulated.
- You are ridiculed.
- You are treated as if you are mentally ill.
- You are forced to undergo a psychiatric evaluation.
- Your handicap is ridiculed.
- People imitate your gestures, walk, or voice to ridicule you.
- Your political or religious beliefs are ridiculed.
- Your private life is ridiculed.
- Your nationality is ridiculed.
- You are forced to do a job that affects your self-esteem.
- Your efforts are judged in a wrong and demeaning way.
- Your decisions are always questioned.
- You are called by demeaning names.
- Sexual innuendoes are present.

##### 4. Effects on occupational situation and quality of life:

- There are no special tasks for you.
- Supervisors take away assignments so that you cannot invent new tasks to do.
- You are given meaningless jobs to carry out.
- You are given jobs that are below your qualifications.
- You are continually given new tasks.
- You are given tasks that affect your self-esteem.
- You are given tasks that are way beyond your qualifications in order to discredit you.

##### 5. Effects on physical health:

- You are forced to do a physically strenuous job.
- Threats of physical violence are made.
- Light violence is used to threaten you.
- Physical abuse is present.
- Causing general damages that create financial costs to you.
- Damaging your workplace or home.
- Outright sexual harassment is present.

<sup>24</sup> Based on numerous seminars and discussions with workers' councils and those affected by bullying, German scientists have discovered more than 100 different acts of bullying, without claiming to be perfect.

Leymann's research, findings, and experience in treating the effects of mobbing are directly applicable to the development of instruments for diagnosing depressions allegedly caused by the effects associated with capitalist relations of production.

#### XIV. STIGMATIZATION OF MENTAL ILLNESS

Nowadays, many people suffer from depression and anxiety, so they have become the leading problem of today. The biggest challenge, however, is the recognition of these diseases, because in the Balkans depression and anxiety are still a taboo subject, which can lead to an even faster progression of the disease, including suicide. Scientific research is focused on the types, epidemiology, classification, diagnosis, treatment, and incidence of depression and anxiety and the suicides caused by these diseases. The diagnosis of depressive disorders is made on the basis of history and clinical picture and with the help of various scales for assessing depression.<sup>25</sup> [61]

As part of the national campaign against stigma and discrimination against mental illnesses, which began last year in Croatia with the publication of Aleksandar Stanković's book "Depra", organized by the Telegram magazine and the association of patients for the prevention of depression and suicide "Lifeline" with the support of the Janssen company, it was Silvana Mengušić's article "Urša Raukar decided to talk about the tragedy: "When I was 14, my sister tried to commit suicide. But then our mother killed herself." [62]

The article takes the form of an interview. The interviewee Urša Raukar Gamulin testifies about the terrible torment and unbearable mental pain. The mother's symptoms of depression were triggered by her sister's illness and suicide.

In a state of depression, the patient convinces himself that he is worthless, that he will never achieve anything, that he is a loser. Depression has its greatest impetus when a

person is faced with many injustices on a daily basis, at the workplace, in society, but the data on the suicides of our fellow citizens over 65 years old, who cannot finish the month with a pension after a lifetime of work, is terrifying. This is a terrible trigger and cause of depression, because what have you been doing all your life, what is the point of it /.../ You live in a society of injustice, a society without hope. But the cause of depression is not only the state of society, but depression and other mental illnesses also have far-reaching consequences for society as a whole. It is necessary to make it possible to pay for private treatments and psychotherapy through HZZO, and to establish centers for depression and suicide. We should return to Andrija Štampar's ideas about health centers as the basis of health care, including mental health care.<sup>26</sup>

#### XV. INSTED OF A CONCLUSION

Mental disorders are among the top 10 causes of loss of health worldwide, with anxiety and depressive disorders ranking as the most common across all age groups and locations. [63]

In the latest analysis for the study Global, regional, and national burden of disorders affecting the nervous system, 1990– 2021: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2021., published on March 14, 2024 in the journal The Lancet Neurology, the problem of depressive disorders is not included. The authors recognize this and note that psychosocial factors such as sleep, stress and social isolation are increasingly recognized as contributors to neurological disease and should be quantified in future analyses, as neurological disorders affect 43% of the world's population or 3.4 billion individuals. [64]

The countries with the highest age-standardized rates of mental disorders in the world are Iran, Australia and New Zealand. Regionally, there is high prevalence and disability in parts of the Americas, including the United States and Brazil. [63]

Some of the lowest rates in the world are in parts of Asia such as Vietnam, Brunei and Japan.

<sup>25</sup> Multifactor analysis (MFA) is a factorial method intended for the study of tables in which a group of individuals is described by a set of variables (quantitative and/or qualitative) structured into groups. It is a multivariate method from the field of surgery that is used to simplify multidimensional data structures. MFA treats all involved tables in the same way (symmetric analysis). It can be understood as an extension of:

- principal components analysis (PCA), when the variables are quantitative,
- multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) when the variables are qualitative,
- factor analysis of mixed data (FAMD), when the active variables belong to both types.

<sup>26</sup> Andrija Štampar (1888-1958) was a prominent scientist in the field of social medicine from Croatia. Social medicine is an interdisciplinary field that focuses on the deep interplay between socioeconomic factors and the health outcomes of individuals. At the 8th regular session of the WHO in Mexico City in 1955, Štampar received the award and medal of the Leon Bernard Foundation, the highest international recognition for services in the field of social medicine.



Some of the differences found in our prevalence estimates are due to differences in risk factors for mental disorders and their treatment across countries. However, the quality and availability of epidemiological data varies considerably from country to country, which may also affect some of the differences in the observed prevalence.

There are a number of proven measures that governments can take to reduce the burden of mental disorders in their region:

1. Reducing contributing factors such as financial stress and domestic violence. There are many known risk factors for mental disorders, such as childhood maltreatment, bullying victimization, conflict, and interpersonal violence. Addressing the causes of mental disorders and taking action to mitigate them is a proactive approach to reducing the burden on the population. These prevention strategies can take many forms. For example, we have seen success in implementing learning programs in schools to support the social and emotional development of children and young people, strengthen their resilience and discourage risky behaviour.
2. Raising awareness and reducing stigma. In many regions of the world, mental health can still be a taboo subject. Reducing stigma can encourage more people to seek care and treatment.
3. Improving access to effective mental health treatment. Much research has been conducted to demonstrate the success and cost-effectiveness of a range of pharmacological and psychosocial treatments for mental disorders. The focus now needs to be on improving population acceptance of these treatments and preventive intervention strategies to slow the emergence of new cases of mental disorders.

[63]

Capitalism as one of the causes of depression is so far recognized ideologically and politically [2] at the level of "instinctive intuition" [65] and this point of view lacks a scientific approach and knowledge of professional society as a historical socio-economic given, methodologically and theoretically, *quod erat demonstrandum* (Which was to be demonstrated).

The modern efforts of the scientific community in the field of depressive disorders lack the recognition of "capitalism" and "professional society" as independent variables at the level of starting scientific assumptions, which are already recognized in the form of a solid scientific disposition that also fulfills Newton's strict postulate "Hypotheses non

finjo" (I frame no hypotheses", or I contrive no hypotheses.

What Isaac Newton wrote on this subject, in my free translation, reads: Until now I have not been able to discover the cause of these properties of gravity from phenomena, and I do not invent hypotheses. For whatever is not deduced from phenomena, we must call hypothesis; and hypotheses, whether metaphysical or physical, or based on occult values or mechanical, have no place in experimental philosophy. In this philosophy, individual sub-concepts are derived from phenomena and are later generalized by induction. [66]

However, we cannot even start experiments without theories or assumptions, and they are blind without theories. The amount of information is in the assumptions, not the experiment. The results of the experiment only confirm or reject the hypothesis.

In 2006, my colleague and me wrote a conceptual project for a nursing home for people who need this kind of care. According to the latest iteration, the nursing home would be both a treatment clinic and a research institute for the study of depressive and similar disorders<sup>27</sup>. [67]

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<sup>27</sup> In 2006, I sent the conceptual project by e-mail to Bill and Melinda Gates with a request to evaluate it and co-finance further work on project documentation and construction. The very next day, I received an answer that the idea was good, but that it did not meet their other criteria for accepting projects for financing, from which they do not deviate: our project was set up commercially, and they only finance non-profit projects in underdeveloped countries, and Slovenia is a developed country, as the intended beneficiaries are elderly people suffering from non-infectious diseases, and they then sponsored and financed the construction of appropriate facilities only for people suffering from AIDS (Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) .

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# The Collapse of the Digital Public Space: A Critical Examination of Speed Politics in the Information Mediation Space

Vania Utamie Subiakto, Ida Royani Damayanti

Communication Science, Faculty of Communication Sciences, Mercu Buana University, Communication Science, Faculty of Business and Social Sciences, Dian Nusantara University, Indonesia  
[vania.utamie@mercubuana.ac.id](mailto:vania.utamie@mercubuana.ac.id), [ida.damayanti@undira.ac.id](mailto:ida.damayanti@undira.ac.id)

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**Abstract**— Digital public space is a communication space formed by internet-based information media, such as social media, blogs, forums, and so on. Digital public space has the potential to become a space for democratization, participation and public deliberation, which can improve the quality of democracy and social welfare. However, the digital public sphere also faces challenges and threats from speed politics, namely communication practices dominated by the logic of speed, efficiency and competition, which can reduce the quality and depth of public discourse. The politics of speed can lead to the collapse of the digital public sphere, which is characterized by phenomena such as polarization, disinformation, populism, trolling, hate speech, and so on. This article aims to conduct a critical analysis of the politics of speed in the information media space, using the theoretical framework of Paul Virilio, Jürgen Habermas, and Manuel Castells. This article also provides several recommendations for overcoming the negative impacts of speed politics, such as increasing media literacy, strengthening regulations, and building inclusive and deliberative online communities.



**Keywords**— digital public space, speed politics, information media, democracy, critical

## I. INTRODUCTION

Digital public space is a communication space formed by internet-based information media, such as social media, blogs, forums, and so on. Digital public space is a development of the concept of public space introduced by Jürgen Habermas (1989), which describes public space as a social arena where citizens can interact, discuss and debate rationally and critically about public problems, without pressure from authorities. or private interests. For Habermas, public space can be said to be successfully formed and maintained in society when they have the freedom to voice their opinions or aspirations. In this case, everyone does not receive pressure, threats or intimidation when they want to express their voice or opinion to the public. Either within the scope of small group discussions or in a wider scope such as on social media. This view states

that public spaces, especially digital-based ones, have the potential to become spaces for democratization, participation and public deliberation that can improve the quality of democracy and social welfare. This is because digital public spaces offer convenience, affordability, diversity and interactivity in public communication, which can expand the space of voice, access and influence for citizens, especially those who are marginalized or minorities (Castells, 2008). This shows that digitalization is able to create potential space that can be utilized by everyone to express their thoughts. Even marginalized parties can have equal rights in the digital space to argue or express opinions on issues of their interest.

However, the digital public sphere also faces challenges and threats from speed politics, namely communication practices dominated by the logic of speed,

efficiency and competition, which can reduce the quality and depth of public discourse. The politics of speed is a consequence of the development of information and communication technology, which enables fast, massive and global transmission of data and information, but also gives rise to negative impacts such as noise, fragmentation and distortion of information (Virilio, 1999). Virilio's view stems from the rise of technology that relies on speed. Not only in the realm of communication and information technology. However, other technologies such as means of transportation also offer speed in moving human objects. This is seen as having the potential for various accidents caused by speed, so that the safety of each subject is threatened.

In this view, the speed of information that is disseminated and received by audiences has the potential to undermine the digital public space. This can occur as a result of the speed at which information is produced, distributed and received, which has the potential to give rise to a lot of disinformation, misinformation, hoaxes and even hate speech. This happens because of the lack of parties involved as gatekeeper in the information space, so that what is distributed is based on initial information from the producer. This condition has caused many social problems to emerge as a result of information spread in new media. Especially on social media where the information comes directly from the users directly. Especially when the subject does not fact check the information they want to disseminate.

The politics of speed, or in Virilio's view, dromology, is basically capable of destroying digital public space. Habermas envisioned the beginning of the public space as a safe and comfortable space for discussion in reaching a certain decision. Especially in the realm of democracy. However, this turned out to be a failure marked by phenomena such as polarization, disinformation, populism, *trolling*, hate speech, and so on. These phenomena can threaten democratic values, such as rationality, openness, tolerance and solidarity, which should be the basis of the digital public sphere (Papacharissi, 2010).

This article aims to conduct a critical analysis of the politics of speed in the information media space. Apart from that, the author also provides several recommendations for address the negative impacts of speed politics, such as increasing media literacy, strengthening regulations, and building inclusive and deliberative online communities. This is important considering that the development of communication and information technology is becoming increasingly powerful and complex. In fact, human needs for this technology are increasingly high, so there is a need for qualified human

resource capacity to skate in the speed space.

## II. THEORETICAL STUDY

### The Politics of Speed

Speed politics is a term coined by Paul Virilio, a French philosopher and media critic, who studied the impact of information and communication technology on society and culture. Virilio (1999) argues that information and communication technology has created a world dominated by speed, which he calls the dromosphere, namely spaces formed by the movement and acceleration of information. Virilio criticizes that speed has become the main logic of modern society, at the expense of other values such as quality, depth, and ethics. Virilio also warned that speed can cause danger and disaster, which he called dromology, namely the science of accidents caused by speed. Virilio pointed out that accidents such as war, terrorism, crime and natural disasters are becoming more frequent and severe as a result of the speed of information and communication technology, which allows the transmission and escalation of conflicts quickly, massively and globally.

Virilio (1999) also criticized that speed has damaged the quality and function of public space, which he called critical space. Critical space is a communication space that allows citizens to interact, discuss and debate rationally and critically about public issues, without pressure from authority or private interests. Virilio argues that critical space has been replaced by transmission space, namely a communication space dominated by the logic of speed, efficiency and competition, which reduces the quality and depth of public discourse. The transmission space is a space that does not allow reflection, dialogue and consensus, but only offers fast, abundant and varied information, but also noise, fragmentation and distortion. Virilio gave the example that internet-based information media, such as social media, blogs, forums, and so on, are examples of transmission space, which can cause the collapse of digital public space.

### Public Space

Initially, the concept of public space was an area that emerged in the space of bourgeois society, a space that mediates between civil society and the state, where the public organizes itself and where public opinion can be built. This kind of public space category can be found in the historical reality of British and French society in the mid-17th century, where coffee shops became the center of criticism in which a new group began to emerge among bourgeois intellectuals and aristocratic society giving birth to an educated group that had similarities in ways of

thinking. Space concept The public entered a new dimension with the decline of the bourgeoisie in the context of increasingly advanced industrial society and the emergence of mass democracy (Habermas, 2010). Public space is an important requirement in democracy, public space is a place where citizens communicate about citizens' political anxieties (Hadirman, 2010: 185).

Apart from that, public space is a place where citizens can freely express their attitudes and arguments towards the state or government. Public space must be free, open, transparent and there is no government or autonomous intervention in it, because public space is also a democratic space or vehicle for community discourse, where citizens can voice and express their opinions, interests and needs discursively ( Hadirman, 2009: 128). From this public space, the strength of community solidarity can be gathered to voice aspirations regarding the anxiety and social injustice that occurs in society. Habermas divides public space, where community actors build public space, plurality (families, informal groups, voluntary organizations, etc.), publicity (mass media, cultural institutions, etc.), privacy (area of individual and moral development), legality (general legal structures and basic rights) (Hadirman, 2009: 128). So it can be concluded that there is not just one public space, but there are many public spaces in society. Public space has no boundaries, because public space can be anywhere. If there are people who gather together and discuss relevant topics or themes, then there is a public space. Apart from that, public space is not tied to market or political interests. Therefore, public space is unlimited.

### Digital Public Space

Digital public space is a communication space formed by internet-based information media, such as social media, blogs, forums, and so on. Digital public space is a development of the concept of public space introduced by Jürgen Habermas (1989), which describes public space as a social arena where citizens can interact, discuss and debate rationally and critically about public problems, without pressure from authorities. or private interests. Habermas argues that public space is an important condition for deliberative democracy, namely a form of democracy based on participation, dialogue and public consensus, which can improve the quality of democracy and social welfare. Habermas also criticized that public space has experienced crisis and degradation, as a result of the domination of mass media, capitalism and bureaucracy, which reduces the space for voice, access and influence for citizens, especially those who are marginalized or minorities. Technology has developed so rapidly that it has begun to influence social life. In the last few days, technology has increasingly developed to have new types of social relations, which are

very different from social relations in previous times (Subiakto: 2023).

Digital public space has the potential to overcome the crisis and degradation of public space, by offering convenience, affordability, diversity and interactivity in public communication, which can expand the space of voice, access and influence for citizens, especially those who are marginalized or minorities (Castells, 2008). Digital public space can also be a space for innovation, creativity and collaboration, which can produce new knowledge, ideas and solutions to public problems (Benkler, 2006). Public area Digital can also be a space for education, literacy and conscientization, which can increase citizens' knowledge, skills and critical awareness about public issues (Jenkins, 2009).

However, digital public spaces also face challenges and threats from the politics of speed, which can reduce the quality and function of digital public spaces. Several phenomena that can show the collapse of digital public space as a result of speed politics are polarization, disinformation, populism, *trolling*, and hate speech. Polarization can be seen as a condition in which citizens are divided into conflicting groups and are unwilling to compromise in their views and attitudes on public issues.

Polarization can occur as a result of the speed of information media, which can influence the process of forming public opinion, which should be based on rational and critical discussion and deliberation, but becomes based on spontaneous and impulsive emotions and affection. The speed of information media can also amplify the effect of the filter *bubble* and echo *chamber*, namely the phenomenon in which citizens are only exposed to information that matches their views and preferences, and ignore or reject information that differs or contradicts them. This can cause citizens to become less open, tolerant, and empathetic towards other groups, and more fanatical, radical, and extreme in their views and attitudes (Sunstein, 2017).

Furthermore, disinformation is seen as false, misleading, or false information, which is spread intentionally or unintentionally, with the aim of influencing citizens' opinions, attitudes, or behavior regarding public issues. Disinformation can occur as a result of the speed of information media, which can reduce the quality and accuracy of information, which should be based on valid, reliable and verified facts, data and evidence, but becomes based on opinions, speculation and rumors that are unclear, not complete, or incorrect. The speed of information media can also accelerate the spread and virality of disinformation, which can create confusion, distrust, and fear among citizens, and can damage the reputation, credibility, and

authority of official, professional, and responsible sources of information, such as governments, media, and academics (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017).

Then populism is seen as a political ideology that claims to represent the interests and aspirations of ordinary people, who are considered victims of the political, economic and cultural elite, who are considered enemies and traitors to the people. Populism can occur as a result of the speed of information media, which can influence the process of forming political identity. The speed of information media can also strengthen the mobilization and persuasion effects of populism, which can attract and captivate citizens, especially those who feel dissatisfied, angry or afraid of social, political and economic conditions, and can offer easy, fast, solutions. and radical, but also has the potential to threaten democratic values, such as pluralism, human rights and law (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017).

The next explanation is trolling which relates to provocative, disturbing, or insulting communication behavior, carried out with the aim of causing negative reactions, conflict, or controversy among citizens in the digital public space. Trolling can occur as a result of the speed of information media, which can reduce communication ethics and norms, which should be based on courtesy, respect and responsibility, but become based on fun, sensation and anonymity. The speed of information media can also strengthen the destructive effects of trolling, which can damage the atmosphere, quality and function of digital public spaces, which should be spaces of deliberation, dialogue and consensus, but instead become spaces of confrontation, aggression and violence (Hardaker, 2010).

The last is related to hate speech which is an expression of hatred, hostility or discrimination against certain groups. This hatred can be based on their identity, such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and so on. Hate speech can occur as a result of the speed of information media, which can reduce tolerance and solidarity among citizens, which should be based on respect, recognition and protection of diversity and human rights, but become based on fear, prejudice and stereotypes against groups. other. The speed of information media can also strengthen the effects of intimidation and marginalization of hate speech, which can cause pain, trauma and injustice for targeted groups, and can lead to conflict, violence and human rights violations (Gagliardone et al., 2015).

### III. DISCUSSION

#### Information Accidents in Digital Space

The process of disseminating and consuming information in the digital space has become an activity that is currently a primary need for every human being. This is accompanied by the increasing number of internet users in the world. Indonesia is no exception. Based on reports from We are Social and Meltwater (2023), internet users in Indonesia reached 212.9 million out of a total population of 276.4 million people. Apart from that, active social media users were recorded at 167 million users. However, in the report there are quite interesting things related to the number of cellular mobile connections. The number is 353.8 million and is recorded to be 128% greater than the total population of Indonesia.

This phenomenon is certainly very interesting because it is related to the number of people connected to the internet. The assumption of this condition is that almost everyone in Indonesia has an internet network in their hands. Even if you look at the numbers cellular *mobile*-This indicates that each person has the potential to hold more than one device *smartphone*. The reported data also explains the internet usage time of Indonesian people. It is recorded that people in Indonesia spend an average of 7 hours 42 minutes surfing the internet every day. Apart from that, the highest reason people access the internet is to search for information with a percentage of 83.2%. Of course, this is the most common reason. But by understanding From this, it can be seen that the potential for digital accidents related to this dromological context is large.

Public spaces can basically be used as a vehicle for people to express their opinions (Simarta, 2014). This includes everyone's efforts to provide all information in new media, whether through personal websites, blogs, social media, and so on. Of course, with the existence of digital space, providing this information has become very easy. In fact, anyone can do it without needing to look at the rules for the production and publication of this information. Moreover, in this case speed is an important aspect so that the information can be immediately disseminated and read by the audience.

But in the end this convenience brought humans into a state of war. In this case, information war on a digital basis. Quoting Sun Tzu's statement (Virilio, 2006) who said speed *is the essence of war*. This statement refers to a concept where speed has the essence of warfare. Speed can refer to a party's ability to strengthen its power in a political context. Especially in an effort to gain power and influence in the social sphere. In this case, the development of digitalization is of course very significant related with the condition of speed as a tool of war. Especially when seeing information can be a powerful propaganda tool in shaping public opinion in the wider community.



Based on this view, Virilio (2006) then emphasized the fact that strategic value can be shifted in the context of war. Because strategic values that only talk about place can be overridden by speed that can also control space. Place value is ultimately related to the issue of ownership of time in territorial grabbing efforts. This shows that mastering information quickly to convey, especially being able to influence the public will certainly have a big impact on social life. Especially when certain information is full of interest from the producer.

### **Factors Influencing the Collapse of the Digital Public Space**

Looking at the collapse of the digital public space today, the quality is decreasing in terms of meaningful information exchange, healthy opinion formation, and constructive discussion. This can threaten the integrity of democracy and hinder the development of an inclusive and cultured society. The author looks at several factors that influence the collapse of the digital public space, including:

- i. Dissemination of False or Unreliable Information, where In the era of social media and the internet, information can easily be spread without adequate verification. When false or unreliable information is widespread, the digital public space can be filled with rumors, hoaxes or damaging narratives.
- ii. Existence of Platform Algorithms: Algorithms used by social media platforms and search engines can influence what users see. These algorithms are often designed to increase interaction and engagement, which can result in more controversial or sensational content being promoted, rather than content that supports healthy, quality discussion.
- iii. Echo Chambers and Filter Bubbles: Internet users tend to be exposed to views that align with their own beliefs, due to algorithms that amplify echo chambers and filter bubbles. This can lead to polarization and the formation of narrow opinions, as users tend to only be exposed to the same viewpoints over and over again.
- iv. Use of Manipulative Tactics: where certain actors, including governments, political groups, or commercial entities, may use manipulative tactics such as disinformation, propaganda, or cyberattacks to influence public opinion and manipulate discussions in the digital public sphere.
- v. Information Noise: seen in The surge in the volume of information available on the internet can make it difficult for individuals to sort important and relevant information from that

which is not. This information noise can obscure credible and useful voices.

- vi. Lack of Ethics in Communication: Non-compliance with online communication ethics, such as personal attacks, insults, or verbal harassment, can create a hostile and unhealthy environment in digital public spaces.

### **Efforts to Build Healthy Public Spaces**

The politics of speed in the information media space has a negative impact on the quality and function of the digital public space, which can lead to the collapse of the digital public space. Therefore, efforts need to be made to overcome the negative impacts of speed politics, and rebuild a digital public space that is democratic, deliberative and inclusive. Some recommendations that can be given are as follows:

- Increase media literacy: Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create media in various forms. Media literacy can help citizens to become critical, intelligent and responsible media consumers and producers, who can differentiate between facts and opinions, between information and disinformation, between arguments and propaganda, and so on. Media literacy can also help citizens to become active, creative, and productive media participants and collaborators, who can express their voices, opinions, and aspirations on public issues, and can contribute to new knowledge, ideas, and solutions to problems. - public problem (Buckingham, 2007).
- Strengthening regulations: Regulations are the rules, norms and standards that govern the practices and behavior of media and citizens in the digital public sphere. Regulation can help to maintain the quality, accuracy and ethics of the media, and to protect the rights, interests and welfare of citizens, especially the vulnerable or minorities. Regulations can cover various aspects, such as law, ethics, codes, certification, licensing, and so on. Regulation can be carried out by various parties, such as the government, media, civil society and citizens themselves. Regulations must be balanced, proportional and participatory, which does not sacrifice freedom of expression and human rights, but also does not ignore the responsibility and accountability of the media and citizens (Braman, 2006).
- Building online communities: Online communities are groups of citizens who connect, interact, and collaborate through internet-based information media,

based on shared interests, goals, or identities. Online communities can help to rebuild a digital public space that is democratic, deliberative, and inclusive, in the following ways: first, online communities can be a space for socialization, learning, and empowerment, which can improve citizens' skills, knowledge, and critical awareness state about public issues, and can provide support, motivation and inspiration for citizens to participate and contribute in the digital public sphere (Rheingold, 2000). Second, online communities can be a space for dialogue, discussion and deliberation, which can improve the quality and depth of public discourse, and can create consensus, cooperation and collective action for citizens to solve public problems (Dahlberg, 2001). Third, online communities can be a space of inclusion, recognition and protection, which can increase tolerance and solidarity among citizens, and can protect the rights, interests and welfare of citizens, especially those who are vulnerable or minorities (Nakamura & Chow-White, 2012 ).

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This article has carried out a critical review of the politics of speed in the information media space, using the theoretical framework of Paul Virilio, Jürgen Habermas, and Manuel Castells. This article has also provided several recommendations to overcome the negative impacts of speed politics, such as increasing media literacy, strengthening regulations, and building inclusive and deliberative online communities. This article hopes to contribute to understanding and overcoming the challenges and threats faced by the digital public sphere, and to rebuilding a democratic, deliberative and inclusive digital public sphere. The imbalance in digital public space results in an imbalance of information and speed. This can be seen from the speed in disseminating information in digital public spaces which can result in an unbalanced exchange of information. Poorly verified information can quickly spread, even if it is inaccurate or harmful.

Digital public space also Politics has an important role in how information is filtered, presented and accessed in digital public space. Political forces can utilize digital media to influence public opinion, either by using false information or by controlling the flow of information. Apart from that, speed in sharing information can hinder a healthy and quality public discussion process. Controversial or sensational content often dominates, while more weighty voices or differing opinions can be marginalized.

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# Application of Universal Cooperative Principles in Agricultural Cooperatives: A Case Study from Nepal

Ghanshyam Pandey<sup>1\*</sup>, Chiranjewee Khadka<sup>2</sup>, Arbin Poudel<sup>3,4</sup>, Eva Cudnilova<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Economics, University of South Bohemia, Czech Republic [pandeygs2002@yahoo.com](mailto:pandeygs2002@yahoo.com)

<sup>2</sup>Global Change Research Institute CAS, Belidla 986/4a, 603 00 Brno, Czech Republic [khadka.c@czechglobe.cz](mailto:khadka.c@czechglobe.cz)

<sup>3</sup>Institute of Forestry, Pokhara Campus, Pokhara, Nepal. [arbinpoudel31@gmail.com](mailto:arbinpoudel31@gmail.com)

<sup>4</sup>Green Foundation Nepal, Kathmandu, Nepal.

\*Corresponding author: [pandeygs2002@yahoo.com](mailto:pandeygs2002@yahoo.com)

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**Abstract**— This study examines the use of universal cooperative principles by agricultural cooperatives in Nepal, highlighting their importance and the challenges they face. Data from 45 cooperatives, including savings and credit cooperatives (n=17) and multipurpose cooperatives (n=28), and 135 respondents in Tulsipur Sub-Metropolitan City, Nepal were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The study suggests that principles such as democratic member control, voluntary and open membership, and member economic participation are critical to the effective and sustainable operation of agricultural cooperatives in Nepal. These principles promote members' sense of responsibility and ownership by ensuring transparency, fairness, and democratic decision-making. However, the research also identifies several constraints facing Nepal's agricultural cooperatives, including limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, governance issues, lack of technical expertise, and political interference. These challenges could hinder cooperatives' ability to expand into new markets, provide essential services to members, and support the long-term growth of Nepal's agricultural sector. The study concludes that addressing these issues and promoting the adoption of universal cooperative principles are essential to strengthening agricultural cooperatives in Nepal and enabling them to significantly improve the livelihoods of farmers and rural communities.



**Keywords**— Universal Cooperative Principles, Agricultural Cooperative, Nepal, Economic Prosperity, Sustainability.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Cooperation has long been recognized as fundamental aspect of human interactions (Ibrahim, 2023). Indeed, modern cooperative enterprises trace their roots back to traditional forms of cooperation (Akerle et al., 2014), evolving into what the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA, 1995b) defines as "an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise." Throughout history, cooperative enterprises have played a vital role in fostering locally-owned, people-centered businesses while also serving as catalysts for social

organization and unity (Dhital, 2018). Its model emphasizes democratic decision-making and collective ownership, in keeping with the ethos of cooperation that is deeply rooted in human societies. The cooperative model offers a compelling solution for individuals to leverage their strengths and become owners of their own businesses, overcoming challenges such as administrative hurdles and market dynamics (Ribas et al., 2022). As such, cooperatives not only meet economic needs, but also contribute to the social fabric of communities by promoting solidarity and mutual support. (Dhital, 2018). This study seeks to explore the importance of implementing these principles in agricultural cooperatives and their broader implications for the cooperative movement worldwide. By uniting members

in collective action, cooperatives play a central role in driving economic and social development, promoting shared benefits and empowering communities. Central to the success and longevity of cooperative enterprises is the adherence to universal cooperative principles. By examining how these principles affect the operations and outcomes of agricultural cooperatives, the research aims to shed light on their role in shaping cooperative practices and promoting sustainable development. Through this research, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the importance of universal cooperative principles and their implications for cooperative enterprises in the agricultural sector and beyond.

The concept of cooperatives is multifaceted, encompassing various roles and objectives, as articulated in the Statement on the Cooperative Identity by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) in 1995 (ICA, 1995b). Consequently, these principles are reflected in the operational practices of cooperative enterprises. The universal principles of cooperatives, established by international cooperative bodies such as the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), serve as the ethical cornerstone for cooperative enterprise. These principles collectively uphold the values of inclusivity, democracy, equitable participation, autonomy, education, and collaboration, guiding cooperative enterprises toward sustainable growth and community empowerment ("The Seven Cooperative Principles," 2024). Cooperatives offer significant advantages such as minimizing transaction costs and reducing the risk of default, making them valuable financial intermediaries for small-scale farmers. Despite these benefits, cooperatives encounter a fundamental challenge in strengthening their economic viability and institutional sustainability (Singh, 2022). This challenge is likely due to a number of factors, including market dynamics, the regulatory environment, and internal governance structures. Overcoming this hurdle will require concerted efforts to improve operational efficiency, diversify revenue streams, strengthen member engagement, and adapt to changing market conditions. By addressing these challenges, cooperatives can realize their full potential as catalysts for economic empowerment and sustainable development in their communities.

### 1.1 Significance of Applying Universal Principles

The application of cooperative principles ensures that cooperative organizations operate with transparency, fairness, and a commitment to the well-being of their members and the broader community. (Majee & Hoyt, 2011) defined cooperative values as general norms shared by cooperators, cooperative leaders, and staff that guide their thinking and actions. Cooperative principles, on the

other hand, are guidelines for putting these values into practice, rooted in a particular social philosophy. As a result, cooperatives often tailor their principles to factors unique to their local communities. Understanding the importance of these principles in guiding cooperative action is essential to fostering a cooperative movement that contributes positively to economic and social development. In the following sections of this study, we will explore how agricultural cooperatives in Nepal are implementing these principles, the challenges they face, and the impact of adhering to universal principles on their performance and sustainability. By examining these aspects, we aim to gain insights into the role of cooperative principles in shaping the trajectory of agricultural cooperatives and their contribution to broader socio-economic development in Nepal.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Cooperatives: what it stands for?

The definition of cooperatives in the contemporary world has sparked debate between the "essentialist approach," which seeks to define cooperatives based on inherent characteristics, and the "nominalist approach," which focuses on the practical aspects of cooperative organization. In 1995, the International Cooperative Alliance sought to bridge the gaps by defining cooperatives as "autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise" (Ibrahim, 2023). This definition recognizes the essential elements of cooperatives, such as voluntary membership, democratic governance, and collective ownership, while also recognizing the diverse range of economic, social, and cultural needs that cooperatives seek to address. By emphasizing autonomy and democratic control, this definition reflects the principles underlying cooperative organization and distinguishes cooperatives from other forms of business. By providing a comprehensive yet flexible definition, the International Cooperative Alliance's definition of cooperatives serves to guide and unite cooperative enterprises worldwide by promoting a common understanding of their purpose and principles.

A study by Sabatini et al. (2014) demonstrates that cooperatives have a greater propensity to cultivate social capital compared to other organizational forms in the market. This finding highlights the cooperative model's ability to facilitate market exchange by improving contract enforcement mechanisms and reducing transaction costs. The presence of robust social capital within cooperatives enhances their ability to enforce contracts and facilitate transactions, leading to more efficient and equitable market



interactions. In fact, agricultural cooperatives in particular help individual farmers resist market pressures from their up- and downstream partners giving them an opportunity to cut on transaction costs by jointly performing activities related to processing and/or marketing of their produce (Sabatini et al., 2014; V. Valentinov, 2007; V. L. Valentinov, 2005). Moreover, by reducing information asymmetries and fostering a sense of collective responsibility, cooperatives contribute to the overall resilience and sustainability of local economies. The study by (Sabatini et al., 2014) highlights the valuable role that cooperatives play in not only fostering social capital but also in enhancing market dynamics and promoting economic development.

Strengthening cooperatives across various domains such as governance, financial management, business operations, and community engagement is crucial for their success (Singh, 2022). The selection of competent individuals at both the governance and management levels is paramount to ensure effective leadership and decision-making within cooperatives. Cooperatives, as enterprise with dual nature encompassing both economic and social dimensions (Bonus, 1986), must go beyond merely fulfilling the economic needs of their members. Therefore, to strengthen the cooperative enterprise, agricultural cooperatives are guided by universal principles, that encompass two codes: the social code and the market code (ILO, 2017). The social code emphasizes the cooperative's commitment to serve the broader interests of its members and the community, prioritizing social responsibility, inclusiveness, and community development. On the other hand, the market code focuses on optimizing the cooperative's economic performance and competitiveness in the market, ensuring efficiency, innovation, and profitability (ILO, 2017). By adhering to both the social and market codes, agricultural cooperatives can strike a balance between their economic and social objectives, effectively fulfilling their role as sustainable and socially responsible enterprises (ILO, 2012). This dual governance approach enables cooperatives to navigate complex market dynamics while remaining rooted in their cooperative principles and commitment to member welfare and community development.

## 2.2 Cooperatives: An emergence of Social Economy

Cooperatives stand out for their unique characteristics, emphasizing social objectives over capital returns, democratic member governance, and aligning member interests with the common good (ICA, 2015b). By definition, cooperatives inherently incorporate a social dimension, which upholds their purpose, normative values, and principles, while addressing social needs through economic means (ICA, 2015b). Achieving a harmonious

balance between social and economic necessitates a steadfast commitment to the values-based cooperative model, coupled with proactive management of a dynamic and evolving environment (Novkovic et al., 2022).

Achieving a harmonious balance between social and economic goals necessitates a steadfast commitment to the values-based cooperative model, coupled with proactive management of a dynamic and evolving environment (Novkovic et al., 2022). This holistic approach to cooperative management recognizes the interconnectedness of social and economic objectives, acknowledging that sustainable success requires more than just financial gains. Economic democracy can be enacted through a set of rules and practices including collective ownership, flat hierarchies and participation of all workers in decision-making (Malleon, 2014). By prioritizing member welfare, community development, and democratic decision-making, cooperatives foster a sense of collective ownership and responsibility, enriching both their internal operations and external impact (Sabatini & Franchini, 2015). Navigating the complexities of the modern business landscape while staying true to cooperative principles requires adaptability, innovation, and strategic vision (Sagar, 2023). Cooperatives that effectively balance their social mission with economic viability not only thrive in the marketplace but also contribute positively to the well-being of their members and communities (Thapa, 2017).

Emerging from the philosophy and theory of co-operation and the co-operative movement, on the one hand, and from the practice of co-operation as realized in organizations functioning to meet their goals within the economy, on the other (Torgerson et al., 1997), current literature offers many interconnected polemic themes, perspectives and points of departure, some of them conflicting with one another (Novkovic et al., 2022). Cooperatives are strategically adjusting and repositioning their operations, but to maintain a role of acting in the interests of producers, they will need to use fundamental cooperative principles as their primary logic and discipline of organization (Torgerson et al., 1997). This can include services like collective bargaining, access to inputs and supplies, marketing assistance, and various forms of technical support. Furthermore, the point made by Emilia Off and others underscores the fundamental purpose of cooperatives: to enhance the profitability and success of individual enterprises by pooling resources and leveraging collective strength (Torgerson et al., 1997). This is consistent with the core principle of cooperation among cooperatives, where members work together for mutual benefit rather than pursuing purely individual interests. Overall, the importance of agricultural cooperatives remains rooted in their cooperative values and principles, even as they adapt and evolve to changing market

conditions and operational challenges. These principles serve as the foundation for cooperative success and sustainability, ensuring that they continue to effectively serve the needs of their members and communities.

Indeed, the multifaceted nature of cooperatives is a central aspect of their identity and purpose. The International Cooperative Alliance's Statement on the Cooperative Identity aptly captures this duality by highlighting the intertwined social and economic objectives of cooperatives. This recognition reflects the complex reality that cooperatives operate within both the social and economic spheres, often blurring the lines between the two. As (Pigeon & Rixon, 2023) suggest, cooperatives embody a paradoxical nature, being simultaneously viewed as social and economic institutions. On the one hand, they serve economic functions by providing goods and services, facilitating trade, and generating income for their members. On the other hand, they also fulfill social objectives by promoting the principles of solidarity, equality and community development. At the heart of cooperatives is their collective nature, which distinguishes them from other forms of enterprise. Shared contributions, ownership, benefits, decision-making processes and control mechanisms are all hallmarks of cooperative organizations. This collective ownership and governance structure not only empowers members, but also fosters a sense of belonging and shared responsibility (Vadil & Castriciones, 2023). The emphasis on cooperation and collaboration within cooperatives is crucial. It reflects their commitment to democratic principles and participatory decision-making, where members collectively determine the direction and priorities of the organization (Vadil & Castriciones, 2023). By working together, cooperatives leverage the strength of their collective resources and expertise to achieve shared goals and address common challenges. Overall, the social and economic dimensions of cooperatives are deeply intertwined, reflecting their holistic approach to meeting the needs and aspirations of their members and communities (Vieta & Lionais, 2015). This unique combination of social solidarity and economic viability underscores the enduring relevance and resilience of the cooperative model in today's world.

### 2.3 Cooperatives in Nepal: History and Context

Agricultural cooperatives in Nepal play an important role in the country's rural economy, serving as vital institutions for smallholder farmers and rural communities. Agricultural cooperatives in Nepal have a long history, dating back to the early 20th century. However, their modern form gained prominence after the introduction of the Cooperative Act in 1959. The first cooperative in Nepal was formed in 1956. The Nepal Federation of Savings and Credit Cooperative

Unions (NEFSCUN) was established on August 16, 1988 (NEFSCUN, 2022). A major change in the cooperative sector in Nepal took place in 1992, when the liberal Cooperative Act 1992 was promulgated. Nepal's cooperative sector comprises National Cooperative Federation, 20 Central Cooperative Unions, 321 District Cooperative Unions and about 33,000 primary cooperatives of various types (Department of Cooperatives [DoC], 2016). Cooperatives have extended across the entire country and there are currently an estimated 4.2 million members nationwide. The cooperative movement in Nepal began in 1956 with the establishment of thirteen credit cooperatives in Chitwan District to assist flood victims. Since then, there have been a total of 7,598 cooperatives, including 2,979 multipurpose cooperatives, 2,345 credit unions, 1,410 milk producer cooperatives, 154 consumer cooperatives, and 710 other types of cooperatives (Mali, 2005). Agriculture Cooperatives are also found in the areas of transportation, vegetable production, coffee and tea production, wood carving, furniture, the cottage industry, carpet industry, and in ginger production. The sector has been providing direct employment to 50,000 people while it is providing indirect employment to 700,000 people (DOC, 2016).

Nepal's new constitution makes strong commitments to cooperatives, many of which are agricultural. If these cooperatives can make money for their members, they can be an important force for development, contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (Kemkhadae, 2017). ). The GoN, (2015) recognizes cooperatives as one of the three pillars, along with the public and private sector, for development of the national economy (NEFSCUN, 2020).

The co-operative sector in Nepal plays a very important role in enhancing access to finance, providing non-financial services, and helping to improve the socio-economic condition of members. Making Access Possible (MAP) survey conducted by United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and Nepal Rastra Bank in 2014 revealed that 19 percent people prefer to save in cooperative and 9 percent people borrow from cooperative (IFC & UNCDF, 2023). Cooperatives have played an important role in providing credit to those who are unable to obtain credit from commercial banks (e.g., due to strict credit application procedures, including proof of eligibility).

Agricultural cooperatives in Nepal can take various forms, including primary cooperatives at the grassroots level, district-level cooperatives, and apex organizations that coordinate the activities of lower-tier cooperatives (NEFSCUN, 2019). The primary objective of agricultural cooperatives is to improve the socio-economic status of

farmers by providing them with access to essential services and resources (Dhakal, Obrien, et al., 2021; Kumar et al., 2015). This includes facilitating the collective marketing of agricultural produce, providing inputs such as seeds and fertilizers, and offering financial services such as credit and savings facilities. Agricultural cooperatives engage in a range of activities aimed at improving agricultural productivity and rural livelihoods. These activities can include agricultural extension services, training programs, value-added initiatives, and infrastructure development projects. Despite their importance, agricultural cooperatives in Nepal face several challenges, including limited access to financial resources, inadequate infrastructure, governance issues, and insufficient technical capacity. In addition, political interference and bureaucratic hurdles can hinder their effective functioning.

#### 2.4 Universal Cooperative Principles

While cooperatives share some characteristics with traditional corporations, such as having a board of directors and limited liability for investors, they are fundamentally distinct entities guided by a set of principles that differentiate them from other forms of business (ICA, 2015b). With being said that, cooperatives are guided by a set of principles that set it apart from other corporation (Zeuli & Cropp, 2004). The cooperative principles, as articulated by the International Cooperative Alliance, provide a framework for cooperative governance and operation. These principles include voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, member economic participation, autonomy and independence, education, training, and information, cooperation among cooperatives, and concern for community (ICA, 1995, 2015b, 2016; Zeuli & Cropp, 2004). Applying universal cooperative principles is crucial for ensuring the effective functioning and sustainability of agricultural cooperatives in Nepal (Sharma, 1999). These principles serve as the foundation for cooperative identity and practice, shaping the way cooperatives operate and interact with their members, communities, and the broader society (ICA, 2015b). They emphasize values such as democracy, equality, solidarity, and social responsibility, setting cooperatives apart from profit-driven enterprises. In essence, cooperatives are not just defined by their legal status as corporations but also by their adherence to a set of principles that prioritize member empowerment, community development, and cooperation among equals (Vieta & Lionais, 2015). This unique blend of structure and values distinguishes cooperatives as a viable and sustainable alternative to conventional business models.

1. Voluntary and Open Membership: Cooperative principles advocate for voluntary and open membership, allowing

farmers from diverse backgrounds and communities to join and benefit from cooperative initiatives (Rai, 2021). This inclusivity promotes solidarity and cooperation among farmers, facilitating collective action to address common challenges and pursue shared opportunities. Cooperatives is justified as it is open to all persons willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination (Ibrahim, 2023; ICA, 1995).

2. Democratic Member Control: Cooperative principles promote democratic decision-making processes, ensuring that all members have a voice in the cooperative's affairs. In agricultural cooperatives, democratic governance helps prevent power imbalances and ensures that decisions align with the needs and priorities of the farming community (Rai, 2021). Cooperatives accepted the basic tenet of exercising economic democracy through one member, one vote applies and ensures the cooperative as an organization that is owned, served and democratically controlled by the people it served (Khatiwada, 2014). All the members can vote irrespective of their financial stake in the co-operative thus ensuring autonomy of the cooperative from outside control.

3. Member Economic Participation: Cooperative principles encourage active participation and engagement of members in the cooperative's activities (Rai, 2021). In agricultural cooperatives, this can lead to increased farmer involvement in decision-making, knowledge sharing, and collective problem-solving, ultimately enhancing the cooperative's effectiveness and relevance (Verhees et al., 2015). Spear argues that cooperative values lead to resilient and flexible organizations that can stabilize a community economy since members usually have deeper stakes in the community compared to dispersed shareholders (Spear, 2000).

4. Autonomous Operations and Independence: Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members (Dhital, 2018). This autonomy enables agricultural cooperatives in Nepal to make independent decisions based on the needs and aspirations of their members, free from external influence or interference (Rai, 2021). Its essence is to operate according to the policies and rules made by the share members of the cooperative (G. Pandey, 2024b).

5. Education, Training, and Information: Cooperative principles emphasize the importance of education, training, and information sharing among members (Dhital, 2018). In the context of agricultural cooperatives, this promotes capacity building, knowledge transfer, and skill development among farmers, empowering them to improve their agricultural practices and livelihoods.

6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives: Cooperative principles encourage cooperation and collaboration among



cooperatives at the local, national, and international levels(ICA, 2016). By working together, agricultural cooperatives in Nepal can leverage their collective strength, resources, and expertise to address common challenges, access new markets, and advocate for supportive policies (Dhital, 2018).

7. Concern for Community: Universal cooperative principles emphasize values such as honesty, openness, social responsibility, and concern for community(ICA, 2015b, 2016). By adhering to these principles, agricultural cooperatives can maintain high ethical standards in their operations, fostering trust and credibility among their members and the broader community(Osten et al., 2024).

Upholding universal cooperative principles is crucial for agricultural cooperatives in Nepal to maintain credibility among their members and the broader community. By adhering to these principles, cooperatives can operate in a manner that is fair, transparent, and beneficial to all stakeholders involved(Acharya, 2024). In Nepal, where agriculture plays a significant role in the economy and rural livelihoods, cooperatives serve as vital institutions for empowering farmers, enhancing their bargaining power, and improving access to markets, inputs, and services. However, to fulfill their potential and effectively address the needs of their members and communities, cooperatives must operate with integrity and commitment to cooperative values(Dhakal, Obrien, et al., 2021).

Universal cooperative principles such as voluntary and open membership, democratic governance, member economic participation, autonomy and independence, cooperation among cooperatives, and concern for community are essential guidelines for ensuring the ethical and responsible conduct of agricultural cooperatives in Nepal(ICA, 2016). By promoting democratic decision-making processes, ensuring equitable participation and benefit-sharing, fostering collaboration with other cooperatives, and prioritizing the well-being of rural communities, cooperatives can enhance their credibility and effectiveness as vehicles for sustainable development(Moxom & Dave, 2019). Moreover, transparency in operations, accountability to members, and a commitment to ethical business practices are essential for building trust and confidence among both members and the broader community. Cooperatives that demonstrate integrity and adherence to cooperative principles are more likely to attract and retain members, attract investment, and earn the respect and support of stakeholders(Paudel, 2023). Overall, applying universal cooperative principles not only enhances the performance and sustainability of agricultural cooperatives in Nepal but also contributes to the broader goals of inclusive economic growth, social development, and poverty reduction in rural

areas. By embodying the values of cooperation, solidarity, and mutual aid, cooperatives can play a vital role in building resilient and vibrant rural communities in Nepal.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Study Area

Tulsipur Sub-metropolitan city encompasses 160 cooperatives comprising a total of 12,851 (Male: 7319, and Female: 5532) members and have been providing direct employment opportunities to 68 individuals.(Department of Survey, 2077). Cooperatives are categorized into savings and credit cooperatives and multipurpose cooperatives. Agricultural cooperatives, marketing cooperatives, farm-based cooperatives, forest and agroforestry-based cooperatives, dairy cooperatives were all categorically labelled within multipurpose cooperatives.

#### 3.2. Data Collection

The study was held with a mixed approach qualitative research modality where the researcher itself invested on a social approach with direct questionnaire about the context and adaptability of the universal principles of cooperatives and how it differentiates in application and in theory. Whereas, field research to identify the current scenario of universal principle of cooperative was also conducted. A total of 45 Cooperatives (n=45), both savings and credit cooperatives and multipurpose cooperatives were selected from total cooperatives available around Tulsipur Sub-Metropolitan City (N=160).

Purposive sampling, which is familiar with secondary data, is used in the selection process for screening. The Tulsipur SMC office of administration and chamber of commerce provided the statistics used for the screening, which was conducted based on the cooperatives' performance. The respondents were divided into three categories within each sample: executive director, employee, and general member. The respondents were interviewed using KOBO Tool about the applicability and the status of the universal principle being implemented in the respective cooperative. Case studies were also sought to deter the applicability and issue adhering to cooperatives in cooperatives. Their varying levels of knowledge are a result of their varied experiences with the cooperatives' financial mechanisms. A grand total of 135 responses were gathered. Before the cooperatives were screened, a semi-structured questionnaire was created, and it was used to collect data from the intended respondents after the screening process. The questionnaire included financial supporting statements that complied with regulations as well as basic information about the cooperatives.



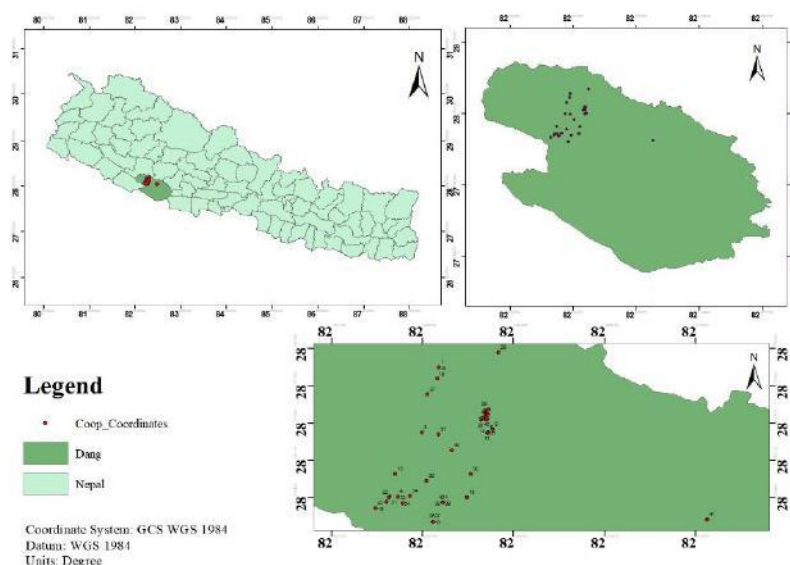


Fig.1 Study Area visualizing location of cooperatives

### 3.3. Data Analysis

The descriptive data from the KOBO Tool was used to generalize the shared understanding of universal principles of cooperatives that is being implemented in the cooperatives of Tulsipur SMC, and to deter the cooperative's requirement of the application of the principles of universal cooperatives, irrespective of their understanding. The average weighted mean was computed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 26. Case study was reviewed to dictate the shared understanding in the regional level to generalize in a global level as well as to specialize in the local level.

## IV. RESULT

### 4.1. Descriptive Statistics of the respondents

A total of 135 respondents from a total of 45 cooperatives (Savings and Credit Cooperatives: 17, and Multipurpose Cooperative: 28) were interviewed for this research study. Brahmin/Chhetris were most of the respondents in both types of cooperatives, whereas dominance of female

respondents was found in both cooperatives. The age group of 25 to 50 age were the major respondents. The respondents were also asked about the awareness of universal principles of cooperatives, where the respondents were categorized based on the position they were at the cooperatives. The total respondents were categorized into executive directors (n=46), employee (n=43) and general members (n=46) respectively. Very less member of the executive board was unaware about the universal principle whereas even less employee was unaware of the universal principle which can be articulated that the employee in the cooperatives were educated about the principle of cooperatives, and they tend to operate in the environment where each cooperative is interwoven into the basic principle of cooperatives. Nevertheless, the general member section of the respondents showed a conflicting descriptive statistic with almost half of the general members were unaware about the concept of universal principles of the cooperatives. This can be interpreted as that the members are only interested on the activities that claimed their self-interest rather than operational readiness.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Respondents

	Savings and Credit Cooperatives	Multipurpose Cooperatives
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
Brahmin/Chhetris	44	58
Indigenous Peoples (IPs)	5	13
Dalits	7	7
Others	0	1

<i>Gender</i>		
Male	20	34
Female	36	45
<i>Position</i>		
Executive Director	19	27
Employee	17	26
Members	20	26
<i>Age</i>		
<25	3	4
25-50	45	66
>50	7	10
<i>Knowledge about Universal Principles</i>		
Executive Director	6	40
Employee	3	40
Members	21	25

#### 4.2. General Understanding of Cooperatives

The respondents were inquired about their general understanding of cooperatives. The cumulative responses from all three categories of respondents were generalized into five headings that summarized into the following:

- 1) Non-participation in profit: Cooperatives are self-operated, member owned entity that delves its operation on the working modality of not gaining profit or benefit on behalf of the organization. However, the member are entitled for the benefit gained and the cost accrued.
- 2) Not doing business with non-members: Co-operative members were found to be limiting their business services and transactions to co-operative members only.
- 3) Providing services to non-members: Cooperatives were found to be sharing non-commercial services that are not related to the financial benefits of cooperative's share-members should also be provided to members.

- 4) Do not rely on favors: Co-operative's share-members should not expect others to give them welfare. Share members themselves should become independent and self-supporting.
- 5) Acting positively: Cooperative share members should act on the ideal of equal participation without discrimination based on gender or any other basis. Positive initiatives and actions should be taken for the benefit of members who are marginalized in the community.

#### 4.3. Level of Awareness of Universal Principles

The respondents were questioned about their awareness of universal principles. The cooperative universal principles are the guiding rules that construct the very foundation of the cooperatives. And the member associated with the cooperatives need a knowledge about what they are and how they matter to the foundation of the cooperatives. The respondents were categorized with a level of awareness about the universal principles viz., <25%, 25-50%, 50-75%, and >75% respectively. The result is displayed stratified based on the type of cooperatives.

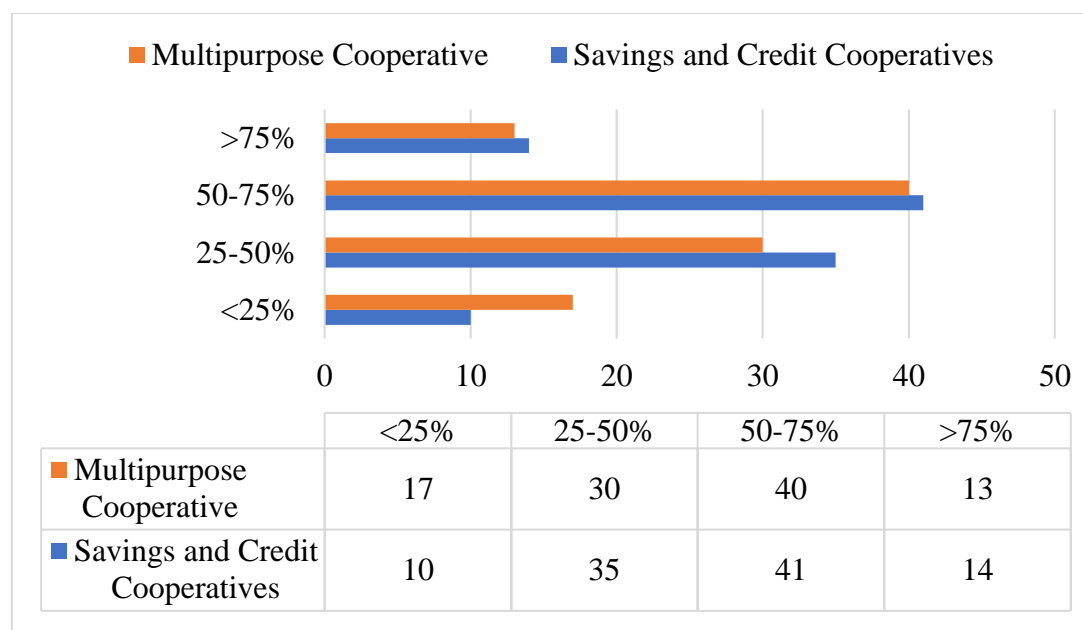


Fig.2 Level of awareness among the respondents

The figure above illustrated high amount of awareness among the respondents of savings and credit cooperatives in respect to multipurpose cooperatives. This can also be related with the high technical issues in implementing universal principles by multipurpose cooperatives in 4.4 as they are equipped with no or lower level of awareness about universal cooperatives and thus weren't able to apprehend the existential of the cooperatives problems in implementing universal principles.

#### 4.3.1. Concept of Universal Principles

The respondents were approached with the intertwined objective of identifying their understanding of universal principles application in their current cooperatives and the

cooperative requirement to implement the universal principles of cooperatives. The respondents were inquired about their knowledge for universal principles, whether they were aware about it or not. The weighted mean across each principle was computed based on the cooperative's practices and cooperative's requirements were determined using SPSS. Voluntary and Open Membership was the most prominent principle found for both criteria mentioned. Followed by member economic participation is the most applicable in terms of importance value index (weighted mean), cooperation among cooperatives was found to be least applicable among the seven principles with the weighted mean value less than 4 for both types of cooperatives.

Table 2 Understanding Universal Principles by Cooperatives Practices and Cooperatives Requirement

Understanding Universal Principles by Cooperatives Practices and Cooperatives Requirement				
Cooperatives' Practices		Universal Principles	Cooperatives' Requirements	
Most Applicable	4.52	<b>Voluntary and Open Membership</b>	4.46	Most Applicable
Most Applicable	4.21	<b>Democratic Member Control</b>	4.10	Applicable
Most Applicable	4.43	<b>Member Economic Participation</b>	4.24	Most Applicable
Most Applicable	4.26	<b>Autonomy and Independence</b>	4.22	Most Applicable
Applicable	4.17	<b>Education, Training, and Information</b>	4.25	Most Applicable
Applicable	3.80	<b>Cooperation among cooperatives</b>	3.95	Applicable
Applicable	4.04	<b>Concern for Community</b>	4.12	Applicable

#### 4.4. Issues in the implementation of universal principles of cooperatives

The table below identifies the key issues in implementing universal principles within cooperatives and how cooperatives of Tulsipur SMC has been categorized based on their performance. The cooperatives who were found underperforming or who were captivated by these challenges that has undermined their day-to-day transactions were labelled as Passive. Those cooperatives who have shown remarkable growth in last few years and also offers many opportunities to fill the gap and witness more remarkable performance with apprehending the universal principles of cooperatives in their daily operation were labelled as Neutral. Nonetheless, those cooperatives who were found to be performing very well capturing every principle of cooperatives in their daily transactions and shown remarkable growth in their financial performance were labelled as Active.

*Table 3 Issues in Implementing Universal Principles of Cooperatives*

Issues in Implementing Universal Principles in the Cooperatives					
S. N	Obstacles	Key Descriptions	Passive	Neutral	Active
1	Limited Member Participation	Encouraging active participation from all members in decision-making processes can be challenging. Some members may be passive or disengaged, affecting the democratic control aspects. Majority of the small-capital intensive cooperatives were captivated by these challenges.	Swajan MCC, Shiva Shikar MCC, Somnath Agriculture MC, Bhagya Agriculture MC	Hamro Rajakot MCC, Ekata SCC, Jyoti Mahila SCC	Hamro Pahunch MCC, Miteri SCC, Rapti SCC
2	Limited Awareness and Understanding	Many agricultural cooperatives lack comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the universal cooperative principles, leading to challenges in their effective implementation. This limited awareness hampers efforts to align cooperative practices with the core principles of voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, and member economic participation.	Samjhana MCC, Shriram Agriculture MC, ShivaShikar MCC	Hamro Rajakot MCC, Balapur Janakrishi MC, Rara SCC	Hamro Pahunch MCC, Saune Pani Agriculture MC, Rapti SCC.
3	Governance Issues	Agricultural cooperatives often face governance challenges, including issues related to leadership, decision-making processes, and transparency. Weak governance structures may result in power imbalances, lack of accountability, and ineffective representation of members' interests, undermining the principles of democratic member control and autonomy.	Pabitra Agriculture MC, Kamal Pokhara Agriculture MC, Manakamana Mil Producers MC	Rara SCC, Saksi SCC, Sahara SCC	Hamro Pahunch MC, Srijana Women SCC, Guru Baba MCC
4	Financial Sustainability:	Financial sustainability is a significant challenge for agricultural cooperatives, particularly in resource-constrained settings. Limited access to capital, inadequate financial management practices, and economic volatility can threaten the viability of cooperatives and hinder their ability to adhere to principles such as member economic participation.	Shiva Shikar MC, Garima MC, Rasta Sebak MC	Tulsipur Agriculture and Forest MC, Hamro Rajakot MCC, Ekata SCC	Hamro Pahunch MC, Tulsi Consumer MC, Siddeshwori Women SCC



5	Member Engagement and Participation	Encouraging active member participation and engagement is essential for cooperative success. However, agricultural cooperatives often struggle to foster meaningful member involvement due to factors such as low literacy levels, and socio-cultural barriers. This lack of engagement undermines the principles of member participation and education.	Goltakuri Mahila Sana Kishan Agriculture MC, Sarbottam MC, Gari Bhagwati Agriculture MC	Rara SCC, Saksi SCC, Darpan Agriculture MC	Hamro Pahunch MC, Guru Baba MCC, Miteri SCC
6	Market Dynamics and Competition	Agricultural cooperatives operate in increasingly competitive market environments, facing challenges from both traditional market players and emerging agribusiness models. Limited market access and changing consumer preferences pose significant challenges to cooperative sustainability and profitability, affecting principles related to cooperation among cooperatives and concern for the community.	Shiva Shikar MC, Rasta Seebak SCC, Ananti SCC	Baba SCC, Ekata SCC, Sahara SCC	Hamro Pahunch MC, Rapti SCC, Tulsi consumers MC.
7	Regulatory and Policy Constraints:	Regulatory frameworks and government policies can either facilitate or hinder the operation of agricultural cooperatives. Complex regulatory requirements, bureaucratic hurdles, and inconsistent policy support may create barriers to cooperative development and compliance with universal principles, particularly in countries with weak institutional frameworks.	Shiva Shikar MC, Dipak Smriti User MC, Subha Sandesh SCC	Janasewa SCC, Baba SCC, Baikalpik SCC, Mahila Utsali SCC	Hamro Pahunch MC, Sahayogi SCC, Srijana Women SCC
8	External Dependencies and Partnerships	Agricultural cooperatives often rely on external stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, and financial institutions, for support and resources. However, dependency on external actors can sometimes compromise cooperative autonomy and decision-making authority, challenging principles of member control and independence.	Satyashwori Mahila SCC, Shanti Agriculture MC, Samjhana MCC	Tulsipur Agriculture and forest enterprise MC, Sahara SCC, Hamro Rajakot MC	Hamro Pahunch MC, Rapti SCC, Saune Pani Agriculture MC
9	Capacity and Skills Gap	Building and maintaining the capacity of agricultural cooperatives and their members is essential for effective governance, management, and operations. However, cooperatives may face challenges in accessing training, technical assistance, and expertise, resulting in skill gaps and limited institutional capacity to adhere to universal principles effectively.	Tulsipur SCC, Arundoya MCC, Fulwari Agriculture MC	Jyoti Mahila SCC, Balapur Janakrishi MC, Ekata SCC	Siddeshwori Women SCC, Guru Baba MCC, Miteri SCC.

Majority of multipurpose cooperatives were found to be underperforming and struggling to cope with the problems of cooperatives and facing obstacles and hurdles in

implementing the universal principles of cooperatives. Savings and Credit Cooperatives were found to be neutral in performance as they were found to be operating on a daily

basis, suggesting more outreach to the members of the cooperatives. Despite the fact that SCCs were operating on a daily basis, the issues of governance, member engagement and participation, market dynamics and competition, regulatory and policy constraints, and capacity building and skills gap were still prominent and need urgent attention. Cooperatives that have established themselves as financial institutions in Tulsipur and have performed well even during the economic emergency period have shown remarkable response to the issues of implementation of universal principles. For instance, Hamro Pahunch Multipurpose Cooperatives Limited have developed around 33 regulations that enables the securing cooperative governance and avoid regulatory and political level constraints, while they have also established and supported a community school, a radio station, various dairy consumption unit, a petrol station and many more social and civic duty that adheres to generate awareness and understanding among the cooperative members. Similarly,

they have started vocational learning program to enhance member participation and also supported community level forest-based enterprises which also promotes member engagement and participation in the cooperative ensuring financial sustainability. Overall, the cooperatives listed in the active column marked their unwavering commitment and application of their financial transactions and cooperative operations adhering to the universal principles of cooperatives.

#### 4.5. Key ideas and solutions to implement the principles of cooperatives

The table below illustrated the key solutions that need to be identified and weighted mean for each solution were computed and ranked accordingly. The most repeated value for each ranking for each solution was computed and percentage weightage was computed and based on the percentage calibration the most important solution was outranked accordingly.

*Table 4 Solutions to Overcome Challenges of Implementation of Cooperatives*

Solutions	%	Rank	Descriptions
Education and Training	12.86%	4	Providing education and training programs to cooperative members, leaders, and stakeholders to enhance their understanding of cooperative principles, governance structures, financial management, and business operations.
Capacity Building:	7.14%	8	Investing in capacity-building initiatives to strengthen the governance, management, and technical skills of cooperative leaders and members, enabling them to effectively implement cooperative principles and manage cooperative enterprises.
Strong Governance:	10.00%	5	Establishing robust governance structures within cooperatives, including transparent decision-making processes, democratic member control, and accountability mechanisms, to ensure adherence to cooperative principles and promote trust among members.
Financial Management:	15.71%	2	Implementing sound financial management practices, such as effective budgeting, accounting, and internal controls, to ensure financial sustainability, transparency, and accountability within cooperatives.
Member Engagement:	17.14%	1	Encouraging active participation and engagement of cooperative members in decision-making processes, planning, and operations, fostering a sense of ownership, empowerment, and collective responsibility.
Market Access and Diversification	6.43%	7	Facilitating access to markets, value chains, and business opportunities for cooperative products and services, as well as promoting diversification strategies to mitigate risks and enhance competitiveness.
Policy Advocacy:	9.29%	6	Advocating for supportive policies, regulations, and legal frameworks that enable the growth and development of cooperatives, including provisions for cooperative registration, governance, taxation, and access to finance.
Networking and Collaboration	15.00%	3	Promoting networking, collaboration, and partnerships among cooperatives, government agencies, NGOs, financial institutions, and other stakeholders to leverage resources, share best practices, and advocate for common interests.
Technology Adoption	2.14%	10	Embracing technological innovations and digital solutions to enhance efficiency, productivity, and service delivery within cooperatives, such as digital financial services, e-commerce platforms, and data management systems.

Social Responsibility	4.29%	9	Emphasizing the social mission of cooperatives and their role in promoting community development, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion, aligning cooperative activities with broader societal goals and priorities
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Member participation in each component of governance has been identified as the key practices that need to be implemented to adhere to the principles of cooperatives. As mentioned in the table above, member participation in decision making, appointment of roles and general assembly will develop a sense of ownership and stewardship towards the cooperative. Next is financial management, cooperatives can only be able to implement the universal principles of cooperatives if all members of cooperatives are aware of the financial management and accounting reporting mechanism of cooperatives. This will develop transparency towards financial accounting and will seek accountability in both senses, i.e. members to cooperative and cooperative to members. Further towards the assessment of key solutions, cooperatives were building networking and collaboration and providing necessary education and training to the members. To hotspot areas to leverage resources, share common understanding and interests around the cooperatives requires effective education and training to members, employees, leaders of cooperatives to understand the governance of cooperatives and coupled with the common understanding of universal principles within the cooperatives. Strong governance could only be achieved if all the above solutions are rigorously and comprehensively put into action and a robust framework to internal control system will allow further diversification and access to market. This can be ensured by advocating at the policy level, advising at the local government level to the national standard, and developing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) within the members.

V. DISCUSSIONS

5.1. Shared Understanding among cooperatives about universal principles:

Addressing the findings and insights from the study can inform policy and regulatory interventions aimed at strengthening agricultural cooperatives in Nepal. This may involve revising existing laws and regulations to better support cooperative principles and provide a conducive environment for cooperative development (Dhakal, OBrien, et al., 2021). Recognizing the importance of member awareness and understanding of cooperative principles, efforts should be made to enhance capacity building and training programs for cooperative members and leaders. This can empower them to effectively apply cooperative principles in their day-to-day operations and decision-

making processes. The study findings can shed light on governance and management practices within agricultural cooperatives in Nepal. Recommendations for improving governance structures, enhancing transparency and accountability, and fostering democratic member participation can be formulated based on the identified best practices and challenges(Puri & Sujarittanonta, 2016). Exploring opportunities for collaboration and networking among agricultural cooperatives can amplify their impact and resilience. Platforms for knowledge sharing, joint ventures, and collective marketing initiatives can be established to leverage the strengths of different cooperatives and enhance their competitiveness in the market (Cervantes et al., 2023). Enhancing financial inclusion and access to resources for agricultural cooperatives is crucial for their sustainability and growth. Efforts should be made to strengthen cooperative financing mechanisms, improve access to credit and investment opportunities, and promote income-generating activities among cooperative members(A. Pandey, 2022). Agricultural cooperatives play a significant role in community development and social impact. The study findings can inform strategies for maximizing the social benefits of cooperatives, such as poverty reduction, gender empowerment, and environmental sustainability, through targeted programs and initiatives (Dhakal, 2021). Establishing robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms is essential for tracking the progress and impact of interventions aimed at strengthening agricultural cooperatives. Regular assessments of cooperative performance against key indicators can help identify areas for improvement and guide future policy and programmatic interventions (USAID, 2017). By addressing these implications, stakeholders can work together to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of agricultural cooperatives in Nepal, ultimately contributing to rural development, poverty reduction, and inclusive economic growth.

5.2. Hurdles in implementing the universal principles within the subtext of cooperatives:

Currently, the main problems seen in the cooperative sector are related to the establishment, operation, regulation, and effective monitoring of cooperatives(G. Pandey, 2024a). The problems seen in some cooperative organizations are related to good governance and adherence to cooperative principles. It seems that this is the primary problem in the field of cooperatives, while the current recession and relaxation in the Nepali economy has also affected the

cooperative campaign in Nepal. Moral objectives, social objectives service to the members, good quality, cheap pricing, reasonable profit, co-operative principle have been the major challenges for co-operative organization in the present context of competitive market (Gurung, 2015). Low commodity prices, the agricultural economy, operational problems, and increasing costs were the most frequently mentioned problems cooperative management are some of the major challenges faced by rural cooperatives as stated by (Gray & Kraenzle, 2002) in their study of problems faced by rural cooperatives.

When cooperative organizations struggle with governance issues, it can lead to inefficiencies, lack of transparency, and conflicts among members or with regulatory authorities. Many Caribbean cooperatives have failed or are floundering because members perceive that the property of the cooperative is their personal property (ILO, 2017). Addressing these governance challenges is critical to ensuring that cooperatives fulfill their mission of serving the interests of their members and contributing to community development. Additionally, external factors such as economic downturns and fluctuations can exacerbate existing challenges within the cooperative sector. The current recession and relaxation in the Nepali economy may have adverse effects on cooperative campaigns, including reduced funding, decreased demand for cooperative services, and heightened financial instability for member-owners. To address these issues and strengthen the cooperative sector, concerted efforts are needed from various stakeholders, including government agencies, cooperative federations, development organizations, and civil society groups.

Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts from cooperative leaders, members, government agencies, and development partners to strengthen governance structures, enhance financial management practices, promote member engagement, and create an enabling policy environment for cooperative development.

### 5.3. Key solutions to achieve universal principle implementation in Cooperatives.

Some potential strategies are to provide the training and technical assistance to cooperative leaders and members on governance best practices, financial management, and compliance with regulatory requirements (ICA, 2015a). Reviewing and updating regulatory frameworks is to ensure and make conducive to the growth and development of cooperatives while maintaining appropriate oversight to prevent abuses. Launching public awareness campaigns are to highlight the benefits of cooperatives and encourage participation from potential members and stakeholders (Uwaramutse et al., 2022). Facilitating

collaboration among cooperatives, government agencies, and other stakeholders is highly demanded to share resources, best practices, and lessons learned (Cuevas & Buchenau, 2018). Providing financial support and incentives for cooperatives are, especially during economic downturns, to help them weather the challenges and continue serving their members effectively (Khatriwada, 2014). By addressing governance issues, promoting adherence to cooperative principles, and providing support during economic downturns, the cooperative sector in Nepal can overcome current challenges and realize its potential as a driver of inclusive economic growth and community development (Simkhada, 2013).

Enhancing the application of cooperative principles and promoting the sustainable development of agricultural cooperatives in Nepal requires a multi-faceted approach that addresses governance, capacity building, market access, social inclusion, and policy support (Dhakal, Obrien, et al., 2021). Governments can create an enabling environment through supportive policies and regulatory frameworks. Cooperative leaders and members can prioritize education, training, and capacity-building initiatives to enhance governance, financial management, and business acumen. Fostering cooperation among cooperatives unlocks the collective strength and resources of the cooperatives at local, national, and international levels (Laserre, 2008). Facilitate knowledge exchange and peer learning opportunities among cooperatives to share best practices, lessons learned and innovative approaches to develop a learning approach among cooperatives and witness financial performance in accordance with the universal principles of cooperatives. Implementing gender-sensitive programs and initiatives to address the specific needs and priorities of women farmers and ensure their equal access to resources, training, and benefits (Duguid & Weber, 2016). Strengthen collaboration between government agencies, cooperatives, civil society organizations, and research institutions to address policy gaps, promote cooperative development, and advocate for the interests of cooperative members (Novkovic & Golja, 2015). By implementing these recommendations in a coordinated manner, Nepal can unlock the full potential of agricultural cooperatives as engines of sustainable rural development, poverty reduction, and food security. The concerted efforts of stakeholders, including government agencies, cooperatives, civil society organizations, development partners, and the private sector, are essential to realize this vision and build resilient and inclusive agricultural cooperatives for the future.



## VI. CONCLUSION

The findings from the study on the application of universal cooperative principles in agricultural cooperatives in Nepal highlight both the importance of these principles and the challenges faced in their implementation. Universal cooperative principles serve as foundational pillars for enhancing transparency, democracy, and supportive articulation within agricultural cooperatives. By adhering to these principles, cooperatives can empower farmers, enhance their livelihoods, and promote collective actions for sustainable development. Adherence to principles such as open and voluntary membership, democratic member control, member economic participation, and autonomy, cooperatives are institutionalized to empower farmers, enhance their livelihoods, and promote collective actions. These principles enable members to have a voice in decision-making processes and contribute to the overall governance and success of the cooperative. The level of awareness among the cooperatives were measured categorized into four strata viz., <25%, 25-50%, 50-75%, and >75% respectively. Multipurpose Cooperatives were found to be lacking behind Savings and Credit Cooperative for the level of awareness among the cooperatives. The respondents were categorically labelled against the implementation of universal principles and the practice of cooperatives were identified. The study identifies a lack of awareness among cooperative members about universal cooperative principles. This highlights the need for educational initiatives aimed at promoting understanding and implementation of these principles among members. Enhanced awareness can foster greater engagement and participation in cooperative activities, leading to improved outcomes for members and communities.

The key issues the respondents faced while implementation of these principles was lack of awareness, governance challenges, market dynamics, regulatory barriers, and capacity buildings, that hinders the effective application of cooperative principles. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach, involving policy reforms, capacity-building programs, and collaborative efforts among stakeholders. The study also concluded the several challenges hindering the effective application of cooperative principles in Nepal, including governance challenges, market dynamics, regulatory barriers, and capacity building needs. Prioritizing education, creating policy enabling conditions, and fostering cooperation among cooperatives are identified as corrective actions to address the challenges faced in implementing universal cooperative principles. By focusing on these areas, cooperatives can enhance transparency, fairness, and their commitment to the well-being of members and the broader community. Overall, the study underscores the importance

of universal cooperative principles in advancing sustainable development goals in the context of agricultural cooperatives in Nepal. By addressing the awareness gap and overcoming implementation challenges, cooperatives can realize their full potential as agents of positive change in rural communities. Additionally, exploring the role of external stakeholders such as government agencies, NGOs, and development organizations in supporting agricultural cooperatives could provide further insights into potential solutions and interventions.

The integration of cooperative principles into the core operations and decision-making processes of cooperatives in Nepal is essential for their success and alignment with sustainable development goals. By embracing these principles and effectively interweaving them into their practices, cooperatives can fulfill their dual economic and social objectives, empower smallholder farmers, promote sustainable practices, and contribute to the overall development of communities. By prioritizing economic participation and autonomy, cooperatives empower smallholder farmers to have a stake in the economic activities of the cooperative. This can lead to increased income generation, improved market access, and enhanced livelihoods for members. By promoting democratic decision-making processes and ensuring inclusivity, cooperatives can empower marginalized groups, promote gender equality, and address social inequalities. By integrating principles of environmental stewardship and resource conservation into their operations, cooperatives can promote sustainable farming methods, reduce environmental degradation, and contribute to climate resilience. Through initiatives such as education and training programs, infrastructure development, and social welfare projects, cooperatives can address local needs and improve the quality of life for community members. The integration of cooperative principles into sustainable development goals ensures alignment with broader global objectives, such as poverty alleviation, food security, and environmental sustainability. Cooperatives can actively contribute to achieving these goals by leveraging their collective strengths and resources for the benefit of society as a whole. Overall, the success of the cooperative movement in Nepal depends on its ability to fully embrace and integrate cooperative principles into its operations and decision-making processes. By doing so, cooperatives can not only thrive economically, but also make meaningful contributions to social progress, environmental sustainability, and community development.

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# EFL teachers' perceptions of their roles at a Vietnamese English Center

Vo Thi Hieu Thao, Nguyen Thi Kieu Thu

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**Abstract**— This study investigated the perceptions of EFL teachers regarding their roles at Hai Hoa English Center in Vietnam. The research aimed to explore teachers' perceptions of five key roles: facilitator, counselor, resource provider, learning coach, and self-access center manager. A questionnaire was administered to 25 teachers at the language center. The findings revealed that teachers strongly perceived their roles as facilitators and counselors, emphasizing the importance of providing personalized guidance, promoting collaboration, and adapting communication styles to cultural norms. The roles of learning coach, resource provider, and self-access center manager were also acknowledged, but considered less crucial compared to facilitator and counselor roles. The results suggest that language learning centers should provide targeted professional development opportunities and resources to support teachers in fulfilling these roles effectively. This study contributes to the understanding of EFL teacher roles in the Vietnamese context and offers valuable implications for teacher training and language center management.



**Keywords**— EFL teacher roles, English language centers, English language education, teacher perceptions, Vietnamese context

## I. INTRODUCTION

In EFL education contexts worldwide, teachers are considered essential facilitators impacting all aspects of classroom language instruction and learning. As noted in a comprehensive literature review by Clark (2020), extensive research highlights the vital roles teachers play in areas like curriculum design, material preparation, teaching methods, classroom management, assessment processes, skill instruction and more. Teachers influence everything from students cognitive and linguistic development to motivation, engagement and future independent learning capacities (William & Dwyer, 2022). However, there can be mismatch between student needs/preferences and teacher practices as found in Garcia's (2021) multi-country study of tertiary EFL education. The researcher surfaced significant gaps in preferred teaching styles, activity formats and even target language skills between teachers and students. Garcia argues addressing these priority divergences can optimize outcomes. This underscores the value of investigating

specific teacher roles from both teacher and student lenses within unique cultural and institutional EFL contexts.

In Vietnam specifically, English language education (ELE) has undergone major reforms, elevating the need for qualified English teachers across different sectors and settings (Le & Chen, 2018). As university programs expand and private language centers proliferate, understanding teacher and learner perspectives can help improve EFL instruction. For example, a study by Nguyen et al. (2023) examined high school EFL teachers implementing new competency-based curriculum. Via focus groups, instructors surfaced challenges around lacking teacher training, materials, and assessment alignment to syllabus goals. Researchers concluded addressing these gaps at the program leadership level could better support teachers in delivering quality education.

At the university level, Phuong (2017) surveyed EFL instructors about ongoing English teaching reforms in



Vietnam. Teachers perceived requiring standardized international certifications (e.g. IELTS score minimums) as beneficial for enhancing teacher qualifications. However, they remained concerned about exam-focused rather than communicative-based teaching, limited practical training, and student motivational issues, which still impede instructional quality. Phuong recommends revised teacher training and recruitment policies to select candidates suited for student-centered teaching. Ngoc and Iwashita (2012) went further by comparing university student and teacher attitudes around communicative language teaching (CLT), a key ELE reform priority. While most instructors endorsed CLT theoretically, classroom observations revealed lecture-based grammar instruction remained common in practice. Students expressed desire for more communicative activities, games, dialogues and pair work to activate their English. The approach mismatch highlights need for better teacher development and monitoring to enable CLT adoption.

Overall, the literature underscores how surveying Vietnamese EFL teachers and students can clarify gaps in practices, beliefs or development support hindering quality instruction. Tailoring teacher role enhancement initiatives and ELE reforms accordingly may optimize classroom language education. As Le and Le (2022) conclude from their research on teachers' perceptions, facilitating open dialogues between policymakers, institutional leadership and EFL educators can help advance reforms most effectively.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Teachers' Roles in EFL Learning

EFL teachers serve critical functions shaping student language proficiency development, engagement and future learning trajectories. However, prior research suggests teacher roles are often not optimally aligned to facilitate quality instruction and outcomes for students. As Nguyen et al. (2017) discusses, Vietnamese learning contexts frequently surface mismatches between student needs/preferences and teacher practices regarding aspects like activities, skills focus, teaching styles and even classroom climate. Students may desire more interactive, communicative methods while teachers default to traditional lecture-based grammar instruction.

Additionally, EFL education sectors like private language centers feature wide variability in teacher qualifications, methods and effectiveness (Truong, 2017). Allowing autonomy without governance can exacerbate suboptimal teaching. As Tran (2018) argues, many centers lack teaching standards, coordination, development mechanisms and accountability processes to ensure teacher

quality. Thus, students risk inadequate language gains despite investment. As Phuong (2022) concludes from a multi-site case study, centers displaying unclear teacher expectations and development processes displayed student dissatisfaction, teacher confusion and leadership frustration with subpar English gains after program completion. Examining and clarifying optimal teacher roles is, therefore, critical.

### 2.2 Key Teacher Roles in EFL Contexts

Extensive research underscores several key teacher roles that facilitate effective EFL instruction and positive student outcomes across global contexts. These roles encompass instructional, affective, material, metacognitive and managerial domains of influence on language learning.

#### 2.2.1 Facilitator Role

Teachers as facilitators enable communicative, student-centered learning environments that promote active English usage. Little (2007) highlights designing participatory activities, scaffolding interaction, and distributing classroom responsibilities as core facilitator functions. Borg and Alshumaimeri (2019) further underscore empowering learner decision-making and goal-setting as crucial for nurturing self-directedness.

#### 2.2.2 Counselor Role

Beyond academic facilitation, teachers provide vital socio-emotional counseling that shapes learner confidence, persistence and wellbeing (Murray, 2011). One-on-one conferencing enables teachers to understand individual concerns, co-create personalized learning plans, and tailor communication styles aligned with cultural expectations (Lamb, 2002; Yashima & Arano, 2015). Such affective investment bolsters student motivation.

#### 2.2.3 Resource Provider Role

Effectively curating level-appropriate materials expands learning opportunities beyond prescribed texts alone. Gardner and Miller (1997) emphasize organizing self-access resources searchable by skill and difficulty to enable personalized practice. Murray (2014) adds equipping learner capacities adapting provided resources for differentiated needs further advances autonomy.

#### 2.2.4 Learning Coach Role

Teachers elevate metacognitive skills that optimize self-regulated learning when acting as learning coaches. Oxford (1990) advocates demonstrating target strategies, verbalizing thought processes, and exploring personalized approaches suiting distinct profiles. Ghanizadeh (2017) evidences explicit strategy instruction

and critical reflection significantly improves language performance over mere knowledge transmission.

### 2.2.5 Self-Access Center Manager Role

Establishing and overseeing supplemental self-access facilities represents another pivotal teacher role maximizing student exposure. Motteram (2017) details center responsibilities spanning intuitive space design, advising personalized study plans, and training transferable learning skills. Actively connecting classroom and autonomous learning enables more expansive growth.

## III. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research Site and Participants

The current research took place at Hai Hoa English Center (HHEC) in Hochiminh City in the second semester of 2021-2022 academic year. The center is located at R4-25 Hung Gia street, Tan Phong Ward, District 7. At Hai Hoa English Center, every student is exposed to not only useful knowledge but also relevant skills to gain the full personal development, including life-long learning. Moreover, the students have been studying English with modern equipment at this school, namely personal computers, projectors, Wifi-system, and so forth. In terms of the English curriculum at the school, there are many orientations for the students. They can select to study English for communication, for exams like "KET, PET, TOEIC, IELTS, TOEFL iBT, etc.", for preparations for overseas study, and so on.

The questionnaire respondents were 25 EFL teachers at HHEC. The majority (64%) were female, while the remaining 36% were male. More than half of the teachers (52%) fell within the 26-30 years old bracket. A significant proportion of the informants (56%) had been teaching English for a period ranging from 3 to 5 years. IELTS Preparation emerged as the most common course, with 36% of the teachers involved in this program.

Furthermore, voluntary interviewees were included. There 3 teachers at HHEC attending the interview. All the teacher interviewees were teaching English at this center in their ninth year.

### 3.2 Research Instruments

The study used two different instruments: the primary quantitative measures (one questionnaire for students and the other for teachers), and the secondary qualitative measures: focus group interviews (for the students and teachers). The questionnaires were expected to collect the teachers' perceptions of the teachers' roles in EFL learning in a convenient way. The focus group interviews were expected to gather more in-depth

information from representative students and teachers at the center.

Regarding the questionnaire structure and content, there were two main parts. Part I gathered personal information and Part 2 explored perceptions of the teacher roles using a 5-point Likert scale. There were 20 single items about the perception of EFL teachers' responsibilities in 5 domains:

- Items 1-4 ask about the teacher's role as "Facilitator"
- Items 5-8 ask about the teacher's role as "Counselor"
- Items 9-12 ask about the teacher's role as "Resource Provider"
- Items 13-16 ask about the teacher's role as "Learning Coach"
- Items 17-20 ask about the teacher's role as "Self-Access Center Manager"

Focus group interview was conducted with 3 teachers, all of whom had been teaching English at HHEC for nine years. The interview used purposive sampling to select participants who could provide rich, in-depth information based on their experience. Semi-structured interview protocols aligned with the questionnaire domains were used.

### 3.3 Procedures for Data Collection and Analysis

Prior to the actual data collection, all instruments were carefully proofread and piloted for reliability and validity. The finalized questionnaires were administered online to the teachers. Totally, 25 teachers finished the questionnaire. Subsequently, three voluntary teacher interviewees were face-to-face interviewed on a scheduled day, with the researcher taking notes of the main ideas.

The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires was analyzed using SPSS (Version 20.0) to generate descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations). The qualitative interview data was analyzed thematically, involving familiarization, coding, categorization and thematic interpretation. The quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the teachers' perceptions of EFL teachers' roles at HHEC.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Results

#### 4.1.1 Overall EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Their Roles

Table 4.1 presents an overview of EFL teachers' perceptions regarding their roles in English language learning. The role of "Facilitator" received the highest mean value ( $M=4.17$ ,  $S.D.=0.99$ ), indicating that teachers strongly perceive their role as facilitators. The role of

"Counselor" also received a high level of agreement ( $M=4.08$ ,  $S.D.=1.08$ ). The roles of "Learning Coach" ( $M=3.48$ ,  $S.D.=1.25$ ), "Resource Provider" ( $M=3.41$ ,  $S.D.=1.20$ ), and "Self-Access Center Manager" ( $M=3.38$ ,  $S.D.=1.23$ ) received lower mean values, suggesting that while teachers acknowledge the importance of these roles, they may not consider them as crucial as the other two roles.

Table 4.1: Overall of EFL teachers' perception of the roles of EFL teachers

Roles	Participants	No. of items	M	S.D
The role as "Facilitator"	25	4	4.17	0.99
The role as "Counselor"	25	4	4.08	1.08
The role as "Resource Provider"	25	4	3.41	1.20
The role as "Learning Coach"	25	4	3.48	1.25
The role as "Self-Access Center Manager"	25	4	3.38	1.23

#### 4.1.2 Teachers' Perceptions of Their Role as Facilitator

Table 4.2 presents teachers' perceptions of their role as facilitators. Item 4, "Giving advice adjusting guidance based on individual student needs" ( $M=4.24$ ,  $SD=1.01$ ), received the highest level of agreement, followed by Item 3, "Teaching students techniques for setting their own English learning goals" ( $M=4.20$ ,  $SD=1.00$ ). The results suggest that teachers strongly embrace their role as facilitators, with a particular emphasis on providing personalized guidance and teaching goal-setting strategies.

Table 4.2: Teachers' perception of EFL teachers' role as Facilitator

No	Statement	N	M	SD
1	Designing participatory learning activities engaging all students	25	4.08	0.95

2	Rearranging classroom seating to enable more student discussion and collaboration	25	4.16	0.99
3	Teaching students techniques for setting their own English learning goals	25	4.20	1.00
4	Giving advice adjusting guidance based on individual student needs	25	4.24	1.01

Interview excerpts further support these findings:

"As a facilitator, I believe it's crucial to provide personalized support and guidance to my students based on their individual needs. By taking the time to understand each student's strengths, weaknesses, and learning preferences, I can tailor my advice and guidance to help them overcome challenges and achieve their language learning goals." (Teacher B)

"One of my key responsibilities as a facilitator is to empower my students to take ownership of their learning by teaching them strategies for setting their own English learning goals. I guide them through the process of identifying their strengths, areas for improvement, and long-term aspirations." (Teacher C)

#### 4.1.3 Teachers' Perceptions of Their Role as Counselor

Table 4.3 presents teachers' perceptions of their role as counselors. Items 7 and 8, "Co-creating personalized study plans with students factoring their pace and weaknesses" and "Using indirect communication styles aligned with local norms when advising students" (both  $M=4.12$ ,  $SD=1.09$ ), received the highest level of agreement. The results suggest that teachers strongly embrace their role as counselors, with a particular emphasis on collaborating with students and adapting communication styles.

Table 4.3: Teachers' perception of EFL teachers' role as Counselor

No	Statement	N	M	SD
5	Having one-on-one meetings with students to understand their worries about learning English	25	4.00	1.04
6	Assisting students in breaking down overwhelming goals into manageable learning objectives	25	4.08	1.08

7	Co-creating personalized study plans with students factoring their pace and weaknesses	25	4.12	1.09
8	Using indirect communication styles aligned with local norms when advising students	25	4.12	1.09

Interview excerpts further support these findings:

"As a counselor, I believe in the power of collaboration when it comes to creating personalized study plans for my students. By working closely with each student and taking into account their individual learning pace and areas for improvement, I can help them develop a tailored strategy that maximizes their potential for growth." (Teacher A)

"In my role as a counselor, I have learned the importance of adapting my communication style to align with the cultural norms of my students. By using indirect communication styles that are more familiar and comfortable for them, I create a safe and supportive environment where they feel heard and understood." (Teacher B)

4.1.4 Teachers' Perceptions of Their Role as Resource Provider

Table 4.4 presents teachers' perceptions of their role as resource providers. Item 12, "Showing students how to break down or simplify complex language materials" (M=3.56, SD=1.26), received the highest level of agreement. The results suggest that teachers acknowledge the importance of their role as resource providers, with a particular emphasis on simplifying complex materials.

Table 4.4: Teachers' perception of EFL teachers' role as Resource Provider

No	Statement	N	M	SD
9	Curating a variety of online and offline language learning materials for students to select from	25	3.20	1.12
10	Recommending reputable learning resources suited to differentiated student English levels and needs	25	3.40	1.19
11	Teaching students skills to annotate texts and create personalized vocabulary cards	25	3.48	1.23

12	Showing students how to break down or simplify complex language materials	25	3.56	1.26
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Interview excerpts further support these findings:

"As a resource provider, I believe it's essential to teach my students how to break down and simplify complex language materials. By demonstrating various techniques such as chunking, summarizing, and using visual aids, I help them develop the skills needed to tackle challenging content independently." (Teacher A)

4.1.5 Teachers' Perceptions of Their Role as Learning Coach

Table 4.5 presents teachers' perceptions of their role as learning coaches. Item 16, "Collaboratively exploring suitable learning approaches based on individual learner differences" (M=3.64, SD=1.29), received the highest level of agreement. The results suggest that teachers acknowledge the importance of their role as learning coaches, with a particular emphasis on collaboratively exploring suitable learning approaches.

Table 4.5: Teachers' perception of EFL teachers' role as Learning Coach

No	Statement	N	M	SD
13	Demonstrating useful language learning strategies during lessons for students to observe	25	3.28	1.21
14	Having students think aloud applying strategies to provide personalized feedback	25	3.44	1.26
15	Nurturing student capacities to assess rhetorical impact of different language uses	25	3.56	1.26
16	Collaboratively exploring suitable learning approaches based on individual learner differences	25	3.64	1.29

Interview excerpts further support these findings:

"As a learning coach, I believe in the power of collaboration when it comes to identifying learning strategies that cater to individual differences. By working closely with my students and taking into account their unique strengths, weaknesses, and learning preferences, I can help them discover approaches that optimize their language acquisition." (Teacher A)



#### 4.1.6 Teachers' Perceptions of Their Role as Self-Access Center Manager

Table 4.6 presents teachers' perceptions of their role as self-access center managers. Item 20, "Arranging space permitting solitary study or peer collaboration as per learner preferences" ( $M=3.52$ ,  $SD=1.26$ ), received the highest level of agreement. The results suggest that teachers acknowledge the importance of their role as self-access center managers, with a particular emphasis on arranging space to accommodate learner preferences.

*Table 4.6: Teachers' perception of EFL teachers' role as Self-Access Center Manager*

No	Statement	N	M	SD
17	Classifying self-access materials per English skill and level to assist selection	25	3.24	1.23
18	Having advising hours for students formulating personalized self-study plans	25	3.32	1.22
19	Providing training modules on goal-setting, progress tracking and other lifelong learning skills	25	3.44	1.23
20	Arranging space permitting solitary study or peer collaboration as per learner preferences	25	3.52	1.26

Interview excerpts further support these findings:

"As a self-access center manager, I believe it's crucial to create a flexible learning environment that caters to the diverse needs and preferences of our students. By arranging the space to accommodate both solitary study and peer collaboration, we enable learners to engage in activities that best suit their learning styles and goals." (Teacher A)

#### 4.2 Discussion

The current study investigated EFL teachers' perceptions of their roles at Hai Hoa English Center in Vietnam. The findings indicate that teachers strongly perceive their roles as facilitators and counselors in the English language learning process. The roles of learning coach, resource provider, and self-access center manager were considered important but less crucial than the facilitator and counselor roles.

These findings align with previous research conducted in various international and Vietnamese contexts. In terms of the facilitator role, Yilmaz and Yavuz

(2015) noted that Turkish university instructors using facilitative, task-based instruction observed significant improvements in students' technical reading and vocabulary outcomes compared to those using teacher-fronted grammar translation methods. Similarly, Le and Le (2022) found that Vietnamese secondary teachers adopting facilitative approaches reported increased student engagement, critical thinking, and learner autonomy compared to traditional grammar-translation methods.

Regarding the counselor role, Hoang (2019) interviewed Vietnamese secondary teachers who perceived their role in providing individual conferencing, positive reinforcement, alternative materials, and family collaboration as central to struggling students' success. Truong's (2017) survey study also highlighted the importance of university instructors offering course selection advising, mental health referrals, and career mentoring to novice students during vulnerable transitions, enabling retention and aspirations.

In terms of the resource provider role, Wang et al. (2019) examined how Chinese secondary teachers developed print, audiovisual, and online materials targeting identified knowledge and skill gaps not addressed through national exams or texts. Instructors systematically adjusted resources for differentiated challenge levels to push perceived student potential. Having autonomous resource access also granted teachers professional purpose and identity apart from test preparers.

As learning coaches, Demir and Okan (2019) investigated Turkish teachers fostering adolescent learner autonomy across individual, collaborative, and digital activities. Effective instructors gradually built metacognitive reflection through modeling then supporting goal-setting, strategy selection, and self-assessment aligned to communicative benchmarks. Researchers promote formally integrating such coaching behaviors into EFL teacher training and practice.

Regarding the self-access center manager role, Li and Wang (2021) underscore EFL instructors as key to facilitating self-access and blended learning centers onsite and online so students direct supplemental activities. Surveying 30 teachers across Chinese universities with established self-access facilities, participant responses indicated three main role categories: managing administrative procedures, coaching learners in personalized progress, and motivating usage and autonomous behaviors.

While the current study's findings generally align with previous research, the lower mean values for the learning coach, resource provider, and self-access center manager roles suggest potential areas for further

exploration and development in the Vietnamese EFL context. Nguyen (2017) advocates for practitioners integrating routine action research inquiry into their teaching cycles, continually examining learner evidence to identify problems of practice and pedagogical solutions. Such reflective, data-driven role mindsets could enhance outcomes and teachers' professional growth.

In conclusion, the current study's findings on Vietnamese EFL teachers' role perceptions largely align with previous research in international and local contexts, highlighting the importance of facilitator and counselor roles. However, the lower perceptions of learning coach, resource provider, and self-access center manager roles indicate opportunities for further research and professional development to strengthen these aspects of EFL teaching practice in Vietnam.

## V. CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Summary of Main Findings

The current study aimed to investigate the perceptions of EFL teachers regarding their roles at Hai Hoa English Center in Vietnam. The research focused on five key roles: facilitator, counselor, resource provider, learning coach, and self-access center manager.

The findings indicate that EFL teachers strongly perceive their roles as facilitators and counselors in the English language learning process. The roles of learning coach, resource provider, and self-access center manager were considered important but less crucial than the facilitator and counselor roles.

Teachers' interview excerpts aligned with these findings, highlighting the importance they place on providing personalized guidance, teaching goal-setting strategies, promoting collaboration, and designing engaging learning activities as facilitators. As counselors, they emphasized collaborating with students to create personalized study plans, adapting communication styles to cultural norms, and breaking down goals into manageable objectives. Teachers also acknowledged the significance of simplifying complex materials, teaching annotation and vocabulary card creation skills, and recommending suitable learning resources as resource providers. As learning coaches, they valued collaboratively exploring suitable learning approaches, nurturing rhetorical assessment skills, and encouraging verbalization of thought processes.

### 5.2 Implications and Recommendations

The findings of this study have several important implications for EFL teaching practice, teacher

professional development, and language learning center management, particularly in the Vietnamese context.

First, the results underscore the importance of EFL teachers adopting a multi-dimensional approach to their roles, encompassing the responsibilities of facilitator, counselor, resource provider, learning coach, and self-access center manager. While teachers may prioritize these roles differently, it is evident that all five roles contribute to creating a supportive and effective language learning environment. EFL teachers should strive to develop their skills and competencies in each of these areas to better meet the diverse needs of their students.

Second, the findings suggest that there may be a need for more focused professional development opportunities for EFL teachers, particularly in the areas of learning coaching, resource provision, and self-access center management. While teachers strongly identified with the facilitator and counselor roles, they may benefit from additional training and support in the other three roles. Language learning centers, such as Hai Hoa English Center, should consider providing targeted workshops, mentoring programs, or peer collaboration opportunities to help teachers strengthen their skills in these areas.

Third, the study highlights the importance of fostering open communication and collaboration between students and teachers to ensure that students' learning needs and preferences are being effectively met. The findings indicate that teachers highly value personalized guidance, support, and goal-setting techniques. EFL teachers should prioritize creating opportunities for one-on-one interactions with students, such as individual conferencing or advising sessions, to better understand and address their specific learning challenges and aspirations.

### 5.3 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

While this study provides valuable insights into the perceptions of EFL teachers regarding their roles at Hai Hoa English Center in Vietnam, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations that may impact the generalizability and interpretation of the findings.

First, the sample size of the study was relatively small, with only 25 teacher participants. Although the sample size was sufficient for the purposes of this study, a larger sample size would have provided more robust and representative data. Additionally, the study was conducted at a single language learning center in Vietnam, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts or geographic regions.

Second, the study relied on self-reported data collected through questionnaires and interviews. While these methods are commonly used in educational research,

they may be subject to response bias or social desirability bias. Participants may have provided responses that they believed were expected or socially acceptable, rather than their true opinions or experiences.

Future research could replicate this study with larger and more diverse samples of teachers from different language learning centers and educational contexts in Vietnam. This would help to determine the generalizability of the findings and identify any variations in perceptions based on factors such as teacher experience or institutional setting. Additionally, conducting similar studies in other countries or regions could provide valuable comparative data and shed light on the cultural and contextual factors that shape perceptions of EFL teacher roles.

Researchers could also explore additional teacher roles or dimensions of EFL teaching that were not covered in the current study. For example, future studies could investigate the role of teachers as assessors, technology integrators, or intercultural mediators. Alternatively, researchers could adapt the framework used in this study to better reflect the unique challenges and opportunities of EFL education in Vietnam.

In conclusion, this study offers valuable insights into the perceptions of EFL teachers regarding their roles at Hai Hoa English Center in Vietnam. The findings underscore the need for a multi-dimensional approach to EFL teaching, targeted professional development opportunities, open student-teacher communication, and continued research in this field. By addressing these implications and limitations, language learning centers and EFL teachers can create more supportive and effective learning environments that foster student success and autonomy.

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# Factors Affecting the Implementation of Cybersecurity in the Philippine Coast Guard

Leopoldo DG Apillanes Jr.

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**Abstract**— This study investigates the factors influencing the implementation of cybersecurity in the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) to ensure national security and maritime safety. The research focused on policies, circulars, developmental plans, equipment, and human resources. A mixed-methods approach was used, collecting quantitative data through a survey of 90 MARSLEC personnel to assess their cybersecurity awareness and perceptions of current measures. Qualitative insights were obtained from in-depth interviews with deputy commanders of MARSLEC units. The results revealed key challenges: not enough policies/circulars and guidelines, limited budget and resources for cybersecurity equipment, and insufficient specialized training and skilled personnel. Despite these challenges, there was a strong commitment from PCG leadership to prioritize cybersecurity. Effective collaboration with other agencies and organizations was deemed crucial. The study recommended addressing these challenges by developing more policies, optimizing resource allocation, and implementing continuous training and awareness programs. By improving cybersecurity readiness, the PCG could better safeguard national interests, maritime assets, and personnel against evolving cyber threats. These measures are essential for enhancing the PCG's cybersecurity posture and ensuring resilient maritime operations.



**Keywords**— Cybersecurity, Philippine Coast Guard, Mixed-Methods, Training, Policy Implementation

## I. INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

Cybersecurity is critical in safeguarding the maritime operations of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG). With increasing cyber threats, the PCG's Maritime Security and Law Enforcement Command (MARSLEC) must adopt robust cybersecurity measures. This study examines the factors affecting cybersecurity implementation within the PCG, focusing on policies, resources, and training.

### Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to identify the factors affecting the implementation of cybersecurity in the PCG. Specifically, it answered the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of MARSLEC personnel concerning cybersecurity?

2. What is the level of awareness in Cybersecurity of MARSLEC personnel in terms of laws, best practices, and threats?
3. How is Cybersecurity implemented in MARSLEC in terms of policies, equipment, and human resources?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the demographic profile and the level of awareness on Cybersecurity of MARSLEC personnel?
5. What are the factors that affect the implementation of Cybersecurity in MARSLEC?
6. What capacity training program can be proposed based on the findings of the study?

### Significance of the Study

This study provides valuable results that can contribute to the advancement of cybersecurity in the maritime sector.

Specifically, the following stakeholders may benefit from this research:

1. **Philippine Coast Guard:** Develop and enhance cybersecurity measures to protect critical infrastructure and operational systems from cyber threats.
2. **Department of Transportation (DOTr):** Promote interagency collaboration, enhance cyber risk management, and ensure legal and regulatory cybersecurity frameworks in safeguarding transportation infrastructure.
3. **Future Researchers:** Contribute to knowledge advancements, support risk assessment, and collaboration in the field of cybersecurity.

### Scope and Delimitations

This study identified the factors affecting the implementation of cybersecurity in the PCG, specifically within MARSLEC units. The investigation combined quantitative and qualitative methodologies to provide a holistic view of cybersecurity implementation factors.

## II. INTEGRATED RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES (IRLS)

### Cybersecurity in Maritime Operations

Maritime cybersecurity is a growing concern globally. According to BIMCO (2021), guidelines on cybersecurity onboard ships highlight the critical need for robust security measures to protect maritime operations. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (2018) emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive cybersecurity framework to address vulnerabilities and threats.

### Factors Influencing Cybersecurity Implementation

Research by Marble et al. (2015) identifies key factors affecting cybersecurity implementation, including policy development, resource allocation, and training. The study indicates that not enough policies/circulars and guidelines and inadequate resources can significantly hinder cybersecurity efforts.

### Training and Awareness Programs

Effective cybersecurity awareness training is crucial for enhancing cybersecurity readiness. Canepa et al. (2021) stress the importance of comprehensive training programs tailored to the specific needs of maritime personnel. Chew (2023) further highlights the role of continuous training in maintaining high levels of cybersecurity awareness.

### Interagency Collaboration

Collaborative efforts are essential in strengthening cybersecurity measures. The ReCAAP Information Sharing

Centre (2021) underscores the benefits of information sharing and interagency cooperation in combating maritime cyber threats.

### Cybersecurity in the Philippine Coast Guard

The PCG's cybersecurity policy, as outlined in Circular No. 11-19 (Philippine Coast Guard, 2019), sets the framework for cybersecurity measures within the organization. However, the implementation of these policies faces challenges, including limited budget and resources (Cabanlong, 2019).

### Technological Adoption in Maritime Operations

Understanding the acceptance of cybersecurity measures within maritime operations is essential. Dwivedi et al. (2019) utilize the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) to explore factors influencing technology adoption, providing insights into the adoption behavior of maritime personnel.

## III. METHODS

### Research Design

A convergent mixed-methods design was used, integrating quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. This approach provides a comprehensive understanding of cybersecurity implementation within MARSLEC.

### Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study integrates the Input-Process-Output (IPO) model with principles derived from the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) see Figure 1. This alignment focuses on the factors of cybersecurity acceptance and adoption in the PCG, particularly within MARSLEC.

**Input Phase:** Drawing from TAM and UTAUT, the study gathers various variables, including demographic data, academic backgrounds, cybersecurity training, and previous assignments of MARSLEC personnel. It assesses their awareness levels regarding cybersecurity laws, regulations, best practices, and threats, and examines existing cybersecurity practices, encompassing policies, circulars, reports, developmental plans, software, hardware, and human resources.

**Process Phase:** Aligned with UTAUT, this phase evaluates the perceived ease of engaging in cybersecurity practices among PCG personnel. Survey questionnaires assess personnel perceptions of adopting and implementing cybersecurity measures, while interview questionnaires gain in-depth insights into challenges and facilitators of

cybersecurity practices. This phase also examines the impact of social norms and influential figures within MARSLEC on cybersecurity adoption and implementation.

**Output Phase:** This phase focuses on facilitating conditions, reflecting elements from both TAM and UTAUT. It involves proposing a tailored capacity training program on cybersecurity for MARSLEC, addressing specific needs and challenges identified. Recommendations are made for improving resource allocation and strategies to foster a culture of cybersecurity awareness and compliance within the PCG.

Figure 1: IPO Model

Input	Processes	Output
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MARSLEC Unit's Personnel</li> <li>- Demographic Information</li> <li>- Level of awareness in cybersecurity</li> <li>- MARSLEC implementation of cybersecurity</li> <li>- Factors affecting the implementation of cybersecurity in PCG applied in MARSLEC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Survey Questionnaire</li> <li>- Interview Questionnaire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Capacity training program on cybersecurity for MARSLEC</li> <li>- Recommendations for Resource Allocation</li> <li>- Strategies to Foster a Cybersecurity Culture</li> </ul>

### Respondents

The study involved 90 MARSLEC personnel for the survey and four deputy commanders for interviews. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure relevant insights.

### Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality was maintained. The study adhered to ethical guidelines set by the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy (PMMA).

### Instrumentation

1. **Survey Questionnaire:** A four-part survey questionnaire assessed demographic profiles, awareness levels, cybersecurity implementation, and influencing factors. The scale options ranged from 'fully unaware' to 'fully aware' and from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree.'

2. **Interview Questionnaire:** Semi-structured interviews elicited detailed responses about practical aspects of cybersecurity implementation, challenges, and training programs.

### Validation of Instrument

Both instruments underwent validation. The survey questionnaire was pretested and reliability was confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha. The interview questionnaire was validated through face and content validity.

### Data Gathering Procedure

Survey data were collected via Google Forms, and interviews were conducted online or face-to-face. Data were securely stored and prepared for analysis.

### Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficients. Qualitative data were transcribed and thematically analyzed to provide insights into cybersecurity implementation and challenges.

## IV. RESULTS

### Demographic Profile

**Age:** The majority (58.89%) were aged 20-30 years. This indicates a trend of younger individuals being involved in cybersecurity within the PCG.

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20 to 30 years old	53	58.89
31 to 40 years old	28	31.11
41 to 50 years old	8	8.89
over 50 years old	1	1.11
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Sex:** Predominantly male (70%), reflecting the current gender composition within cybersecurity roles.

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	63	70.00
Female	27	30.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Rank:** Majority were non-officers (83.33%), suggesting that non-officer personnel are more engaged in day-to-day cybersecurity tasks.

Rank & Current Position/ Designation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Officers</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16.67</b>

CG Security Border Protection Service	4	26.67
CG Investigation, Detection, Management Service	3	20.00
CG K9 Force	3	20.00
CG Sea Marshal Force	3	20.00
CG Surface Patrol Force	2	13.33
<b>Non-Officers</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>83.33</b>
CG Sea Marshal Force	20	26.67
CG K9 Force	20	26.67
CG Security and Border Protection Service	13	17.33
CG Investigation, Detection, and Management Service	12	16.00
CG Surface Patrol Force	8	10.67
CG Security Border Protection Service	2	2.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Years in Service:** Most had 1-5 years of service (40%), highlighting a relatively new workforce.

Years in Service	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 1 year	14	15.56
1 to 5 years	36	40.00
6 to 10 years	21	23.33
More than 10 years	19	21.11
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Academic Background:** Predominantly Bachelor's degree holders (74.44%).

Academic Background	Frequency	Percentage (%)
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Bachelor's Degree Holder	67	74.44
Master's Degree Holder	1	1.11
Others	22	24.44
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Cybersecurity Training:** A significant gap in training, with 93.33% having not received formal training.

Cybersecurity Training Received	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	6	6.67
No	84	93.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Previous Cybersecurity Duties:** Only 1.11% had previous cybersecurity roles, indicating limited prior exposure.

Previous Assignment to Cybersecurity Duties	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	1	1.11
No	89	98.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.00</b>

#### Awareness Levels

**Pertinent Laws and Regulations:** Overall mean awareness level of 2.50 (Aware), with highest awareness for the Data Privacy Act of 2012 and the Anti-Photo and Video Voyeurism Act of 2009.

PERTINENT LAWS, RULES, AND REGULATIONS (CIRCULARS, POLICIES, ETC.)	MEAN	VI
Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173)	2.67	Aware
Anti-Photo and Video Voyeurism Act of 2009 (Republic Act No. 9995)	2.67	Aware
Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10175)	2.64	Aware
Utilization of PCG Provided Email Services (SOP No. 05-19)	2.58	Aware



Policy Guidelines to Raise Security, Awareness, Consciousness, and Discipline on the Use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Devices and the Internet of PCG Personnel (Circular 09-14)	2.53	Aware
Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Data Privacy Act	2.51	Aware
Utilization of Issued PCG Mobile / Cellular Phones (SOP No. 19-19)	2.49	Unaware
Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) Act of 2015 (Republic Act No. 10844)	2.49	Unaware
Philippine Coast Guard Cybersecurity Policy (Circular No. 11-19)	2.42	Unaware
National Cybersecurity Plan 2023 (NCSP 2023)	2.34	Unaware
Electronic Commerce Act of 2000 (Republic Act No. 8792)	2.32	Unaware
Government Procurement Reform Act (Republic Act No. 9184)	2.30	Unaware
<b>OVERALL MEAN</b>	<b>2.50</b>	<b>Aware</b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Fully Aware; 2.50 – 3.24 — Aware; 1.75 – 2.49 — Unaware;

1.00 – 1.74 — Fully Unaware; VI – Verbal Interpretation

Use reputable antivirus software	2.98	Aware
Educate employees on the awareness of best practices in cybersecurity	2.90	Aware
Limit user privileges	2.89	Aware
Be cautious of phishing attempts	2.86	Aware
Conduct regular security assessments	2.86	Aware
Develop an incident response plan	2.86	Aware
Encrypt sensitive data	2.84	Aware
Implement multi-factor authentication (MFA)	2.81	Aware
Implement a firewall	2.80	Aware
Regularly monitor and analyze logs	2.71	Aware
<b>OVERALL MEAN</b>	<b>2.93</b>	<b>Aware</b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Fully Aware; 2.50 – 3.24 — Aware; 1.75 – 2.49 — Unaware;

1.00 – 1.74 — Fully Unaware; VI – Verbal Interpretation

**Best Practices:** Overall mean awareness level of 2.93 (Aware), with highest awareness for using strong passwords, maintaining physical security, and securing Wi-Fi networks.

BEST PRACTICES ON CYBERSECURITY	MEAN	VI
Use strong and unique passwords	3.24	Aware
Maintain physical security	3.13	Aware
Secure Wi-Fi networks	3.10	Aware
Regularly back up data	3.04	Aware
Keep software up to date	2.98	Aware

**Cybersecurity Threats:** Overall mean awareness level of 2.62 (Aware), with highest awareness for phishing, password attacks, and e-commerce fraud.

CYBERSECURITY THREATS	MEAN	VI
Phishing	2.83	Aware
Password Attacks	2.78	Aware
E-commerce and Payment Card Fraud	2.76	Aware
Malware	2.69	Aware
Social Engineering	2.68	Aware
Ransomware	2.67	Aware
Insider Threats	2.66	Aware
Data Breaches	2.63	Aware

Internet of Things (IoT) Threats	2.56	Aware
Cryptojacking	2.56	Aware
Denial of Service (DoS) Attack	2.54	Aware
Advanced Persistent Threats (APTs)	2.53	Aware
Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) Attacks	2.52	Aware
Structured Query Language (SQL) Injection	2.50	Aware
Man-in-the-Middle (MitM) Attacks	2.49	Unaware
Zero-day Exploits	2.46	Unaware
<b>OVERALL MEAN</b>	<b>2.62</b>	<b>Aware</b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Fully Aware; 2.50 – 3.24 — Aware; 1.75 – 2.49 — Unaware;

1.00 – 1.74 — Fully Unaware; VI – Verbal Interpretation

### Implementation of Cybersecurity

**Policies and Documentation:** Overall mean implementation level of 2.50 (Implemented), with significant awareness but gaps in specific internal policies.

INDICATORS	MEAN	VI
MARSLEC has development plan on cybersecurity	3.00	Agree
MARSLEC makes guidelines or SOPs in cybersecurity	2.98	Agree
MARSLEC conducts webinars or seminars to promote cybersecurity awareness.	2.94	Agree
MARSLEC sends reiteration of policies, circulars, documentary reports and/or developmental plan on a continuing basis	2.90	Agree
Infographics about cybersecurity is disseminated to MARSLEC personnel	2.88	Agree
<b>OVERALL MEAN</b>	<b>2.94</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.24 — Agree; 1.75 – 2.49 — Disagree;

1.00 – 1.74 — Strongly Disagree; VI – Verbal Interpretation

**Equipment:** Overall mean implementation level of 2.93 (Implemented), indicating a good understanding of best

practices but room for improvement in regular monitoring and multi-factor authentication.

INDICATORS	MEAN	VI
MARSLEC provides computer hardware components {i.e. Central Processing Unit (CPU), Random Access Memory (RAM), Hard Disk Drive (HDD), Graphics Processing Unit (GPU), Network Interface Card (NIC)}	2.94	Agree
MARSLEC provides standard software (i.e. Firewall Tools, Antivirus, Web Vulnerability Scanning Tools, Application Software)	2.84	Agree
MARSLEC has offices to cater cybersecurity issues.	2.77	Agree
MARSLEC uses variety of modalities (physical, virtual, blended, etc.) to cater to the stakeholders and general public in terms of cybersecurity concerns.	2.74	Agree
<b>OVERALL MEAN</b>	<b>2.83</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.24 — Agree; 1.75 – 2.49 — Disagree;

1.00 – 1.74 — Strongly Disagree; VI – Verbal Interpretation

**Human Resources:** Overall mean implementation level of 2.62 (Implemented), with identified need for increased training and awareness programs.

Human Resources (skills, training, etc.)	Mean	VI
MARSLEC personnel is sent for cybersecurity-related trainings.	2.86	Agree
Presence of MARSLEC personnel in every PCG districts with cybersecurity related duties	2.76	Agree
MARSLEC personnel's cybersecurity performance are evaluated on a regular basis.	2.71	Agree
<b>OVERALL MEAN</b>	<b>2.77</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.24 — Agree; 1.75 – 2.49 — Disagree;

1.00 – 1.74 — Strongly Disagree; VI – Verbal Interpretation

## Factors Affecting Implementation

**Policy Development:** Not enough policies/circulars and guidelines hinder effective implementation, highlighting the need to develop more of it.

**Resources:** Limited budget and equipment constrain cybersecurity efforts, emphasizing the need for optimized resource allocation.

**Training:** Insufficient specialized training impacts readiness, underscoring the importance of continuous training programs.

## V. DISCUSSION

### Policy Development and Dissemination

The study found that not enough policies/circulars and guidelines significantly hinder effective cybersecurity implementation. Simplified and well-disseminated policies are crucial for ensuring that all personnel are aware of and can comply with cybersecurity protocols. This aligns with Vaidya's (2019) research, which emphasizes the importance of targeted awareness campaigns and training initiatives to ensure understanding and compliance with cybersecurity regulations.

### Resource Allocation

The limited budget and resources for cybersecurity equipment were identified as major challenges. Optimizing resource allocation to provide adequate funding for cybersecurity infrastructure and tools is essential. This finding is supported by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework, which highlights the need for continuous assessment and updates to technological infrastructure to mitigate cybersecurity risks.

### Training and Development

The study highlighted a significant gap in specialized cybersecurity training among MARSLEC personnel. Continuous training and development programs are crucial for enhancing cybersecurity readiness. This is in line with Canepa et al. (2021) and Chew (2023), who emphasize the importance of comprehensive cybersecurity awareness training within the maritime domain.

### Interagency Collaboration

Effective collaboration with other agencies and organizations was highlighted as crucial. Partnerships with governmental bodies such as the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) can enhance cybersecurity skills and address evolving cyber threats. The ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre's annual report

underscores the benefits of information sharing and collaboration in combating maritime cyber threats.

### Regulatory and Legal Challenges

The implementation of the National Cybersecurity Strategy Framework by the DICT represents a significant step toward addressing regulatory and legal challenges. Ensuring swift adaptation to changing regulations and integrating these into the cybersecurity strategy is essential. Developing agile regulatory adaptation processes can ensure compliance and effectiveness.

### Cyber Risk Management

In the maritime industry, cyber risk management involves adapting to continuous security evolution to manage cyber risks effectively. This includes technical measures, strategic planning, senior management involvement, and continuous risk assessment to address vulnerabilities and threats dynamically.

### Adoption and Use of Technology

Understanding the acceptance of cybersecurity measures within the PCG is essential for ensuring a secure operational environment. Evaluating personnel perceptions and adoption of cybersecurity practices using models like the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) provides insights into technology acceptance and usage behavior.

### Recommendations

1. **Policy Development:** Develop, simplify and disseminate clear cybersecurity policies.
2. **Resource Optimization:** Allocate adequate budget and resources for cybersecurity infrastructure.
3. **Continuous Training:** Implement ongoing training programs to improve skills and awareness.
4. **Enhanced Collaboration:** Foster interagency collaboration to leverage shared knowledge and resources.
5. **Agile Regulatory Adaptation:** Develop processes to swiftly adapt to changing cybersecurity regulations.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Enhancing the PCG's cybersecurity readiness requires addressing policy, resource, and training challenges. By implementing the recommended measures, the PCG can better protect its maritime operations from evolving cyber threats. This study provides actionable insights that

contribute to strengthening the cybersecurity resilience of MARSLEC and the PCG as a whole.

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# A Review of Chinese Political Literature Translation Studies since the New Era

Peng Yao<sup>1</sup>, Chen Shuangyu<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>School of Foreign Studies, Yangtze University, Jingzhou, Hubei 434100, China

\*Corresponding author: School of Foreign Studies, Yangtze University, Jingzhou, Hubei 434100, China

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**Abstract**— *In this paper, we analyze the core journals of the past ten years with the subject terms "political literature" plus "translation", "political literature", "English translation" on China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI). "I have analyzed the characteristics on translation of political literature during 2012-2022 from the aspects of practical experience, multi-perspective research and national image construction, and look forward to the development of English translation of political literature, hoping to provide various types of reference information for it.*



**Keywords**— *2012-2022; literature review; translation of political literature.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since the 18th National People's Congress (NPC), the Communist Party of China (CPC) have continued to lead the people to achieve world-renowned achievements. China's comprehensive national power and influence have been increasing, and the world is eager to know more about China. China's political literature, especially the works or conferences of party and government leaders, has become a window for the world to understand China, as they provide a comprehensive overview of China's real development and important policies in the moment. In order to make international community understand China more comprehensively and objectively, it is imperative to do a good job of translating political literature. In addition, from the current research situation, there are few studies summarized about the translation of Chinese political literature. Based on this, the current situation of political

literature translation will be discussed and analyzed in this article.

## II. OVERVIEW OF RELEVANT RESEARCH STATUS AT HOME AND ABROAD

Under the pavement of the predecessors, Chinese political literature translation has made a big breakthrough and progress. Zhang Ying (2019) put forward specific suggestions in "A few thoughts on the translation of important political literature", emphasizing that the translation of such literature in the new era must transcend traditional thinking, promote conceptual innovation, and highlight the consciousness of translators' communication to bridge the differences between China and the West in terms of values and language and culture as well as their role effects. Huang Youyi, the executive vice president of the China Translation Association, gave a lot of thoughts to the

construction of China's international discourse system through the translation of the English version of Xi Jinping on Governance. Li Qiong (2015) emphasized the selection of appropriate foreign translation strategies to promote the construction of foreign discourse system in "Foreign Translation Strategies in the Construction of Foreign Discourse System". On the whole, many scholars in the translation field have put forward new requirements to the translation of political literature in the new historical period. That is, they no longer stick to the principle of being highly faithful to the original text, but are more inclined to give equal importance to translation and dissemination. Besides, they pay attention to the authenticity and acceptability of the translation, and devote themselves to making the world read and understand China.

Compared with domestic studies, there are few translation studies abroad. However, some foreign scholars have launched studies on related topics, i.e., analyses of political discourse. For example, Patricia L. Dunmire (2012: 746) who used systemic functional linguistics, critical discourse analysis and narrative theory to study the linguistic structure and rhetorical function of political discourse, focusing on American foreign policy and national security discourse in the post-Cold War period. She also examined how modernist notions of the future are projected through political and policy discourse and how these projections play out ideologically. Massoud Sharififar, Elahe Rahimi (2015: 343) used Hanley's systemic functional linguistics as a theoretical basis to examine the political discourse between Obama and Rouhani's art of linguistic coverage in their political speeches of September 2013 in the United Nations, analyzing how the two presidents combine ideology and power in their political speeches through verb and object and mood. That is, they demonstrate their power, competence, and policies through language. Mehdi Mahdian (2013: 35) and others have done this by employing CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) with special emphasis on Fairclough's (1989) framework and by using Holliday's (1985) SFL (Systemic Functional Linguistics) concept in an attempt to elucidate the relationship between language and ideology involved in translation. The results of the study proved that the use of critical discourse analysis on English and Chinese

helps translators to understand the genre conventions, social contexts and situational contexts of English and Chinese, and to outline the formation of power relations and ideological relations at the level of discourse language.

These studies show that in order to strengthen the construction of political discourse system and help the communication of national image, it is imperative to strengthen the strength of one's own foreign propaganda. In addition, since foreign studies do not cover the translation of Chinese political literature, this article will focus on the analysis of domestic political literature translation studies.

### III. CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF POLITICAL LITERATURE

Throughout the domestic research, the translation research of political literature mainly presents the following three characteristics.

#### 3.1 Studies based on the summary of practical experience

This kind of research mainly comes from experts and scholars who have been engaged in the translation of political literature for a long time. They have accumulated lots of experience or insights in the process of long-term translation practice. For example, Li Qiong (2015: 155), based on the feature that publicity materials and the construction of foreign discourse system are intertwined and closely related in various aspects in the context of globalization, pointed out that the appropriate translation strategy will directly affect the translation of publicity materials. and further affect the success of the construction of foreign discourse system. Therefore, it is proposed that in the process of constructing the foreign discourse system, different translation strategies such as literal translation and liberal translation should be flexibly chosen according to the text types of different contents on a macro level. Based on Piaget's epistemology of occurrence, supplemented by social constructivism's learning theory and acceptance theory, and supported by empirical research on 10 "Chinese keywords", Dou Weilin (2016:106) proposed the strategy characterized by focusing on ourselves, paying attention to differences, continuously strengthening our translation ability, and gradually improving the effectiveness of foreign translation

and communication of political discourse. Zhang Youming (2017: 30) took the English translation of the Policy Address of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region for example and compared it with the Work Report of the Chinese Government, and conducted a preliminary discussion on the authenticity of the wording of each. The paper provides a detailed analysis of the possibility, necessity, and feasibility of the translation, and points out that it is not advisable to overemphasize the linguistic heterogeneity between Chinese and English in the translation of political documents. In order to enhance the "authenticity" and "readability" of the translation, we should minimize the differences between the target language and the original language in terms of wording and phrasing, overcome "Chinglish", thus achieving "successful persuasion" and "effective communication". Shiwen, Liu Runze, and Wei Xiangqing (2019: 79) found that the translation and dissemination of the core terms of the "Belt and Road" political discourse in the English-language media through a self-made thematic corpus reflected the "terminology filter" effect with a cognitive rhetorical nature. On this basis, the authors tried to further reflect on the cross-linguistic application constraint mechanism of core political terms, expecting to provide reference for terminology and the practice and research of cross-cultural communication of political discourse with Chinese characteristics in the new era. Sun Ning (2020: 21) took "On Persevering in Promoting the Construction of a Community of Human Destiny" as an example, analyzed and summarized the distinctive personal style and characteristics of Xi Jinping's diplomatic discourse: being close to the audience, making good use of rhetoric, being plain and simple, and discussing the past and the present, and proposed five kinds of targeted English translation strategies: literal translation, literal translation with annotation, free translation, amplification and deletion, hoping to enhance the international communication power and influence of Xi Jinping's diplomatic discourse by combining the translation purpose theory. Liu Liang (2020) took the foreign language version of On Promoting a Shared Community for Humanity as an example, which put forward some proposals and initiatives to the international community, elaborated China's propositions and expressed

China's views. All these translated expressions of China's solutions to global problems need to adapt to the growing trend of world multipolarity and cultural diversity, and adapt and integrate into the discourse environment of the international community. Liu Kuijuan (2021: 139) took the English translations of Xi Jinping on Governance, Volumes I-III, as an example to explore the basic considerations and translation principles in the process of Chinese to English translation.

From a macro perspective, these studies are substantial results, which are important guides for employees who are involved in the translation of political literature. However, from the microcosmic aspect, such studies come from different translators' subjects. Due to translators' individual styles vary greatly, we need to be sensible when studying them. Therefore, we shouldn't copy them all, but to actively screen them and form our own thinking.

### 3.2 Multi-perspective study of political literature translation

Since the 18th National Congress, General Secretary Xi Jinping's important remarks on strengthening publicity and promoting the prosperity of Chinese philosophy and social sciences have brought the importance of foreign translation of political literature to the forefront. As a result, the translation of political literature has made great development and new breakthroughs, and more and more scholars have carried out research on the translation of political literature. Many scholars have conducted multi-perspective studies on the translation of political literature based on corpus, relevance theory, evaluation theory, discourse cohesion theory, rhetoric and so on. For example, Hu Fengsheng, Jing Bo, and Li Xin (2012: 89) analyzed the practicality and effectiveness of discourse cohesion theory in the translation of political literature, taking the 2010 Government Work Report as an example, and emphasized the importance of cultivating cohesion awareness in translation practice. Taking the translation of the report of the 18th National Congress as an example, Sun Libing and Zhao Jing (2014: 47) discussed how to choose the subject carefully to achieve a clear and direct translation. In addition, a corpus analysis was conducted and corresponding translation strategies were proposed by using the corpus retrieval tool AntConc3.2. Li Xin and Li Tao (2020) took the Chinese-English parallel

corpus of the documents of the Third Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee as a carrier, and compared the translation styles of official English translations of political documents and English translations by overseas translators in terms of linguistic form parameters and translation shift, and found that the official versions were closer to English expression habits and audience thinking than overseas translations, and also more accurately conveyed Chinese national conditions and the image of the Chinese government; in addition, they emphasized the need to strengthen the timeliness of foreign translations of political literature, so as to help the overseas dissemination of Chinese political discourse. Zhu Chaowei (2020: 4), on the basis of sorting out the changes in the connotation of translation, pointed out the shortcomings of current translation theory and practice, and proposed that the issue of translation standards should be rethought from the perspective of foreign communication needs and innovative foreign communication discourse system, and the discourse equivalence standard of translation should be established. Deng Zhongmin and Zeng Jianping (2020:136) took Xi Jinping on Governance as an example to explore the translation of repetitive rhetoric in political discourse. Yu Li (2021:67) took the evaluation theory of systemic functional linguistics as the analytical framework, making the subjectivity of translators in the translation of political literature as the research object, and conducted a study based on the corpus of Chinese and English corresponding political literature. By comparing the similarities and differences between the translations and the original texts in terms of attitude, interventions and choices within the graduation system in the Chinese-English translation, the study reveals the subjectivity of translators are mainly reflected by the differences in the selection of categories such as reliability, valuation, assertion, quantity, quality, process and focus between the original text and the translated text; in the English-to-Chinese translation, the translator's subjectivity is mainly realized by the different selection of resources such as opposition, acceptance, quantity, volume, quality, process and focus between the original text and the translated text. That's to say, under the perspective of evaluation, the translator's subjectivity is reflected differently in two-way translation. Li Tao and Hu

Kaibao (2021) drew on the "evaluation system" (Martin and White 2005), the "ideological square" (van Dijk 1998) (van Dijk 1998) and a corpus-based discourse analysis approach to explore how China's attitudes and positions toward itself and other countries in Chinese political discourse are reflected in English translations through the translator's mediation. Fu Jianan (2022: 74) took the translation of allusions in political literature as the object of study, disintegrated the translation process of allusions into two "fusion of horizon", and analyzed in depth how the translator accurately understands and interprets the inter-subjective "perspective difference" in each "fusion of horizon" process.

This kind of research perspective is relatively new, indicating that the translation of political literature has moved from the initial summary of experience or techniques to a multi-perspective research scope, which is conducive to the development of political literature translation.

### 3.3 Research from the level of national image construction

Foreign translation is an important part of cultural diplomacy and an important bridge between China and the international community. The quality of translation is not only about the success or failure of translation, but also about the image of the country. As an important part of foreign translation, political literature translation should be a good example. Taking the 21st century as a boundary, Wu Yun and Jiang Mengying (2018: 16) discussed the transformation of foreign translation planning from being dominated by state institutions to other available departments, and the transition from the construction of national image in the self-view to the other's view, and considered how China's foreign translation planning can be combined with the changes in the field of Chinese literature translation under the concept of cultural diplomacy. In the light of the changes in the field of Chinese literary translation under the concept of cultural diplomacy, we considered how China's foreign translation planning can mobilize all parties to expand its social network, enrich its practice in line with the market demand, adapt to the communication methods of different times, and better understand the expectations of the receiving countries and improve the output effect, thus providing some reference for China's foreign translation planning. Taking political discourse translation as the research object, Xie Li and Wang



Yinquan (2018: 7) pointed out that enhancing China's international discourse is a decisive factor for China's international image self-shaping through an in-depth analysis of the current situation of China's international image and the characteristics of China's political discourse. Although such research accounts for a small proportion of the current direction of political literature translation, it is bound to attract widespread attention as China's soft power is further enhanced and the demand for national image construction is strengthened.

To sum up, the research on translation of political documents in China presents rich and diversified characteristics, including not only micro (e.g., summary of experience in political document translation techniques) and macro (e.g., national image construction) studies, but also multi-perspective studies on translation of political documents using various theories. On the whole, these studies not only enrich the connotation of political literature translation, but also expand the scope of political literature translation research, which is conducive to providing enlightenment for political literature translation in China, thereby promoting greater progress of foreign propaganda work.

#### IV. ACHIEVEMENTS AND SHORTCOMINGS OF POLITICAL LITERATURE TRANSLATION

##### 4.1 Achievements in the translation of political literature

Looking at the current research results, we can find that China's political literature translation research has made significant achievements since the new era, which are mainly reflected in the following aspects:

(1) As a branch of foreign translation, translation of political documents has gradually become an important research branch in the translation field in China. According to the author's incomplete statistics, the development of political literature translation has been very rapid since the new era, with more than 250 relevant publications. Especially, the research results on translation of political documents in the past five years show a trend of year-on-year growth. In addition, the "Forum on Translation and Research of Central Documents" has been held for many years, and

more and more scholars and senior translators have devoted themselves to the research work of translation of political documents, trying to promote China to the world better.

(2) The scope of translation studies of political documents has gradually expanded. From the literature published by many scholars, the translation of political literature has broken through the traditional level of translation strategies and skills summary, and expanded the scope of research to various aspects based on corpus, translator's subjectivity, foreign discourse, and national image construction. In addition, the groups of political literature translation research have been expanded, including government officials, experts, translators, researchers from research institutions, university teachers and students, etc.

(3) The level of translation studies of political literature is higher. Given the pavement of experts such as Huang Youyi, Cheng Zhenqiu and Wang Longsheng in previous years, the quality of publications on translation of political literature has been on an upward trend. In the past ten years, there were twenty research papers have been published in foreign language or Chinese core journals, including China Translation, China Scientific and Technical Translation, and Shanghai Translation. In addition, the relevant research has been supported by many provincial and ministerial level or above projects, and two of them have been funded by the National Social Science Foundation of China in the past two years, namely, "A Comparative Study on Translation Styles of Political Literature Based on Corpus: An Example of English Translation of the Documents of the Third Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee" by Li Xin and Li Tao and "The Inter-subjectivity of Allusions in Political Literature and "Fusion of Horizon" by Fu Jianan.

(4) The study of translation of political documents has realized multi-perspective and cross-disciplinary research. It not only absorbs many theories in the field of translation, but also unites with the fields of rhetoric, corpus, and the construction of foreign discourse system, so that the perspective of translation of political literature is further extended.

##### 4.2 Deficiencies of political literature translation

Since the new era, although the research on translation of political literature in China has made great progress, there

are still some shortcomings, which are mainly manifested in the following points:

(1) The research results of political literature translation are relatively few. Although there are more than 200 publications related to the translation of political literature since the new era, there are only a few monographs of related research.

(2) The talents engaged in the research of political literature translation are not enough in the future. On the one hand, with the emergence of computer-aided translation technology, translation work has become convenient and fast, but also poses a challenge to the employment prospect of the translation industry. On the other hand, the number of translators specializing in the translation of political literature is a bit weak compared to the fields of science and technology and media. In order to better communicate the voice of China, many forces need to work together.

(3) There is a lack of in-depth research on translation of political literature. It can be seen from the translation literature of political literature. Although the translation of political literature presents the characteristics of multiple perspectives, most of the research papers stay in the summary of skills. These can be verified from the titles of related literature. For example, the terms "translation strategies" and "translation techniques" are used more frequently.

(4) The research system of political literature translation needs to be improved. At present, the research on translation of political literature is combined with many theories and has a wide range of research perspectives, but due to the lack of systematic sorting and professional system construction, it seems to be loose on the whole.

## V. PROSPECTS OF POLITICAL LITERATURE TRANSLATION

After more than ten years of development, the research on translation of political literature in China has made great achievements, but there are also some shortcomings. By sorting out and summarizing the above-mentioned researches, the author believes that the future development of political literature translation research will show the following trends:

(1) The multi-perspective research on translation of political literature will continue to develop and highlight innovation. In addition to combining with related translation theories at home and abroad, political literature will be more extensively combined with other fields, such as the construction of political discourse system. In addition, the research content will develop in a more detailed and in-depth direction.

(2) The importance of translation of political literature will be further highlighted. In order to open up a new dimension of great power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics in the new era and help construct the foreign discourse system of China in the new era, more scholars and experts will be involved in the research. In addition, political literature translation research will set up special research topics at various levels and hold seminars to encourage relevant personnel to carry out targeted and practical research.

(3) The translation of political literature will develop rapidly by means of corpus and computer-aided translation tools. For example, the linguistic characteristics of translated texts can be examined through the intervention of corpus, so as to better guide the translation of documents.

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# Examining Women's Portrayal in "The White Tiger" Through A Gendered Lens

Devina Rathore

Department of Comparative Language and Culture, Barkatullah University, Bhopal, India

[devinarathore77@gmail.com](mailto:devinarathore77@gmail.com)

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**Abstract**—Aravind Adiga's "The White Tiger" explores the harsh realities faced by women in contemporary India, specifically those ensnared within the stifling grip of social hierarchy. The novel provides us with an unsettling glimpse into the multitude of women caught in the shackles of patriarchy. Through a simplistic narrative, it takes us through a multitude of such experiences, from the village women like Balram's grandmother and mother to the fiercely independent, foreign-educated Pinky Madam. Through a realistic portrayal of the daily struggles of these characters, Adiga vehemently critiques the system that denies these women the basic right to voice their opinions. He reveals the existence of the dowry system, the financial strain that families with daughters face, the barriers to female education and upward mobility, and the psychological oppression that women experience in a patriarchal culture. However, by downplaying the agency of some female characters, the story—which is told from Balram's self-serving point of view—may be perceived as maintaining some of these disparities. Notwithstanding this drawback, "The White Tiger" is an engrossing and uncompromising examination of the intricate and frequently tragic lives of women entangled in the webs of caste, poverty, and tradition. Their experiences highlight the severe social and economic divide that still exists in modern-day India.



**Keywords**—Catalyst, Narratives, Patriarchy, Resistance, Subjugation

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Role of Women in Indian Society

In Indian society, women have long had a varied and frequently complex role that has been influenced by a complex web of historical, religious, and cultural factors. Their positions have been intricately entwined with concepts of tradition, family, and community, reflecting the centuries-old patriarchal institutions that have dominated societal dynamics. Investigating the historical and cultural settings that have influenced women's identities and experiences is essential to comprehend their place in Indian society.

Indian civilization has always placed a high value on the cohesiveness of the family and the community, with women being essential to preserving these ties. At home, women were in charge of taking care of the family's needs,

administering the household, and rearing the children. The foundation of home life was built by their labor, both visible and unseen, yet their contributions were sometimes overlooked and underappreciated. Women were often placed in roles of subjugation and dependence, with little opportunity for autonomy or self-determination, despite their vital role in the family.

Moreover, the position and treatment of women in Indian society have been greatly influenced by religious and cultural customs. Patriarchal readings of religious texts and teachings have frequently perpetuated pre-existing power dynamics and inequities, despite the fact that Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, and other faith traditions all offer unique viewpoints on gender roles and relationships.

Due to strongly ingrained societal norms and attitudes, women have been subjected to discriminatory practices such as child marriage, dowry harassment, and gender-



based violence. The introduction of Western concepts of gender equality and women's rights, in opposition to native cultural customs and beliefs, during British colonial administration further complicated the situation of women in India. Colonialism fostered Orientalist stereotypes and narratives that depicted Indian women as helpless victims in need of rescue and salvation, even as it cleared the way for social reform movements and legislative actions meant to improve the status of women.

India has made tremendous progress toward women's empowerment and gender equality since gaining independence, as seen by grassroots campaigns, educational programs, and legislative changes. But in spite of these developments, there are still gender differences in India in a number of areas, such as politics, work, healthcare, and education. Gender-based violence continues to be a widespread and systemic problem, and women continue to encounter obstacles in their pursuit of good education and economic opportunity. Furthermore, the difficulties underprivileged women encounter is exacerbated by intersecting characteristics like caste, class, religion, and ethnicity, which exacerbates inequality and disparities even more.

## 1.2 The Entangled Lives

"The White Tiger," the Man Booker Prize-winning book by Aravind Adiga, transports readers to the gritty underbelly of modern India. The story, which is told from the perspective of an ambitious young man Balram Halwai, who uses ruthlessness and cunning to leave his underprivileged background, highlights the harsh realities that those at the bottom of the social scale must contend with. Although Balram's story is compelling, the way the ladies in his life are portrayed offers a complex and moving picture of social injustices.

The narrative underscores the recurring pattern of women's reliance within the framework of patriarchy. The dowry system, which depends on young females like Balram's sister, is seen as a financial burden, further solidifying the idea that these girls are commodities. A cycle of domestic servitude traps women like Ashok's maidservant and Balram's mother, whose daughters are doomed to repeat the same experience. Many women find that marriage turns into a transaction rather than a happy place to be, with little chance of breaking free from their set positions. The difficulties of escaping a system that controls a woman's life from birth is highlighted by this cyclical reliance. This study scrutinizes Adiga's depiction of women in "The White Tiger," examining how these figures function as potent social critique tools and shed light on the nuanced

difficulties women endure in a society where caste, tradition, and poverty predominate.

## II. STIFLED DREAMS- THE STORY OF BALRAM'S MOTHER

The restrictive ways in which patriarchy controls women's life is a recurrent issue in the book. This oppression is embodied by Balram's mother. She is mute and invisible, forced to work as a backbreaking domestic worker in the wealthy Ashok family's home. Her only goal is to fulfill the men's demands and indulge their whims. Her terrible demise amid a remorseless silence highlights the harsh reality for countless women caught in similar situations.

Born in the destitute village of Laxmangarh, she faces constant challenges in a culture that is characterized by ingrained poverty and hardship. She is forced into a life of domestic servitude and subservience after being denied access to economic and educational prospects. The crushing weight of tradition and cultural expectations also stifles her dreams. From an early age, Balram's mother takes on the role of providing for her family, working nonstop to meet their fundamental necessities in the lack of a dependable male wage earner. Her days are filled with labor and suffering as she faces the difficulties of rural life head-on with strength and resiliency.

She makes an effort, but she can't break free from the cycle of exploitation and poverty because of social constraints on her autonomy. Balram's mother's hardships are a heartbreaking reminder of the systemic inequities that are prevalent in Indian society throughout the entire book, especially for women who reside in rural areas. Her narrative highlights the critical need for gender-sensitive policies and initiatives to address the underlying causes of inequality and oppression by illuminating the intertwining dynamics of gender, class, and caste that impact the daily lives of millions of women throughout the nation. In addition, the figure of Balram's mother emphasizes the fortitude and tenacity of rural women who face numerous obstacles in their struggle for dignity and survival.

## III. THE MATRIARCH: ASHOK'S GRANDMOTHER

In 'The White Tiger' by Aravind Adiga, Ashok's grandmother takes on the persona of a strong matriarch, representing customs and family power in the Halwai home. Adiga's portrayal of the generational gap and the lasting impact of tradition in the face of the rapid changes sweeping through contemporary India is sophisticated and insightful. Ashok's grandmother emanates authority and veneration from the moment she first appears in the book, demanding

deference and obedience from both family members and domestic workers. Her steadfast observance of traditions and rites betrays a profound dedication to preserving the dignity and purity of the Halwai family lineage, carrying on norms that have been passed down through the ages. She embodies the archetype of the loyal wife and mother who puts the family's well-being and harmony above all else. Her unwavering devotion to patriarchal conventions and gender roles define her character. Her dedication to upholding family customs and values in the face of outside influences and cultural shifts defines her role as the matriarch.

Ashok's grandmother is a moral compass and a guiding influence in the Halwai household throughout the entire book, giving family members advice and guidance with gravitas and authority. Her steadfast dedication to preserving the prestige and dignity of the family name informs all of her decisions and deeds. This sense of responsibility and obligation runs deep.

Additionally, the character of Ashok's grandmother personifies the conflict between tradition and modernity as she clings firmly to the traditions and rituals of the past while navigating the complexity of a world that is changing quickly. Her conversations with the protagonist of the book, Balram, shed light on the conflicts of values and ideas that characterize the relationship between the old and new India.

Ashok's grandma is not immune to the flaws and uncertainties that come with ageing, even though she follows tradition. Her portrayal of a vulnerable, fragile figure highlights the universal human experience of ageing and mortality. In summary, Ashok's grandmother is a fascinating character in "The White Tiger," representing the matriarch's power and ageless wisdom while juggling the challenges of a shifting society. Adiga provides a subtle examination of custom, authority, and the lasting influence of familial ties on the social structure of modern-day India via her persona.

#### IV. PINKY MADAM: A GLIMMER OF HOPE

In 'The White Tiger' by Aravind Adiga, Pinky Madam appears as a poignant symbol of dissatisfaction among the wealthy urban elite of modern-day India. Her persona has been painstakingly designed to represent the intricacies and paradoxes of contemporary Indian culture, where privilege and discontent frequently coexist.

Pinky Madam is introduced as the spouse of Ashok, Balram Halwai's employer. She holds a position of relative wealth and social standing. She is a representative of a generation that aspires to overcome the limitations of tradition and

social expectations because she was educated overseas and is used to a luxurious lifestyle.

Pinky Madam appears to be a sophisticated and privileged person on the outside, but her inner struggle is evident. She struggles with a deep sense of alienation and disappointment throughout the book, which is a result of her failure to balance her own goals with the strict expectations that society and her family have placed on her. Furthermore, as she negotiates the complexities of her identity as a woman stuck between the opposing demands of tradition-bound household duty and individual autonomy, Pinky's character serves as a metaphor for the contradictions between tradition and modernity. But in the end, Pinky's attempts at self-promotion are rife with uncertainty and ambivalence. She is nonetheless trapped in a patriarchal society that inhibits female autonomy and favors male authority, despite her occasional acts of disobedience.

Her experience serves as a powerful reminder of the complexity of status and power as well as the frequently elusive pursuit of authenticity and fulfillment in a contradictory and unequal society. In summary, Pinky Madam, who represents the hopes, conflicts, and hardships of a generation torn between tradition and modernity, emerges as a powerful symbol of unhappiness in "The White Tiger." Her persona provides a compelling framework for examining the nuances of gender, class, and power in modern-day India. It also sheds light on the human cost of pursuing personal liberty and meeting social expectations.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Due to changing social, political, and economic factors, women's roles in Indian society are drastically changing. Even though women's rights and gender equality have advanced significantly, there is still more work to be done to remove structural obstacles and deeply ingrained patriarchal beliefs that prevent women from exercising their full agency and participation in society. India has the opportunity to realize the full potential of its women and create a more just and inclusive society for all by questioning accepted norms and promoting gender-inclusive policies and practices.

Adiga explores the nuances of gender relations and the unequal distribution of status and power in Indian culture through the eyes of these many female characters. Their tales shed light on the many challenges and victories that characterize women's lives in a world that is changing quickly by acting as miniature representations of the larger socioeconomic dynamics at work. Readers can learn more about the complicated nature of

gender dynamics and how women deal with the challenges of their social and cultural contexts by analyzing the representation of women in "The White Tiger." Their experiences subvert traditional narratives and illuminate the agency, fortitude, and resilience that define women's lives in the midst of hardship.

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# On the Application of Variation Means in the Subtitling of Short Videos

Lian Ruoxin

School of Foreign Studies, Yangtze University, Jingzhou, Hubei, China

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**Abstract**— Nowadays, short videos have played a crucial role in the spread of Chinese culture. However, the time and space limitations of short videos pose new challenges to translators. Although the traditional complete translation seeks to cover all aspects, it is not able to meet the requirements of short-video subtitle translation. In this paper, the author analyzes the use of seven variation means in the subtitling of short videos about Jingchu cuisine and explores how to use them to break the limitations of the English translation of short video subtitles.



**Keywords**— subtitle translation; variation means; Jingchu cuisine; short videos

## I. INTRODUCTION

Short videos are fascinating and have gradually become an important channel for Chinese culture to spread. However, in the process of short video subtitle translation, there are various limitations. Thus, the article will introduce the current situation of subtitle translation of Jingchu cuisine short videos, the constraints of short-video subtitling, and analyze the subtitle translation of Jingchu cuisine short videos with the variation translation theory to explore how to use variation means to break the limitations of short-video subtitling.

## II. CURRENT SITUATION AND CONSTRAINTS OF SUBTITLE TRANSLATION FOR JINGCHU CUISINE SHORT VIDEOS

Few Jingchu cuisine short videos have English subtitles on major short video platforms at home and abroad. Even if they do, they only have machine translations with

grammatical errors and improper wording, which fail to effectively spread Jingchu cuisine and culture and are not conducive to Chinese food and culture going global. To fill this gap, the author and her team members told the historical stories behind Jingchu cuisine by filming the process of making Jingchu dishes. The author also edited the Chinese subtitles according to online information and translated them into English.

The characteristics of short videos put subtitling under various constraints. “There are two main technical constraints imposed by the multi-media environment: time, and space” (Zoe de Linde, 2010: 9). “Two main constraints of them are time and space. Time refers to the time that each line of subtitles must remain on the screen long enough for viewers to scan it, usually two to three seconds. Space refers to the number of language symbols that can fit on the screen. Sometimes two lines of subtitles are used, sometimes one” (Li Yunxing, 2001: 39). The author found through practice



that the length of the short video and the speech speed of the voiceover staff have a limiting effect on the number of words in the subtitles and that a short video of one minute or so can accommodate about 240 Chinese characters or about 120 English words.

### III. VARIATION TRANSLATION AND ITS MEANS

“The criterion for differentiation of complete translation and variation translation is the degree of integrity of the content and form of the original work” (Huang Zhonglian, 2002: 5). “Variation translation is an activity in which the translator reproduces the contents of the original by means of such variation means as adding, omitting, editing, narrating, condensing, combining and altering according to the special needs of specific readers under specific circumstances” (Huang Zhonglian, 2002: 66).

Huang Zhonglian (2002: 67) points out that “adding refers to the increase of information on the basis of the original work; omitting refers to the overall removal of the information of the original work that is not needed by the readers in the translator's opinion; editing refers to the act of organizing and ordering the content of the original work to make it perfect or refined; narrating refers to paraphrasing the original content, which is to take the meaning from the original work; condensing refers to conveying the information of the original work in a very condensed way; combining refers to the combination of two or more parts of the same kind or with a logical relationship; altering means making obvious changes in the original work such as changing the content or form or even the style”.

### IV. VARIATION MEANS USED IN SUBTITLE TRANSLATION OF JINGCHU CUISINE SHORT VIDEOS

The limitations of short-video subtitle translation make the complete translation inappropriate for the subtitling of Jingchu cuisine short videos, so the author adopts variation means in translating ten dishes of Jingchu to break the limitations of short-video subtitling.

#### 1. Adding

Example 1: 湖北人习惯把“丸子”叫为“圆子”。

People in Hubei (a province of east-central China) call “meatballs” “yuanzi”.

Example 2: 据传当年关羽大意失荆州之后……

It is said that Guan Yu, a famous general during the Three Kingdoms period (220-280 AD), accidentally lost the three prefectures of Jingzhou.

Huang Zhonglian (2002: 94) points out that “the ways of adding can be divided into three kinds: interpretation, commentary, and writing. Interpretation means elucidation, which is the explanation of a certain part of the original work in the translation. The general reason for interpretation is that the readers of the translated language do not know much about certain contents of the information they receive”. Considering most readers of the translated language probably do not know information about Chinese places, historical figures, dynasties, and ancient texts, in the above two examples, the author adopts one of the methods of “addition”, “interpretation”, to explain Chinese unique words. At the same time, taking into account the time and space constraints of short video subtitle translation, the author only added the main relevant information of the words. For example, for the Chinese place name “Hubei”, the author only introduces its location in China, without describing more details about it. This not only allows readers to understand Hubei but also does not exceed the word count or length limit.

#### 2. Omitting

Example 1: 当地官员让厨师用莲藕做出“吃藕不见藕”的美味，其中一位厨师想到了将藕捣碎做成圆子的方法，精心烹饪后……

...local officials asked chefs to use lotus roots to make a delicacy with lotus roots invisible. One of the chefs mashed the lotus root and made it into balls.

Example 2: 他们趁夜色在城池边上构筑多条陷阱，并命军中厨师宰杀百只鸡在城墙边上用大锅烹饪，试图以鸡汤的浓浓香味引曹军将士连夜攻城。

They built traps beside the city wall at night and ordered chefs to cook a hundred chickens in a large pot to lure Caocao's soldiers to attack overnight.

“From the reality of translation, the need is the initial driving force of translation activities, and any information that directly or indirectly matches the reader's needs to a

high degree can be retained, while any information that deviates from it or has little relation with it can be discarded" (Huang Zhonglian, 2002: 95). In the author's opinion, what the original text wants to emphasize in Example 1 is how the chef made a dish of roots without seeing roots. Therefore, the specific practice of the chef is directly translated, but the translation of "想到了.....的方法" or "thought of a method of" and "精心烹饪" or "cooked carefully" are omitted. This allows readers to understand the key information through a concise translation. In Example 2, "军中" or "in the army" is what readers can think of according to the context, so there is no need to translate it. "宰杀" or "slaughtered" is also omitted as slaughtering chickens happens before cooking chickens and it is not such an important step as cooking. The "鸡汤的浓浓香味" or "the strong aroma of chicken soup" is omitted because it is mentioned again in the following text, and readers can easily understand by common sense that it is through the aroma of chicken soup to attract Cao's army to attack the city. From the above analysis, we can see that omitting can effectively break the constraints of time and space of short videos without failing to convey the key information of original texts.

### 3. Editing

Example 1: 据史书记载, 公安人很早就有喂养水牛和食用牛肉的习俗。三国时, 张飞所辖队伍总是上交稻谷最多, 其他将领问有何秘诀, 张飞诡言道: "公安地好、水好、草好。"有人问草与种水稻有何关联? 张飞哈哈大笑: "公安牛肉好吃.....", 公安牛肉的美名自此流传开来。

Edition: 据传三国时, 张飞所辖队伍总是上交稻谷最多, 其他将领问有何秘诀, 张飞哈哈大笑: "公安牛肉好吃.....", 公安牛肉的美名自此流传开来。

Example 2: 公安县是长江上一个重要码头, 过去码头工人搬运货物, 早上收工时就聚在一起喝酒吃火锅, 再回去休息, 因此慢慢形成了喝早酒、吃火锅的习俗。

编辑版: 在公安县, 过去很多码头工人搬运货物, 从晚上一直忙到天亮, 慢慢形成了喝早酒、吃火锅习俗。

Huang Zhonglian (2002: 95) points out that "the purpose of editing is to make the main idea more distinct, to make the content very clear and concentrated, to give a clear and deep impression, to make the content serve the center, and to organize the original material according to the needs

of the main idea". In example 1, "三国时" or "in the Three Kingdoms" can indicate that the people of Gong'an have a long history of eating beef, so the first sentence conveying the same information was removed in editing. The sentence "张飞诡言道: "公安地好、水好、草好。"有人问草与种水稻有何关联?" or "Zhang Fei said that the land, water, and grass of Gong'an are great. People asked him about the relations between grass and rice planting" is also removed while editing as it fails to clarify the link between grass, rice plants, and Gong'an beef. Instead, it weakens the link between delicious Gong'an beef and handing in the most grain. Thus, the author removed it to make the historical source of the delicious beef clearer and more explicit. In Example 2, "公安县是长江上一个重要码头" or "Gong'an County is an important dock of Yangtze River" is not very relevant to the modern dock workers' custom of drinking morning wine and eating hot pot, so it is deleted to make the story more focused and reduce the length of the original.

### 4. Narrating

Example 1: 自古以来流传着"长江的鱼, 洪湖的藕, 才子佳人吃了不想走"的美名。

It has been said that people don't want to leave after eating the lotus root from Honghu Lake, the largest pollution-free freshwater lake in Hubei Province.

Example 2: 有道是饮一口佳酿, 嚼一块干鱼, 鱼助酒兴, 酒释鱼味, 脆在嘴上, 美在心里。

There is a saying: "With a sip of good wine and a piece of dried fish enhancing each other's taste, you will find the fish crisp and the mood happy.

"The narration is based on the content of the original work, changing the form of the expression of the original work, and always using narrative language to convey the content, so there are extracts and edits, and more generalizations. It is characteristic to give up details and seek roughness" (Huang Zhonglian, 2002: 95). For example, in Example 1, the author does not translate "长江的鱼" or "the fish of the Yangtze River" and "才子佳人" or "gifted scholars and beautiful ladies" according to the original sentence, but translate the sentence into "people do not want to leave after eating the roots of Honghu Lake" to convey its core meaning. In example 2, instead of translating "鱼助

酒兴” or “the fish improves the joy of drinking wine” and “酒释鱼味” or “the wine reduces the fishy taste”, the author translates the meaning of the sentence, namely eating fish and drinking wine can make both fish and wine taste better. The details of how fish and wine interact with each other are omitted, but this not only conveys the main meaning of the original text but also ensures the brevity of the translation.

#### 5. Condensing

Example 1: “炸藕圆子”既能当菜肴入席，也可作平日小吃零食，是很有营养的素食小点。

It is nutritious and can be served as a dish or snack.

Example 2: 于是，人们便把鱼肚剖开，把肚子里面的脏东西掏出来，洗干净，用盐腌制，经太阳晒干后慢慢享用，这种晒干的鱼因此得名“阳干鱼”。

Therefore, they gutted, washed, salted, and dried the fish in the sun, hence the name “Sun-dried Fish”.

Huang Zhonglian (2002: 95) points out that condensation is “to introduce the core content of the original work in a very small space”. From the above two examples, we can see that the underlined translations convey the information of the original texts well in a condensed way. It is easy to find that the translations are much shorter than the corresponding original texts, which effectively breaks the time and space limitations of the short video.

#### 6. Combining

Example 1: “公安牛肉”，湖北省荆州市公安县特产，也叫“牛肉炉子”，“炉子”在公安方言中跟火锅的意思相近，是中国国家地理标志产品（2014 年批准）。“公安牛肉”其实是当地人对“牛肉火锅”的统称……

Combination: “公安牛肉”，也叫“牛肉炉子”，是湖北省公安县对牛肉火锅的称谓，是中国国家地理标志产品（2014 年入选）……

“One reason for the combination is that the original work is improperly structured and unrefined, lacking in organization, and what should be put together ends up in two cuts, mainly at the level of sentences, sentence groups, and paragraphs.” (Huang Zhonglian, 2002: 96). In the example, the last sentence is closely related to the first sentence, and both of them are about the name “Gong’an beef”, so they should not be divided into two sentences. The author thus combined them before subtitling to ensure the

correct and clear organization and make the original text short enough without leaving out the original meaning.

#### 7. Altering

“In general, the six means mentioned above are all included in the list of the alteration that is singled out as a category to emphasize its characteristics. To alter means to change, to make a significant change in the content or form of the original work” (Huang Zhonglian, 2002: 96). This translation practice is mainly about the change of content, which can be seen from the examples cited above. Thus, the author will not give more examples here.

## V. CONCLUSION

This paper introduces the current situation and the main limiting factors of the English translation of Jingchu food short video subtitles. It also analyzes the variation means used in the subtitle translation of the short videos with the variation translation theory. Through the above examples and analysis, it can be concluded that the variation means of adding, omitting, editing, narrating, condensing, combining, and altering can break the limitations of the English translation of short video subtitles effectively while retaining the main content of the short videos.

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# The Empire Writes Back: Deconstructive Paradigms in *Jack Maggs*

Shengjia Wan

School of Foreign Languages, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, China

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**Abstract**— In his ‘neo-Victorian novel’ *Jack Maggs*, Peter Carey seeks to retell Charles Dickens’s classic *Great Expectations* from the postcolonial perspective. *Jack Maggs*, a stand-in for Dickens’s Magwitch, is shaped into the protagonist in Carey’s work, which telegraphs the author’s close attention to marginalized groups in British society. By endowing the silent ‘other’ with the opportunity to speak, Carey attempts to deconstruct the hegemony of the Anglo-centric narrative and reshape the unique cultural identity of Australians, which simultaneously embodies the self-reflexivity of his literary practice.

**Keywords**— *Jack Maggs*, Peter Carey, Neo-Victorian Novel, Postcolonial Rewriting.



## I. INTRODUCTION

In his article published in *Studies in the Novels* (1997), Dana Schiller coined the term ‘neo-Victorian novel’ to categorize contemporary novels set in the Victorian era. However, according to scholars like Ann Heilmann and Mark Llewellyn, it is not solely the Victorian setting, but a self-consciousness ‘engaged with the act of (re)interpretation, (re)discovery and (re)vision concerning the Victorians’ that more serves as the focus of the novel (Heilmann and Llewellyn 4). In other words, with the aim to participate in and reshape the Victorian culture, neo-Victorian novels are naturally endowed with a sense of reflexivity.

Among these novels, colonial issues become the common subjects. As Gayatri Spivak puts it, ‘it should not be possible to read nineteenth-century British literature without remembering that imperialism, understood as England’s social mission, was a crucial part of the cultural representation of England to the English’ (Spivak 243).

Spivak’s words reveal that, during the process of colonizing and dominating the world, nineteenth-century England gradually established its glorious image. However, this authority has been successfully built at the expense of the countries being colonized, which nowadays urges people from these once ‘mysterious’ places to rewrite the ‘orthodox’ history. Many neo-Victorian novels have been produced mainly for this purpose. By recoding the imperial experience, they provide the silent ‘other’ oppressed by the authoritative discourse with chances to speak and express themselves. In his novel *Jack Maggs*, Peter Carey offers us an excellent example of this strategy.

In Carey’s writing, Abel Magwitch, a marginalized character in Dickens’s novel, is transformed into the heroic protagonist, Jack Maggs. Although in a similar situation, Maggs is no longer an object passively being described, but a subject capable of narrating his own story. Bringing to bear the deconstructive paradigm on the authoritative discourse, Carey revises the age-old version of colonial



history offered by the empire, contributing to the establishment of a unique Australian cultural identity within the postcolonial context.

## II. 'ITS METAPHYSICAL ASSOCIATIONS WERE OF HELL': THE COLONIAL IMAGINATION IN THE DISCOURSE OF EMPIRE

In his work *Postcolonial Criticism*, Bart Moore-Gilbert recalls the initial impression of Australia in the eyes of Europeans, 'its metaphysical associations were of hell, unnatural inversions (for instance of the seasons) and imprisonment' (Moore-Gilbert 197). As an exile for British criminals, Australia was imbued with colonial imagination. In Charles Dickens's classic novel *Great Expectations*, the texts concerning Australia constitute a typical illustration of this feature. For instance, Magwitch would rather sacrifice the superior living environment in Australia and risk his life to return to England, just for a glimpse of the 'London gentleman' brought up by him:

'This is the gentleman what I made! The real genuine One! It does me good fur to look at you, Pip. All I stip'late, is, to stand by and look at you, dear boy!' (Dickens 263)

It can be inferred from his words that, for Magwitch, only a gentleman coming from London can be called a 'real genuine one'. Nevertheless, he is ignorant of a more important fact: it is these so-called 'gentlemen' that make him a displaced man. Just as Edward Said argues in *Culture and Imperialism*, 'the prohibition placed on Magwitch's return is not only penal but imperial: subjects can be taken to places like Australia, but they cannot be allowed a "return" to metropolitan space, which, as all Dickens's fiction testifies, is meticulously charted, spoken for, inhabited by a hierarchy of metropolitan personages' (Said xvi). In fact, the sentence of a lifelong banishment is a deprivation of 'Englishness'. When a convict is exiled to the marginalized geographical space, he is simultaneously expelled from the sphere of dominant culture.

As a result, although Magwitch can use his considerable financial resources to break away from the geographical restrictions, he is unable to shake the authority of the imperialist culture and be truly accepted as a member of English society. This truth is not only

revealed in his tragic end but implied in Dickens's way of depicting him. For example, in Magwitch's first appearance, Dickens makes an observation of him with the eyes of Pip, 'I had often watched a large dog of ours eating his food; and I now noticed a decided similarity between the dog's way of eating and the man's. The man took strong sharp sudden bites, just like the dog' (Dickens 22). At the moment Magwitch ventures back to London and meets Pip, Dickens again depicts his rude and greedy style of eating, 'Some of his teeth had failed him since I saw him eat on the marshes, and as he turned his food in his mouth, and turned his head sideways to bring his strongest fangs to bear upon it, he looked terribly like a hungry old dog' (262).

By comparing the convict with the dog, the author seemingly aims to direct readers to establish an imaginative connection between the two. Arguably, if the implicit prejudice conveyed in the latter paragraph can be attributed to the bad atmosphere amid London upper class, which has changed Pip's frame of mind, there is no doubt the observation made by Pip as a child in the former passage, reflect 'the certain narrative position and moral judgement' of Dickens (Wang 67). Even faced with the huge difference in both strength and physical constitution, the sight young Pip set on Magwitch still embodies a condescending attitude. Within this unbalanced power landscape, Magwitch, as a 'savage' outcast, is forced into the object being watched, whilst the power of evaluation lies in the hands of the actual observer who hides behind the protagonist's innocent eyes—the imperial world represented by Dickens himself. The animalistic nature of Magwitch depicted in the novel, thus conceived, is not so much a manifestation of his 'primitive' instincts as a stereotype about the powerless people within the net of imperial discourse. During the process of being constantly othered, Magwitch actually experiences the state of aphasia: he can only be described and evaluated, but never speak for himself.

Throughout Dickens's writing, the authority of empire often contrasts sharply with the submission of the other. At the geopolitical level, the British Empire occupies the center of the world, while Australia is, by contrast, as Mr. Wemmick describes it, a 'deep' space understood to be 'on the opposite spot of the

globe'(Dickens 161). It is imagined as a jail in the vacuum: once Magwitch is exiled there, he has to disappear from the main storyline. Even if he plays the most important role in Pip's rise in British society, Magwitch's presence can merely be hinted at through Mr. Jaggers. It is only when Magwitch again risks his life to set foot on the land of London that his identity as Pip's biggest sponsor is finally revealed. Similarly, although Pip's journey to the East to work in Herbert's mercantile trade and stand on his own feet serves as one of the most indispensable parts of the character's spiritual growth, Dickens applied only two paragraphs to give a very rough description of this part. It seems that these places exist only to meet the needs of the Anglo-centric narrative. Under British hegemony, the image of the colonized 'others' becomes something that can be molded at will. It can be both a notorious prison and a great wish-granting factory.

Therefore, for the center occupied by the empire, the question that counts is not so much about what the periphery is, but rather what significance its existence can contribute to the center. In his classic work *Orientalism*, Said points out, 'as both geographical and cultural entities—to say nothing of historical entities—such locales, regions, geographical sectors as "Orient" and "Occident" are man-made'(Said 5). According to Said, the existence of the West indeed depends on the East: through imaginatively constructing the so-called 'East', the 'West' can define itself oppositely. By the same token, if there is no such thing as the periphery, then the center dissolves. As a result, it is owing to the 'primitive and mysterious' Australia that the 'civilized and advanced' British Empire can exist; it is also because of the 'rude and barbaric' others like Magwitch that the genteel London gentlemen come into being. In the writings of imperial writers, these dichotomies implying colonial imagination can be found everywhere, shaping readers' perceptions in an invisible and nuanced way.

### III. FROM MARGIN TO CENTER: THE DECONSTRUCTIVE PARADIGM IN JACK MAGGS

In an interview, Peter Carey confesses his attitude towards *Great Expectations* as well as other works of Dickens: 'I was a bit slow in coming to Dickens for all

sorts of reasons, but there's no doubt that what that book encourages you to do—what so many of the books we grew up reading encourage you to do—is to take the British point of view.'<sup>①</sup> By presenting a glorified image of the empire, this perspective implants Western-centric views into the readers' value systems, thus ideologically encouraging their complicity with Western hegemony. Faced with the prejudice revealed in these influential works, Carey's intention of rewriting is clear. He not only needs to deconstruct the old system, but also to establish a new one.

Still retaining the basic structure of its prototype, *Jack Maggs* narrates the original story from a novel angle. After making a fortune in Australia, Jack Maggs, a once exiled convict, ventures back to London to look for Henry Phipps, whom he has dedicated his life to fostering. To this end, he first serves as a footman under Mr. Buckle, and later falls victim to the deception of Tobias Oates, becoming a subject of his study of the criminal mind and trickery. However, while Maggs endures hardships in the quest for his foster son, Phipps goes into hiding. Reluctant to meet his benefactor, he even attempts to shoot Maggs in collusion with Mr. Buckle. After the conflict, Maggs finally recognizes the true nature of this so-called 'London gentleman', returning to Australia to start a new life there.

At the level of the plot, Maggs, the protagonist of the story, is a stand-in for Magwitch, with Phipps an equivalent of Pip; And the writer, Tobias Oates, is a parody of Dickens himself. Confronted with the hostility of people around him as well as the threat of laws, Maggs is undoubtedly in a tough situation similar to Magwitch's. However, there exists a clear difference between the two, which resides in their agency. In Carey's story of redemption, Maggs is endowed with the right to speak for himself: In his letter sent to Phipps, Maggs confesses the reasons for becoming a criminal. Born as an orphan, Maggs has no choice regarding his path to survival. At the age of a child, he is made known that he has been raised for an economic purpose, just 'like a hog or a hen'<sup>②</sup>. His foster mother, Mary Britten, trains him up as a thief to

<sup>①</sup> Ramona Koval, An Interview with Peter Carey, Broadcast on Books and Writings on Friday, 12 September 1997.

<sup>②</sup> Peter Carey, *Jack Maggs* (Leicester: Faber and Faber, 1997), p.106. All subsequent references to this edition are noted parenthetically in the text.

bring a constant source of income to her family. In the course of committing theft, Maggs falls in love with his accomplice Sophina. In the end, to take the blame for Sophina, Maggs confesses his crime to the judge, but instead of saving his beloved, he is banished to Australia.

From his confession, it is clear that Maggs is not, as the judge puts it, 'a thief by nature'(p. 276), but born into an environment that offers him nothing but a life of crime. Carey's writing is not intended to justify the character's illegal behavior of stealing, but rather to deconstruct the essentialism embedded in the imperial ideology. In *Aspects of the Novel*, E. M. Forster points out, Dickens's people are 'nearly all flat'(Forster 108). In his writing, a good man won't easily turn bad, while a bad person also finds it challenging to become good. That is, the goodness and badness of his characters are predetermined by their innate natures, and mainly epitomized in their physical features. Even if contaminated by the evils of high society in his later years, Pip, as a 'handsome' and 'good-natured' boy, is eventually able to get rid of the bad influences and return to the right path; In contrast, one's ugly appearance always serves as a symbol of his or her dubious morality. Bentley Drummle, 'an old-looking young man of a heavy order of architecture', is seemingly destined to treat Estella badly. And when it comes to Magwitch, his crime-oriented behavior is also matched by the 'rude' and 'primitive' appearance.

In Carey's work, his portrayal of multi-dimensional characters undoubtedly challenges such stereotypical thinking. Although Maggs, owing to his aggressive looks, is considered to be 'some kind of rascal' at first glance (p. 55), he is indeed a man of thoughtfulness and determination. Whether it's assisting Constable, with whom he has always had differences, in retaining his job or demonstrating a strong sense of self-sacrifice to save Sophina, the integrity displayed through these actions gradually overrides the initial impression left by him, and also earns him the favor of Mercy. On the contrary, Oates, who seems to be the most cultivated and well-mannered in the novel, is a liar and a hypocrite. In daily life, he spares no effort to uphold an image of kindness and compassion, 'the death of children had always had a profound effect on him. When the young victims were also the children of poverty, it produced in him a considerable rage'(p. 130).

However, as the text develops, the real reason for Oates' repeated visits to the slums is finally revealed: the material and inspiration for writing, the copyright and income from the work, these are the things that matter most to Oates. As the embodiment of Dickens in the story, Carey's characterization of Oates undoubtedly reflects a subtle irony of this well-known author's contrasting performance between his realm of social life and literary creation.

#### IV. 'TO MYTHOLOGISE AUSTRALIA IN ITS OWN TERMS': NEO-VICTORIAN FICTION AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF CULTURAL IDENTITY

From venturing to England to returning to Australia, the different choices of Maggs reveal a fluidity in his identity. Upon his return to London, Maggs finds himself shut out by Britten. Confronted with Britten's questioning of his intentions, he replies with an extremely assertive attitude, 'that is what I want. My home'(p. 5). As an exile returning to his homeland, Maggs has anticipated the cold reception and self-deprecatingly refers to himself as a 'cockroach'(p. 128). Even so, he clings to his original identity, 'I am a fucking Englishman, and I have English things to settle. I am not to live my life with all that vermin. I am here in London where I belong'(ibid.). At this point, he still has illusions about the empire, and desires to clear his name as well as be accepted back into mainstream society. However, Mr. Buckle's malice and Oates's deception join to immerse Maggs in pain, and the gun aimed at him by his proud 'son' Phipps becomes the last straw. Just as Meyer Abrams notes in his *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, the development of the protagonist's mind and character into maturity often requires 'a spiritual crisis', 'which usually involves recognition of one's identity and role in the world'(Abrams 193). Maggs's cognitive development follows the same trajectory. After realizing the true nature of the so-called 'London gentleman', he returns to Australia with Mercy, and settles there as a person of 'Australian descent'.

The experience of Maggs is not only a personal attempt to seek identity but also a metaphor for Australia's search for national identity. Maggs's morbid obsession with the London sphere epitomizes Australia's cultural inferiority complex in the face of empire, 'although the

countries of the former “British” Caribbean are, like Australia, now “independent” territories, they remain, at least in part, tied to Imperial history and its collusive textuality’(Moore-Gilbert 208). Classic texts that carry the imperial ideology continue to influence contemporary Australians, displaying the ‘ideological and psycho-social dimensions of colonialism’(Jin 124). The disconnection between a politically independent entity and a culturally vulnerable status has become a daunting problem for Australians. Carey’s rewriting classic literature is an effort to change this situation. When it comes to the idea behind *Jack Maggs*, Carey avers, ‘we carry a great deal of self-hatred, denial, grief, and anger, all unresolved. It took a long time before I could think of exactly how I might use these passions to fuel a novel. Then one day, contemplating the figure of Magwitch, the convict in Charles Dickens’s *Great Expectations*, I suddenly thought THIS MAN IS MY ANCESTOR. And then: this is UNFAIR!’(Ho 124). For Carey, the most important purpose of writing is to reveal the unequal power distribution lurking beneath the seemingly equal national sovereignty. Upon his return to London, Maggs claims, ‘I come here for the culture... the opera, the theater, I got a lot of time to make up for’(p. 5). In the eyes of the uneducated Maggs, the imperial life is a superior option for filling in the gaps of his knowledge, without realizing the model itself is the cause of his misfortunes. In some ways, this is also an allusion to the intricate relationship between colonies and their former masters in the post-colonial era.

For Maggs, the journey of searching for his ‘son’ is also a process of searching for spiritual roots. After disenchanting the ‘civilized’ and prosperous imperial life, he finally recognizes the truth: his son is not the London gentleman, but the children of New South Wales who are closely related to him by blood. At the end of the story, Maggs chooses to return to Australia and start a new life there. This arrangement reflects Carey’s desire to ‘mythologise Australia in its own terms’(Hassall 135), which also reveals his confidence in the future of the nation: Australians will eventually prove themselves along with their community, and establish an independent cultural identity in their land.

## V. CONCLUSION

In the process of rewriting *Great Expectations*, Peter Carey not only reveals the imperial ideology implicitly embedded in the classic text, but subverts and reconstructs it to its foundation. Although Maggs is a stand-in for Magwitch, there exists an essential difference between the two. Compared with the marginalized Magwitch, Maggs is no longer the voiceless ‘other’ under the control of authoritative discourse, but has the power of speaking and takes the initiative to narrate his own story. To a certain extent, Maggs’s journey of searching for his ‘son’ mirrors the process of Australia’s search for cultural identity, embodying Carey’s concern for national identity and the spirit of independence. As Anthony Hassall points out, ‘to create a national repository of their own’, Australians should ‘(re)claim and (re)write those English stories which constituted their first meta-narrative, as well as invent new ones’(134). In this sense, Carey’s rewriting highlights his mission and responsibility as a contemporary Australian writer and demonstrates a postmodern reflexive consciousness of literary creation.

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# Giving Voice to the Unvoiced: The Rise of Indian Dalit Literature

Niyati Chauhan

M.A candidate, Department of English, Sri Dev Suman University, Uttarakhand, India

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**Abstract**— The word "Dalit" connotes people who are impoverished, oppressed, abused, and in need. The origin of the Indian caste system is not a widely accepted theory. There are several forms of inequality that give rise to social prejudice in every civilised community. Additionally, it is dressed in "Casteism" in India. The subaltern literary voices of the tribals, Dalits, and other minority groups were absent from discourses tailored to the tastes of the nobility. The dalits are denied their basic rights to equality, property ownership, and education. Dalit literature thus arises as a voice for all those marginalised, oppressed, and exploited populations who have long suffered from societal injustice and exploitation. The liberation of Dalits from this never-ending slavery is the central theme of Dalit literature. Dalit experiences and expressions are positing the history in quotidian. Though they may appear as alien and anathema to the "upper" caste sensibility, they can be read as embodying the political in all its dimensions. Since Dalit literature is based on ideas of equality, liberty, justice, and solidarity rather than pleasure, it is important for Dalit critics to find a new imagery of "beauty and truth", which is more responsive to contemporary lived realities. Otherwise, Dalit literature will forever be condemned for its lack of merits and the taste within the overarching framework of traditional aesthetics. The Dalit writers' rejection of the hegemony of a caste-based universalism challenges the neat binary world of postcolonial literary theory and calls attention to the internal contradictions of Indian society.



**Keywords**— Dalit language, literature, theory, aesthetics, mainstream. Dalit writings, Oppressed, Untouchables, Caste, Expression.

India is one of the fastest growing countries yet is notorious for its rigid caste system. Literature has been an integral part of India since time immemorial and in the post modern era when the problems regarding human rights occupy the central stage, it becomes an evident step to literally portray the marginalised community. Dalit literature is an attempt to bring to the fore the discrimination, brutality, and ostracization faced by the Dalit community in India. The members of the Dalit community have been pushed to the margins and their lived experiences have been disregarded by the majority. Their stories have been deemed unworthy to be written about. However, in the modern era, the name "Dalit" refers to individuals, who have been viewed as "outcasts," meaning they do not merit recognition within the four

categories of the class system. The Manu Smriti, a holy text, describes the "Varna system" of society. It is a four-tiered Varna system that includes four social classes that were created from the body of Lord Brahma.

## CONCEPT OF DALIT

The term 'dalit' literally means "oppressed" and is used to refer to the "untouchable" casteless sects of India. Dalit, also called outcaste, is a self designation for a group of people traditionally regarded as untouchables. Dalits are a mixed population of numerous caste groups all over India, South Asia and all over the world. There are many different names proposed for defining this group of people like 'Ashprosh' (Untouchable), 'Harijans' (Children of

God) 'Dalits, (Broken People) etc. Etymology of the word 'Dalit' The word 'Dalit' comes from the Sanskrit and it means "downtrodden", 'suppressed,' 'crushed' or 'broken to pieces'. It was first used by Jyotirao phule in the nineteenth century in the context of the oppression faced by the erstwhile "Untouchable" castes of the twice-born Hindus. Mahatma Gandhi coined the word 'Harijan', translated roughly as "children of God" to identify the former untouchables.

### **SOCIAL STATUS OF DALIT:**

Dalits have been destined for inferior activities such as leather work, butchering or removal of rubbish, animal carcasses and waste; by this so called civilized Hindu society. Dalits work as manual laborers cleaning street, latrines and sewers. Engaging in these activities was considered to be polluting to the individual and this pollution was considered contagious. As a result, Dalits were commonly segregated and banned from full participation in Hindu social life.

### **DALIT MOVEMENTS IN INDIA:**

The earliest known Dalit reformer was Lord Gautam Budha, who preached the abolishing of untouchability. The earliest known reformation within Hinduism happened during the medieval period when the Bhakti movements actively engaged in the participation and inclusion of dalits. In the 19th century, the Brahmo samaj, Arya samaj and the Ramakrishna mission actively participated in the emancipation of Dalits. Saint kabir, mahanubhava sect, varkari sect in Maharashtra rejected the term untouchability and embraced Dalits as brothers. Maharashtra state was the key state in the reformation of Dalit or on the transformation of untouchable to touchable. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Rajashri Shahu Maharaj, V. R. Shinde and the pinnacle towering figure Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar were the prominent social reformers in Maharashtra. In the 1950, Ambedkar turned his attention to Buddhism and converted thousands of untouchable people in Buddhism with himself. In west Bengal chaitanya prabhu initiated a movement called 'Namo shudras movement' (bow to Dalit) which changed an attitude towards untouchable community. Overall, Dalit reform movements had been in India since ancient period right from Gautama Buddha. Still it is in course of reforming state by creative efforts of social reformers.

### **DALIT WRITING**

The untouchables were long denied access to formal education, which would have energised and inspired them

to launch a legitimate literary movement in opposition to the established literature's monopoly. Some educated "Untouchables" came into contact with contemporary education during the post-Independence era, and they saw they needed to adopt a new way of thinking. The birthplace of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the champion of the oppressed, is where this literary movement got its start. Thus, in the early 1970s, "Dalit Literature" gained popularity and quickly expanded to surrounding states like Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and many more. In Dalit literature, the Dalits themselves convey their rage and bitterness towards those who they hold accountable for their current situation. It calls into question the standing and circumstances surrounding the Dalits. Hira Dom's poem is regarded as the earliest work of Dalit literature, and Swami Achyutanand's writings and social activity exposed an oppressive societal framework. Dalit reality is portrayed in Dalit literature. With this portrayal, the untouchables subvert the upper class's purported purity and speak out loudly throughout the caste-ridden society. Since the 1970s, a large number of poets and writers from Dalit communities have been producing poems, short stories, novels, and autobiographies brimming with themes of caste oppression, identity issues, poverty, untouchability, and revolution.

These writers, in general, do not express their disapproval of any one group; rather, they see themselves as cut off from both the government and the social structure, which they believe keeps them impoverished and debased. Stated differently, the pursuit of identity is fundamental to Dalit culture. Because of this, Dalit writers have responded in a number of ways to issues relating to poverty, hypocrisy, injustice, social discrimination, and other social practices. These answers are kinds of protest meant to bring about a revolution in order to bring about social change. The primary distinction between Dalit and mainstream literature is that the former rejects the long-standing Indian customs of caste, class, and religion while the latter maintains that customs cannot be completely disregarded. According to the Dalit writers, a particular class has been using the word "tradition" as a "safeguard" for their own purposes. Regarding this, Dangle states A tradition is created and nurtured by ideas and ideals, and it is these ideas and principles that give rise to and maintain a tradition. A tradition's foundation is determined by the overall set of circumstances as well as the social structure in place at the time.

The privileged elite is constantly looking to create a useful custom that protects its interests. The weaker segments of society are sick of this custom. In actuality, a small number of people have forced all of our traditions—religious, social, literary, and cultural—on the majority.

(Dangle, 261). Comparably, Bama, a Tamil Dalit fiction writer, has created incredibly valuable works about gender, caste, and marginalised groups in society. She pens the first autobiography by a Tamil Dalit woman. Her books, which have been translated into English and several other Indian languages, include *Karukku*, *Sangati*, and *Vanman*. She reveals the shame of religious conversion and the caste system in *Karukku*. Her work effectively highlights the issue of Dalit consciousness. She fiercely opposes the caste-based Indian society in general and the Roman Catholic Churches in particular for their practice of untouchability.

### A NEW FLAVOUR

One of the solid arsenals produced by the Dalit community, apart from its resolute commitment to love, forgive and fight, is the articulation, through literature, of human emotion, and writing about bodies and sexuality, compelling rage and justifiable challenges to authority. Over the first half of the twentieth century, besides BR Ambedkar, a proliferation of Dalit writers produced work in multiple vernaculars, writing in a tone that conveyed their selves in the most direct form. The list below attempts to cover some of the recognised and popular works, which gained prominence through their craft and expression. They have given rise to thought, philosophy and meditation, and let many bathe in the pain and joy they put forth. For generations, Dalits had to be locked in someone else's hateful interpretation. Their registers of protest and sweetness in life were not only undermined but stolen by their oppressors. Dalits, therefore, had to witness their beauty being manipulated and relegated to an ugly demeanour. Dalit writers, though, used this to their service. Time was made unavailable to Dalits, so they slashed the rigid conventions of temporality and space in their writing.

### CONCLUSION:

On the whole, Dalit literature gives a message about their community not individuality, about revolt not passivity, about progress not backwardness. This message is to the entire world about their status in society by portraying the exploitive, helpless, and engrossed with grief, suppressed and enslaved and a subaltern state. To some extent, Dalit in India can be compared with African American regarding the mutilation. The shared political position of these authors is against the hegemony of upper and middle class Hindu beliefs and for the power of the human beings against oppressive social rules. Dalit author questioned religion and Identity throughout their literature. It could be said that Dalit literature achieved a firm foundation in the

mid-20th century; but its framework was established in the early 19th century. Today Dalit writers have their literary foundation with ideology and publish numerous journals. They also have a number of political organizations supporting them. The most prominent of these is the Dalit panthers (begun in the 1970s), which has borrowed much of its ideology from America's Black panthers. The future of Dalit literature is embarked on the present status of Dalit and their sensibility. And certainly new reforming waves are blowing for the radical development in Dalit literature as literature of protest. Thus Dalit literature is a new dimension in the day today and used up literature. With great amaze, people fascinate towards this new charismatic dimension in literature i.e. Dalit literature.

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# The Poetic Vision of Patrick Kavanagh

Dr Sheetal Kapoor

Assistant Professor of English Army Institute of Law, Mohali Punjab University, Chandigarh

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**Abstract**— Patrick Kavanagh, a prominent 20th-century Irish poet from Inniskeen Parish, County Monaghan, profoundly impacted global audiences with his poetry, transcending national boundaries. Despite limited formal education, Kavanagh's passion for literature led him to become a self-taught poet, capturing the essence of rural Irish life. His early works, such as "The Green Fool," reflect his struggle and detachment from peasant life, while his poetry often combines simplicity with profound insights, celebrating childhood wonder and the beauty of nature. Kavanagh's criticism of the Irish Literary Revival and his rejection of romanticized rural stereotypes positioned him as a genuine post-colonial thinker. His major works, including "The Great Hunger," depict the harsh realities of rural existence, contrasting with idealized notions of Irish identity. Kavanagh's influence extended beyond his lifetime, liberating subsequent generations of Irish poets from traditional constraints and emphasizing the significance of finding beauty in ordinary life. Despite facing challenges and limited recognition during his career, Kavanagh's legacy endures, celebrated for his honest portrayal of life's struggles and his ability to inspire through his poetic vision.



**Keywords**— Irish, literary renaissance, criticism, post-colonial, peasant-life.

## INTRODUCTION

You who desired so much- in vain to ask Yet fed your hunger like an endless task, Dared dignify the labour, bless the quest-

Achieved that stillness ultimately best, Being; of all, least sought for...<sup>1</sup>

These lines aptly describe an eminent Irish poet from the twentieth century, whose poetry surpasses national confines and profoundly impacts individuals across the globe, embracing diverse cultures. Patrick (Joseph Gregory) Kavanagh hailed from Inniskeen Parish, situated in Northern Ireland, specifically County Monaghan. As the eldest among ten siblings, he followed his father's footsteps, acquiring the skills of both a cobbler and a farmer. Despite facing intellectual limitations during his childhood, he received no formal education beyond the age of twelve. Nevertheless, he nurtured a deep passion for literature and writing poetry, delving into his own self-studies. Despite facing an unusual reaction from his family, Kavanagh took immense pleasure in writing and immersed

himself in poetry, seizing every available opportunity. He humorously described his life as a typical representation of the impoverished Irish countryside, where the true poverty lay in the lack of enlightenment to explore life's wonders under the moonlight.

Until his father's passing in 1929, Kavanagh balanced his work as a cobbler and farmer. In the autumn of 1930, he ventured to Dublin. Eventually, by 1939, he bid farewell to farm life and made Dublin his home. However, Kavanagh's experience in the city wasn't without challenges. The literary landscape was overshadowed by Yeats, who had a dominant presence. When Yeats passed away in 1939, the focus of critics intensified on evaluating his poetry, which unfortunately pushed younger poets, including Kavanagh, into the background and placed them at a disadvantage.

These poets found themselves inevitably measured against Yeats, often overshadowing their own unique merits and talents. Kavanagh, too, faced the perception of being a minor poet from a rural background, capable of evoking profound poetic expressions but seen as

simple at heart. However, he refused to be disheartened by the unwelcome treatment he received. Instead, he resolved to establish his distinct identity in Dublin, employing two key strategies: anti- revivalism and downplaying the significance of nationality in literature. He criticized the stagnant state of literature produced by his contemporaries and viewed much of modern Irish

<sup>1</sup> These lines are by the poet Hart Crane from his poem "To Emily Dickenson".

writing as mere imitation. In a letter to his brother, Kavanagh expressed his perspective, "of the Irish Movement you know plenty...they presented an essentially sentimental Ireland. The Yeats-Synge phoney Ireland was eminently suited for export to America and it has falsified the picture of this country" (Garrat, 1986).

Kavanagh emerged as a genuine post-colonial thinker and poet, breaking free from the mental frameworks imposed by both colonialists and anti-colonialists. He was the first to reveal the entanglement of Irish revivalism with its presumed adversary, as it whitewashed derogatory remarks and recycled tired stereotypes, leading him to denounce it as a "thoroughgoing English-bred lie."<sup>2</sup> Coming from a rural background, Kavanagh recognized that what seemed to be distinctive characteristics of the Irish peasantry were prevalent in many societies with limited economic development. He also realized that the idea of an Irish essence was a veiled ideological construct perpetuated by the ruling class to serve their own interests. Therefore, he questioned the fetishization of such a concept.

This evaluation of revivalism aligned with Frantz Fanon's depiction of the second stage of decolonization, where intellectuals adopted a foreign tourist perspective within their own nation, excessively and superficially assimilating local customs. By rejecting such a role, Kavanagh found himself just as incomprehensible to the majority of English critics as Fanon was to many French intellectuals.

### Kavanagh's Early Work

In 1938, Kavanagh released his autobiographical work, *The Green Fool*. Within its pages, he portrays his detachment from the peasant community and his personal struggle for artistic growth. Crafted with the intent to resonate with those who lean towards romanticism and emotion, *The Green Fool* presents a dramatized and reshaped account of certain episodes from his life journey. Initially, he felt that the realm of actual existence lacked significant drama. In his writing, the force of imagination overran the boundaries of fact, leading to a perplexing

fusion of his concept of reality. However, in his subsequent works, Kavanagh deliberately distances himself from the dominion of imagination, aiming to restore the essence

<sup>2</sup> Kavanagh, Patrick. *Self-Portrait*. Dolmen Press, 1964.  
[http://www.ricorso.net/rx/library/authors/classic/Kavanagh\\_P/S\\_Portrait.htm](http://www.ricorso.net/rx/library/authors/classic/Kavanagh_P/S_Portrait.htm)

of truthful poetic expression. As his early poetry gained traction, he endearingly came to be known as Dublin's 'peasant poet.'

Patrick Kavanagh's rise in popularity was significantly propelled by the Literary Renaissance occurring in Ireland during that period. This cultural movement, entwined with the surge of Irish Nationalism, experienced a resurgence of Irish literature with deep roots in the peasant communities of the nation. Escaping the influence of dominant English literary styles, this movement sought to capture the genuine essence of Irish identity. Irish themes became more relatable and resonated widely throughout the entire Irish populace, transcending the boundaries of the literary elite.

The aspiration of many artists within Ireland's Renaissance was to secure autonomy from British rule, extolling the distinctive facets of Irish culture. Through their works, they depicted the diligent rural populace nestled within Ireland's verdant hills, a force driving the country's quest for independence. Yet, it was evident that many of these visionary writers were urban inhabitants with a somewhat skewed perception of rural life. In contrast, Kavanagh introduced a more invigorating vision of Ireland. He portrayed 'the daily victories and tribulations of the common man' without succumbing to either sentimentalism or didacticism.

Following *The Green Fool*, Kavanagh refined his writing style to achieve simplicity and honesty, capturing the authentic spirit of Ireland without ulterior motives. This straightforwardness finds resonance in the diverse themes of his poetry. Kavanagh held the belief that preserving the sense of childhood wonder was crucial for adult contentment, and he bemoaned society's dismissal of this childlike perception. His poetry exalted childhood and endeavored to revive the inner child, as he expressed in his poem "Advent",

The newness that was in every stale thing  
When we looked at it as children

and further in "Canal Bank Walk": Grow with  
nature again as before I grew.

Kavanagh takes pleasure in the simple beauty found in nature, as he articulates in his poem "Canal Bank Walk":

Leafy-with-love banks and the green waters of the canal  
Pouring redemption for me.

He held a strong aversion to the solitude, disputes, and disappointments of rural existence, a sentiment that is poignantly evident in his work "Shancoduff",

Who owns them hungry hills?

and also in his magnum opus "The Great Hunger":

We will wait and watch the tragedy to the last curtain,  
Till the last soul passively like a bag of wet clay  
Rolls down the side of the hill...

Kavanagh demonstrates his aptitude for imaginative insight in his writings, showcasing the skill of inventive observation, as he articulates in "The Great Hunger":

And we will watch from the doorway the years run back

Having penned numerous protest poems that criticized the demoralizing essence of Irish poetry, Kavanagh finds harmony with life and his homeland by composing verses that exude jubilation and elation. In "Shancoduff," he proclaims:

They are my Alps and have climbed the Matterhorn

### **Influence of Samuel Beckett**

A substantial source of Kavanagh's unease regarding his writing emanated from Samuel Beckett. Beckett, an Irish artist, resisted prevailing literary trends and harbored a distinct aversion to the languages employed by masters, perpetually embodying an outsider status within his own language. Although Beckett and Kavanagh never collaborated, Kavanagh pursued the thematic essence encapsulated by Beckett in his own literary creations. In contrast to aligning with the Irish Literary Renaissance, to which he never truly adhered, Kavanagh centered his poetry on the hardships and challenges encountered by ordinary individuals.

Beckett maintained that when readers criticized Irish society as a 'mere pastiche' devoid of a cohesive 'overall purpose,' the solution was to "depict despair and fertility on the stage" for a comedic effect. In instances where a poet falls short of effectively conveying their intended image, the poem forfeits its original purpose and transforms into a tragedy. The most enriching literature is that which is thoroughly explored and breathes life as a comedy. As voiced by Declan Kiberd, "The answer to

the sense of doom was not to avoid tears, but to revert to laughter after they had dried. Otherwise a people would know only emotional and spiritual underdevelopment for...Tragedy is under-developed comedy, not fully born" (Kiberd, 1995). Kavanagh remained steadfast in his pursuit of crafting such a comedy within his composition, "The Great Hunger" (with comedy embodying a profoundly specific concept for Kavanagh). His unyielding preoccupation with the concept of underdevelopment gave rise to a clever yet compassionate narrative centered around the ordinary Irish individual.

### **Major Works and Style**

According to Seamus Heaney, Kavanagh's remarkable rural poetry merely constitutes the initial phase of his accomplishment. This aspect of his body of work vividly conjures the landscape of County Monaghan, displaying exceptional vitality. Notable instances include the early lyrical piece "Ploughman" (1936) and Kavanagh's magnum opus, the extensive poem "The Great Hunger" (1942).

In "The Great Hunger," Kavanagh's full spectrum of poetic talent comes to the forefront.

The poem's introductory lines:

Clay is the word and clay is the flesh

Where the potato –gatherers like mechanised scarecrows  
move Along the side-fall of the hill- Maguire and his men.

These lines demonstrate Kavanagh's adeptness at harmonizing the mundane and the sacred. Throughout the poem, he revisits the imagery of clay, portraying the peasant farmer Patrick Maguire with both empathy and a resistance to excessive sentimentality. Maguire's character is a complex blend of vulnerability and magnanimity. On one hand, he emerges as a commanding presence in the rural expanse of Monaghan, while on the other, Kavanagh underscores Maguire's bachelor status, his sense of emasculation under his mother's influence (she lives until Maguire reaches 65), and his suppressed yearning for intimacy. Impressively, Kavanagh elevates Maguire's persona above triviality, crafting him into a symbol of a disregarded, though overly idealized, facet of Irish existence.

From the very outset, we are presented with imagery of rusty ploughs, fractured buckets, ditches, frozen terrain, and the gradual yet persistent fading of human vitality. This stark portrayal veers away from revivalist pastoral romanticism and sentimentality, presenting a stark contrast to the idealized notions.

Kavanagh's poetry emerged from the heart of peasant Ireland, displaying an exceptional ability to vividly capture the essence of his homeland. He adeptly employed

colloquialisms and vibrant imagery to present the most authentic portrayal of the country. His words served as a genuine representation of the rural Irish peasant culture, reflecting his own experiences and life within the Irish countryside. Kavanagh embodied the voice of the common man, making his work resonate with a wide audience across Ireland. In certain instances, his portrayal is so masterful that the reader feels as if they are directly encountering Kavanagh through his own prose.

Examining "The Great Hunger," one can discern a undercurrent of bitterness that stems from Kavanagh's personal struggle against the hardships of agricultural labor. His writing mirrors a life intertwined with the values and harsh realities of the farming laborer. His disenchantment with the circumstances faced by the Irish rural population arose only after he had described those circumstances in "The Great Hunger," where his emotions are a mixture of affection and repulsion.

Watch him, watch him, that man on a hill whose spirit Is  
a wet sack flapping about the knees of time

He lives that his little fields may stay alive fertile when  
his own body Is spread in the bottom of a ditch under  
two coulter in Christ's

Name. (58-61)

According to Robert F. Garrat, the poem's potency emanates from,

"The narrative of Maguire himself, a figure whose hunger encompasses the spiritual, intellectual, and sexual realms. He dutifully cares for his mother, refrains from marrying as long as he has other obligations, and perpetually awaits improved fortune, a bountiful harvest, a future year, or the right life partner. The strict moral code of his church gradually tightens its grip, enclosing him in a web of guilt-ridden responsibilities. Ultimately, Maguire remains unmarried and spends his later years in solitude, crushed by the confines of his narrow existence" (1986).

In his portrayal of rural life, Kavanagh sought to counter what he perceived as a distorted representation of the land promoted by Yeats and Lady Gregory. His subsequent depictions of Dublin's literary scene and political landscape were equally marked by profound disillusionment. Kavanagh's primary object of disdain became the charming, semi-comedic Irish figure, which he viewed as a tragicomic caricature crafted primarily for international appeal. Behind his unyielding stance lies a profound comprehension of the contemporary snares that threaten human dignity from all angles, as well as an unwavering belief in the enduring but tarnished essence of human innocence.

Just as significantly as the influence of peasant

Ireland shaped his creative output, Kavanagh's estrangement from his family and friends in Ireland also left a profound impact. His growing passion for literary art perplexed numerous friends and family members, causing bewilderment within the community. They questioned his writing abilities and even derided him, labelling him as an outcast, while his own family regarded him as an outsider. The shift to Dublin didn't markedly improve matters, as the competitive atmosphere among emerging writers further isolated him from his peers. He frequently bemoaned the unfortunate reality that his poetry, especially during his lifetime, failed to gain substantial recognition from scholars.

The poem "Who Killed James Joyce" serves as a prominent instance where his own poetry acts as an indication of his perceived rejection as a poet. In a concise author's note accompanying his *Collected Poems* (1964), he channels his frustration into statements such as:

Poetry made me a sort of outcast And,

I've never been much considered by the English poets  
also,

On many occasions I literally starved in Dublin

In 1955, Kavanagh confronted mortality as he underwent surgery to remove one of his lungs. Despite these challenges, he persevered and managed to live for an additional twelve years. During this time, he crafted a heartfelt lyrical poetry that exuded a sense of celebration. This poetry was characterized by its humility and ecstasy, a sincere attempt to counteract the protest-oriented nature of his earlier work. At this juncture, he underwent a reawakening of the long-lost perceptions and wonder of his childhood. He honed the ability to discern the extraordinary within the ordinary, directing his focus intently, joyfully, and playfully towards the present moment.

Kavanagh harbored a desire to regress to a state of ultimate simplicity, one where concerns about appearing foolish ceased to matter. He aimed to embrace his own essence, no matter how modest. His aspiration was to serve God, to thrive within nature, and to immerse himself in the habitual and mundane aspects of life. He employed the concept of God as a means to illustrate that definitive answers often remain elusive, highlighting the futility of excessive analysis and advocating for the celebration of life's uncomplicated nature. He believed that the presence of a benevolent deity allowed humans to approach life with a lighter perspective. In his pursuit of this philosophy, he deliberately avoided any romantic writing style, liberating himself from rigid forms.

Kavanagh's influence has granted many younger



Irish poets the freedom to explore their own subjects and modes of expression without the constraints of established tradition. However, what hasn't been transmitted to the following generation is Kavanagh's readiness, akin to Yeats's legacy before him, to actively engage in political and social matters, even in an individual capacity. While a few poets have penned sporadic verses in response to the situation in Northern Ireland, these works have generally lacked aesthetic quality, as referred to by Darcy

O. Brian in the book "Patrick Kavanagh." These poems underscore how the presence of romantic nationalism rhetoric detrimentally affects Irish poetry when it directly addresses political issues.

The study of Kavanagh's writing is complicated by a multitude of contradictions and paradoxes, arising from his frequent ability to distance his idealistic vision from the often harsh reality upon which it's built. For instance, he can assert that his youth on a Monaghan farm was unbearable due to a lack of intellectual illumination, a point he extensively elaborates in "Tarry Flynn." Yet, in a subsequent passage, he passionately laments leaving that very farm, a sentiment emphasized by his insistence that this departure was involuntary. John Nemo, writing in the *Journal of Irish Literature* (1977), argues that Kavanagh was somewhat conscious of these inconsistencies but found ways to rationalize them. He attributed the perceived weaknesses in his writing to the unsatisfactory audience he encountered in Dublin, labelling their influence as the cause of the loud, sensational, and inaccurate elements he detected in his work.

Interestingly, Kavanagh himself was caught between two conflicting stances. On one hand, he advised his readers that matters of public significance were beyond the scope of a poet's concern. Conversely, he spent nearly fifteen years attempting to educate the Irish public on what he perceived as the truth about literature, culture, art, and politics. This internal tension shaped his complex approach to his own work and his engagement with broader issues.

Numerous contradictions and paradoxes in Kavanagh's work stem from his adeptness at separating his idealized vision from the often-harsh realities upon which it's grounded. For instance, he can express that his early life on the Monaghan farm was unbearable due to a lack of intellectual enrichment (a point he strongly emphasizes in "Tarry Flynn"). Yet, a few paragraphs later, he passionately declares that his gravest error was departing from that very farm, a sentiment underscored by his insistence that this departure was against his own wishes.

In the *Journal of Irish Literature* (1977), John Nemo suggests that Kavanagh had some awareness of his inconsistencies but found it relatively easy to rationalize

them. He attributed what he perceived as the shortcomings in his writing to the unsuitable audience he encountered in Dublin, alleging that they were responsible for what he considered the sensationalism, loudness, and inaccuracy in his works.

Kavanagh himself grappled with a dual perspective. On one hand, he advised his readers that matters of public importance were beyond the purview of a poet's concern. Conversely, he spent nearly fifteen years endeavoring to enlighten the Irish public on what he believed to be the truth about literature, culture, art, and politics. This internal tension significantly shaped his approach to his own work and his engagement with broader issues.

## CONCLUSION

Kavanagh's poetry might pose a challenge to comprehension for certain readers, but his impact on subsequent generations has been pivotal. He has eternally preserved his legacy through his writings, a sentiment he articulated in one of his own poems, "Innocence":

I do not know what age I am I am no mortal age.

While Kavanagh faced challenges and criticism during his lifetime, his work has gained significant recognition and acclaim posthumously. Today, he is regarded as one of Ireland's greatest poets, with his poems being included in literary curricula and anthologies worldwide. Kavanagh's ability to capture the essence of the human condition and his enduring relevance ensure that his legacy will continue to inspire future generations. His poetic vision offers a profound and enduring legacy. His journey from a humble rural background to becoming a celebrated poet reflects his resilience and dedication to his craft. Kavanagh's ability to find beauty in the ordinary, his honest portrayal of life's struggles, and his celebration of the human spirit make his work timeless and universally resonant. Through his poetry, Kavanagh invites us to see the world with fresh eyes, to find joy in simplicity, and to appreciate the richness of our shared human experience.

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# From Repression to Resistance: A Study of Subalterns in two Odia Films Udandi Sita and Balidana

Soumyakanta Senapati

Lecturer in English, G.Sc. College, Athgarh, Odisha, India

[senapatisoumyakanta@gmail.com](mailto:senapatisoumyakanta@gmail.com)

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**Abstract**— *With Independence, colonialism didn't end, rather the legacy was transmitted to the new elites who absorbed the attitude of colonizers and continued to oppress the subalterns consolidating their power and wealth through exploitative and unethical means. In Odisha, the new elite class, consisting of the Government officials and landlords, money-lenders of middle-class community perpetuated the colonial evils and exploited the poor subalterns resulting in their dispossession, destitution and displacement. The literature of the period and after tries to record these atrocities unleashed by the middleclass and how the subalterns reacted to it. This paper explores the representation of inexpressible oppression meted out to the subalterns, their sufferings, and their resistance in post-independence Odisha through two landmark Odia films, Udandi Sita (1992) and Balidana (1978). Through a counter-dominant narrative, the films aim to awaken societal consciousness about the plight of the oppressed and advocate for resistance against systemic injustices.*



**Keywords**— *Colonialism, Subalterns, Exploitation, Resistance, Oppression*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The last quarter of the twentieth century is admittedly the golden period for Odia Cinema. With a significant rise in its popularity and in audience, the Odia film industry used several new techniques, adopted themes that could appeal to the masses, introduced new and skilled actors and actresses from different strata of society, and shifted its interest and attention towards the life and concerns of people in Post independence Odisha. This period witnessed the production of some evergreen films like Jaga Hatara Pagha, Balidana, Maya Miriga, Udandi Sita, Bhagya hatara Dori, Jor Jaar Mulak Tar etc. that vividly portrayed the Odishan tradition, culture, customs, and the realities of the society that the state had overlooked by far. Though Odia industry was apparently influenced by other Indian film Industries and Bollywood, it, at the same time, tried to live up to the tastes of the general public of Odisha by depicting the major issues and the social realities of the day, viz. the oppression of the peasants and the poor, their sufferings in the hands of the new elites, and their

resistance to the oppression. Udandi Sita (1992) and Balidana (1978) are two of the most famous films of that time that tell the story of oppression and dispossession from the counter-perspective of the dominant discourse featuring a female and a male protagonist respectively. They foreground the lived experiences of the peasants and the poor and documents the atrocities unleashed by the elites, who were “as oppressive and exclusive as the colonial master” (Nayar 100) and the trials and the tribulations of the lower class that led them to raise their voice through violence. The films, by presenting the oppression and resistance of the individual subalterns, try to create a consciousness among the people who had accepted their hegemonic position and submitted their voice before the elites.

## II. SUBALTERN IN THE HISTORY OF POST-INDEPENDENCE ODISHA

According to the Latin roots ‘Sub’ means ‘below’ and ‘alternus’ means ‘all others’. The term ‘Subaltern’ was

primarily used in the military context meaning ‘of inferior rank’. But it was adopted by Antonio Gramsci in a non-military sense to refer to those groups in society who are subject to the hegemony of the ruling class. This understanding of the subaltern was taken up by South Asian historians who used it for the Subaltern studies collective in the 1980s to rewrite the histories of the marginalised classes. Prominent historian Ranjit Guha used the term in the context of colonial India and placed it in opposition to the term ‘elite’. In the same context, the term ‘elite’ not only covered the European colonisers, but also the dominant middle-class people who had access to hegemony and state power by virtue of their wealth, education or association with British officials and who enjoyed political, economic, and social agency. On the other hand, the term ‘subaltern’ refers to the people who didn’t come under this category, regardless of their race, caste or class, and lacked the agency enjoyed by the elites. After Independence, when the middle class got direct access to the state power, the position of subalterns didn’t change in the society. They remained in the same position of disempowerment, without any voice or agency as the new laws and policies couldn’t help much in uplifting their conditions. In Odisha, mainly the peasants, tribals, sharecroppers, the lower caste and class people are considered as subalterns owing to their socio-economic condition and marginalised representation.

In the post-independence period, while Odisha was rejoicing with some phenomenal steps taken to assert its unique identity, it couldn’t be successful in eradicating the long existing issues like the caste system, class division, oppression, and exploitation of the farmers and the lower class and so on. The new Government also worked in line with the colonial system that only gave advantages to the elites and the subaltern’s voice was pushed far beyond the margin. Roosa says, “It replaced British officialdom only to create a kind of replica of British imperial government” (140). The Independence and ensuing reformations did not bring any remarkable change in the condition of the farmers and the lower class. The state policies, instead of encouraging them and uplifting their situation, depressed them further. After Independence, the middle class, as Franz Fanon says, acquired the power and agency of the colonial master; but they were devoid of any sort of sympathy. In this context, Roosa says, many Subalternists believe that “the Indian elite in power after independence in 1947 treated the peasantry in much the same way that the colonial state had” (139). The new elites like the middle-class Odias like the Sahukars or money lenders, Zamindars or landlords and other officials took advantage of the marginalised conditions, illiteracy and lack of agency of the farmers and the lower class and exploited them through several means that only enervated the condition of these subalterns. Due to

lack of any sort of political or economic agency, the subalterns’ voice went unheard; any attempt of subaltern to raise voice was stifled readily by the nexus of middle-class and Government officials. However, “the long tradition of exploitation” (qtd. in Chakraborty) and extreme exertion of power by the middle class led to the revolt and resistance of the subaltern to bring an end to the rule of the oppressor. While much study has been done to recover the voice of subalterns in colonial Odisha, the subalterns of Post-independence Odisha, whose experiences and concerns the films depict, have been relatively ignored. Since most of the audience of the Odia film industry belong to this section of the society, the films of the time largely replicated these concerns and depicted the issues quite lively to create a kind of consciousness among the masses to raise their voice. The Odia films of the 70s, 80s and 90s largely addressed these issues of the poor class and tried to recover the experience of the subalterns by showing under what circumstances they resorted to violence. They also tried to decolonize the mind of the subalterns from the dominance of these middle-class people by showing the resistance of the oppressed class. The realities of these struggles, suffering, and the resistance are adroitly portrayed in two of Odia films of the time, i.e. *Udandi Sita* and *Balidana*.

### III. UDANDI SITA: THE STORY OF STRUGGLE AND RESISTANCE

*Udandi Sita* is a 1992 film produced by Ganapati films and directed by Avtar Singh starring Aparajita Mohanty, Uttam Mohanty, and Raimohan Parida as its lead characters. Though primarily a male-centred film, it is named after its leading female character Sita, played by Aparajita Mohanty. The word “Udandi” can be literally translated as ‘an unruly or undisciplined girl’. However, the title stands for the indomitable and undaunted female character, Sita who shows a strong will power to raise her voice and avenge her husband’s death by killing the landlord and putting an end to his oppression. *Udandi Sita* accounts the oppression of the poor by the middle-class in the village of Raygarh. Ray Saheb is the single most powerful person in Raygarh. His power and dominance can be ascertained from a single fact that Raygarh hasn’t seen any election after Independence and it is Ray Saheb who selects the Sarpanch of the village. The people of Raygarh have lost their voice and no one could even dare to speak before Ray Saheb. Ray Saheb leaves no stone unturned to exploit the people and oppress them. He eyes on women, sexually exploits them, misappropriates village funds, and even beats the collector when the latter objects to his wrongdoings. Showing the condition of the lower class, the film tries to give a new angle to the resistance by the



subalterns; it depicts that a woman in Odia society can also take revenge of the oppression and exploitation when the whole village has become the hegemonic subjects of Ray Saheb and accepted that their fate is not going to change.

The male protagonist of the film *Raju* works as a servant of Ray Saheb and he is also subjected to endless oppression by him. Raju is entrusted with the impossible task of straightening the tail of Ray Saheb's dog and Ray Saheb stops his salary until he accomplishes the task. In the turn of events, he becomes the nominal Sarpanch of Raygarh whose bridle remains in the hands of Ray Saheb. Ray Saheb uses his name to acquire funds and continues to exploit him as usual. The lower-class people think that their situation will change as Raju has acquired agency, but this is a dream that is never materialized. The agency given to the lower-class people in some cases is even controlled by the middle-class people. And when Raju tries to oppose Ray Saheb, he is falsely accused of killing the collector and is jailed. Upon return, he tries to unite the people to raise their voice, but the people don't have guts to even stand before Ray Saheb. In his lone fight against Ray saheb, Raju loses the battle and is killed. A subaltern's voice is suppressed forever by middle-class supremacy.

Along with highlighting the predicament of the subalterns, the film also delivers a powerful social message of resistance of women to their oppression. The lone resistance of Sita symbolizes a new form of empowerment in Odia society. Her resistance is not against an individual oppressor, but against the inherited colonial oppressive mechanism in entirety. Sita, in her attempt to take revenge, defies the codes of social discourse about the widow and she eventually kills Ray Saheb putting an end to his oppression. She is seen as a Devi or Goddess incarnated who saves the villagers. The film portrays her as an empowered subaltern who resists and raises voice unlike others who have accepted the tyranny of Ray Saheb.

Sita's character challenges traditional gender roles and the submissive expectations of women, especially widows, in her community. Her actions inspire other women and marginalized individuals to question and resist the systemic oppression they face. By portraying her journey from victim to avenger, the film underscores the potential for transformation and empowerment within subaltern communities, showing that even in the face of overwhelming odds, resistance is possible and can lead to meaningful change.

#### IV. **BALIDANA: A STORY OF TRIALS, TRIBULATIONS AND RESISTANCE BY THE PEASANTS**

"It would be no exaggeration to call the history of post-colonial Odisha the history of forced dispossession, state repression and resistance against it" ( Padhi and Sarangi 1). In post-colonial Odisha, the new elites adopt and adapt the hierarchical and exploitative practices introduced by the British to continue the oppression and to satiate their unquenchable thirst for wealth and landed property. *Balidana*, produced under the banner of Basant Naik entertainment and directed by legendary film artist and director Prashanta Nanda, chronicles the life of two generations of a peasant family that suffered in the hands of a wicked Sahukar or Money-lender, the dispossession and displacement of the family, and the violent resistance of the protagonist. Showing the oppression of the middle class on peasants in Post-independence Odisha, the film also highlights another significant event in the history of modern Odisha, i.e. the peasants' violent resistance or revolution which was branded as terrorism. It brings to the light the helplessness of the subalterns or farmers that resulted in their turning into rebels and raising weapons towards the middle-class in resistance.

Land holds utmost significance in the life of the farmers and it is a symbol of their identity. But the commodification of land under British rule made it an object of buying and selling. *Balidana* revolves around this issue of land and shows how this commodification led the middle-class to occupy the lands of lower-class through manipulation. In that time, the middle-class, that emerged from the remnants of the colonial system, perpetuated the oppression of the peasants taking advantage of their illiteracy and backwardness. In the film, Jagata, the father of the protagonist Raju, mortgages his 2 acres of land near Sahukar to get married to Laxmi. He pays most of his annual harvest to repay the loan, but that falls short to the interest even. Eventually, the Sahukar usurps the land leaving the family deprived of their only source of income. The peasant can't oppose but puts blame on his luck. This rightly portrays the social reality of that time where farmers were not paid their dues and they had to mortgage their land near the wicked-money lender who used several means to usurp their land. The subaltern couldn't oppose due to lack of agency and his voice disappeared in the vast world dominated by the elites. He couldn't even seek the intervention of the state that worked in the interest of the middle-class.

There is a "line of continuity between the colonial and the postcolonial where both are linked by crime, immorality and corruption" (Nayar 99). Despite several

legal reforms, the postcolonial situation didn't change anything for the lower-class and the colonial legacies continued to plague the society. The middle-class maintained the existing hierarchies and perpetuated the oppression of the lower-class. The character of Raju, played by Prashanta Nanda, though doesn't directly suffer from brutal oppression like his father Jagata did, is a victim of Sahukar's manipulation and lost his way of life as the Sahukar encroached upon. Raju has a strong sense of attachment for their land from his very childhood and when it is snatched, he pledges to take revenge for this. Raju grows up to be an angry young man and an independent farmer who tills the government land to grow crops. But eventually Sahukar's manipulation played its role and Raju loses his land to an industrialist who takes the land to build a factory. His attempt of raising voice lands him in jail. Raju here stands for the hundreds of such voiceless farmers who became victims of the manipulation and exploitation of such middle-class agents and whose voice was suppressed by the dominant class. Though Aju, the industrialist, takes the land under the direction of Sahukar, this scenario exemplifies how elite industrialists often seized the lands of poor farmers through various means. In Odisha, the maoist movement that gained momentum in the 70s was also a result of this displacement of the subalterns from their home and land.

In the jail, Raju meets the school master who had become a rebel because of the oppression of the numerous Sahukars and Zamindars. Raju eventually joins hands with the master and both of them plan to take revenge from the Sahukar. This event highlights how the poor people adopted the ways of violence and terrorism because of the unending torture and oppression of the middle class. Raju and the master escapes from jail to fight for their right. Bereft of any sort of political or social agency, they had no other way but of violence. The film here tries to shed light on the constraints that made the poor people adopt the path of violence. They didn't have education or agency. Even the Government had betrayed them by taking sides of the middle class. So, the only means they could adopt to raise their voice against such oppression was of the violence. But the state didn't understand their constraints and to maintain its image, it disowned them. Unlike the Colonial period, it didn't want to put them into the discourse of nationalism and resistance; rather they were branded as criminals.

The story of resistance runs parallel with the love story of Raju with the daughter of the Sahukar. It is when the Sahukar tries to forcibly marry her off because she wanted to marry a low class 'criminal' Raju that Raju attacks the village. However, the master, to not let Raju's life get spoiled, kills the Sahukar saying that he is putting an end to the oppression of another Sahukar.

## V. SUBALTERNS' ASSERTION OF VOICE AND DECOLONIZING THE SPACE

It is ultimately the policies and value system of the colonial administration which is transmitted to this new class of predators, represented by Ray Saheb and Sahukar in Odia society. The predatory attitude of these elites replicates the extractive and authoritarian nature of the colonial administration, demonstrating a continuity of oppression. Countless individuals and families in post-independence Odisha suffered in the hands of the elites and ended their life in destitution. However, the extreme exertion of power, limitless exploitation and oppression also compelled the lower-class masses to vent out their anger and anguish by waging a battle against the perpetrator. Both the films clearly lay bare the suffering of the farmers and the lower-class masses in the hands of the middle class and how this suffering drove them to adopt the violent means of resistance as the state had created no scope of agency for them. But in modern Odisha, these kinds of resistance were criminalized and the voice of the subaltern was invariably suppressed by the state. The state never attempted to explore the causes of their resistance and under what condition they resorted to violence. The films try to highlight the actual experience of the farmers and the lower-class people to justify their means of resistance. In the films, the subaltern, whose voice was long suppressed, can at last assert his identity and is successful in freeing the space and the mind of the people from the colonization of the middle class.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Both *Udandi Sita* and *Balidana* are significant contributions of the film industry to enriching the popular culture of Odisha and they help create the unique identity of Odia film industry. Apart from their appealing patriotic songs, screenplay, cinematography and starring, the films are also credited with shedding light on the grim social realities and conditions of the lower class and farmers of their contemporary society. With the changed class equation in post-independence period, the middle class appeared as just the other-self of the colonizer and tried to keep the voices of the subalterns beyond the margins of the society with their continuous oppression and exploitation. And any attempt of resistance by the subaltern used to be criminalized. Though the subaltern studies project was certainly unreachable to the Odia film makers of that time, both the films have adopted a counter-dominant perspective to explore the experiences and pathetic and constraining situations of the subalterns that forced them to adopt the path of violence for resistance, as they couldn't withstand the exploitation more. With their respective unique

approaches of giving voice to the peasants and the lower-class people, the films have been able to show the assertion of identity and voice of the subalterns in the end, and thereby impart a subtle message to society to awake from a deep slumber and raise voices and awareness against the oppressors on behalf of the oppressed.

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# Trauma and Cultural Estrangement of Immigrant Children in Marina Budhos' *Ask Me No Questions*

Jibin Jose P<sup>1</sup>, Amutha Dhanaraj<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of English, Karunya Institute of Technology and Sciences, Coimbatore, India

Email: jibinjp2815@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of English, Karunya Institute of Technology and Sciences, Coimbatore, India

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**Abstract**— Children form the most vulnerable group in the context of violence, including war, riots, and racial and communal conflicts. They easily become the victims of social, political and cultural injustices. Unimaginable emotional and psychological trauma is endured by kids who are uprooted from their home country and kept apart from their parents. In the course of their personality development and character formation, it will have everlasting repercussions. The novel *Ask Me No Questions* by Budhos is a riveting investigation of the pain, identity, and cultural estrangement experienced by immigrant children, particularly in post-9/11 America. This article aims to shed light on the emotional and psychological toll that immigrant children and families experience as they strive to rebuild their lives in a foreign land.



**Keywords**— Children, Estrangement, Identity, Immigration, Trauma

## I. INTRODUCTION

Children are the most susceptible demographic in situations of violence and conflict. The majority of children are forced to migrate and relocate due to various forms of violence both inside and across nations. Many children lose their homes and are split up from their parents, which causes them to be uprooted from their homeland. In children's literature, the anguish and suffering of children have taken the front stage. Over time, children's literature has undergone significant changes, and in the post-modern age, its contents are largely similar to those of adult literature. The present-day children's literature deal with trauma, identity crises, cultural estrangement, immigration problems, terrorism, death, war, starvation, natural disasters, and pandemic diseases. "Children in modern times have been caught in the crossfire of many racial, cultural and war clashes. Immigration problems, wars, terrorism, natural disasters and annihilation have become an inevitable part of children's literature" (Elshaikh, 2015, p. 176).

In *Ask Me No Questions*, Budhos tells the story of a Muslim family from Bangladesh, consisting of two

daughters and their parents, who immigrated to the USA. The narrative delves into the challenges the family encountered following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the US. Nadira, a fourteen-year-old girl, narrates the story of her family as they navigate difficult circumstances such as being arrested and facing deportation. The objective of this article is to clarify how cultural alienation and identity crisis intensify the emotional and psychological strain that immigrant families and children face while attempting to start over in a new country.

## II. DISCUSSION

People migrate overseas in search of better living conditions, top-notch educational possibilities for kids, and more chances for their families to develop socially, culturally, and economically. Nadira's father emigrated to the US with the same intention. Her mother and her older sister Aisha make up a household of four. Nadira and her family had a sense of disconnection from their homeland, just like any other individual who misses their mother nation. They never lose the enduring recollections of their



native country and draw strength from it. Nadira says, "Even though we left when I was seven, sometimes if I close my eyes, it's as if I were right there. I remember the *boroi* tree outside our house, the stone wall where Ma slapped the wash dry, the metal cabinet where Abba kept his school books" (Budhos, 2008, pp. 5–6). These words highlight the suffering of being uprooted and how hard it is for them to mentally adjust to their new home.

Nadira and her sister, who come from a Muslim family in Bangladesh, experience a strong sense of lack of belongingness in America. "You forget you don't really exist here, that this really isn't your home" (2008, p. 8). Despite all of the options available in America, they do not feel at home there. They hoped to become affluent, attend college, and finally settle down when they emigrated to America. In reality, however, things were not going well because they lacked the requisite legal papers to prove their presence. They live in constant terror of being discovered and imprisoned since their father has an expired passport. "In the US, in particular, many undocumented parents have been increasingly arrested and/or deported by the immigration task forces since that fatal date. As a result, many immigrant children have undergone some inexpressible physical and psychological traumatic events" (Elshaikh, 2016, p. 12). Their immigration status is a source of constant apprehension and uncertainty for them. They are traumatised by the constant fear of impending deportation, which makes them preoccupied.

Following the September 11 attacks on America, the nation's immigration and visa regulations were tightened, and citizens of Muslim-majority nations began to be treated with distrust, prejudice and discrimination. Many Muslim immigrants were arrested and deported particularly those who lacked valid visas and other legal documentation. A new rule was enacted in the US requiring all men from specific Muslim-majority countries - Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Pakistan, and Bangladesh - who were over the age of eighteen to register. Of those who did, some were detained or expelled from the nation. Nadira recalls her mother's worry and nervousness when they just landed at the airport, as well as how insecure they felt in a country that they considered their dream destination. "How her mouth became stiff when the uniformed man split open the packing tape around our suitcase and plunged his hands into her underwear and saris, making us feel dirty inside" (2008, p. 7).

After reaching in, the family tried hard to blend in and assimilate into the American society thinking that they would be able to obtain their American citizenship. Understanding the fact that returning to Bangladesh does not have anything good to offer them, every member of the

family attempts hard to assimilate into American society by trying to make them believe that it is their home. Nadira's father tried to do all the possible work available to earn for his family and to fit himself into American society. Regarding her father's genuine efforts to get socialized and raise income, Nadira comments:

Once we got here, Abba worked all kinds of jobs. He sold candied nuts from a cart on the streets of Manhattan. He worked on a construction crew until he smashed his kneecap. He swabbed down lunch counters, mopped a factory floor, busses dishes in restaurants, delivered hot pizzas in thick silver nylon bags. (7–8)

He and his family are constantly afraid that they will be detained and deported because they are illegal immigrants. They do not believe that they can live in America with the certainty of security and safety. It creates a traumatic condition which affects the children in the family adversely. Nadira and her sister Aisha are at a stage in their life when they start to dream about a bright future and established careers. The insecure life brings shadows over their prospects.

Trauma is of various forms - psychological, physical, individual and collective. Nadira and her family members go through all the different forms of trauma as they are interconnected. One kind of trauma will lead to the other and its effects on the individual will carry to other people who are associated with them. Trauma is when an individual loses the sense of having a safe place to retreat to and process his or her emotions or experiences resulting in a feeling of helplessness (Van der Kolk, 1987). Nadira's family goes through it, and the family's helplessness is highlighted when the father is jailed and the mother is forced to remain in a public asylum. As their efforts to continue in America failed, they attempted to travel to nearby Canada but were sent back by the authorities.

In post-September 11 America, with the increased strictness of immigration rules, the identity of Nadira and her family members became more visible. They were considered illegal aliens and started to face a serious issue of identity crisis. Many of the Muslim community members lost their jobs or could not make money. Life has become miserable for people who fail to produce valid documents. Many Bangladesh families seriously started to think about returning to their homeland, but many like Nadira's father found even that a futile thought as they already had sold their houses in Bangladesh and had nothing to go back to. They recognized themselves as unwanted 'other' in America. The fear and terror of the situation are well expressed in Nadira's words: "Each bit of news was like a

piece of hail flung at us, stinging our skins. *Homeland Security. Patriot Act. Code Orange. Special Registration*" (2008, p. 9). The family has experienced enough suffering as illegal immigrants in America, particularly the two daughters. "Children of unauthorized immigrants... are more likely to report anxiety, fear, sadness, posttraumatic stress symptoms, anger, and withdrawal" (Potochnick & Perreira, 2010, p. 470).

In America, Nadira and her sister experienced a severe kind of cultural estrangement. Aisha wanted to lead an American style of life so she tried to observe how her American classmates spoke, dressed and ate and started to follow it. But Nadira was not so particular about imitating the American style, but she also confronted the difficulties of getting shifted to a new cultural setting. Nadira did not make any efforts to shape her lifestyle like that of her American friends. But Aisha was determined to overcome this cultural estrangement and she found her means to get mingled with her American classmates. Nadira says: "She began to study the other kids - especially the American ones. She figured out how they walked, what slang they used" (2008, p. 24). Aisha determined exactly which group of girls she wanted to join in her higher grades. She took note of what they were wearing, such as their flare-leg jeans and macrame bracelets. Then she persuaded her mother to take her shopping so she could buy the same items. This attitude from Aisha demonstrates how much she desired to modify her living style to that of a native to be recognised in American culture.

Nadira and Aisha experience a difficult time balancing their desire to fit into American society with their cultural heritage. This conflict has resulted in a tangle for their cultural identities. Their identities are further shaped by this fight, which also heightens their sense of cultural alienation. They must navigate issues related to faith, attire, and cultural norms while attempting to win over their classmates' acceptance and understanding. After the 9/11 attacks, the girls' Muslim faith became a source of ongoing stress as they dealt with discrimination and misconceptions related to their religion, which played a crucial role in their identity construction.

After their horrific encounters with various forms of trauma, Aisha and Nadira feel scared, depressed, anxious, and distant. Their mother was taken away from them when their father was imprisoned. By residing at their uncle's house, the two sisters began to engage in every action essential to release their father. When their uncle was arrested for illegal residence, Nadira and her sister recalled their father's incarceration, and the same painful sensations of anxiety and stress surfaced in their thoughts. On hearing

the kind of treatment that their uncle had from the police after his arrest, they used to have nightmares and distress:

That night Aisha yells out in her sleep. She thrashes beside me, her hair springing up in wild coils. Her eyes look strange and unmoored. "What is it?" I ask.

"I keep having this dream," she whispers. "Every time I go up on the stage, these policemen come and tell me, 'You don't belong here.' Then they take me and lock me up in a cell with no light." (Budhos, 2008, p. 102)

Lack of belongingness, identity crisis and cultural conflicts caused frustration and disappointment for the girls. Aisha gave up the plan of appearing in the long-awaited interview at Barnard University and decided not to attend the function in the school to receive the award of valedictorian.

However, these stressful events improved their ability to interact with the outside world. "Indeed, the traumatic events of being separated from their parents, taking their father into detention, accusing him of being a terrorist, and living under constant threat of deportation, turn both Nadira and Aisha into experienced adults" (Elshaikh, 2016, p. 15). Nadira and Ayisha decided to test their abilities to challenge and overcome the traumatic situation in which they were placed. Despite knowing it is a difficult task, they are determined to save their family. "The child who has been directly exposed to a traumatic event has had the opportunity to test his ability and gain strength on his own. In this case he may have been able to face the danger and surpass it peacefully by internalizing it so he is less afraid/anxious" (Srour, 2005, p. 89). Srour's observation proved to be true about these teenage girls as evidenced by their actions to save their family.

Nadira appears for her father in court when his lawyer gives up and successfully defends her father and the right of her family to live in America. She shows the court that the authorities have the wrong person since her father spells his name 'Hossain' with an 'a,' whilst the other one they are looking for is 'Hossein' with an 'e.' She proves that her father's payment to the Islamic Centre was a means for him to save money for his daughters' college tuition rather than financial support to a terrorist group. Aisha had a change of mind and delivered her valedictorian speech in front of a sizable audience, demanding things on behalf of everyone who faces a similar circumstance. "All I ask of you is to see me for who I am. . . I want what you want. I want a future" (Budhos, 2008, p. 152). Her words capture her unwavering desire to be accepted for who she is, as well as the strength and resiliency she gained from her ordeal.

### III. CONCLUSION

Following the September 11 attacks, the United States reinforced its internal security measures, which presented several challenges for undocumented immigrants in the country, including arrest, incarceration, and deportation. Budhos deftly addresses the trauma, identity, and cultural alienation that immigrant children - especially those of Muslim descent - face in *Ask Me No Questions*. Nadira and her sister experienced the psychological and emotional consequences of uncertainty about their immigration status and struggled with their cultural identities. They represent millions of immigrant girls around the world who confront and overcome the obstacles to survive in the existential struggle.

### IV. DECLARATION OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

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# Literacy Status of Scheduled Caste Community in West Bengal

Tupai Barman<sup>1</sup> and Prof. Tarini Halder<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar (Ph.D.), Department of Education, Kalyani University, Kalyani, Nadia, West Bengal, India. Email:

[tupaibarman.bfc@gmail.com](mailto:tupaibarman.bfc@gmail.com), ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-0291-8439>

<sup>2</sup>Professor, Department of Education, Kalyani University, Nadia, West Bengal, India.

Email: [thalderku@gmail.com](mailto:thalderku@gmail.com), ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-8807-7182>

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**Abstract**— *The Scheduled Castes (SC) are among the most socially and educationally disadvantaged groups in West Bengal. The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of the literacy status of Scheduled Caste and various sub-castes of Scheduled Caste community in West Bengal. The paper also reviews the current literacy status and literacy growth pattern of Scheduled Caste and various sub-castes. The paper highlights district-wise current literacy status and literacy trends among Scheduled caste in West Bengal. Also, highlights the sub-castes wise current literacy status and literacy growth pattern among Scheduled caste. The paper briefly analyses districts wise and sub-castes wise current literacy status and literacy growth pattern among scheduled caste in West Bengal. The researcher concludes that districts wise and sub-castes wise literacy growth rate is consistently increase and the Government needs to pay more attention to those districts and sub-castes where the literacy rate is relatively low among scheduled castes in West Bengal.*



**Keywords**— *Literacy Status, Scheduled Caste (SC), Sub-castes of Scheduled Caste.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Scheduled Castes (SC) are among the most socially and educationally disadvantaged groups in India (Rukhsana & Alam, 2014). After the seven decades of independence Scheduled Castes, people are educationally lagging behind than other castes of India. Due to the discrimination and social exclusion, the representation of Scheduled Caste in the educational arena is very less (Majhi & Sardar, 2019). As per the 2011 Census, the state of West Bengal comprises 10.7% of the overall population of India, which is made up of around 16.6% Scheduled Caste people. West Bengal ranks third in terms of the percentage of the overall population that is comprised of Scheduled Castes, representing 23.5% of the population. The Scheduled Caste is one of the largest socially segregated groups in India. They are people known as untouchables or outcastes who experience violence, discrimination and social exclusion on a daily basis. The traditional taboos are the same for Dalit men and women (Ghosh, 2019; Dutta & Bisai, 2020). The

schedule castes are comparatively backward in occupational, educational, social, cultural, religious and political sector (Chouhan, 2012). Scheduled Castes have different histories of social and economic deprivation, and the underlying causes of their educational marginalisation are also strikingly distinct (Rukhsana & Alam, 2014). But now a day's they are going under educational, social and economic changes both in rural and urban areas with their attitude towards education, religion, child marriage, superstitions, etc. is changing (Chouhan, 2012). The state of West Bengal has the second highest Scheduled Castes population with 60 sub-communities. Among 60 Scheduled Caste communities of West Bengal 34 are lying below the state average of literacy rate (Dutta & Bisai, 2020). So, the researcher intends to study literacy status of Scheduled Caste and different sub-castes of Scheduled Caste community in west Bengal.

**Objectives:**



1. To examine the growth rate of Literacy of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal.
2. To study the districts wise literacy trends of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal.
3. To examine the Growth Pattern of Literacy rate among different sub-castes of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal
4. To analyse the district wise trend of gender gap among Scheduled Caste in West Bengal.
5. To study the currents literacy status of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal.
6. To study the Current Literacy Status of Different sub-castes of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal
7. To analyse the literacy rate among different sub-castes of SC based on locality (Rural-Urban) in West Bengal.
8. To compare literacy status among Rural SC sub-castes and Urban SC sub-castes in West Bengal.

## II. METHODOLOGY

This is a documentary study and approach of the study is qualitative. The study is based on the secondary sources according to the need of the study. The data about the Scheduled caste are collected from government websites, reports, journals, internet sources etc.

## III. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

**Data were presented and analysed objective wise.**

**Objective- 1:** To examine the growth rate of Literacy of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal.

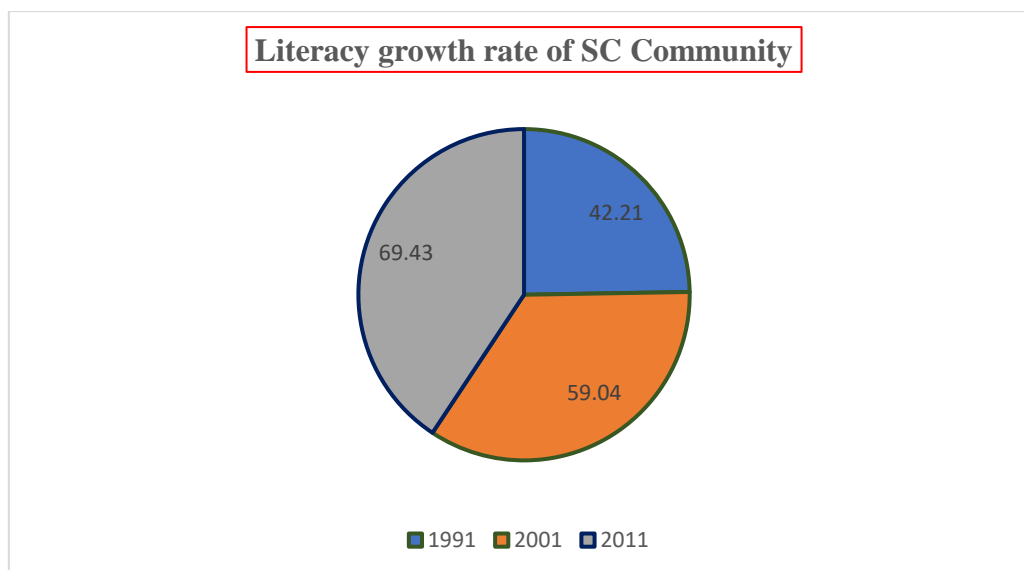
*Table No- 1: Growth rate of Literacy among Scheduled Caste in West Bengal.*

Years	Total %	Decadal growth rate %		Male %	Decadal growth rate %		Female %	Decadal growth rate %		Gap %
1991	42.2	16.8		54.5	16		28.9	18		25.6
2001	59.0			70.5			46.9			23.6
2011	69.4		10.4	77.2		6.7	61.2		14.3	16.0

Source: Census of West Bengal 1991,2001,2011.

**Interpretation:** Table 1 shows the growth rate of literacy among scheduled caste in West Bengal from 1991 to 2011. The growth rate of SC community literacy from 1991 to 2001 is 16.8% and from 2001 to 2011 the literacy growth rate of SC community is 10.4%. In 1991 the male literacy rate of SC community was 54.5% which increased to 70.5% in 2001 and this growth rate is 16% and in 2011 the literacy rate is 77.2% which is an increase of 6.7% since 2001. In 1991 the female literacy rate of SC community was 28.9% which increased to 46.9% in 2001 and this growth rate is

18% and in 2011 the literacy rate is 61.2% which is an increase of 14.3% since 2001. In 1991 to 2001 the decadal growth rate of male literacy rate is 16% and 2001 to 2011 the decadal growth rate of male literacy rate is 6.7%. on the other hand, 1991 to 2001 the decadal growth rate of female literacy rate is 18% and 2001 to 2011 the decadal growth rate of female literacy rate is 14.3%. So, it can conclude that the decadal growth rate from 1991 to 2011 of female literacy is better than male literacy.



**Objective- 2:** To study the districts wise literacy trends of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal.

*Table No- 2: Districts wise literacy trends of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal.*

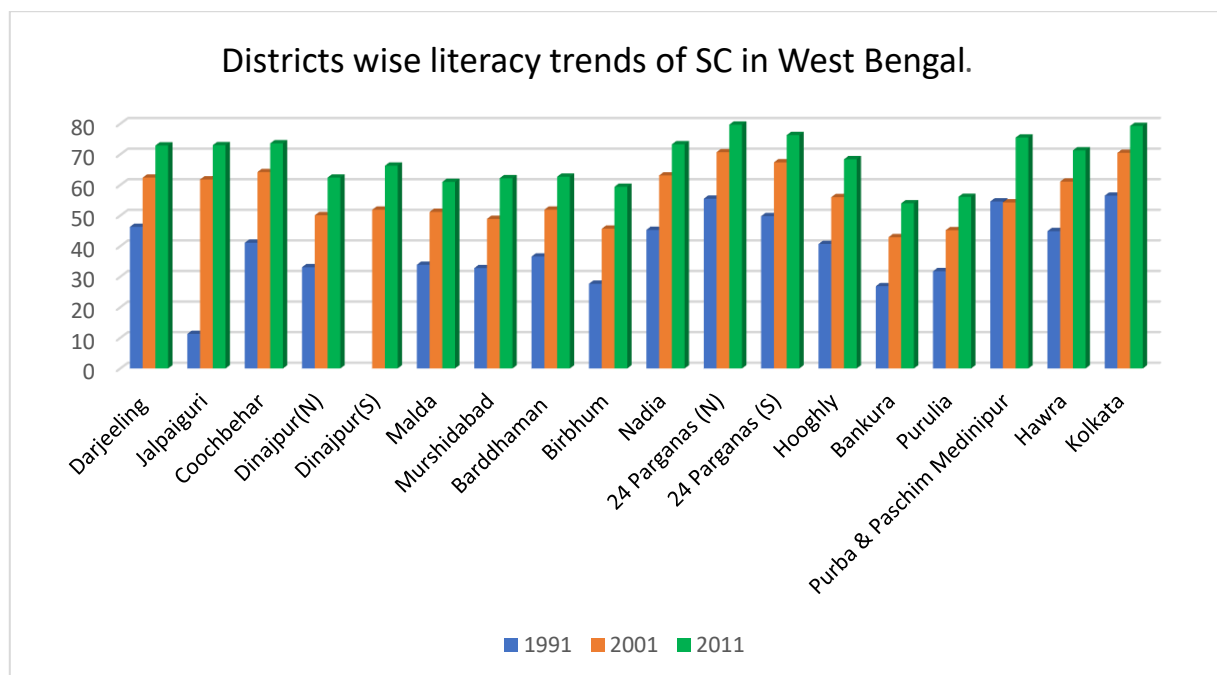
Districts	SC Literacy Rate % 1991	SC Literacy Rate % 2001	Decadal growth rate % (1991-2001)	SC Literacy Rate % 2011	Decadal growth rate % (2001-2011)
Darjeeling	46.3	62.4	16.1	72.9	10.5
Jalpaiguri	11.3	61.8	50.5	73.0	11.2
Coochbehar	41.1	64.2	23.1	73.6	9.4
Dinajpur(N)	33.1	50.1	17.0	62.4	12.3
Dinajpur(S)		51.9	18.8	66.3	14.4
Malda	33.9	51.2	17.3	61.0	9.8
Murshidabad	32.8	48.9	16.1	62.2	13.3
Bardhaman	36.6	51.9	15.3	62.7	10.8
Birbhum	27.7	45.7	18.0	59.4	13.7
Nadia	45.3	63.1	17.8	73.3	10.2
24 Parganas (N)	55.5	70.7	15.2	79.7	9.0
24 Parganas (S)	49.8	67.4	17.6	76.3	8.9
Hooghly	40.7	56.0	15.3	68.4	12.4
Bankura	26.9	42.9	16.0	54.0	11.1
Purulia	31.8	45.2	13.4	56.1	10.9
Purba & Paschim Medinipur	54.6	54.3	-0.3	75.5	21.2
Hawra	44.9	61.1	16.2	71.3	10.2
Kolkata	56.5	70.5	14.0	79.3	8.8

Note: North Dinajpur & South Dinajpur are calculated together because at the time 1991 Dinajpur was not divided.

Source: Census Report of West Bengal 1991,2001,2011.

**Interpretation:** Table 2 shows the districts wise literacy trends of scheduled castes in West Bengal from 1991 to 2011. In 1991, Kolkata district had the highest literacy rate and Jalpaiguri districts had the lowest literacy rate among scheduled caste in West Bengal. followed by, in 2001, North 24 Parganas districts had the highest literacy rate and Bankura districts had the lowest literacy rate among Scheduled Caste in West Bengal. Also in 2011, North 24 Parganas Districts had the highest literacy rate and Bankura

Districts had the lowest literacy rate among scheduled castes in West Bengal. In 1991 to 2001 Jalpaiguri district had the highest literacy decadal growth rate and Purba & Paschim Medinipur district had the lowest literacy decadal growth rate of SC community in West Bengal. On the other hand, in 2001 to 2011 Purba & Paschim Medinipur district had the highest literacy decadal growth rate and Kolkata district had the lowest literacy decadal growth rate of SC community in West Bengal.



**Objective- 3:** To examine the Growth Pattern of Literacy rate among different sub-castes of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal

Table No- 3: Growth Pattern of Literacy rate among different sub-castes of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal.

All SC	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
1. Bagdi, Duley	8.7	10.8	13.9	30.0	47.7	61.4
2. Bahelia	11.6	14.4	22.5	39.2	59.6	70.4
3. Baiti	12.7	17.9	32.9	51.9	68.8	76.8
4. Bantar	15.4	18.1	17.3	41.8	33.1	72.4
5. Bauri	5.5	10.1	9.4	24.2	37.5	50.5
6. Belder	9.6	20.2	18.7	42.1	39.8	58.0
7. Bhogta	3.1	33.3	18.0	28.7	47.9	58.7
8. Bhuimali	11.3	17.4	21.2	35.2	57.1	68.3
9. Bhuiya	7.1	9.9	14.2	21.5	42.1	54.9
10. Bind	6.6	10.9	12.7	31.9	35.0	48.6
11. Charmakar, Chamar, Mochi, Muchi, Rabidas, Ruidas, Rishi	8.3	12.0	14.4	35.9	46.9	60.0
12. Chaupal	3.3	16.3	20.8	39.6	43.2	53.0
13. Dabgar	29.2	20.4	22.4	33.9	34.5	71.8

14. Damai (Nepali)	21.1	37.3	37.5	20.8	69.9	78.3
15. Dhoba, Dhobi	18.9	24.3	38.8	28.1	73.9	80.7
16. Doai	6.2	17.3	22.6	28.5	60.1	65.7
17. Dom, Dhangad	7.1	9.9	12.6	52.9	46.0	58.9
18. Dhari, Dharhi, Dosadh, Dusadh,	12.9	16.7	23.7	52.4	59.6	69.4
19. Ghasi	5.8	10.2	9.0	37.1	30.5	40.0
20. Gonrhi	5.6	18.6	25.2	29.1	56.1	67.7
21. Halalkhor	24.5	10.4	29.9	44.2	68.7	80.8
22. Hari, Mehtar, Mehtor, Bhangi, Balmiki	8.8	11.9	15.3	37.4	49.5	62.4
23. Jalia Kaibartta	17.9	20.5	30.2	26.6	64.9	73.0
24. Jhalo Malo, Malo	14.5	19.2	25.5	37.9	60.3	71.5
25. Kadar	12.2	22.8	25.5	51.5	69.7	78.1
26. Kami (Nepali)	18.1	27.9	34.7	42.1	68.8	79.1
27. Kandra	15.1	24.0	31.5	49.3	72.2	81.8
28. Kanjar	16.2	8.2	16.0	42.5	65.4	71.9
29. Kaora	9.7	17.3	17.8	55.4	52.9	66.2
30. Karenga, Koranga	9.5	12.3	18.4	49.5	54.8	67.6
31. Kaur	12.3	14.5	16.5	60.1	52.2	65.4
32. Keot, Keyot	13.8	16.6	23.2	32.5	58.8	68.9
33. Khaira	5.3	9.2	10.9	32.3	42.3	55.2
34. Khatik	25.3	17.9	30.0	35.7	68.9	74.4
35. Koch	8.6	16.1	15.2	38.7	42.9	52.5
36. Konai	7.4	9.1	15.9	30.6	49.7	63.0
37. Konwar	15.7	24.5	45.7	58.4	82.9	82.9
38. Kotal	12.5	14.4	21.8	45.4	59.7	69.9
39. Kurariar	5.4	21.9	25.1	42.2	56.7	64.2
40. Lalbegi	18.1	21.5	25.9	51.8	67.2	85.6
41. Lohar	8.3	12.4	15.1	29.7	46.5	59.1
42. Mahar	11.8	13.5	19.9	40.3	52.6	63.2
43. Mal	5.9	9.6	12.2	26.6	39.6	54.4
44. Mallah	14.1	15.4	23.8	37.7	53.9	65.8
45. Musahar	3.16	8.3	5.3	15.8	15.3	24.4
46. Namasudra	21.0	26.9	35.9	56.2	71.9	79.5
47. Nat	4.5	39.2	31.3	49.7	59.3	64.8
48. Nuniya	11.0	15.9	20.8	39.4	54.2	65.7
49. Paliya	11.6	20.8	18.5	31.0	50.3	64.3
50. Pan, Sawasi	16.9	16.4	27.3	54.9	61.0	72.3
51. Pasi	15.6	7.9	26.8	46.3	64.1	72.6
52. Patni	16.2	18.9	25.4	49.4	64.5	73.9



53. Pod, Poundra	26.7	27.3	36.5	56.1	72.1	79.8
54. Rajbanshi	14.8	17.6	24.7	40.7	60.1	70.7
55. Rajwar	9.2	11.4	16.6	38.7	46.4	59.7
56. Sarki (Nepali)	14.4	26.0	27.3	49.3	62.5	72.6
57. Sunri (Excluding Saha)	28.6	22.4	54.9	66.0	82.5	86.3
58. Tiwar	8.1	20.4	25.3	45.2	62.1	71.9
59. Turi	7.5	12.9	14.3	27.6	40.6	53.7
60. Chain (in Malda, Murshidabad, Nadia and Dakshin Dinajpur districts)	--	--	--	--	--	62.1

Source: Census Report of West Bengal 1961,1971,1981,1991,2001,2011.

**Interpretation:** Table 3 shows the Growth Pattern of Literacy rate among different sub-castes of Scheduled Castes in West Bengal. The table shows that Growth Pattern of Literacy rate of various SC sub-castes the top five are Lalbegi (67.5%), Konwar (67.2%), Kandra (66.7%), Kadar (65.9%) and Baiti (64.1%). On the other hand, the bottom five are Musahar (21.2%), Ghasi (34.2%), Bind (42.0%), Dabgar (42.6%) and Koch (43.9%). Also, sub-caste Rajbanshi literacy growth rate (55.6%) has the 28th from highest literacy rate among the mentioned sub-castes of

Scheduled Caste. The literacy rate of various sub-castes of the Scheduled Caste community in West Bengal has consistently increased from 1961 to 2011, exceptionally Bantar, Bauri, Belder, Bhogta, Dabgar, Dhoba, Dhobi, Dom, Dhangad, Ghasi, Halalkhor, Jalia Kaibartta, Kanjar, Kaora, Kaur, Khatik, Koch, Musahar, Nat, Paliya, Pan, Sawasi, Pasi, Sunri (Excluding Saha) etc sub-caste.

**Objective- 4:** To analyse the districts wise trend of gender gap among SC in West Bengal.

Table No- 4. Trends in Gender gap in literacy of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal.

Districts	SC Literacy Rate % (1991)			SC Literacy Rate % (2001)			Decadal growth rate% (1991-2001)		SC Literacy Rate % (2011)			Decadal growth rate% (2001-2011)	
	Male	Female	Gap	Male	Female	Gap	M	F	Male	Female	Gap	M	F
Darjeeling	58.1	33.3	24.8	73.9	50.3	23.6	15.8	17.0	80.6	65.0	15.6	6.7	14.7
Jalpaiguri	54.8	26.6	28.2	73.4	49.6	23.8	18.6	23.0	80.1	65.5	14.6	6.7	15.9
Coochbehar	54.3	26.9	27.4	75.8	52.3	23.5	21.5	25.4	80.7	66.0	14.7	4.9	13.7
Dinajpur(N)	45.7	19.1	26.6	63.5	35.7	27.8	17.8	16.6	70.9	53.3	17.6	7.4	17.6
Dinajpur(S)				63.7	39.6	24.1	18.0	20.5	73.8	58.2	15.6	10.1	18.6
Malda	46.6	20.2	26.4	62.8	38.9	23.9	16.2	18.7	68.6	52.9	15.7	5.8	14.0
Murshidabad	40.5	24.4	16.1	58.1	39.3	18.8	17.6	14.9	68.5	55.7	12.8	10.4	16.4
Bardhaman	47.5	24.7	22.8	63.7	39.6	24.1	16.2	14.9	71.5	63.6	7.9	7.8	24.0
Birbhum	38.5	16.1	22.4	57.8	33.1	24.7	19.3	17.0	68.0	50.4	17.6	10.2	17.3
Nadia	55.0	34.8	20.2	71.8	53.9	17.9	16.8	19.1	79.0	67.3	11.7	7.2	13.4
24 Parganas (N)	64.7	41.2	23.5	70.8	61.4	9.4	6.1	20.2	85.4	73.7	11.7	14.6	12.3
24 Parganas (S)	64.9	33.4	31.5	79.6	54.2	25.4	14.7	20.8	84.4	67.8	16.6	4.8	13.6

Hooghly	52.8	27.8	25	67.3	44.7	22.6	14.5	16.9	76.3	60.2	16.1	9.0	15.5
Bankura	40.3	13.1	27.2	58.2	27.1	31.1	17.9	14.0	65.8	42.1	23.7	7.6	15.0
Purulia	48.9	13.5	35.4	63.0	26.4	36.6	14.1	12.9	69.8	41.6	28.2	6.8	15.2
Purba & Paschim Medinipur	68.7	39.8	28.9	62.3	41.4	20.9	-6.4	1.6	83.2	67.3	15.9	20.9	25.9
Hawra	56.0	32.9	23.1	70.5	51.4	19.1	14.5	18.5	77.3	65.1	12.2	6.8	13.7
Kolkata	63.5	47.3	16.2	77.3	62.3	15.0	13.8	15.0	85.0	72.9	12.1	7.7	10.6

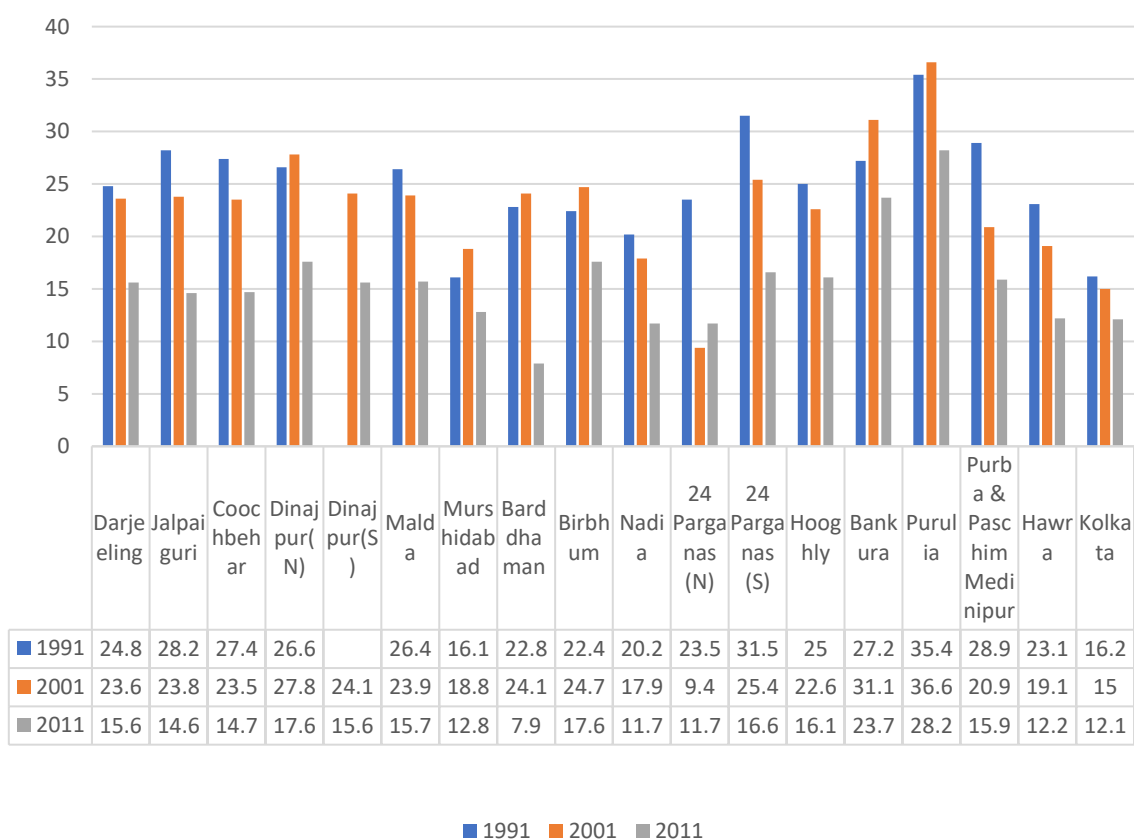
**Note:** North Dinajpur & South Dinajpur are calculated together because at the time 1991 Dinajpur was not divided.

**Source:** Census of West Bengal 1991, 2001, 2011.

**Interpretation:** Table 4 shows the districts wise trends in gender gap in literacy of scheduled castes in West Bengal from 1991 to 2011. In 1991, Purulia districts in West Bengal had the highest gender gap in literacy and Murshidabad districts had the lowest gender gap in literacy. In 2001, Purulia districts had the highest gender gap in literacy and the North 24 Parganas had the lowest gender gap in literacy. In 2011, Purulia districts had the highest gender gap in literacy and Bardhaman districts had the lowest gender gap in literacy. From 1991 to 2001 Cooch Behar district had the highest growth rate in the decade of male and female

literacy, with males at 21.5% and females at 25.4%. Overall, the decadal growth rate of female literacy is better than the decadal growth rate of male literacy in all districts. Exceptions are North Dinajpur, Murshidabad, Burdwan, Birbhum, Bankura and Purulia districts. On the other hand, in 2001 to 2011 Purba & Paschim Medinipur districts had the highest growth rate in the decade of male & female literacy. Overall, the decadal growth rate of female literacy is better than the decadal growth rate of male literacy in all districts.

**Trends in Gender gap in literacy of SC in West Bengal**



**Objective- 5:** To study the currents literacy status of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal.

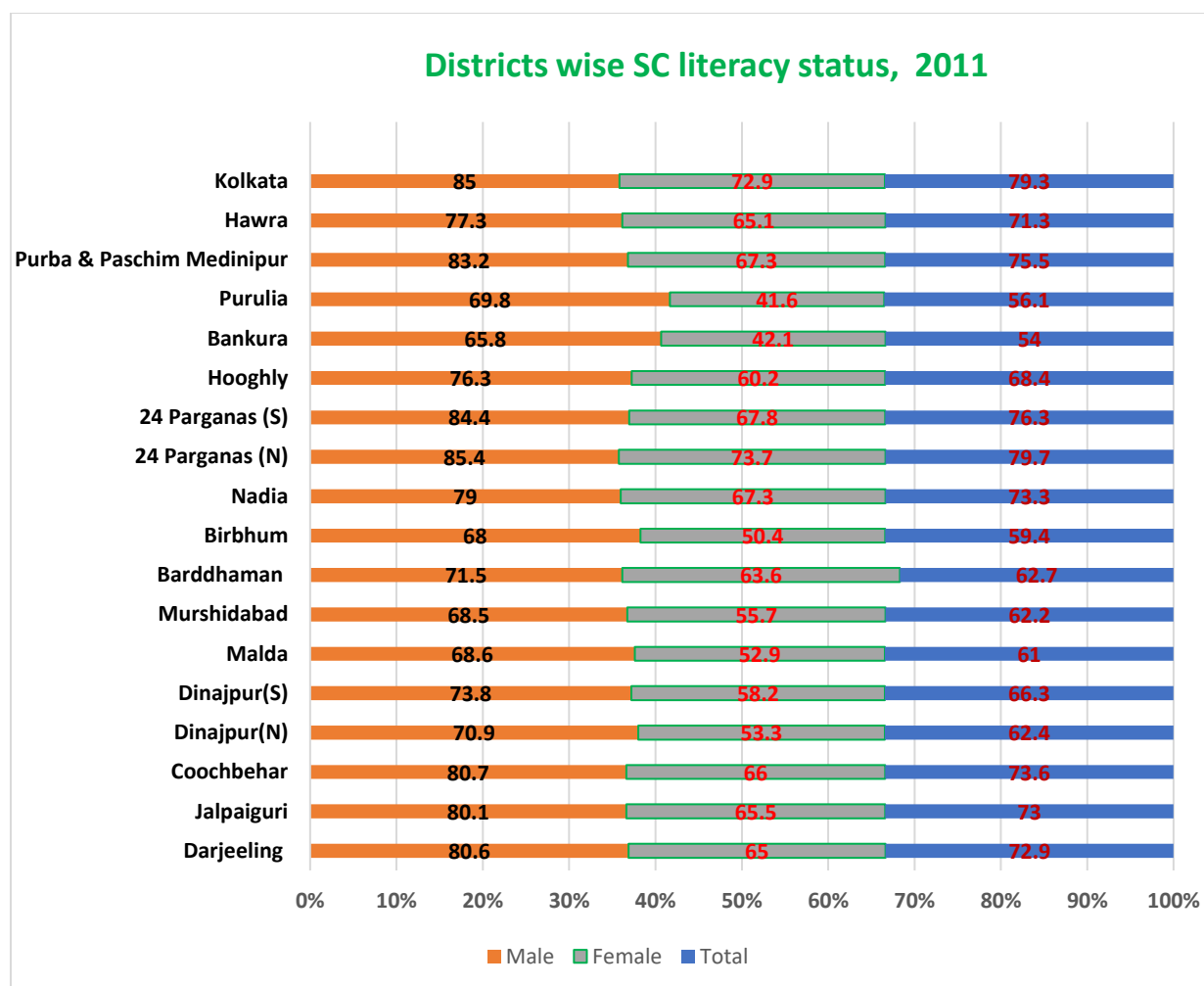
*Table No- 5. Districts wise literacy status of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal, 2011.*

Districts	Total	Male	Female	Gap
Darjeeling	72.9	80.6	65.0	15.6
Jalpaiguri	73.0	80.1	65 .5	14.6
Coochbehar	73.6	80.7	66.0	14.7
Dinajpur(N)	62.4	70.9	53.3	17.6
Dinajpur(S)	66.3	73.8	58.2	15.6
Malda	61.0	68.6	52.9	15.7
Murshidabad	62.2	68.5	55.7	12.8
Barddhaman	62.7	71.5	63.6	7.9
Birbhum	59.4	68.0	50.4	17.6
Nadia	73.3	79.0	67.3	11.7
24 Parganas (N)	79.7	85.4	73.7	11.7
24 Parganas (S)	76.3	84.4	67.8	16.6
Hooghly	68.4	76.3	60.2	16.1
Bankura	54.0	65.8	42.1	23.7
Purulia	56.1	69.8	41.6	28.2
Purba & Paschim Medinipur	75.5	83.2	67.3	15.9
Hawra	71.3	77.3	65.1	12.2
Kolkata	79.3	85.0	72.9	12.1

Sources: Census of West Bengal, 2011.

**Interpretation:** Table 5 shows the districts wise literacy status of scheduled castes in West Bengal. The table shows that districts wise literacy status among Scheduled Caste the top five literacy rate are North 24 Parganas, Kolkata, South 24 Parganas, Purba & Paschim Medinipur and Cooch Behar.

On the other hand, the bottom five literacy rate are Bankura, Purulia, Birbhum, Malda and Murshidabad. In 2011, North 24 Parganas district had the highest literacy rate and Bankura districts had the lowest literacy rate among scheduled castes in West Bengal.



**Objective- 6:** To study the Current Literacy Status of Different sub-castes of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal.

*Table No 6: Current Literacy Status of Different sub-castes of Schedule Caste in West Bengal 2011.*

All SC Community	Total%	Male%	Female%	Gap%
Bagdi, Duley	61.4	70.3	52.3	18.0
Bahelia	70.4	74.6	65.7	8.9
Baiti	76.8	82.0	71.2	10.8
Bantar	72.4	87.5	55.9	31.6
Bauri	50.5	62.1	38.8	23.3
Belder	58.0	69.3	46.0	23.3
Bhogta	58.7	70.4	46.7	23.7
Bhuimali	68.3	74.0	62.2	11.8
Bhuiya	64.9	65.6	43.8	21.8
Bind	48.6	56.6	40.1	16.5
Chamar,Charmakar, Mochi, Muchi, Rabidas,Ruidas,Rishi	60.0	68.2	51.4	16.8
Chaupal	53.0	62.6	41.8	20.8
Dabgar	71.8	80.9	62.5	18.4



Damai (Nepali)	78.3`	86.4	70.6	15.8
Dhoba, Dhobi	80.7	87.2	73.7	13.5
Doai	65.7	72.9	58.3	14.6
Dom, Dhangad	59.0	68.5	49.2	19.3
Dosadh, Dusadh, Dhari, Dharhi	69.4	77.9	59.6	18.3
Ghasi	40.0	50.8	29.4	21.4
Gonrhi	67.7	73.2	61.5	11.7
Halalkhor	80.8	88.0	72.7	15.3
Hari, Mehtar, Mehtor, Bhangi, Balmiki	62.4	71.0	53.5	17.5
Jalia Kaibartta	73.0	79.5	66.1	13.4
Jhalo Malo, Malo	71.5	76.7	65.9	10.8
Kadar	78.1	85.7	70.3	15.4
Kami (Nepali)	79.1	87.1	71.4	15.7
Kandra	81.8	89.4	73.9	15.5
Kanjar	72.0	76.1	68.0	8.1
Kaora	66.2	73.9	58.2	15.7
Karenga, Koranga	67.6	75.2	59.9	15.3
Kaur	65.4	74.3	55.5	18.8
Keot, Keyot	68.9	77.7	59.4	18.3
Khaira	55.2	66.5	43.9	22.6
Khatik	74.4	80.8	67.2	13.6
Koch	52.5	60.8	43.7	17.1
Konai	63.0	69.7	55.9	13.8
Konwar	82.9	87.7	77.5	10.2
Kotal	70.0	77.4	62.3	15.1
Kurariar	64.2	70.6	57.3	13.3
Lalbegi	85.6	92.1	78.2	13.9
Lohar	59.1	69.7	48.2	21.5
Mahar	63.2	72.3	53.8	18.5
Mal	54.4	63.4	45.2	18.2
Mallah	65.8	74.4	56.2	18.2
Musahar	24.4	30.3	18.2	12.1
Namasudra	79.5	85.1	73.6	11.5
Nat	64.8	70.6	57.9	12.7
Nuniya	65.7	73.7	56.6	17.1
Paliya	64.3	72.1	56.0	16.1
Pan, Sawasi	72.3	81.7	62.7	19.0
Pasi	72.6	80.8	63.3	17.5
Patni	73.9	79.6	67.8	11.8

Pod, Poundra	79.8	87.1	71.9	15.2
Rajbanshi	70.7	78.3	62.5	15.8
Rajwar	59.7	71.2	47.5	23.7
Sarki (Nepali)	72.6	81.2	64.4	16.8
Sunri (Excluding Saha)	86.3	93.5	78.6	14.9
Tiyar	71.9	79.4	64.0	15.4
Turi	53.7	63.2	43.7	19.5
Chain (in Malda, Murshidabad, Nadia and Dakshin Dinajpur districts)	62.1	69.1	54.7	14.4

Source: Census Report 2011 in West Bengal

**Interpretation:** Table 6 shows the Current Literacy rate among different sub-castes of SC in West Bengal, 2011. The table shows that current literacy rates of various SC sub-castes the top five are Sunri (Excluding Saha) (86.3%), Lalbegi (85.6%), Konwar (82.9%), Kandra (81.8%), Halalkhor (80.8%) and Dhoba, Dhobi (80.7%). On the other hand, the bottom five are Musahar (24.4%), Ghasi (40.0%), Bind (48.6%), Bauri (50.5%), Koch (52.5%). Also, Sunri subcaste had the highest literacy rate, which is 86.3%, where male literacy rate 93.5% and female literacy rate 78.6% and their gap literacy between male and female

literacy rate 14.9%. Also, Musahar sub-caste had the lowest literacy rate, which is 24.4%, where male literacy rate 30.3% and female literacy rate 18.2% and their gap literacy between male and female literacy rate 12.1%. Also, sub-caste Rajbanshi literacy rate (70.7%) has the 24th from highest literacy rate among the mentioned sub-castes, where male literacy rate 78.3% and female literacy rate 62.5% and gap between male and female literacy rate 15.8%.

**Objective- 7:** To analyse the literacy rate among different sub-castes of SC based on Locality in West Bengal

Table No 7: Literacy status among different sub-castes of SC based on Locality in West Bengal, 2011.

SC Community	Rural				Urban			
	Total %	Male %	Female %	Gap %	Total %	Male %	Female %	Gap %
All Scheduled Castes	67.5	75.7	58.9	16.8	76.7	83.1	70.0	13.1
1. Bagdi, Duley	60.7	69.8	51.5	18.3	67.2	74.7	59.7	15.0
2. Bahelia	68.3	72.5	63.7	8.8	89.7	94.1	84.9	9.2
3. Baiti	74.0	79.4	68.2	11.2	84.2	88.7	79.3	9.4
4. Bantar	73.7	94.4	54.0	40.4	71.8	84.8	56.4	28.4
5. Bauri	48.4	60.1	36.6	23.5	58.9	70.2	47.5	22.7
6. Belder	52.3	63.8	40.2	23.6	73.4	83.8	62.0	21.8
7. Bhogta	58.1	69.9	45.9	24.0	76.5	81.8	70.5	11.3
8. Bhuimali	63.8	69.7	57.6	12.1	80.9	86.0	75.5	10.5
9. Bhuiya	57.5	68.7	46.1	22.6	45.1	54.3	35.3	19.0
10. Bind	45.2	53.6	36.3	17.3	62.8	68.8	56.2	12.6
11. Chamar, Charmakar, Mochi, Muchi, Rabidas, Ruidas, Rishi	57.3	65.4	48.9	16.5	68.6	76.8	59.3	17.5
12. Chaupal	51.2	61.0	40.0	21.0	77.3	83.2	69.4	13.8
13. Dabgar	60.8	67.2	53.1	14.1	81.7	94.7	69.8	24.9

14. Damai (Nepali)	73.5	83.4	64.0	19.4	87.9	92.8	83.4	9.4
15. Dhoba, Dhobi	78.7	86.0	71.1	14.9	84.2	89.4	78.5	10.9
16. Doai	65.2	72.6	57.5	15.1	70.7	75.7	66.0	9.7
17. Dom, Dhangad	57.8	67.3	48.0	19.3	63.1	72.8	53.2	19.6
18. Dosadh, Dusadh, Dhari, Dharhi	59.6	67.1	51.3	15.8	73.4	82.2	63.1	19.1
19. Ghasi	37.1	48.0	26.1	21.9	56.0	66.6	46.5	20.1
20. Gonrhi	54.2	61.0	46.6	14.4	81.7	85.8	77.0	10.2
21. Halalkhor	71.6	80.3	61.5	18.8	82.2	89.2	64.4	24.8
22. Hari, Mehtar, Mehtor, Bhang, Balmiki	60.1	68.5	51.3	17.2	68.4	77.6	59.2	18.4
23. Jalia Kaibartta	70.1	77.1	62.5	14.6	80.9	85.8	75.6	10.2
24. Jhalo Malo, Malo	69.5	74.8	63.8	11.0	75.4	80.5	69.9	10.9
25. Kadar	78.7	86.4	70.7	15.7	69.7	75.0	64.7	10.3
26. Kami (Nepali)	75.0	84.6	65.8	18.8	88.1	92.7	83.9	8.8
27. Kandra	81.6	89.3	73.6	15.7	86.0	91.2	80.3	10.9
28. Kanjar	69.7	73.1	66.5	6.6	80.5	86.1	74.4	11.7
29. Kaora	64.1	72.3	55.5	5.8	71.3	77.9	64.5	13.4
30. Karenga, Koranga	67.0	74.7	59.3	15.4	73.1	80.2	65.9	14.3
31. Kaur	63.2	72.8	52.2	20.6	75.4	80.6	69.8	10.8
32. Keot, Keyot	67.4	76.4	57.7	18.7	73.5	81.7	64.5	17.2
33. Khaira	54.9	66.2	43.6	22.6	61.4	72.7	50.4	22.3
34. Khatik	72.9	79.8	65.8	14.0	74.5	80.9	67.3	13.6
35. Koch	51.7	60.1	42.7	17.4	77.1	81.3	73.2	8.1
36. Konai	61.8	68.5	54.7	13.8	73.4	80.0	66.4	13.6
37. Konwar	80.0	86.1	73.4	12.7	85.7	89.2	81.6	7.6
38. Kotal	69.8	77.3	61.9	15.4	74.0	79.2	68.6	10.6
39. Kurariar	62.9	69.4	55.8	13.6	69.6	76.0	63.3	12.7
40. Lalbegi	81.6	87.3	74.5	12.8	87.1	94.0	79.5	14.5
41. Lohar	57.3	68.1	46.2	21.9	72.6	81.2	63.6	17.6
42. Mahar	60.4	69.7	50.8	18.9	78.4	85.9	70.5	15.4
43. Mal	53.1	62.2	43.8	18.4	67.9	75.9	59.8	16.1
44. Mallah	59.7	69.1	49.4	19.7	74.2	81.6	65.8	15.8
45. Musahar	21.3	27.2	15.1	12.1	39.2	44.9	33.2	11.7
46. Namasudra	77.5	83.4	71.1	12.3	83.9	88.7	79.0	9.7
47. Nat	46.5	52.1	39.5	12.6	83.8	90.5	76.1	14.4
48. Nuniya	59.3	67.9	50.0	17.9	72.3	79.5	63.8	15.7
49. Paliya	63.9	71.8	55.5	16.3	80.5	84.5	76.4	8.1
50. Pan, Sawasi	71.4	81.1	61.3	19.8	82.0	87.5	76.5	11.0
51. Pasi	68.8	77.1	59.5	17.6	73.5	81.6	64.1	17.5

52. Patni	71.2	77.2	64.9	12.3	81.2	86.2	75.9	10.3
53. Pod, Poundra	78.8	86.6	70.5	16.1	83.8	89.2	78.0	11.2
54. Rajbanshi	70.1	78.0	61.8	16.2	74.5	80.8	67.9	12.9
55. Rajwar	58.9	70.4	46.9	23.5	65.2	76.8	52.5	24.3
56. Sarki (Nepali)	69.3	79.3	59.7	19.6	80.7	85.7	75.9	9.8
57. Sunri (Excluding Saha)	84.4	92.8	75.3	17.5	92.2	95.5	88.5	7.0
58. Tiwar	71.5	79.1	63.3	15.8	75.8	81.4	69.9	11.5
59. Turi	49.0	58.3	39.6	18.7	61.1	71.1	50.5	20.6
60. Chain (in Malda, Murshidabad, Nadia and Dakshin Dinajpur districts)	62.0	69.0	54.6	14.4	63.0	69.9	55.6	14.3

Source: Census of West Bengal, 2011.

**Interpretation:** Table 7 shows the literacy rate among different sub-castes of SC Rural and Urban areas in West Bengal. The table shows that among the rural literacy rates of various SC sub-castes the top five are Sunri (excluding Saha) (84.4%), Lalbegi (81.6%), Kandra (81.6%), Konyar (80.0%), Dhoba and Dhobi (78.7%) and the bottom five are Musahar (21.3%), Ghasi (37.1%), Bind (45.2%), Nat (46.5%), Bauri (48.4%). Also, sub-caste Rajbansi literacy rate (70.1%) has the 18th from highest literacy rate among the mentioned sub-castes. On the other hand, among the urban literacy rates of various SC sub-castes the top five are

Sunri (Excluding Saha) (92.2%), Bahelia (89.7%), Kami (Nepali) (88.1%), Lalbegi (87.1%), Damai (Nepali) (87.9%) and the bottom five are Bauri (58.9%), Bhuiya (45.1%), Dom & Dhangad (63.1%), Ghasi (56.0%) and Musahar (39.2%). Also, sub-caste Rajbansi literacy rate (74.5%) has the 30th from highest literacy rate among the mentioned sub-castes.

**Objective- 8:** To compare literacy status between Rural SC sub-castes and Urban SC sub-castes in West Bengal.

Table No 8: Comparison of literacy status between Rural Scheduled Caste sub-castes and Urban Scheduled Caste sub-castes in West Bengal.

SC Community	Total %	Rural %	Urban %	Difference % of Rural & Urban
All SC	69.4	67.5	76.7	9.2
Bagdi, Duley	61.4	60.7	67.2	6.5
Bahelia	70.4	68.3	89.7	21.4
Baiti	76.8	74.0	84.2	10.2
Bantar	72.4	73.7	71.8	1.9
Bauri	50.5	48.4	58.9	10.5
Belder	58.0	52.3	73.4	21.1
Bhogta	58.7	58.1	76.5	18.3
Bhuimali	68.3	63.8	80.9	17.1
Bhuiya	64.9	57.5	45.1	12.4
Bind	48.6	45.2	62.8	17.6
Chamar, Charmakar, Mochi, Muchi, Rabidas, Ruidas, Rishi	60.0	57.3	68.6	11.3
Chaupal	53.0	51.2	77.3	26.1

Dabgar	71.8	60.8	81.7	20.9
Damai (Nepali)	78.3	73.5	87.9	14.4
Dhoba, Dhobi	80.7	78.7	84.2	5.5
Doai	65.7	65.2	70.7	5.5
Dom, Dhangad	59.0	57.8	63.1	5.3
Dosadh, Dusadh, Dhari, Dharhi	69.4	59.6	73.4	13.8
Ghasi	40.0	37.1	56.0	18.9
Gonrhi	67.7	54.2	81.7	27.5
Halalkhor	80.8	71.6	82.2	10.6
Hari, Mehtar, Mehtor, Bhangi, Balmiki	62.4	60.1	68.4	8.3
Jalia Kaibartta	73.0	70.1	80.9	10.8
Jhalo Malo, Malo	71.5	69.5	75.4	5.9
Kadar	78.1	78.7	69.7	9.0
Kami (Nepali)	79.1	75.0	88.1	13.1
Kandra	81.8	81.6	86.0	4.4
Kanjar	72.0	69.7	80.5	10.8
Kaora	66.2	64.1	71.3	7.2
Karenga, Koranga	67.6	67.0	73.1	6.1
Kaur	65.4	63.2	75.4	12.2
Keot, Keyot	68.9	67.4	73.5	6.1
Khaira	55.2	54.9	61.4	6.5
Khatik	74.4	72.9	74.5	1.6
Koch	52.5	51.7	77.1	25.4
Konai	63.0	61.8	73.4	11.6
Konwar	82.9	80.0	85.7	5.7
Kotal	70.0	69.8	74.0	4.2
Kurariar	64.2	62.9	69.6	6.7
Lalbegi	85.6	81.6	87.1	5.5
Lohar	59.1	57.3	72.6	15.3
Mahar	63.2	60.4	78.4	18.0
Mal	54.4	53.1	67.9	14.8
Mallah	65.8	59.7	74.2	14.5
Musahar	24.4	21.3	39.2	17.9
Namasudra	79.5	77.5	83.9	6.4
Nat	64.8	46.5	83.8	37.3
Nuniya	65.7	59.3	72.3	13.0
Paliya	64.3	63.9	80.5	16.6



Pan, Sawasi	72.3	71.4	82.0	10.6
Pasi	72.6	68.8	73.5	4.7
Patni	73.9	71.2	81.2	10.0
Pod, Poundra	79.8	78.8	83.8	5.0
Rajbanshi	70.7	70.1	74.5	4.4
Rajwar	59.7	58.9	65.2	6.3
Sarki (Nepali)	72.6	69.3	80.7	11.4
Sunri (Excluding Saha)	86.3	84.4	92.2	7.8
Tiyar	71.9	71.5	75.8	4.3
Turi	53.7	49.0	61.1	12.1
Chain (in Malda, Murshidabad, Nadia and Dakshin Dinajpur districts)	62.1	62.0	63.0	1.0

**Interpretation:** Table 8 shows the comparison of Literacy among rural & urban SC sub-castes in West Bengal. Among the various SC sub-castes, the difference between rural and urban literacy is that the top five sub-castes are Nat, Gonrhi, Bahlia, Chaupal and Koch. It can be found from the table that Nat sub-caste has the highest difference between rural and urban literacy rate, where the urban literacy rate (83.8%) is 37.3 % better than the rural literacy rate (43.5%), followed by Gonrhi sub-caste urban literacy rate (81.7%), 27.5% better than the rural literacy rate (81.7%), followed by Chaupal sub-caste urban literacy rate (77.3%) is 26.1% better than the rural literacy rate (51.2%), followed by Bahlia sub-caste urban literacy rate (89.7%) 21.4% better than the rural literacy rate (68.3%), followed by Koch sub-caste urban literacy rate (77.1%) of is 25.4% better than the rural literacy rate (51.7%). On the other hand, the least difference between rural and urban literacy rate of five sub-castes are Khatik (1.6%), Bantar (1.9%), Kotal (4.2%), Tiyar (4.3%), Rajbanshi (4.4%) & Kandra (4.4%).

#### IV. FINDINGS

The analysis of data revealed the following findings:

1. It is found that the growth rate of literacy among scheduled castes in West Bengal from 1991 to 2011 is consistently increase. However, the literacy rate from 1991 to 2001 is higher than that from 2001 to 2011.
2. It is found that the districts wise literacy trends of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal from 1991 to 2011 is consistently increase in almost all district. However 2001& 2011, North 24 Parganas districts had the highest literacy rate and Bankura districts

had the lowest literacy rate among SC in West Bengal.

3. It is found that North 24 Parganas district had the highest literacy rate, where male literacy rate higher than female literacy rate and Bankura districts had the lowest literacy rate, where male literacy rate higher than female literacy rate, among scheduled caste in West Bengal.
4. It is found that from 1991 to 2011 Purulia districts of West Bengal had the highest gender gap in literacy, while Murshidabad districts had the lowest gender disparity in literacy in 1991, also in 2001, North 24 Parganas had the lowest gender literacy gap. Then in 2011, Burdwan district had the lowest gender gap in literacy.
5. It is found that current literacy status of various SC sub-castes, Sunri sub-caste had the highest literacy rate and Musahar sub-caste had the lowest literacy rate, where sub-caste Rajbanshi literacy rate has the 24th from highest literacy rate among the mentioned sub-castes.
6. It is found that Growth Pattern of Literacy rate of various SC sub-castes has consistently increased from 1981 to 2011, exceptionally Bantar, Bauri, Belder, Bhogta, Dabgar, Dhoba, Dhobi, Dom, Dhangad, Ghasi, Halalkhor, Jalia Kaibartta, Kanjar, Kaora, Kaur, Khatik, Koch, Musahar, Nat, Paliya, Pan, Sawasi, Pasi, Sunri (Excluding Saha) etc sub-castes.
7. It is found that among the rural and urban literacy rates of various SC sub-castes the Sunri (excluding Saha) sub-caste has the highest literacy rate and Musahar sub-caste had the lowest literacy rate. Also, sub-caste Rajbanshi literacy rate of rural

areas has ranked the 18th and urban areas has ranked the 30th from highest literacy rate.

8. It is found that Nat sub-caste has the highest difference between rural and urban literacy rate and Khatik sub-caste had the lowest difference between rural and urban literacy. Also, the difference in rural-urban literacy among sub-caste Rajbanshi is very low which is 4<sup>th</sup> position of the bottom five.

#### Literacy Programme in Independent India:

- ❖ Social Education (1951-56)
- ❖ Gram Shikshan (1959)
- ❖ Farmer's Functional Literacy Project (1967-68)
- ❖ Foundational Literacy for Adult Women (1975-76)
- ❖ Nation Adult Education Programme (1978)
- ❖ Rural Functional Literacy Project (RELP) & Mass Programme of Functional Literacy (MPFL)
- ❖ National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA) (1988)
- ❖ Padhna Likhna Abhiyan (2020)
- ❖ Samagra Shiksha Scheme (2018)
  1. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)
  2. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan Programme (RMSA)
- ❖ Saakshar Bharat (2009)
- ❖ Special educational development programmes for SC girls belonging to low literacy Districts

#### V. CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it can be concluded that the literacy rate among the Scheduled Caste population in West Bengal and districts wise literacy trends of Scheduled Caste is continuous increasing decade by decades in almost all district. It clearly shows that female education rate and female literacy decadal growth rate is significantly higher than male education rate in many districts. Also, the overall gender gap in the districts is gradually decreasing. On the other hand, the current literacy status and Growth Pattern of Literacy rate of various SC sub-castes is continuous increasing decade by decades. Again, it can be seen that the urban literacy rate is much higher than the rural literacy rate among different sub-castes of SC community in West Bengal. There are several districts in West Bengal that have lower literacy rates than others, such as Puruliya, Birbhum, Bardhaman, and Bankura. These districts require more attention from the government. Also, there are several Sub-castes of Scheduled Caste in West Bengal that have lower

literacy rates than others sub-castes, such as Musahar, Ghasi, Bind, Bauri, Koch, Belder, Bhogta, chaupal, Khaira, Mal and Turi. Also, sub-castes Rajbanshi literacy rate has the 24th from highest literacy rate among the mentioned sub-castes. According to Das (2018) Our scheduled caste pupils can make more academic success if we give them with better family environments, institutional facilities, institutional climates, and government facilities. There should be attitudinal change of the general caste towards the scheduled caste and State Government has to play active part for educating SC (Ghosh, 2019). The government acts to enhance the standard of life, education, and socioeconomic backwardness of the people in the South Carolina and participates in The state and federal governments offer several policies, several scholarships, and a range of training opportunities to students in the SC. But these policies alone are not enough because girls' education is very poor in the rural areas of the state, so the government should make the scheduled caste people living in the rural areas aware about female literacy in particular (Rukhsana, 2014).

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# Career Path Program Evaluation for the Retention of Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha Ltd. Scholars

Airon Peralta, Alexander Rafal

Philippine Merchant Marine Academy Graduate School, Palacio Grande Building, Anda St, Intramuros, Manila, 1002 Metro Manila, Philippines

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**Abstract**— A shortage of maritime officers emphasizes the need for effective retention strategies to address the growing demand for skilled seafarers in the rapidly expanding global maritime industry. This study evaluates the Career Path Program of Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha Ltd. ("K" Line) aimed at retaining Filipino maritime scholars, focusing on satisfaction in terms of salary, rewards and benefits, job satisfaction, professional growth, and welfare through a convergent mixed-methods parallel research design. The quantitative study accounted for 107 "K" Line scholars, while the qualitative study accounted for 11 "K" Line scholars. Findings indicate that the Career Path Program effectively enhances scholar retention through well-structured support in professional development and welfare. While satisfaction levels with salary and professional growth opportunities were generally positive, the analysis suggests that enhanced rewards and promotion opportunities could further improve retention rates. This study offers valuable and actionable insights for shipping companies to review their career path programs to enhance retention, increase loyalty, and significantly reduce turnover among seafarers.



**Keywords**— Retention, Salary, Job satisfaction, Rewards and Benefits, Professional Growth, Welfare

## I. INTRODUCTION

There were an estimated 1,892,720 seafarers globally, comprising 857,540 officers and 1,035,180 ratings, according to the Seafarer Workforce Report released by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and the Baltic International Maritime Council (BIMCO) in 2021. In addition to China, Indonesia, Russia, and India, the Philippines is one of the top five providers of seafarers. This highlights the role of Filipino seafarers in the global maritime industry, known for their skills and experience. However, the report also raised concerns about the sufficiency of the current supply to meet the demand, particularly projecting a shortage of 89,510 officers by 2026, thereby presenting a significant challenge for the industry.

Global trade by sea is rapidly increasing alongside the global economy, resulting in a rise in maritime activities, as reported in the Shipping Now 2022-2023 data edition.

This upsurge has led to a growing demand for qualified seafarers to operate vessels safely and efficiently. Seafarers are contractual workers stated in MLC2006, Regulation Standard A2.5.2 (b), and typically serve on board for less than 12 months. Any service period beyond this duration is considered non-compliant as per MLC Standard A5.2.1.6. In such cases, ships are not allowed to sail until these non-conformities are addressed (AMSA, 2022). After disembarking, seafarers have the right to seek new employment opportunities. This right is anchored in the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1948. This situation often puts the former employer in the position of finding a suitable replacement.

Retaining these seafarers and ensuring their loyalty are significant challenges for shipping companies. According to Collins (2022), about 25% of employees are considering leaving their current company. Additionally, several



shipping sectors experience an annual turnover rate ranging from 25% to 35% (Bhattacharya, 2015). Therefore, it is important to understand why seafarers choose to stay and progress in their careers. To effectively address human resource challenges, ship owners are looking for ways to improve their pool of seafarers, especially officers, as the cost associated with replacing them significantly exceeds the cost of retention. This includes expenses related to recruitment, training, and the loss of valuable knowledge and experience (Cloutier et al., 2015). Decision-making for safe operations on board the vessel can be acquired through years of professional training and seafaring experiences (Hannaford & Hassel, 2021).

The absence of a well-defined career path is identified as one of the key factors contributing to employee turnover. Additionally, issues such as lack of training, failure to customize recognition, neglect to listen to employee concerns, and not monitoring retention rates are areas that need attention. Without a clear career progression, employees may lack the motivation to remain in their roles. It is essential to demonstrate how employees can progress within the company to cultivate loyalty and dedication (Half R., 2018). Recognizing this, several organizations in the maritime industry have already created career path programs, providing opportunities for professional development and growth for their seafarers.

Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha, Ltd, commonly known as “K” Line, is a shipping firm that offers various marine transportation services, such as dry bulk, container shipping, pure car carrier, and energy resources. “K” Line employs seafarers from Japan, the Philippines, China, India, Ukraine, Russia, Bulgaria, and other nationalities, with Filipinos accounting for more than half of the total seafarers employed. Over the years, “K” Line has consistently supported the development of Filipino individuals in the maritime sector by providing scholarships to those who aspire to become officers through their specialized career path program, which includes a clear route for progressing in one's career. Implementing the career path program faced challenges, reflecting the broader industry-wide difficulties of retaining seafarers. A common challenge “K” Line Scholars face is the mismatch between their career aspirations and the advancement prospects offered by the company. Scholars often perceive these opportunities as limited, resulting in slower professional growth than anticipated. Compounding this issue, more attractive offers from other companies lure scholars away with promises of higher salaries, better career progression, enhanced welfare both ashore and onboard, greater rewards and benefits, and higher job satisfaction. This situation presents a

significant challenge for “K” Line in retaining talent and necessitates strategic adjustments to meet the evolving expectations of their scholars.

In relation to this, identifying the factors affecting the retention of “K” Line scholars is important. Especially given the global shipping industry's increasing demand for qualified seafarers and the need for safe and efficient vessel operations (Mahmud, 2021). This understanding led the researcher to evaluate the “K” Line Career Path Program by analyzing the satisfaction levels of their scholars in terms of salary, rewards and benefits, job satisfaction, professional growth, and welfare. The primary goal of this study is to enhance “K” Line Scholar retention by providing recommendations that could improve their career path program. The findings are intended to help shipping companies boost seafarer satisfaction, thereby improving retention rates.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Seafarer Retention in the Shipping Industry

The shipping industry relies heavily on the skills and expertise of seafarers, who play a crucial role in ensuring the safe and efficient movement of goods around the world. Over the past few years, a significant amount of research has been carried out to develop approaches aimed at keeping seafarers (Caesar et al., 2015; Papachristou et al., 2015). The overall outcome of this research emphasizes the significance of job satisfaction and motivation in retaining seafarers. However, there is a lack of discussion about the career path program.

Seafarer retention is an important aspect of the success of shipping companies (Arsenie et. al., 2014), and it is important for the growth and revenue of an organization (Cloutier, O., 2015). Satisfied employees ultimately benefit the organization in terms of cost savings, as turnover can lead to a loss of valuable knowledge and experience as well as increased recruitment and training costs (Hidayah and Harnoto, 2018). Employee retention can be understood as the range of strategies and initiatives organizations implement to encourage employees to stay with the company for an extended period. While there are different interpretations of the term, the underlying objective is to retain talented individuals within the organization and prevent them from seeking opportunities elsewhere (James & Mathew, 2012 as cited in Singh, 2019). In recent years, the shipping industry has faced a growing shortage of skilled seafarers, making it even more important for companies to focus on retaining their employees (Nguyen et al., 2014).



### **Salary, Rewards and Benefits, Job Satisfaction, Professional Growth, and Welfare**

Employees may leave the organization for personal or professional reasons. Employees do not leave the company for insignificant reasons. Several factors can influence employee retention, which includes salary (Nguyen et al., 2014), rewards and benefits (Acharya, 2022), job satisfaction (Jalagat, 2016), professional growth (Tymon et al., 2011 as cited in Sumbal, 2018), and welfare (Acharya, 2022).

#### **Salary**

Salary is a fundamental factor in employee retention. Employees who perceive they are being paid fairly and equitably are likelier to remain with their current employers. Research has consistently demonstrated that compensation is one of the most important factors employees consider when evaluating job offers and deciding whether to stay with their current employer. Thus, low salary is one of the reasons employees leave an organization (Shakeel, N. and Sahar, 2015). However, according to Angott (2007, as cited in Tsai & Liou, 2017), an employee's current salary is a significant consideration for most job seekers, but it likely will not be enough to keep them in the company.

#### **Rewards, Benefits, and Welfare**

Katsikea et al. (2015) state that rewards and benefits are important to employee retention, development, and satisfaction. The authors suggest that rewards and benefits should be viewed as strategic tools that can positively impact employee behavior, motivation, and overall performance. They also point out that an organization's rewards and benefits system should be aligned with its overall strategy, values, and goals. When employees feel they are being fairly rewarded for their work, they are more likely to be satisfied and motivated to stay with the organization. This, in turn, can positively impact employee retention, which can be important for maintaining a skilled and experienced workforce. Moreover, employees who are satisfied with their compensation are more likely to engage in professional development and improve their performance, which can lead to better organizational outcomes.

Rewards can be classified as extrinsic and intrinsic (Silvera, 2013). Extrinsic rewards are tangible benefits external to the employee's job or task (Munir et al., 2016). This means the employer typically provides them and is not directly related to the work. Examples of extrinsic rewards include salary, bonuses, promotions, training and development opportunities, and welfare benefits on board ships (Thai et al., 2013). These rewards can effectively

motivate employees to perform well and help attract and retain talent within an organization.

On the other hand, intrinsic rewards are intangible or psychological benefits that an employee receives from their work. These rewards are related to the work itself and are often associated with the satisfaction, fulfillment, and enjoyment an employee gets from performing well in their role. Examples of intrinsic rewards include appreciation, facing new challenges, positive and caring attitudes from employers, and job rotation after achieving a goal (Safiullah, 2014). These types of rewards can be very powerful motivators for employees as they tap into the individual's personal values and motivations.

#### **Job Satisfaction**

The authors Khalib et al. (2015) have provided a definition of job satisfaction as a measure of an employee's level of liking or disliking of their job. Job satisfaction is a subjective feeling or attitude toward one's work, reflecting the level of pleasure or fulfillment an individual experiences from their job or the work environment (Ali, 2016). It is a complex and multi-dimensional construct that can be influenced by various factors such as job characteristics, work relationships, pay, opportunities for growth and development, work-life balance, and organizational culture. Job satisfaction can significantly impact an employee's motivation, performance, and overall well-being, and can ultimately affect an organization's productivity and success. Charles et al. (2019) suggest that job satisfaction, which includes factors such as salary, promotion opportunities, and receiving awards or recognition, is negatively related to an employee's intention to quit their job. In other words, employees who are satisfied with their jobs are less likely to have the desire to leave their current employment (Arfat and Rainyee, 2014). The authors argue that job satisfaction is important when addressing employee retention and turnover, as it can significantly impact an organization's ability to retain talented and productive employees.

Moreover, Caesar et al. (2015); Papachristou et al. (2015) studies conclude that job satisfaction is important in retaining seafarers.

#### **Professional Growth and Welfare**

Professional growth is another factor that has been identified as important for seafarer loyalty and retention. Career advancement opportunities such as training programs, leadership courses, and mentorship have been shown to positively impact seafarers job satisfaction and retention (Li et al., 2014).

Welfare and support programs such as counseling services, medical care, and family support programs have also been

shown to improve seafarer well-being and job satisfaction. It is an essential aspect of employee retention. Employees who are supported in their well-being and work-life balance are more likely to be satisfied with their job and remain with the organization long-term. By prioritizing employee welfare, organizations can encourage commitment among their employees (Rafiei et., al 2014).

### Career Path Programs for Seafarers

Career path programs are important tools for enhancing employee retention across various industries (Arsenie et al., 2014; Yamamoto, 2014). By offering well-defined career development paths, these programs enable employees to acquire new skills, develop their abilities, and gain essential knowledge to advance in their careers (Chandani et al., 2014).

Seafarers can benefit greatly from career path programs, as they provide a clear sense of direction and purpose and lead to increased job satisfaction, motivation, and commitment to the employer (Tsai & Liou, 2017). Recognizing this, some ship owners and manning agencies have taken proactive measures to implement such programs. An example is the introduction of a career path program that allows seafarers to ascend to higher positions on board, such as Captains, within a relatively short span of (8) eight years after completing their degree (Galam, 2022).

"K" Line has established a Career Path Program for Filipinos who aspire to become maritime officers. The program selects candidates from institutions such as the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy, Maritime of Asia and the Pacific, John B. Lacson, University of Cebu, Lyceum of Batangas, and Crystal-E College in Bohol. The selection process consists of examinations, interviews, and medical examinations that begin either during high school or college. In addition, it also includes the selection of Mechanical Engineer board passers to bridge to become Marine Engineer. The program is founded on awarding scholarships to aspiring seafarers. These scholarships serve as educational grants, providing opportunities for individuals who may need more resources to pursue maritime education. Besides the scholarships, the program supports comprehensive training covering MARINA requirements and "K" Line in-house training, ensuring seafarers are well-equipped with practical expertise, a profound understanding of real-life maritime situations, and theoretical knowledge. "K" Line career path program also offers a clear route for progressing in one's career. Scholars need to understand their career path, identify the significant achievements they need to attain, and comprehend the several phases of their professional growth. This component can serve as a powerful source of

motivation for these scholars, as it converts their ambitions into concrete objectives and provides guidance to achieve their goals.

## III. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a convergent parallel design, a mixed methods design. The quantitative component involved the collection and analysis of numerical data through survey questionnaires. On the other hand, the qualitative component aimed to gain insight into experiences, perceptions, and feedback through interviews. After that, the methods were triangulated by directly comparing the quantitative statistical results and qualitative findings (Creswell, J.W., & Creswell, J.D. (2018). Two datasets were obtained, analyzed separately, and compared in the research process. The study included independent variables such as salary, rewards and benefits, job satisfaction, professional growth, and welfare, and the dependent variable for this study was retention. For the survey, a total of 107 "K" Line scholars responded to the survey. 11 "K" Line scholars participated in the interviews. The respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction on various factors used in the survey on a four-point Likert response format, 4 being strongly satisfied and 1 being not strongly dissatisfied. Semi-structured interview questionnaires were used for the interview.

## IV. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 1 - Level of Satisfaction in terms of Salary

SALARY	Mean	VI
Current Salary Level	2.91	Satisfied
<b>WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>2.91</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Very Satisfied; 2.50 – 3.24 — Satisfied; 1.75 – 2.49 — Somewhat Satisfied; 1.00 – 1.74 — Not Satisfied; VI – Verbal Interpretation

Regarding salary, the respondents' overall satisfaction level had a mean of 2.91, suggesting a generally satisfied perception among the respondents (Table 1). This result suggests that the surveyed seafarers are content with the remuneration provided by the "K" Line. Satisfaction with the current salary level is an essential aspect of employee retention, particularly in a field as specialized and demanding as seafaring. As stated by Participant A, "Salary does not really affect my decision to stay at "K" Line as I am actually contented with my present salary. A commendable profile of the company, supporting crews,

good company benefits, and welfare are some of main reasons why I chose to stay here,” expresses contentment with their present salary and emphasizes that salary competitiveness is not the primary factor influencing their decision to stay. Participant K expressed, “Salary motivates the crew. If the salary is good, the crew feels appreciated and gives back to the company their money's worth.” An organization's ability to attract and retain quality employees is greatly influenced by its ability to offer a competitive salary compared to that of others. Therefore, these factors are intrinsically connected to employee retention (Iqbal et al., 2017). According to Manalo et al., (2013), the high salary of seafarers is one of the reasons why Filipinos would like to work onboard the vessel. A satisfied perception regarding salary can contribute to the overall contentment of seafarers, potentially enhancing their commitment to the “K” Line.

*Table 2 - Level of Satisfaction in terms of Rewards and Benefits*

REWARDS AND BENEFITS	Mean	VI
Health insurance benefits	3.09	<i>Satisfied</i>
Family health insurance	3.03	<i>Satisfied</i>
Standby pay	2.75	<i>Satisfied</i>
Seniority bonus	2.72	<i>Satisfied</i>
Rejoining bonus	2.66	<i>Satisfied</i>
Recognizing employee achievements	2.54	<i>Satisfied</i>
Rewarding employee achievements	2.41	<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>
Retirement benefits	2.32	<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>
Loyalty bonus	2.10	<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>
<b>WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>2.62</b>	<b><i>Satisfied</i></b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Very Satisfied; 2.50 – 3.24 — Satisfied; 1.75 – 2.49 — Somewhat Satisfied; 1.00 – 1.74 — Not Satisfied; VI – Verbal Interpretation

Among the indicators pertaining to the respondent's level of satisfaction with “K” Line's Career Path Program, particularly in terms of rewards and benefits, health insurance benefits and family health insurance emerge with the highest mean values of 3.09 and 3.03, respectively, both falling within the “Satisfied” category (Table 2). These findings indicate a general content perception among seafarers regarding the health-related benefits provided by the program. Conversely, the loyalty

bonus records the lowest mean value of 2.10, categorized as “Somewhat Satisfied”. As stated by Participant B, “Extra income given by the company for me greatly helps during financial struggles during vacation.” This suggests that respondents may have varying perceptions of loyalty bonuses, and feedback from scholars could enhance their value. This type of bonus should be reviewed by the company and given across all ranks since Chusna and Kusuma (2022) found that the loyalty bonus significantly impacts retention, emphasizing the importance of these financial incentives in enhancing employee commitment. Similarly, rewarding employee achievements and retirement benefits are rated as “Somewhat Satisfied,” with mean values of 2.41 and 2.32, respectively. One of the scholars interviewed expressed the view that providing retirement benefits to loyal crew members who have served the company for an extended period is a positive practice. Participant C believed that this approach could incentivize more crew members to remain with the company for longer durations, stating, “I think it is a good idea to provide retirement benefits to the loyal crew who have served the company for many years. By doing so, we can encourage more crew members to stay longer with the company.” The moderate satisfaction levels point to potential gaps in how these rewarding employee achievement and retirement benefits meet the scholars' expectations, suggesting room for improvement in the company's retention strategies. Participant K highlights specific bonuses such as health benefits, stand-by pay, leave pay, and rejoining bonus as crucial for acknowledging true loyalty, stating, “True loyalty must sometimes be noticed by this company and not just taken for granted. A change in decision is possible if the health benefits, stand-by pay, leave pay, and rejoining bonus will be removed.” They express concern that removing these benefits might influence their decision to stay with the company. The study by Quinby (2020) found that retirement benefits significantly impacted employee retention, underscoring the importance of these benefits in retaining employees. Similarly, research by Wickramasinghe and Sajeevani (2018) demonstrated that rewarding employee achievement significantly positively influences retention intentions, highlighting the effectiveness of incentive programs in maintaining a committed workforce. The weighted mean for rewards and benefits is 2.62, placing it within the “Satisfied” range. This signifies an overall positive perception regarding the rewards and benefits aspect of the Career Path Program of “K” Line. However, the variations in mean values highlight specific areas, such as loyalty bonuses, rewarding employee achievements, and retirement benefits, where targeted enhancements might further

elevate the satisfaction levels of “K” Line's future scholars. Rewards and benefits play a significant role in enhancing employee commitment to a company (Nazir et al., 2013). However, if these rewards and benefits are not administered properly, it may negatively affect employee morale, leading to unproductive performance and a high staff turnover rate (Nigusea & Getachew, 2019).

*Table 3 - Level of Satisfaction in terms of Job Satisfaction*

JOB SATISFACTION	Mean	VI
Culture of teamwork onboard	3.21	<i>Satisfied</i>
Work onboard	3.16	<i>Satisfied</i>
Manpower onboard to perform job effectively	3.16	<i>Satisfied</i>
Reporting mistakes or errors without fear of reprisal.	2.99	<i>Satisfied</i>
Support provided to manage stress and fatigue onboard	2.81	<i>Satisfied</i>
Waiting time of less than 2 months to go onboard (re-employment)	2.53	<i>Satisfied</i>
<b>WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>2.98</b>	<b><i>Satisfied</i></b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Very Satisfied; 2.50 – 3.24 — Satisfied; 1.75 – 2.49 — Somewhat Satisfied; 1.00 – 1.74 — Not Satisfied; VI – Verbal Interpretation

The survey findings pertaining to job satisfaction within “K” Line's Career Path Program indicate a predominantly favorable disposition among the respondents. Based on Table 3, the indicator with the highest mean value is the “Culture of teamwork onboard” at 3.21, categorizing it as “Satisfied.” This could mean seafarers feel a strong sense of working together and being part of a team, contributing positively to their job satisfaction. In terms of the lowest mean value, “Waiting time of less than 2 months to go onboard (re-employment)” stands at 2.53, classified as “Satisfied.” While still within the satisfaction range, this indicator suggests that improvements in reducing the waiting time for re-employment could enhance the overall job satisfaction of the seafarers. Participant D specifies that long waiting periods without just reasons and dealing with terror superiors are potential factors that could negatively impact their job satisfaction, stating, “All except for long waiting period without just reasons. Terror superiors”. For these individuals, financial obligations and commitments, such as buying a house or paying debts, are linked to job stability and consistent earnings (Acharya, 2022). A long time of waiting until their savings drain out would mean seeking employment elsewhere. The weighted mean for job satisfaction is 2.98, placing it within the “Satisfied” range. This underscores the positive job-related experiences of the scholars. High levels of job

dissatisfaction and low levels of commitment to an organization significantly impact the increased turnover rates of seafarers. As a result, increasing seafarers' job satisfaction can significantly lower the rate at which they leave the company (Turker & Er, 2007, cited by Cahoon et al., 2014).

*Table 4 - Level of Satisfaction in terms of Professional Growth*

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH	Mean	VI
Training and development opportunities	3.17	<i>Satisfied</i>
Provides opportunities for promotion	2.79	<i>Satisfied</i>
<b>WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>2.98</b>	<b><i>Satisfied</i></b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Very Satisfied; 2.50 – 3.24 — Satisfied; 1.75 – 2.49 — Somewhat Satisfied; 1.00 – 1.74 — Not Satisfied; VI – Verbal Interpretation

As for the respondents' level of satisfaction in terms of professional growth within “K” Line's Career Path Program, a positive sentiment among the respondents has emerged. Improving employee performance entails using various measures, including providing employees with work training to enhance their skills and cultivate motivation and retention (Haryono et al., 2020). “K” Line has an advantage in utilizing the advanced and modern equipment of “K” Line Maritime Academy Philippines as they provide in-house education and training to all seafarers, including scholars. The indicator with the highest mean value is “Training and development opportunities,” standing at 3.17 and categorized as “Satisfied” (Table 4). This signifies a strong acknowledgment from the seafarers regarding the program's efficacy in providing avenues for continuous learning and skill development. Participant E appreciates the training and development opportunities provided by KLMA (“K” Line Maritime Academy), renowned for its globally competitive programs. They emphasize the importance of these opportunities in skill development and competitiveness as seafarers, stating, “Training and development opportunities. K-line is known for its highest quality and globally competitive trainings offered to its crew through KLMA, which is very helpful in developing our skills to be an effective and competitive seafarer.” Conversely, “Provides opportunities for promotion” records a mean value of 2.79, also falling within the “Satisfied” range. While reflecting contentment, this suggests that there might be room for improvement in the perception of promotional opportunities within the Career Path Program. Participant F highlights the importance of training and development opportunities, alongside career advancement, expressing, “Training and development opportunities, career advancement. Promotions will make



me stay in the company. If I really deserved the promotion and I was not promoted, then I will transfer to another company who is willing to promote and give opportunity to me". They emphasize that promotions would significantly influence their decision to remain with the company. Additionally, they indicate that despite meeting the criteria for promotion, not being promoted could lead to turnover, as they seek opportunities elsewhere. Prince (2005) as cited in Das and Baruah (2013), notes that employees always seek opportunities to develop their careers and move up the ladder. If these expectations are not met, it can lead to employee turnover (Hassan et al., 2013). The overall mean for professional growth is 2.98 (Satisfied), indicating an overall satisfaction with the program's provisions for professional growth. Nonetheless, this presents an opportunity to refine particular aspects of the Career Path Program related to professional growth, ensuring that it aligns closely with the aspirations and expectations of "K" Line's seafaring workforce.

*Table 5 - Level of Satisfaction in terms of Welfare*

WELFARE	Mean	VI
Safety policies and procedures being implemented onboard	3.47	<i>Satisfied</i>
Living conditions onboard	3.28	<i>Satisfied</i>
Welfare programs such as medical and emergency assistance for the immediate family	3.12	<i>Satisfied</i>
Support to maintain physical and mental well-being onboard	2.99	<i>Satisfied</i>
Communication channel for addressing seafarers' concerns about their welfare	2.90	<i>Satisfied</i>
Support to maintain physical and mental well-being ashore	2.74	<i>Satisfied</i>
<b>WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>3.08</b>	<b><i>Satisfied</i></b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 — Very Satisfied; 2.50 – 3.24 — Satisfied; 1.75 – 2.49 — Somewhat Satisfied; 1.00 – 1.74 — Not Satisfied; VI – Verbal Interpretation

As presented in Table 5, the survey results examining welfare aspects within "K" Line's Career Path Program reveal a notably positive outlook among the respondents. The highest mean value is attributed to "Safety policies and procedures being implemented onboard," with a mean of 3.47, categorized as "Satisfied." This indicates a strong perception from seafarers regarding the safety measures in place, emphasizing the importance of a secure working environment. On the other end, the indicator with the lowest mean value is "Support to maintain physical and mental well-being ashore," standing at 2.74 but still within the "Satisfied" range. Participant I echo this sentiment, expressing that the quality and availability of internet connection can potentially influence their decision to transfer to another company if not satisfactory. They expressed, "Physical and mental well-being onboard. If the vessel has low internet connection or not having internet,

this could potentially make me transfer to another company." This points to potential opportunities for enhancing the support mechanisms for seafarers when they are ashore. The "Living conditions onboard" indicator garnered a mean value of 3.28 (Satisfied). This indicates a high level of satisfaction among seafarers regarding the quality of accommodations and amenities provided during their time at sea. This positive perception is vital, as comfortable living conditions contribute significantly to the overall well-being and job satisfaction of seafaring professionals. Additionally, "Welfare programs such as medical and emergency assistance for the immediate family" achieved a mean value of 3.12, reinforcing the positive impact of the Career Path Program in supporting seafarers and their families during medical emergencies. Participant J echoes similar sentiments, "While we are onboard, they take care of their employees and provide assistance to our family in times of calamity. The company provides unlimited connections unlike other companies, which limit internet access for the crew." This underscores the importance of welfare initiatives that extend beyond the individual seafarer to encompass their immediate family members. The overall mean for welfare is 3.08, which is within the "Satisfied" range. This reflects a positive overall perception of the Career Path Program's provisions for the well-being of the scholars. The specific findings from individual indicators offer valuable cues for targeted improvements, providing a foundation for refining and tailoring welfare-related elements within the program. Welfare helps to improve employee satisfaction, which ultimately reduces the likelihood of employees leaving the company (Pelago, 2024).

*Table 6 - Summary Table*

RETENTION FACTORS	MEAN	VI
Salary	2.91	<i>Satisfied</i>
Rewards and Benefits	2.62	<i>Satisfied</i>
Job Satisfaction	2.98	<i>Satisfied</i>
Professional Growth	2.98	<i>Satisfied</i>
Welfare	3.08	<i>Satisfied</i>
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>2.87</b>	<b><i>Satisfied</i></b>

Overall, welfare received the highest satisfaction ratings. Regarding salary, the respondents were generally content, indicating satisfaction with the remuneration provided by "K" Line. Among the indicators related to rewards and



benefits, health insurance benefits and family health insurance received the highest satisfaction ratings, while rewarding employee achievements, retirement benefits, and loyalty bonuses received the lowest ratings. The respondents categorized their satisfaction with these aspects as "Somewhat Satisfied". Regarding job satisfaction, respondents reported predominantly favorable perceptions, with a strong sense of teamwork onboard contributing positively. However, there was a suggestion that reducing waiting time for re-employment could further enhance job satisfaction. In terms of professional growth, respondents acknowledged the efficacy of the Career Path Program in providing training and development opportunities, although perceptions regarding promotional opportunities suggested room for improvement. The survey results concerning welfare aspects revealed positive outlooks, particularly regarding safety policies and procedures implemented onboard. However, opportunities were identified to enhance support mechanisms for seafarers ashore and refine welfare programs such as medical and emergency assistance for immediate family members.

## V. CONCLUSION

There is a positive level of satisfaction with "K" Line's welfare, salaries, and professional growth opportunities, with onboard safety policies and health insurance benefits receiving particularly favorable feedback. However, areas such as rewards, retirement benefits, and loyalty bonuses show lower levels of satisfaction and need further enhancement. Effective teamwork has positively impacted job satisfaction, but there is room for improvement in reducing re-employment waiting times and enhancing promotional opportunities. Additionally, while the safety policies and welfare initiatives, including support for seafarers on shore and their families, are generally well-received, further refinement of these systems is necessary to improve overall satisfaction. Areas requiring attention include enhancing health benefits, standby pay, seniority, and rejoining bonuses, recognition of employee achievements, support for managing stress and fatigue, and the quality of living conditions onboard. Strengthening communication channels for addressing seafarers' welfare concerns and maintaining physical and mental well-being both onboard and ashore are also critical. The retention of "K" Line scholars is influenced by a variety of factors that shape their decisions to stay with the company. Salary competitiveness plays a significant role, with diverse opinions on adequacy, though loyalty and prospects for growth often take precedence. Health insurance, retirement benefits, and bonuses are essential to providing financial security and acknowledging loyalty. Job satisfaction

correlates strongly with teamwork, relationships, and the overall company culture, although challenges like long waiting periods for re-employment and difficult superiors can detract from this. The company values professional growth and offers training and career advancement opportunities, but there are concerns about delays in promotions. Additionally, welfare measures, especially those enhancing physical and mental well-being onboard, like unlimited internet access and family support given by the company, contribute significantly to the overall satisfaction and retention of scholars.

The study's findings provide a valuable framework for "K" Line and other shipping companies to improve their retention strategies through the Career Path Program. The demand for skilled seafarers in the worldwide shipping business has significantly increased. Therefore, retaining a dedicated, proficient, and motivated workforce is essential to ensuring maritime operations' safety, efficiency, and sustainability.

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# Enhancing L2 Speaking Skills Through Technology: An Overview of Research Findings

Dr. Nagamurali. Eragamreddy

English Language Unit, Preparatory Studies Center, University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Salalah, Sultanate of Oman  
E-mail: Nagamurali.Eragamreddy@utas.edu.om; muralieragamreddi@gmail.com

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**Abstract**— *The efficacy of Technology-Enhanced Speaking Development (TESD) for enhancing second language (L2) speaking abilities was examined in this study. To determine the digital resources and instructional activities utilized in TESD, 58 research publications were examined. The study discovered 19 distinct learning activities that are employed in TESD and can be divided into four categories: guiding the use of speaking methods, facilitating speaking practice in spoken interactions, supporting speaking abilities in activities, and enhancing speaking knowledge. The results of the examined literature demonstrated that learner perception and academic achievement are typically improved by TESD interventions. Furthermore, a framework known as the Cognitive Schemata for Speaking Skills was put forth to direct the creation and execution of TESD initiatives. The study also noted difficulties with student motivation, instructor preparation, and access, and it suggests future research paths to deal with these problems.*



**Keywords**— *L2 speaking, TESD, digital resources, learning activities, and cognitive schema paradigm*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In L2 learning, the investigation of speaking ability improvement is a prevalent problem (Shahini & Shahmirian, 2017). L2 students aim to gain a comprehension of how to use spoken L2 in a variety of environments (Liao, 2009), which is crucial for everyday communication and the improvement of additional L2 abilities (Alrasheedi, 2020). This goes in addition to comprehending and gaining auditory knowledge from particular resources in specific settings. It is generally acknowledged that acquiring L2 speaking abilities is exceedingly challenging, necessitating extensive knowledge, the creation and rebuilding of cognitive schemata, a significant focus on management, and the coordination of intricate cognitive operations (Alimohamadi, & Poordaryiaenejad, 2015; Umaira, 2020). Given the significance and challenge of developing speaking proficiency in a foreign language, it is evident that there is an urgency to look into helpful activities and resources to enhance L2 speaking.

Since 2000, academics have been examining technology-enhanced L2 speaking development, or TESD, to address this demand (Shadiev & Yang, 2020). Speaking with instructors, who are often L2 speakers, has historically been the primary way that students have acquired their L2 speaking abilities (Pitura, 2022). In contrast to earlier methods that did not possess digital affordances, modern digital technology allows for the encapsulation of an enormous quantity of reliable English-speaking resources spoken by native speakers into efficient instructional assignments that let learners complete them at their preferred pace. This strategy leads to greater productivity in L2 speaking advancement (Blake, 2016; Payne, 2020).

Scholars have carried out meta-analyses, reviews and syntheses in addition to the expanding body of empirical studies on technology-enhanced speaking development (TESD) (e.g., Blake, 2016; Payne, 2020); but very few, if any, of these investigations have systematically emphasized explicitly on technologies for TESD. Thus, a thorough analysis of TESD applications can present a clear understanding of the tools available for speaking



enhancement, the findings of which may assist those involved in choosing the right tools for their usage. Furthermore, research has demonstrated that different activities have a distinct impact on the enhancement of L2 speaking skills (Chau, 2021), suggesting that instructors need to select the right work for TESD. So, once more, a whole picture may be provided by a systematic evaluation of TESD research from the standpoint of learning tasks. Furthermore, the results of TESD have not been thoroughly examined in many investigations. While certain investigators, like Blake (2016) and others, have emphasized the overall favorable outcomes of TESD, others, including Lim et al. (2022), have been less optimistic. A comprehensive examination of the empirical research on TESD is beneficial for elucidating the findings of prior TESD research, since these contradictory results may have caused uncertainty and reluctance among academics and practitioners to apply this learning strategy.

This led to a methodical evaluation of empirical studies on TESD by the researcher from 2000 to 2024, with an emphasis on digital technologies, learning objectives, and learning results. The author's objectives in conducting this review were to: (a) categorize the different kinds of online resources and technology-boosted learning activities for the improvement of L2 speaking; (b) evaluate TESD results; (c) create a TESD model; and (d) offer implications for further study. This review was led by three questions:

1. Which digital tools were employed in the development of L2 Speaking?
2. Which educational activities were used in the TESD?
3. What were the TESD findings?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 L2 Speaking

Speaking in an L2 is an intricate cognitive task. It necessitates both top-down processing—where interpretation is guided by preexisting knowledge and expectations—and bottom-up processing, where students construct comprehension from individual sounds and words (Corps & Rabagliati, 2020). (Thio, 2005; Al-Mahrooqi & Tuzlukova, 2011). Tasks designed for learning must take this complexity into account. Tasks that are well-designed offer chances for meaningful input as well as output. Students gain by reading a variety of texts, including official discussions and informal exchanges, as they might affect how they use language and vocabulary. Deeper engagement and growth are promoted by "pushed output" assignments, which require learners to grapple with rather foreign concepts (Thio, 2005; Al-Mahrooqi & Tuzlukova, 2011).

As a normal aspect of spoken communication, negotiating meaning is essential to vocabulary growth and

understanding. Cooperation is required for tasks like "split information" exercises, which promote language acquisition and bargaining (Thio, 2005; Al-Mahrooqi & Tuzlukova, 2011). But L2 speaking comes with a lot of difficulties. Sensitive aspects of identification such as age, first language, and even motivation affect pronunciation (Derwing & Munro, 2005). Although paying careful attention to pronunciation is crucial, other elements of fluency development should also be taken into consideration (Derwing & Munro, 2005). Assessing speaking ability is still difficult. While alternate approaches, such as group discussions, show potential but need further investigation, traditional examinations lack rater consistency (Thio, 2005; Al-Mahrooqi & Tuzlukova, 2011).

Technology presents fascinating opportunities. Speaking assessments that are graded by a computer may offer useful screening resources (Thio, 2005). Future studies on L2 speaking will focus on examining how well technology-enhanced activities work, how task design affects fluency development, and how speaking contributes to vocabulary expansion. L2 speaking training will become even more beneficial for students aiming to improve their fluency and communication abilities as study on the subject develops.

### 2.2 Previous Studies on TESD

Lys (2013) gives an example of how using iPads in a conversation lesson aided in the development of L2 speaking. The task-based, learner-centered approach that makes use of iPads is consistent with a paradigm that incorporates learning techniques and cognitive schema. Students probably engaged prior knowledge (schema) about the topic of the talk by working on assignments on iPads. Additionally, the iPads gave them the chance to practice new learning techniques (such as recording and evaluating discussions) to get better at speaking. This study emphasizes how technology may be used to foster a supportive atmosphere in which students actively apply their prior knowledge to establish focused speaking development plans.

The potential of technology, especially virtual reality (VR), to lessen L2 speaking anxiety (PSA) is highlighted by Chen (2022). Despite equal performance outcomes, their findings imply that VR may be more beneficial than mobile-assisted learning for lowering PSA. It's interesting to note that using technology tends to mitigate the effects of individual anxiety variations, indicating that technology can help students who experience different levels of worry. This is consistent with the idea of incorporating learning techniques (focused approaches) and cognitive schema (pre-existing knowledge) into a technology-enhanced model. Technology can boost speech



development and tailor the learning process by attending to individual requirements and worries.

González and Hardison (2022) present how the multimodal L2 pronunciation tool Assistive Design for English Phonetic Tools (ADEPT) enhances speaking development. This is consistent with a paradigm that combines learning techniques with cognitive schema. By giving students access to several representations of the IPA symbols—visual, aural, and tactile—ADEPT is likely to activate their prior understanding of sounds, or schemas. The website also provides explanations and recordings, which may encourage students to create focused practice plans (rehearsing certain sounds) to improve their pronunciation accuracy. This study shows that by providing a variety of channels for engaging with pronunciation principles and developing targeted learning.

Jaramillo Cherrez and Nadolny (2023) employ asynchronous video talks to illustrate the efficacy of technology in supporting L2 speaking development. Their mixed-methods study found a connection between video conversations better speech performance and a greater willingness to interact. This is consistent with a paradigm that combines learning processes with cognitive schema. To accomplish the assignment, learners were likely to create communication skills (drafting questions) while also activating prior knowledge about the issue through video chats. This shows that technology may improve speaking by promoting language use that is active and social by nature.

According to Zou et al. (2023), the integrated model of technology acceptability may be used to study the user acceptability of L2 speaking tools that are driven by AI. Their research indicates that learners' intentions to utilize an AI speech assessment system were positively affected by their perception of the system's utility and enjoyment. This aligns with a model that blends cognitive schema and learning strategies. Learners are more likely to interact with an AI tool and activate their schema about the target language if they find it entertaining and useful. The comments provided by the AI can subsequently help students create focused learning plans such as practicing areas of weakness to enhance their speaking. This study emphasizes how crucial user-centered design is to improving the efficacy of AI technologies for L2 speaking development.

Shabani and Jabbari (2023) draw attention to the potential benefits of online flipped classrooms for the development of L2 speaking, especially those that include interaction. According to their research, speaking improved more with interaction-embedded (IE) online flipped education than with interaction-reduced (IR) instruction. This is in line with an approach that mixes cognitive schema

with methods for learning. Student-centered engagement in the IE class probably triggered the schema of the language. Moreover, discussions and collaboration may have encouraged students to use targeted learning strategies such as posing queries and putting forth arguments to enhance their speaking skills. According to this study, flipped classes conducted online can provide a social learning environment in which students actively interact with their schema and build strategies.

Metruk (2024) draws attention to the potential of mobile learning (MALL) in the development of L2 pronunciation. According to their review, learners' attitudes and pronunciation were positively changed by smartphone applications. This is in line with a model that combines cognitive frameworks with methods for learning. MALL applications probably give students quick access to resources for pronouncing words (pictures, audio), which may help them recall their prior sound knowledge. These applications can also include interactive activities and feedback systems, which encourage students to create focused learning strategies (self-recording and pronunciation comparisons) to increase their speaking accuracy. According to this study, mobile technology can help to improve pronunciation by facilitating active interaction with target sounds and providing accessible learning tools.

Shafiee Rad (2024) is in favor of using AI-powered language-learning applications, such as Speeko, to enhance L2 speaking. The results show that using Speeko, as opposed to traditional approaches, improved speaking skills, willingness to communicate, and favorable perceptions. This makes sense for a paradigm that blends instructional methods with logical concepts. By offering tailored practice and feedback, Speeko probably activates schema about the language of interest. Furthermore, because the app is interactive, users may be encouraged to create focused learning techniques (practicing areas of difficulty, getting feedback, and modifying pronunciation). This work demonstrates how AI may be used to design tailored learning environments that take into account schema and promote the development of speaking strategies.

Discussion panels are shown to be beneficial in fostering the development of L2 speaking and having an impact on learner autonomy, growth attitude, and willingness to communicate (WTC) by Cao and Liu (2024). This makes obvious for a structure that combines rational notions with teaching strategies. Discussion panels' interaction with themes is likely to activate schema about the target language. Furthermore, the necessity of participation and teamwork may encourage students to

create focused learning techniques such as developing arguments or employing transition words to successfully convey their thoughts. This study demonstrates how discussion panels may support the development of a social learning environment in which students actively employ their schema and acquire communication techniques via interaction.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was carried out using the conventional three-step process of analyzing the data, evaluation, and selection. On January 11th, 2024, the researcher searched the "Web of Science Core Collection" for publications, selecting "article" as the record sort and "English" as the language. Because technological opportunities have been employed more often in L2 learning after 2000, the period selected "from 2000-01-01 to the present" (Shadiev & Yang, 2020). The study was carried out on studies listed by the "Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI)", "Sciences Citation Index (SCI)", and the "Sciences Citation Index Expanded (SCI-E)", by numerous previous evaluations in the area of technology-assisted language acquisition. This was done because papers included in the SSCI/SCI/SCI-E are typically subjected to thorough peer review employing strict standards and have a significant impact (Duman et al., 2015). After the search, the author found 524 papers, from

which the researcher chose articles using seven screening criteria (see Table 1). After screening the papers based on their titles and abstracts, the author promptly eliminated 97 publications that had no bearing on the development of L2 speaking, in addition to 23 articles whose complete texts were not accessible online. The primary texts of the remaining 404 articles were then reviewed to evaluate them. Initially, 290 papers that did not include empirical findings on TESD were eliminated by the researcher. After that, forty more papers that addressed the gaining of audio data from particular resources in particular contexts were disqualified since the researcher's evaluation was limited to speaking abilities in general. Additionally, fourteen additional papers that lacked a clear explanation of the TESD implementation procedures and results were eliminated. Ultimately, the author eliminated four further publications that emphasized pupils with special needs considering the significant differences in schooling between this student demographic and the general pupil population (Scott & Windsor, 2000). As a result, 56 papers total—58 individual studies—were left after screening (see the asterisk-marked References for further information). Adopting a "Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA)" 2020 flow diagram (<http://prismastatement.org/prismastatement/flowdiagram.aspx>), Figure 1 shows the steps involved in identifying and screening articles.

Table 1: Article Choice: Inclusion and Exclusion Basis

Factors	Inclusion	Exclusion
Title and abstract-based selection	Relevance to L2 speaking improvement	Lack of online full-text availability
Filtering according to primary literature	Presenting on empirical research on TESD	Emphasizing the obtaining of auditory data from certain resources in particular contexts exclusively
	Giving precise information about the execution procedures and results of TESD	Emphasizing pupils with unique requirements

Based on three codes that corresponded to the RQs, the author deductively assessed the 56 papers that reported 58 studies (refer to Table 2). First, e-learning resources and networks, electronic gadgets, and digital instruments for L2 speaking development were covered in "Technologies for L2 Speaking Development." The sub-codes were created using the classification of contemporary technology for L2 speaking by Golonka et al. (2014) and Shadiev and Yang (2020), which included interactions, games, automated machines, electronic books, and more. The primary approach employed by the researcher for

coding this category was to study the literature studies and methodology portions of the analyzed papers, which focused on the kinds, characteristics, and benefits of digital technology for L2 speaking development. "Learning tasks for TESD" was the second code, and it dealt with the students' digital activities for improving their L2 speaking skills. The sub-codes were created using the L2 speaking development activities listed by Chau (2021), which included taking notes, observing, and text analysis. The author focused on the study plans and learner obligations in TESD and classified this group after reading the

methodologies portions and literature reviews of the 56 papers. The third code, "Outcomes of TESD," dealt with how TESD impacted students' emotional and academic states. The sub-codes were categorized into favorable,

neutral, unfavorable and hybrid impacts (Zhang and Zou, 2021a, 2021b). After reading the comments and findings sections and emphasizing the TESD results and their causes, the researcher classified this group.

Table 2: Coding Technique

Codes	Sub-codes	Sections
Technology for the improvement of L2 speaking	Automated machines, conversations, electronic books, games, and others (Shadiev & Yang, 2020)	Evaluation of the literature; Methodology
TESD coursework assignments	Taking notes, observing, text analysis non-reciprocal tasks, etc. (Chau (2021).	Review of the literature; Methodology
Results of TESD	Favorable, neutral, unfavorable and hybrid impacts (Zhang and Zou, 2021a, 2021b).	Findings and Comments

The researcher first examined seven studies before he concluded his interpretation and the best way to code the articles. The remaining papers were then examined by the author. After comparing the coding findings, it was determined that there was good reliability (Pearson's  $r = 0.90$ ). Any remaining discrepancies were settled by thorough crosschecking.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Digital Technologies for L2 Listening Development

The author listed various digital resources, to answer research question 1, that are employed to improve L2 speaking (Refer to Figure 2) while emphasizing how language acquisition is changing as a result of these tools. Pronunciation aids and interactive activities are easily accessible using MALL (Metruk, 2024). Chatbots and virtual language partners are two examples of artificial intelligence (AI) systems that offer individualized feedback and encourage the use of active communication (Shafiee Rad, 2024). Students can participate in conversations on asynchronous video discussion platforms, which improve group learning (Jaramillo Cherez & Nadolny, 2023). By immersing students in realistic circumstances, VR settings help to lessen the anxiety that comes with public speaking (Chen, 2022). Applications for augmented reality (AR) and computer-aided pronunciation training (CAPT) provide both visual and aural assistance for practicing pronunciation (Sinyagovskaya & Murray, 2021; Sinyagovskaya, 2022; Wang et al., 2024). Speech recognition tools (McCrocklin, 2016; Evers & Chen, 2022; Jiang et al., 2023; Kholis, 2021;

Kang et al., 2024) offer instant feedback on pronunciation, grammar, and fluency. For L2 speakers, the combination of these technologies with well-established pedagogical frameworks has the potential to produce individualized, interesting, and productive educational activities.

The author examines several digital tools that are used to improve L2 speaking, highlighting how these technologies are changing the face of language acquisition. Pronunciation aids and interactive exercises are easily accessible via mobile-assisted Language Learning (MALL) (Metruk, 2024). Chatbots and virtual language partners are examples of artificial intelligence (AI) systems that provide individualized feedback and encourage conversation (Shafiee Rad, 2024). Students can participate in group discussions on asynchronous video discussion platforms, which improves collaborative learning (Jaramillo Cherez & Nadolny, 2023). By immersing students in realistic events, virtual reality (VR) environments help students overcome their fear of public speaking (Chen, 2022). Applications for computer-aided pronunciation training (CAPT) and augmented reality (AR) offer both visual and aural support for pronunciation practice. Speech recognition software provides real-time input on grammar, fluency, and pronunciation. By combining these technologies with well-established pedagogical frameworks, educational activities for L2 speakers can be made more individualized, interesting, and successful. MALL makes interactive activities and pronunciation aids easily accessible (Metruk, 2024).

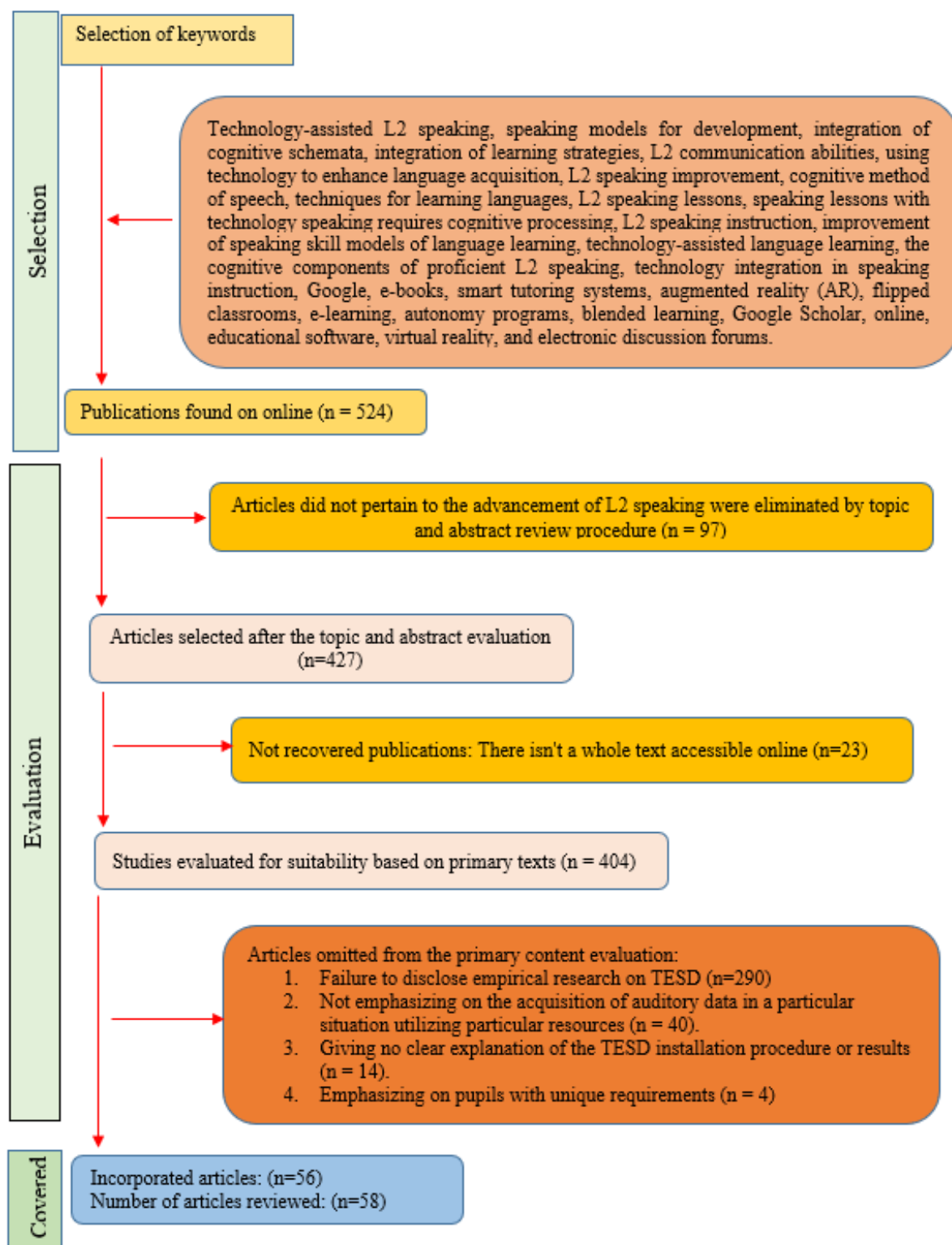


Fig.1: Steps involved in identifying and screening articles

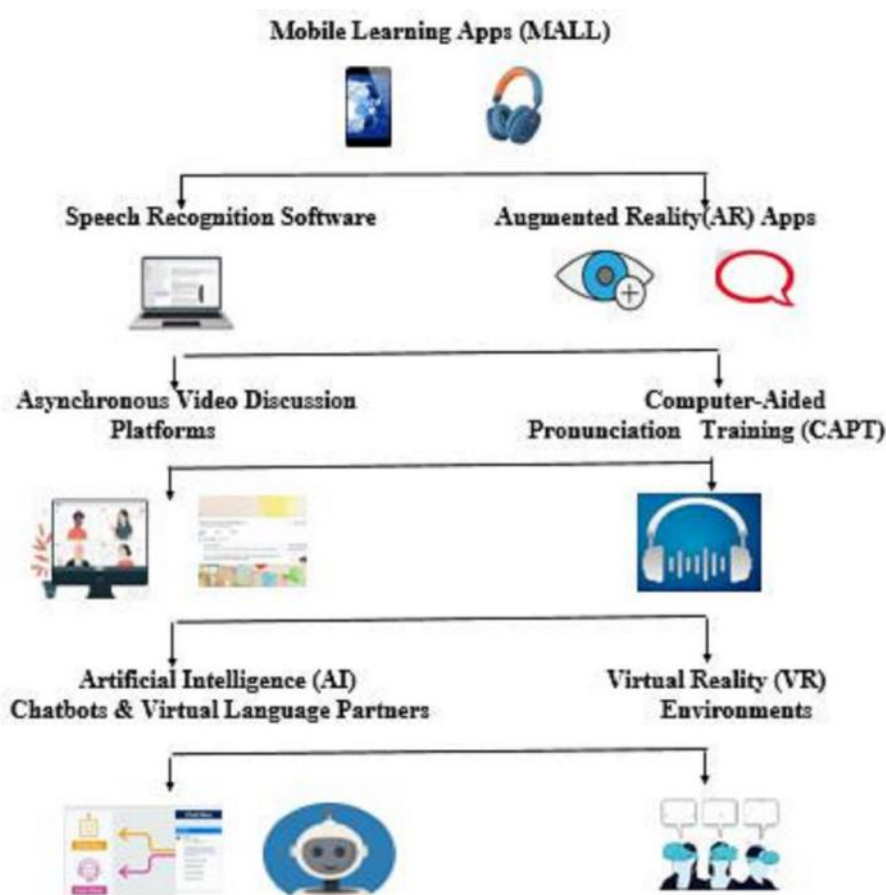


Fig.2: Numerous Articles Examining Various Digital Technology Models for L2 Speaking Improvement

Two examples of artificial intelligence (AI) systems that provide personalized feedback and promote the use of active communication are chatbots and virtual language partners (Shafiee Rad, 2024). Asynchronous video discussion platforms allow students to engage in dialogue, which enhances group learning (Jaramillo Cherez & Nadolny, 2023; Rofi'I & Herdiawan, 2024). Virtual reality environments help students feel less nervous about public speaking by immersing them in realistic situations (Chen, 2022). Applications for computer-aided pronunciation training (CAPT) and augmented reality (AR) offer pronunciation practice in both visual and auditory ways (Sinyagovskaya & Murray, 2021; Sinyagovskaya, 2022; Wang et al., 2024). Speech recognition software (McCrocklin, 2016; Evers & Chen, 2022; Jiang et al., 2023; Kholis, 2021; Kang et al., 2024) provides real-time feedback on grammar, fluency, and pronunciation. Combining these technologies with tried-and-true pedagogical frameworks can result in customized, engaging, and fruitful learning experiences for L2 speakers.

#### 4.2 Learning Tasks for TESD

In response to Research Question 2, the author selected 17 educational activities that were employed for TESD (see Figure 3). The most common learning activities were understanding activities, which were employed in 45 studies. Other common learning activities included linguistic curriculum (19 studies), team discussions (12 studies), lessons on speaking techniques (12 studies), overview and a reflection (10 studies), written evaluation (10 studies), non-reciprocal activities (10 studies), interacting with computers (10 studies), pre-speaking prompts and estimation drawing (8 studies), conversations recording and dissemination (6 investigations), role-playing (5 studies), taking notes (5 studies), observing (5 studies), open discussion (4 studies), transcribing (4 studies), lessons on foundational information (4 studies), conversations with native speakers (Kato et al., 2016) (2 studies). Since some research used multiple tasks, the total surpasses 58.

For the improvement of speaking, the author outlined four primary goals for each of the 17 various educational activities. The development of speaking-related knowledge was the primary goal. Six assignments were used in this regard: (a) Language knowledge guidance,



which covered topics like pronunciation (Maulana et al., 2024; Bashori et al., 2024), vocabulary (Opelia, 2024), and syntax (Sabir et al., 2021); (b) Speaking methods directions, which covered topics like self-evaluation and identifying sentence boundary pauses (Vetchinnikova et al., 2023); (c) Basic understanding instruction, which increased students' proficiency with the speech's content (Vetchinnikova et al., 2023); (d) open discussion (Q&A), where students gained knowledge by posing instructors questions and getting clarifications and suggested answers (Agbatogun, 2014); (e) team discussion, where students learned through conversations with their peers (Jaramillo Cherrez & Nadolny, 2023; Yudiati & Annisa, 2024); and (f) transcript analysis, where students had to study by looking at transcripts (Cowie, 2018).

Supporting speaking skills in activities was the second goal. Students participated in group or individual technology-enhanced activities (Cowie, 2018; Hsu et al., 2021). For this goal, five activities were applied: (a) Role-playing, which entailed having students adopt different characters and participate in dialogues or scenarios to practice speaking in a variety of settings. (Timpe-Laughlin et al., 2022); (b) picture descriptions, in which students had to describe images or photos, with an emphasis on honing their ability to give thorough and evocative oral explanations (Lavalle & Briesmaster, 2017; Mutiara, 2023); (c) storytelling, in which students had to share anecdotes or narrated stories, with an emphasis on storytelling techniques and holding the attention of the audience (Fu et al., 2022); (d) debates, which required students to investigate and argue opposing sides of an issue, strengthening their capacity to convey their views vividly and persuasively (Nurakhir et al., 2020) and (e) speeches or presentations, which required students to prepare and deliver speeches or presentations on a topic of interest, improving their public speaking skills (Sabdani-Asiri et al., 2024; Picanço Marchand et al., 2024).

Enabling speaking practice in spoken encounters was the third goal. To achieve this, four tasks were employed: (a) role-playing, in which pupils took on the roles of personalities and interacted with one another in L2 situations, honing their speaking skills in real-life situations (Suban, 2021; Jendli & Albarakati, 2024); (b) conversations with L1 speakers, in which learners were involved in L2 conversations with native speakers, offering an authentic

speaking experience (Kato et al., 2016); (c) conversation documenting and distributing, in which pupils recorded their speech, distributed it with other students, and enjoyed listening to their classmates, enabling peer feedback and self-evaluation (Chien et al., 2020); and (d) interacting with computers, in which learners engaged in L2 spoken interactions with computer programs, offering a low-pressure environment for speaking practice. (Fathi et al., 2024) and (e) collaborative storytelling, where students work together to write and narrate stories. This activity required them to improve their storytelling abilities and participate in meaningful verbal exchanges (Shaban & Junejo, 2024).

The fourth goal was to direct and promote the use of speaking strategies. To achieve this, there were five tasks: (a) pre-speaking prompts and prediction making, which asked students to anticipate and talk about the content of their speech to assist them to plan their speaking strategy and organize their thoughts (Zadnikar, 2024); (b) pre-speaking understanding recollection, which helped learners remember vocabulary and pertinent information connected to their speaking subject to prepare them for effective communication (Loizou, 2024); (c) overview and reflection, which asked students to evaluate their performance, pinpoint fields for enhancement, and reinforce effective speaking strategies (Mohammed, 2024); (d) peer feedback, which allowed students to offer their peers comments on how well they spoke, promoting introspection and the use of persuasive speaking techniques (Loizou, 2024). and (e) role-playing exercises, which helped students employ particular speaking techniques, like persuasion or negotiation, in a simulated real-life setting. This improved their ability to use these techniques successfully in real conversations (Yudiati & Annisa, 2024).

### 4.3 TESD Findings

The current study evaluation determined the overall benefits of TESD (Figure 4) to treat RQ3. 32 articles (80%) of the forty studies that examined educational results revealed substantial beneficial findings, two (5%), neutral results, and six (15%) showed mixed results. Of the 28 research investigations that looked into the perceptual results, 25 (89%) revealed substantial positive findings, and 3 (11%) indicated neutral outcomes.

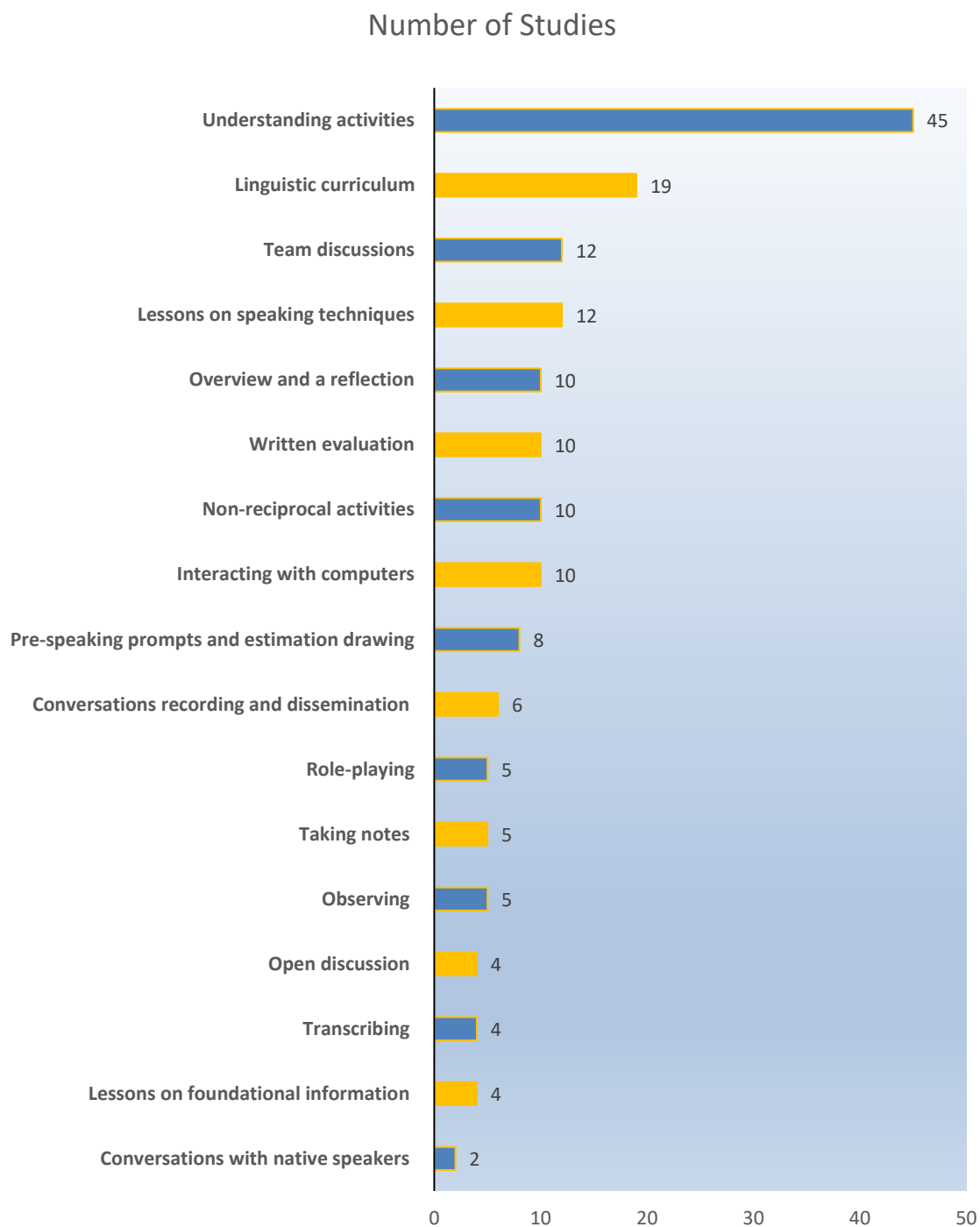


Fig.3: Study Representing Various TESD Activities

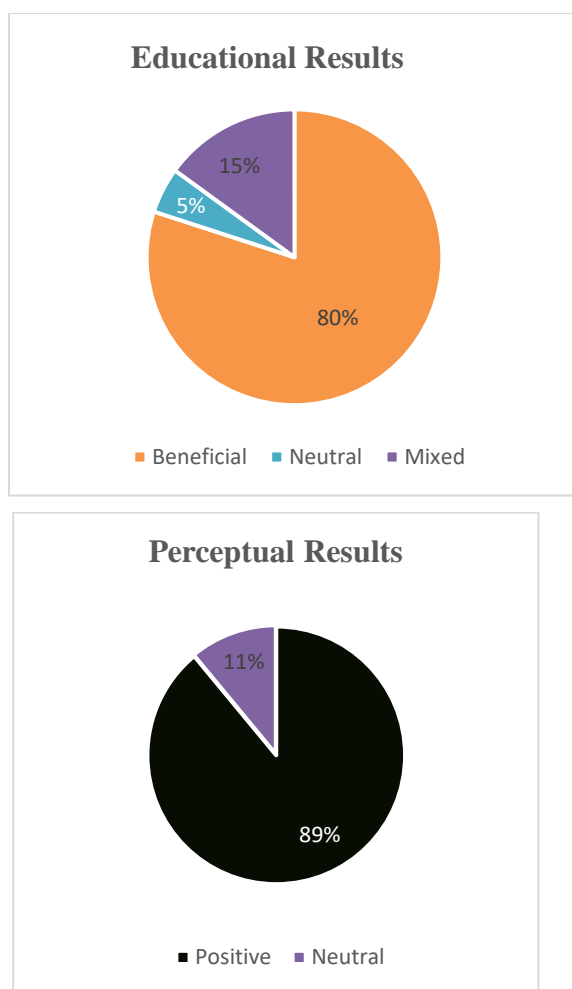


Fig.4: Benefits of TESD

#### 4.4 Justification for the Efficacy of TESD

The usefulness of TESD in enhancing L2 speaking abilities is investigated in this analysis. According to the findings, TESD provides a variety of learning activities that meet different objectives and increase L2 speaking fluency. Seventeen unique TESD learning activities were found to be used in different research projects (Pitura, 2022). The activities cover a wide range of topics and focus on many facets of L2 speaking. Learners' comprehension of the fundamental elements of spoken language is improved through activities like open discussions and language knowledge assistance, which focuses on pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar (Maulana et al., 2024; Bashori et al., 2024; Opelia, 2024; Agbatogun, 2014). Role-playing, visual descriptions, storytelling, debates, and other activities give students the chance to practice speaking in a variety of settings, improving their fluency and promoting effective communication (Suban, 2021; Jendli & Albarakati, 2024).

TESD activities that provide realistic speaking settings and encourage interaction, such as conversing with

native speakers, recording and sharing conversations, and engaging with computers, can help develop fluency and confidence in speaking (Kato et al., 2016; Chien et al., 2020; Fathi et al., 2024). Learners are encouraged to develop and apply good speaking strategies through activities such as pre-speaking comprehension memory, overviews with reflection, and prediction-making prompts (Zadnikar, 2024; Loizou, 2024; Mohammed, 2024). Because of its versatility, TESD may effectively meet a range of learning goals by helping L2 speakers acquire new information, hone existing skills, get real-world speaking experience, and build their strategic competence. The study also emphasizes how TESD improves L2 speaking results. TESD has been linked to significant improvements in educational results in 80% of the 40 studies that were analyzed. In a similar vein, 89% of research looking at learner perception reported having a good experience using TESD. These results imply that TESD interventions are generally well-received by students and effectively enhance learners' L2 speaking skills.

TESD is superior to conventional L2 speaking training techniques in several ways. Pronunciation guides and interactive exercises are easily accessible through mobile applications (MALL), enabling individualized learning outside of the classroom (Metruk, 2024; Li, 2024). When combined with asynchronous video discussions and virtual reality environments, TESD activities make for a more dynamic and interesting learning environment than when using only textbook-based methods (Chen, 2022; Jaramillo Cherrez & Nadolny, 2023). Learners can receive tailored feedback on pronunciation, grammar, and fluency from tools such as chatbots and speech recognition software, which encourages self-correction and progress (Shafiee Rad, 2024). virtual reality (VR) environments can mimic real-world situations, enabling students to practice speaking in a secure setting. This can be especially helpful for learners who are afraid of public speaking (Chen, 2022).

Hence, the study that is being presented offers strong proof of the effectiveness of TESD in improving L2 speaking abilities. Many learning activities address different facets of speaking development, and the successful results shown in the research bear out the efficacy of TESD interventions. Moreover, TESD has notable benefits in comparison to conventional techniques, rendering it an invaluable resource for instructors and students aiming to enhance their L2 oral communication skills.

#### 4.5 The Barriers to TESD's Efficacy

With so many platforms and tools available to improve second language (L2) proficiency, technology has become an essential component of language learning. TESD has drawn a lot of interest in language instruction in recent years. However, TESD's efficacy is hampered by

several issues, despite its apparent advantages. This study explores a few of the major issues and offers suggestions for how to resolve them. Lack of access to digital resources and technology is one of the main problems. Inequality in access to computers, smartphones, and high-speed internet hinders students' capacity to participate fully in TESD activities. Existing educational gaps are made worse by the digital divide, which calls for creative solutions to ensure fair access for all students (Warschauer, 2003). The caliber of online resources for language learning presents another difficulty. Even while the internet has a plethora of materials, not all of them are excellent or suitable for use in teaching. Finding relevant resources that support their learning objectives and aims may be difficult for educators and students (Hubbard, 2008). Furthermore, because technology is developing so quickly, it is frequently necessary to update and revise old materials.

Moreover, a lack of support and training for teachers frequently undermines the effectiveness of TESD. A large number of language instructors lack the necessary training to effectively create TESD activities or incorporate technology into their lesson plans (Jones & Hafner, 2021). Educators must have continuous assistance and professional development opportunities to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to integrate technology into the classroom. Furthermore, problems with engagement and motivation provide serious obstacles to TESD's efficacy.

Particularly in online or virtual settings where there may be less opportunity for connection and community, some students might not be motivated to participate in speaking exercises (MacIntyre et al., 2019). Creating dynamic and captivating TESD exercises that encourage cooperation and dialogue can assist in resolving this issue.

#### 4.6 TESD Cognitive Schema

Because TESD and cognitive schema learning share common foci, the author created a TESD paradigm (see Figure 5) based on an ascending evaluation of the findings from the review. This paradigm is in line with Schneider et al. (2022) cognitive schema learning paradigm. According to the study's findings, students in TESD could choose speaking materials from a wealth of resources depending on their unique requirements and choices (Sabir et al., 2021). Additionally, they could utilize a variety of cognitive schema learning techniques (Schneider et al., 2022) and actively participate in TESD speaking tasks with a significant amount of command (Kato et al., 2016). These methods could include reflecting on speaking procedures (Wu & Wang, 2021) and modifying the speed and subject matter of their speaking exercise (Silvia, 2018). Additionally, based on concepts of cognitive schema learning, the researcher selected several TESD programs and evaluated their overall efficacy from educational and affective standpoints (Kondo et al., 2012; Mohammed, 2024). Therefore, creating TESD frameworks using a cognitive schema learning paradigm could be worthwhile.

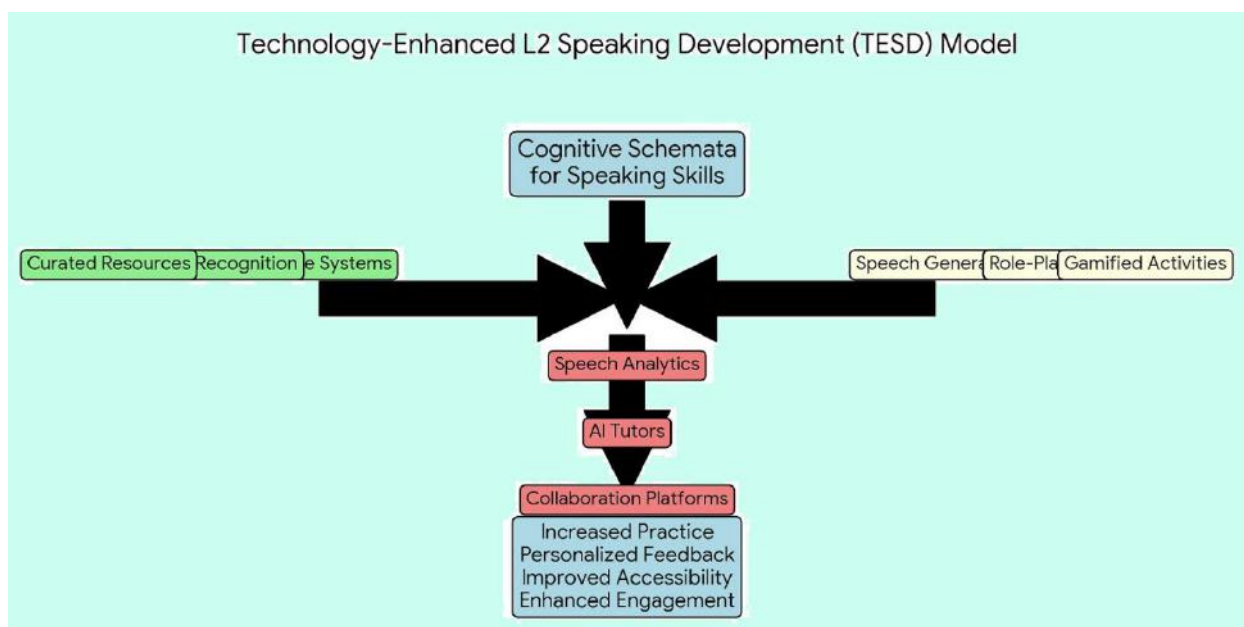


Fig.5: TESD Cognitive Schema

A thorough framework for TESD that incorporates multiple components to improve learners' speaking abilities is shown in the above picture of The Cognitive Schemata for the Speaking Skills paradigm. Primarily, the approach highlights the application of cognitive schemata—mental models that assist individuals in organizing and interpreting speech-related data. A variety of techniques and technologies are used to support these schemata to increase language learning's efficacy and efficiency (Schneider et al., 2022). The model's utilization of E-Systems, recognition, and curated materials is one of its main features. Resources that have been carefully chosen to be interesting and relevant for learners are known as "curated resources," and they offer a variety of learning opportunities. Recognition tools, such as certificates or badges, can inspire students and give them a feeling of accomplishment. E-Systems like, learning management systems and online platforms, provide a centralized location for tracking progress and accessing resources.

The approach also includes particular exercises and resources meant to improve speaking abilities. Role-plays and gamified activities imitate real-life speaking scenarios, making learning more interactive and interesting. Speech generators can assist learners in practicing pronunciation and intonation (Timpe-Laughlin et al., 2022). The model's essential elements are speech analytics and AI tutors, which provide students with tailored feedback depending on how well they talk (Kang et al., 2024). This personalized method aids students in pinpointing areas in need of development and monitoring their advancement over time. Through collaborative activities and peer and instructor interaction, collaboration platforms help students build community and improve their communication skills (Shaban & Junejo, 2024). A fundamental tenet of the approach is increased practice, which emphasizes the significance of regular and consistent practice in the development of speaking abilities. The capacity of learners to practice effectively is further enhanced by personalized feedback and increased accessibility to resources and support (Shafiee Rad, 2024).

#### **4.7 Future Research Directions for TESD**

A positive image is created by the research on TESD. 58 studies were analyzed, and the results show a variety of online resources and educational activities that successfully advance L2 speaking abilities. But there are difficulties in the field. Here, the researcher examines possible future paths for TESD with an emphasis on maximizing its advantages and resolving its drawbacks. An important future direction is highlighted by the cognitive schemata learning-based TESD model that has been developed. TESD can encourage a sense of ownership

and motivation by giving students authority over their learning resources, approaches, and task complexity. Subsequent investigations may examine methods for further tailoring learning experiences. Creating adaptive learning platforms that suggest materials and activities in response to each learner's needs and development could be one way to achieve this (Shaban & Junejo, 2024). Furthermore, developing learner autonomy calls for strong self-evaluation abilities (Chien et al., 2020). By incorporating self-assessment techniques and tools into TESD programs, teachers may enable students to recognize their areas of strength and weakness and create individualized progress targets.

Ensuring fair access to technology and resources is a major concern for TESD. Already existing disparities in schooling may be made worse by the digital divide. Future studies should look into how to improve the accessibility of TESD activities and tools for students using antiquated technology or with poor internet connectivity. This can entail creating learning activities that are available offline, using low-bandwidth apps, and looking into alternate access locations like libraries or community centers. The ability of teachers to successfully incorporate technology into their lessons determines how effective TESD is. Subsequent endeavors ought to concentrate on furnishing educators with continuous professional growth prospects to enhance their technological proficiency and pedagogical abilities for TESD. This could entail developing mentorship programs, workshops, and online resources to provide educators with the skills and assurance they need to create TESD activities that are both interesting and successful.

Successful language learning requires maintaining students' enthusiasm and involvement, especially in virtual or online environments. Potential avenues for future research include gamifying and enhancing the interactivity of TESD activities. This could entail introducing possibilities for peer engagement, cooperative learning assignments, and game-based aspects. Furthermore, encouraging a feeling of community in online learning environments might improve motivation and involvement. A more encouraging learning atmosphere can be produced by creating virtual areas where students can interact, exchange experiences, and recognize each other's accomplishments.

The "Cognitive Schemata for Speaking Skills" paradigm places a strong emphasis on the value of processing and organizing speech-related information using mental models. Subsequent investigations may explore further the cognitive mechanisms underlying L2 speaking and the most effective ways in which technology might assist these mechanisms. This would entail investigating



how artificial intelligence (AI) might be used to tailor education to each student's unique cognitive preferences and learning requirements. Furthermore, studies on the efficacy of different speech analytics tools and feedback systems might help design more impactful and customized learner support. To maximize the benefits of TESD, it is crucial to close the gap between research and practice. Subsequent endeavors ought to be focused on distributing study outcomes and optimal methodologies to teachers of languages and curriculum designers. This could entail setting up professional learning communities for teachers, compiling online databases of useful TESD activities, and formulating evidence-based standards for incorporating technology into L2 speaking practice.

## V. CONCLUSION

This study looked at how well TESD can help with L2 speaking proficiency improvement. After 58 studies were analyzed, 17 different digital tools and learning activities were shown to be beneficial in promoting speaking fluency. These exercises focus on a range of speaking development domains, including language proficiency and pragmatic application. Additionally, the study discovered that TESD treatments are often well-received and result in notable gains in learners' speaking abilities. This study adds credence to the increasing amount of data demonstrating TESD's efficacy. It draws attention to the variety of learning activities that TESD offers and its beneficial effects on students' speaking abilities (Schneider et al., 2022). Furthermore, the suggested model—the Cognitive Schemata for Speaking Skills model—offers a helpful framework for creating and executing TESD programs. TESD can significantly change L2 speaking training. TESD can produce interesting and productive learning experiences for everyone by supporting learner autonomy, addressing accessibility concerns, and cultivating a positive learning environment. Subsequent investigations ought to concentrate on refining the technological instruments and instructional strategies within TESD to ensure its sustained efficacy in enhancing L2 speaking skills worldwide.

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# Contemporary Critical Theories

Niyati Chauhan

M.A Candidate, Department of English, Sri Dev Suman University, Teri Garhwal, Uttarakhand, India

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**Abstract**— A brief introduction to literary criticism and literary theory are given at the start. In any genre, the critic must be, in a sense, a political thinker, sociologist, and psychologist, as well as a literary historian and aesthete. Additionally, this paper examines various critical, literary concepts and finally the conclusion is drawn by means of the review of literature indicated. Literary theory is the systematic study of the nature of literature and of the methods for literary analysis. It is the body of ideas and methods we use in the practical reading of literature. By literary theory we refer not to the meaning of a work of literature but to the theories that reveal what literature can mean. Literary theory is a description of the underlying principles, one might say the tools, by which we attempt to understand literature. All literary interpretation draws on a basis in theory but can serve as a justification for very different kinds of critical activity. It is literary theory that formulates the relationship between author and work; literary theory develops the significance of race, class, and gender for literary study, both from the standpoint of the biography of the author and an analysis of their thematic presence within texts. In simple words, it is a perspective with which we look at and interpret a text.



**Keywords**— Literary theory, traditional critical theories structuralism, formalism, feminism, Psychoanalytical, modernism, New – Criticism, Marxism

## I. INTRODUCTION

In this research paper, we are going to undertake a brief overview of the rise and development and criticism, especially in the 19th and 20th centuries. Thus, the purpose of interpretation then was to discern the author's intention which would unlock the textual meaning of the work. However, with time, critics began to focus more concertedly on the text itself, hence meaning came to be seen as residing with the reader. This research paper will enable you grasp the basis of literary theorizing and criticism by relating them to your everyday experience. It is also expected that by the end of this paper you should be able to apply theoretical perspectives to literary works. literary criticism and theory are unavoidable part of studying literature. Their aim is to explain, entertain, simulate, and challenge the student of literature. They make literature refreshing, informative and stimulating in many ways which help us to achieve a better understanding of literature.

The practice of literary theory became a profession in the

20th century, but it has historical roots that run as far back as ancient Greece (Aristotle's Poetics is an often cited early example), ancient India (Bharata Muni's Natya Shastra), ancient Rome (Longinus's On the Sublime) etc. The aesthetic theories of philosophers from ancient philosophy through the 18th and 19th centuries are important influences on current literary study. The theory and criticism of literature are tied to the history of literature.

In the 20th century, the emphasis shifted to the work of art, especially under the influence of the new criticism. When the critic views art basically in its own terms, seeing the work as a self-contained entity, he is using the objective theory. Some critics have talked about theoretical and practical or applied criticism. Theoretical criticism attempts to arrive at the general principles of art and practical criticism applies these principles to the works of art. Literary critics have also talked about other types of criticism such as historical criticism which examines a work of art against its historical background and the author's life while impressionistic criticism emphasizes the



way that a work of art affects the critic.

Textual criticism applies scholarly means to a work of art to reconstruct its original version while analytical criticism tries to get at the nature of a work of art as an object through the detailed analysis of its parts and their organization. Judicial criticism judges a work of art by a definable set of standards and moral criticism evaluates a work of art in relation to human life while mythic criticism explores the nature and significance of the archetypes and archetypal patterns in a work of art.

Above all, in this research paper we will discuss briefly some of the major modern critical theories which are quite significant for those who are interested in literature and they are structuralism, post structuralism, Russian

formalism, Reader response criticism, psychoanalytical criticism, deconstruction, feminism, new historicism, post colonialism, modernism and postmodernism and they will be illustrated respectively.

### **Literary Theory**

The terms —literary theory‖ and —critical theory‖ refer to essentially the same fields of study and now undergoing a transformation into "cultural theory" within the discipline of literary studies, can be understood as the set of concepts and intellectual assumptions on which rests the work of explaining or interpreting literary texts. A theory as a body of rules or principles used to appraise works of literature while literary theory on its own, tries to explain the assumptions and values upon which various forms of literary criticism rest. Literary theory refers to any principles derived from internal analysis of literary texts or from knowledge external to the text that can be applied in multiple interpretive situations. The fact that literary theory is an indispensable tool which literature uses to realize its goal of sensitizing and educating the audience.

It concludes by stating that the difficulty often encountered in a literary text is often resolved by subjecting it to a particular theoretical analysis. However, a persistent belief in "reference," the notion that words and images refer to an objective reality, has provided epistemological (that is, having to do with theories of knowledge) support for theories of literary representation throughout most of Western history. Until the nineteenth century, Art, in Shakespeare's phrase, held "a mirror up to nature" and faithfully recorded an objectively real world independent of the observer. Modern literary theory gradually emerges in Europe during the nineteenth century in one of the earliest developments of literary theory. The current state of theory is such that there are many overlapping areas of influence, and older schools of theory, though no longer enjoying their previous eminence, continue to exert an influence on the whole.

The once widely-held conviction (an implicit theory) that literature is a repository of all that is meaningful and ennobling in the human experience, a view championed by the Leavis School in Britain, may no longer be acknowledged by name but remains an essential justification for the current structure of American universities and liberal arts curricula. We all know that different people will experience the same event differently. It follows, then, that different people will approach the same literary text differently. One person may be offended by a character's actions, while another finds them comic. One reader is energized by a story's political implications, while another is awed by the same story's philosophical bent. Literary theories emerged as ways to explain different people's views and responses to literature rather than insisting that one view is the best or correct view, literary theory attempts to find value in all views that are based on a careful study of the literature.

### **Femanism**

‘Feminism’ is taken from the Latin word ‘Femina’ which means woman. Charles Fourier, a utopian socialist and French philosopher, is credited with having coined the word ‘féminisme’ in *Theorie des Quatre Mouvements et des Destinées Générales* (published in 1808). Feminist literature covers the canon of nonfiction, fiction, poetry, essays (and more) that relates to women's equality in all arenas including social, political, and domestic. Essentially, feminist literature covers a wide range of written expression, but what they all have in common is a focus on the female experience and how it changes, expands, and evolves.

The 'women's movement' of the 1960s was not, of course, the start of feminism. Rather, it was a renewal of an old tradition of thought and action already possessing its classic books which had diagnosed the problem of women's inequality in society, and (in some cases) proposed solutions. These books include Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), which discusses male writers like Milton, Pope, and Rousseau; Olive Schreiner's *Women and Labour* (1911); Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929), which vividly portrays the unequal treatment given to women seeking education and alternatives to marriage and motherhood; and Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949), which has an important section on the portrayal of women in the novels of D. H. Lawrence. Male contributions to this tradition of feminist writing include John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Woman* (1869) and *The Origin of the Family* (1884) by Friedrich Engels.

### **Waves of Feminism**

The first wave of feminism (1890s-1960s) took place in

the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in the United States, emerging out of an environment of urban industrialism and liberal and socialist politics. First wave feminism sought political and legal equality specifically, women's right to vote

The second wave of feminism (1960s-1980s) began in 1960s and was sparked by the publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystery* (1963). The second wave was also a result of the protests against the Miss America pageant in Atlantic City in 1968. In this phase, sexuality and reproductive rights of women were prominent issues

The third wave of feminism (1990s-2010) began in the late twentieth century and is instructed by postcolonial theory. The name 'Third Wave' came from Rebecca Walker's article —Becoming the Third Wave. This wave grew with the emergence of the —Riot grrrl, a subcultural movement that combines feminism, punk music and politics in Olympia, Washington, in the early 1990s. Third wave feminists embrace individualism in women and diversity and sought to redefine what it meant to be a feminist. Major focus was on women's different colour, ethnicity, nationality, religion, culture etc.

Fourth wave feminism (2010-present) refers to rejuvenation of interest in feminism that began in 2010s. The fourth wave strives for greater gender equality with a focus on gender norms and the marginalization of women in society. Its majorly focuses on sexual harassment, rapes, molestation etc., in the era of social media.

### Marxism

Marxism is a social, political, and economic philosophy named after Karl Marx. It examines the effect of capitalism on labor, productivity, and economic development and argues for a worker revolution to overturn capitalism in favor of communism. Marxism posits that the struggle between social classes—specifically between the bourgeoisie, or capitalists, and the proletariat, or workers—defines economic relations in a capitalist economy and will inevitably lead to revolutionary communism. Marxism is a method of socioeconomic analysis that uses a materialist interpretation of historical development, better known as historical materialism, to understand class relations and social conflict as well as a dialectical perspective to view social transformation.

Karl Marx (1818-1883), a German philosopher, and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895), a German sociologist (as he would now be called), were the joint founders of this school of thought. Marx was the son of a lawyer but spent most of his life in great poverty as a political exile from Germany living in Britain (he was expelled after the 1848 'year of revolutions').

Engels had left Germany in 1842 to work in Manchester for his father's textile firm. They met after Marx had read an article by Engels in a journal to which they both contributed. They themselves called their economic theories 'Communism' (rather than 'Marxism'), designating their belief in the state ownership of industry, transport, etc., rather than private ownership. Marx and Engels announced the advent of Communism in their jointly-written *Communist Manifesto* of 1848. The aim of Marxism is to bring about a classless society, based on the common ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange. Marxism is a materialist philosophy: that is, it tries to explain things without assuming the existence of a world or of forces beyond the natural world around us, and the society we live in. It looks for concrete, scientific, logical explanations of the world of observable fact. (Its opposite is idealist philosophy, which does believe in the existence of a spiritual 'world elsewhere' and would offer, for instance, religious explanations of life and conduct). Marxian economics focuses on the criticisms of capitalism, which Karl Marx wrote about in his book *Das Kapital*, published in 1867.

### Psychoanalytic Literary Theory

Psychoanalytic literary criticism (emerged in the 1960s), is literary criticism or literary theory which, in method, concept, or form, is influenced by the tradition of psychoanalysis begun by Sigmund Freud. Psychoanalysis itself is a form of therapy which aims to cure mental disorders 'by investigating the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements in the mind'. The classic method of doing this is to get the patient to talk freely, in such a way that the repressed fears and conflicts which are causing the problems are brought into the conscious mind and openly faced, rather than remaining 'buried' in the unconscious. This practice is based upon specific theories of how the mind, the instincts, and sexuality work.

This theory works on the psychology. It adopts the methods of reading employed by Freud and later theorists to interpret texts, like dreams, express the secret unconscious desires and anxieties of the author, that a literary work is a manifestation of the author's own neuroses. Psychoanalysis attempts to understand the workings and source of unconscious desires, needs, anxieties and behavior of writers, readers and specific cultural phenomena. They want to understand human behavioral patterns and cultural behavior patterns. Through the scope of a psychoanalytic lens, humans are described as having sexual and aggressive drives. Psychoanalytic theorists believe that human behavior is deterministic. It is governed by irrational forces, and the unconscious, as well as instinctual and biological drives.

Due to this deterministic nature, psychoanalytic theorists do not believe in free will. Practitioner: Sigmund Freud, Ernest Jones..

### **Russian Formalism**

Russian formalism was a school of literary criticism in Russia from the 1910s to the 1930s. It includes the work of a number of highly influential Russian and Soviet scholars (mentioned below) who revolutionised literary criticism between 1914 and the 1930s by establishing the specificity and autonomy of poetic language and literature. Russian formalism exerted a major influence on thinkers like Mikhail Bakhtin (not basically a part of Russian Formalism but is important) and on structuralism as a whole. The movement's members had a relevant influence on modern literary criticism, as it developed in the structuralist and post- structuralist periods. Under Stalin it became a pejorative term for elitist art.

The term "formalism" was first used by the adversaries of the movement, and as such it conveys a meaning explicitly rejected by the Formalists themselves. Russian Formalism is the name now given to a mode of criticism which emerged from three groups, MLC: The Moscow Linguistic Circle (1915) OPOJAZ group (1916) and Prague Linguistic Circle (PLC): to which Roman Jakobson also contributed.

Basically, Russian Formalists are concerned about the form of a literary work that what type of literary devices are used in the formation of a text. Although, Russian Formalism is often linked to American New Criticism because of their similar emphasis on close reading, the Russian Formalists regarded themselves as a developers of a science of criticism and are more interested in a discovery of systematic method for the analysis of poetic text. Russian formalism is distinctive for its emphasis on the functional role of literary devices and its original conception of literary history. Russian Formalists advocated a "scientific" method for studying poetic language.

### **New Criticism**

New Criticism was a formalist movement in literary theory that dominated American literary criticism in the middle decades of the 20th century. New criticism is an analytic literary criticism that is marked by concentration on the language, imagery, and emotional or intellectual tensions in literary works. It emphasized close reading, particularly of poetry, to discover how a work of literature functioned as a self-contained, self-referential aesthetic object. The movement derived its name from John Crowe Ransom's 1941 book *The New Criticism*.

The work of Cambridge scholar I. A. Richards, especially

his *Practical Criticism* and *The Meaning of Meaning*, which offered what was claimed to be an empirical scientific approach, were important to the development of New Critical methodology. Also very influential were the critical essays of T. S. Eliot, such as "Tradition and the Individual Talent" and "Hamlet and His Problems", in which Eliot developed his notions of the "theory of impersonality" and "objective correlative" respectively. Eliot's evaluative judgments, such as his condemnation of Milton and Dryden, his liking for the so-called metaphysical poets, and his insistence that poetry must be impersonal, greatly influenced the formation of the New Critical canon.

New Criticism developed as a reaction to the older philological and literary history schools of the US North, which focused on the history and meaning of individual words and their relation to foreign and ancient languages, comparative sources, and the biographical circumstances of the authors (New Historicism). The New Critics felt that this approach tended to distract from the text and meaning of a poem and entirely neglect its aesthetic qualities in favour of teaching about external factors. On the other hand, the New Critics disparaged the literary appreciation school, which limited itself to pointing out the "beauties" and morally elevating qualities of the text, as too subjective and emotional. Condemning this as a version of Romanticism, they aimed for a newer, systematic and objective method.

New Critics believed the structure and meaning of the text were intimately connected and should not be analyzed separately. In order to bring the focus of literary studies back to analysis of the texts, they aimed to exclude the reader's response, the author's intention, historical and cultural contexts, and moralistic bias from their analysis (Close Reading).

### **Structuralism**

Structuralism is an intellectual movement which began in France in the 1950s and is first seen in the work of the anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss and the literary critic Roland Barthes. It is difficult to boil structuralism down to a single 'bottom-line' proposition, but if forced to do so it would be that its essence is the belief that things cannot be understood in isolation - they have to be seen in the context of the larger structures they are part of (hence the term 'structuralism'). Structuralism was imported into Britain mainly in the 1970s and attained widespread influence, and even notoriety, throughout the 1980s. In sociology, anthropology, archaeology, history, philosophy, and linguistics, structuralism is a general theory of culture and methodology that implies that elements of human culture must be understood by way of their relationship to

a broader system. It works to uncover the structures that underlie all the things that humans do, think, perceive, and feel. As an intellectual movement, structuralism also became the heir to existentialism.

The structures in question here are those imposed by our way of perceiving the world and organising experience, rather than objective entities already existing in the external world. It follows from this that meaning or significance isn't a kind of core or essence inside things: rather, meaning is always outside. Meaning is always an attribute of things, in the literal sense that meanings are attributed to the things by the human mind, not contained within them. Emile Durkheim based his sociological concept on 'structure' and 'function', and from his work emerged the sociological approach of structural functionalism.

Apart from Durkheim's use of the term structure, the semiological concept of Ferdinand de Saussure became fundamental for structuralism. Saussure conceived language and society as a system of relations. His linguistic approach was also a refutation of evolutionary linguistics. Russian functional linguist Roman Jakobson was a pivotal figure in the adaptation of structural analysis to disciplines beyond linguistics, including philosophy, anthropology, and literary theory. Jakobson was a decisive influence on anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, by whose work the term structuralism first appeared in reference to social sciences. By the late 1960s, many of structuralism's basic tenets came under attack from a new wave of predominantly French intellectuals/philosophers such as historian Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser, and literary critic Roland Barthes.

Though elements of their work necessarily relate to structuralism and are informed by it, these theorists eventually came to be referred to as post-structuralists. Many proponents of structuralism, such as Lacan, continue to influence continental philosophy and many of the fundamental assumptions of some of structuralism's post-structuralist critics are a continuation of structuralist thinking. In literary theory, structuralism challenged the belief that a work of literature reflected a given reality; instead, a text was constituted of linguistic conventions and situated among other texts. An example of structuralism is describing an apple. An apple is crisp, sweet, juicy, round, and hard. Another example of structuralism is describing your experience at the ocean by saying it is windy, salty, and cold, but rejuvenating.

## II. CONCLUSION

To conclude my research paper, I reached to the point that

literary criticism and theory are the mandatory parts of literature. This research paper seeks to introduce students to some of the most important schools of literary theory and criticism in the 20th Century that have had significant impact on the study of literature. Their aim is used to explain, entertain and challenge the students of literature. Criticism is a term which has been applied since the seventeenth century to the description, justification, analysis, or judgment of works of art. They make literature invigorating, useful and animating from multiple points of view which help us to accomplish a superior comprehension of literature.

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# Deconstructing the Quest for Identity and Meaning in Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*

Dr. Girija Suri

Assistant Professor, Amity University, Gurugram, Haryana, India

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**Abstract**— Margaret Atwood's novel, *Surfacing* (1972) addresses the Woman's Question through the point of view of young woman who travels with her boyfriend and two married friends and sets on a journey into her troubled past. The paper analyzes the different ways in which the novel portrays the growing distance of the protagonist's self-identity from her sense of language, history, and culture. It delves into the role of language, reason, and logic in imbuing as well as taking away the protagonist's self-belief. It also probes Atwood's portrayal of nature, especially wilderness, as an essential aspect of one's psychological development and realization of desires. The paper argues that the novel is a quest for female identity and meaning in which language and nature play extremely significant roles.



**Keywords**— quest, identity, language, nature, civilize, society,

Rosemary Sullivan famously remarked that Margaret Atwood's writings are marked by a "cultural or civic consciousness", the fact that her work embodies both a strong public and private consciousness (qtd. in Mandel 53). This is true for much of Atwood's poetry and her novels which are known for their exploration of a range of pressing contemporary issues and subjects in a distinct manner making her large body of work at once unique and radical. Linda Hutcheon rightly suggests – "In all her writing, Atwood shows herself to be the tireless explorer and exposé of cultural clichés and stereotypes, in particular of those that affect women" (313). Atwood attempts to address the Woman Question in her novel *Surfacing* (1972), a story structured around the point of view of a young woman who travels with her boyfriend, Joe, and two married friends David and Anna, to a remote island on a lake in Northern Quebec, where she spent much of her childhood in search of her missing father. Accompanied by her lover and another young couple, she becomes caught up in her past and in questioning her future. First published in 1972, the novel has been called a companion novel to Atwood's collection of poems *Power Politics* which was written the previous year. It was adapted into a movie in 1981.

What is presented in Atwood's *Surfacing* is the analogous nature of patriarchy and geographical colonization and how this combined colonial experience has left the victim with the feeling of displacement and disconnectedness from her language, history, and culture. This has, in turn, led to a fractured sense of self and a desperate need to regain and reclaim identity. The story is that of the literal journey to the site of her past that initiates the metaphorical one into her subconscious, which in turn forces her to confront certain ghosts and to re-examine what she has become convinced of believing as the truth, the lies that she herself and society have impressed upon her, including notions such as there never having been any important women artists. Slowly, she becomes awakened to the fictionality of history and memory and thus begins her re-examination of her past, "I must be more careful of my memories, I have to be sure they're my own and not the memories of other people telling me what I felt, how I acted, what I said". She travels to a place beyond, or before, that is reminiscent of a pre-colonial Canada – a place of wilderness, a place of nature, a literal place her father chose so that – "... he could recreate, not the settled farm life of his own father but that of the earliest ones who arrived when there was



nothing but forest and no ideologies but the ones they brought with them". On the other hand, it is a metaphorical place from where she can retrace her history's steps and this time from a renewed and cleansed perspective. She surfaces from her past and her acceptance and acknowledgement of it is presented as vital in her process of regeneration.

*Surfacing* is divided into three parts – the present, the past, and again the present. The journey to Quebec brings back to her the horrifying memories of her abortion—an experience which sublimates within itself the disturbing memories of her marriage as well. Atwood radically brings to the surface the dark side of childbirth where the female subject does not experience the conventional maternal bonds with her unborn baby but rather goes through a phase of disgust and burden of guilt. The societal expectations from a mother are subverted when the protagonist categorically states that it was no use trying to justify to the world the "unpardonable sin" that she had committed in aborting the child. She feels that she is like – "... incubator... after it was born I was no more use (34)"

The narrator's friend Anna, too, is plagued by her moody husband David who orders her to strip off her clothes for his movie 'Random Samples', a compilation of shots "of things they come across". Anna, humiliated by the request, however complies. Even though she confesses to the narrator about being subject to nightly rapes by David, she remains passive. In a similar fashion, Joe, the narrator's boyfriend is infuriated when the latter rejects his proposal. Anna's confession prompts the narrator to question her own relationship with Joe. She acknowledges – "I'm trying to decide whether or not I love him ... I sum him up, dividing him into categories ... I'm fond of him, I'd rather have him around than not; though it would be nice if he meant something more to me. The fact that he doesn't makes me sad; no one has since my husband. A divorce is like an amputation, you survive but there's less of you". In the earlier part of the novel, therefore, it seems as if women are mere conformists to men's patriarchal attitudes who consider women as beings desiring only – "babies and sewing". Women, such as the narrator experience a life of lack, a condition which she describes as – "emptied, amputated". She states, "A section of my own life, sliced off from me like a Siamese twin, my own flesh cancelled."

Women's subjugation to the ruthless power of the male authority is similar to the domination exercised by man over nature. The narrator constantly identifies herself with the damaged landscape of Quebec. The narrator establishes an emphatic relationship between the fragmented self of the protagonist and the damaged landscape of the island. The narrator states that the – "...

death of the heron was causeless, undiluted." Beavers are killed for reasons not very different from those which propel men to abuse women, which is "To prove they could do it, they had the power to kill..."; "The innocents get slaughtered because they exist, I thought, there is nothing inside the happy killers to restrain them, no conscience or piety". Jaidev sums up the argument – "*Surfacing* addresses itself to such fundamental human issues as cruelty and violence, both of which are associated with power... [the heroine's] tragedy and that of the landscape mirror each other, reflect each other" (113). For the heroine, the term 'Americans' has become a metaphor for the power-hungry people who – "... spread themselves like a virus, they get into the brain and take over the cells and the cells and the cells change from inside and the ones that have the disease can't tell the difference".

The quest for self-identity takes shape in the second section of the novel with the narrator descending into water and discovering her father's dead body. The narrator encounters the ghost of her aborted child and starts to lose her sanity. The theme of inversion that is characteristic of Atwood's works such as "This is a Photograph of Me" is central to *Surfacing* as well. According to Eli Mandel, facing up ghosts is a requirement of the reconstruction of a devastated world. It represents sexual fears, repressed contexts of imagination and social rigidity. In her quest to find her own identity, Atwood's heroine before realizing a fully liberated state even contemplates death as an escape.

The narrator submits to paranoia – "Everything I can't break... I throw on the floor... I take off my clothes... I dip my head beneath the water... I leave my dung, dropping on the ground... I scramble on hands and knees... I could be anything, a tree, a deer, a skeleton, a rock". In her submission to paranoia and madness, the narrator abandons all the external trappings of a civilized world which constricts and oppresses her. Malashri Lal while arguing for the novel as an ecofeminist one makes a valid observation – "With...the connotations of wilderness, non-civilised state, primitivism, unformed condition, woman in man-made society was seen to require the mediation of men to "civilise" her away from nature and take her closer to the realm of God or morality and social ethics as designed by patriarchy" (309-10). It is precisely this attempt of the patriarchal order to "civilize" the untamed, female subject that Atwood's unnamed protagonist of *Surfacing* subverts in her quest for identity and meaning. Where the order of man and woman in the novel hardly comes across as complementary but rather as the victimizer and the victimized respectively, the narrator decides to renounce her passive role as the one who is

brutalized and traumatized. She refuses to play second fiddle to men. She states that "I have to recant, give up the old belief that I am powerless and because of it nothing I can do will ever hurt anyone. A lie which was always disastrous than the truth would have been. The word games, the winning and losing games are finished : at the moment these are no others but they will have to be invented, withdrawing is no longer possible and the other is death." She decides to stay on the island alone and this, according to Bijay Kumar Das – "...helps her to overcome passivity and casts her in a new role of self-assertion with individual identity" (68).

The narrator begins to destroy language – one of the primary structures of society that oppresses the marginalized. Elaine Showalter in her remarkable essay "Feminist Criticism in Wilderness" comments– "The problem is not that language is insufficient to express women's consciousness but that women have been denied the full resources of language and have been forced into silence... Women's literature is still haunted by the ghosts of repressed language, and until we have exorcised these ghosts, it ought not to be in language that we base our theory of difference" (193). Atwood too has been addressing this concern in her various works such as her poem "Spelling" from *True Stories* (1981). The speaker in "Spelling" states as if an incantation – "A word after a word/ after a word is power./ At the point where language falls away.../ the word/ splits & doubles & speaks/ the truth & the body/ itself becomes a mouth." "The prison-house of language" which embeds women in a patriarchal structure, however is radically used by Atwood and her protagonists as a potent force to subvert its potential to create hierarchies and oppress. According to Meera T. Clark – "... while Atwood stresses the importance of visionary language in *Surfacing*, she is primarily concerned with the notion that language possesses an autonomy which far from reflecting an objective, external reality, actually creates a reality which is far more powerful, and which is inextricably linked to our destruction and creative survival" (3).

The narrator has been split in the novel by forces of rationalism and logic represented by her father as well as the lover's forceful insistence on her abortion. She had been denying her responsibility for the abortion by justifying it – "The bottle had been logical, pure logic, remnant of the trapped and decaying animals, secreted by my head, enclosure, something to keep the death away from me." However, the narrator accepts her responsibility for the power to kill – "Whatever it is, part of myself or a separate creature, I killed it. It wasn't a child, but it could have been one, I didn't allow it."

The structure of language and logic seem to be fabrications that maintain the facade of life and sanity under which crouch the facts of mortality, death and madness. The narrator divests herself of all these artificialities and burns her artwork – "The pages burn in my hands; I add them one by one so that the fire will not be smothered, then the paint tubes and brushes, this is no longer my future. There must be some way of cancelling the Samsonite case, it can't be burned. I draw the big knife across it, X-ing it out." She further states – "I know I must stop being in the mirror. I look for the last time at my distorted glass face... Not to see myself, but to see. I reverse the mirror so it's toward the wall, it no longer traps me." She tears apart the cabin and burns the symbol of her fake wifehood – her wedding ring and thus divests herself of all doubles. Elizabeth K. Baer remarks – "She attempts to get to the source – the source of her feelings, her instincts, her humanity" (30). The irrationality extends to her language – "The forest leaps upward, enormous, the way it was before they cut it...". In one of the languages there are no nouns, only verbs held for a moment. She warns – "I am absurd... there are no longer any rational points of view". She therefore breaks the rules of grammar. To get in touch with her body again, she virtually becomes like an animal. She becomes not a living thing but "it" and her language accordingly breaks down man-made limitations – "I am not an animal or a tree, I am the thing in which the trees and animals move and grow, I am a place."

One of the most important and haunting images of the novel is that of the narrator's mother standing in front of the cabin with her hand stretched out wearing gray leather jacket. Her mother is feeding the jays, one perched on her wrist and another on her shoulder. This image is repeatedly used in the novel and represents to the narrator a healthy communion of her mother with nature. Ellen Moers, has commented upon the role of bird imagery in women's literature and argues that the "central sense" of such imagery in women's literature "is not flying as a way for a woman to become a man, but as a way for the imprisoned girl-child to become a free adult" (qtd. in Baer 32). After having railed against language and after having destroyed its logic and rules, she arrives at the possibility of a new language. The female quest involves a search for the mother – the embodiment of "irrationalism" as opposed to her father's rationalism, the universal mother, the creative principle. The reunion of mother and child immortalized in the Demeter and Persephone myth is the ultimate goal.

Speaking about her vision of her parents, she says – "They were here though, I trust that. I saw them and they spoke to me, in the other language". It is remarkable that

this new language is not bound by reason and is no longer enervated by logic. As she sees her mother, she also sees her father who now represents not a terrifying figure but a “protecting spirit” from whom she gets a map to a place where every person confronts his truth. From her mother, she receives knowledge of the heart. Instead of seeing herself as a “pastiche” of words used and misused by others, ‘she’ now assumes power and responsibility for evil as well as good, and above all, for words. She must now acknowledge her capacity for creation, for the fertility of her womb, as well as for the fertility of her imagination. She now affirms life- her life as well as of that inside her. According to Elizabeth K. Baer, “... she has seen the ghosts of her parents and has accepted a gift, a heritage from each one of them” (33).

In resembling more and more with an animals, she attempts to free herself as well as her child from the restricting structures of the society that impinge on her creativity and natural aspects of her being. Her abortion had divided her self. She therefore makes love to Joe so that she can give birth to the “goldfish” nurturing in her womb. She does not know whether the child in her womb is a male or a female but has made up her mind to assert herself by allowing the fetus to grow. She says – “I cannot know yet; it’s too early. But I assume it: if I die it dies; I starve it starves with me. It might be the first true human, it must be born, allowed.” According to Bijay Kumar Das, “...with the protagonist’s determination to give birth to the child, the novelist has hinted that germination will take place and the implication is that the women will be protected provided they defend themselves against the onslaught of men over them” (71).

Her growing awareness of the connection between herself and animals (the fish, the heron) throughout the novel signifies her ability to get in touch with that side of herself and become whole again. Her submerged, true, natural self emerges in full capacity once she gets rid of all the external fabrications of language, the troubles of traumatic wifehood and abortion and the expectations of society to be “civilized”, tame and “proper”. Atwood radically emphasizes that how significant it is for human beings to stay in contact with the animal side of their nature. This is what the narrator had lost; the split between nature and culture, the irrational and rational, intuition and logic, women and men, emotion and intellect. The feminist inversion, as Baers expresses is to claim the value of what has previously been seen as the negative side of all those dichotomies just listed, and further, to assert that full humanity must be both (33). Atwood’s protagonist refuses to be pinned down as the perfect woman, actively reconstructing her life. One can sum up the political feminist agenda of Margaret Atwood’s

reconstruction of the fragmented, divided, downcast, broken and victimised female subject lies in what Goldblatt suggests – “... proving to her and to us that we all possess the talent and the strength to revitalise our lives and reject’s society’s well- trodden paths that suppress the human spirit. She has shown us that we can be vicariously empowered by our surrogate, who not only smiles but winks back at us, daring us to reclaim our own female identities”.

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# Evaluation of Class-10 English Textbooks: Case Study Based on NCF 2023

Sattayasri Gururaghavendran<sup>1</sup>, Sai Archana M<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>MA Student, Department of English, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Vijayanagar Colony, Anantapur-Bangalore Road, Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh, India  
[sattayasri2000@gmail.com](mailto:sattayasri2000@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Teaching Assistant, Department of English, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Vijayanagar Colony, Anantapur-Bangalore Road, Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh, India  
[saiarchanam@sssihl.edu.in](mailto:saiarchanam@sssihl.edu.in)

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**Abstract**— *Textbook evaluation, an interesting area in the field of applied linguistics, has a wide scope for research. The purpose of this research paper is to state the aims and objectives stated in NCF 2023(National Curriculum Framework) concerning the English language course textbook, to list out the current challenges faced in schools as stated in NCF 2023, to explain how a textbook can be evaluated, and to evaluate textbooks based on the principles of NCF 2023. Both qualitative and quantitative studies have been conducted to assess whether the learning outcomes and goals are achieved or not. For this purpose, I have chosen Class-10 English textbooks across two different boards, one from the CBSE board (The B.V.B school) and the other from the Tamil Nadu State Board (Bharathi Vidhya Bhavan Matriculation Higher Secondary school). Evaluation has been done by collecting information from teachers and students of both the schools in the during-use and post-use stages to get feedback on how well the books work in practice, and how effectively the aims are achieved.*



**Keywords**— *Textbook evaluation, NCF 2023, School Education, Class Ten Textbook*

## I. INTRODUCTION

### What is Textbook Evaluation?

The Oxford Dictionary defines a ‘textbook’ as “a book used as a standard work for the study of a particular subject” (The Oxford English Dictionary). It is important to determine how and by whom they will be produced, how and by whom their contents will be selected, how and to whom they will be distributed, and how teachers and students will make use of them (Mohammadi and Abdi, 2014).

‘Evaluation’ in education is the process of finding out whether, or to what extent the materials used achieved the aims and objectives of a learning programme. (Rea-Dickens & Germaine, 1992). It is a useful device for innovations and modifications (Laabidi and Nfissi, 2016).

Thus, ‘textbook evaluation’ is a process by which a textbook is assessed or evaluated based on the aims and

objectives of its respective learning program, to authenticate its appropriateness.

### The purpose of the evaluation

According to Jack C. Richards, evaluation is done (i) to provide feedback on how well the book works in practice and how effectively it achieves its aims, (ii) to document effective ways of using the textbook and assist other teachers using it, (iii) to keep a record of adaptations that were made to the book. (RAS, 2014)

In this paper, I aim to evaluate Class-10 English textbooks of two different boards, CBSE and Tamil Nadu State Board to provide feedback on how well the books work in practice and how effectively they achieve their aims.



### What is NCF 2023?

The National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF) addresses education for school children across all Indian school systems (NCERT, n.d.). It focuses on the developmental perspectives, adopting different teaching methods and curriculum changes, and the latest one, with a few amendments aligning with the NEP-2020's vision, was released in 2023. (Admin, 2023)

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Education plays a pivotal role in shaping the minds of individuals, and the choice of educational materials is crucial in achieving the desired learning outcomes. This literature review explores various sources that shed light on the evaluation of educational materials, including textbooks and curriculum frameworks.

The National Steering Committee for National Curriculum Frameworks (2023) has developed the National Curriculum Framework for School Education, outlining the aims, objectives, and current challenges in education. This framework serves as a guiding document for educators and policymakers to ensure a comprehensive and effective educational experience. The document, available at [NCFSE-2023-August\_2023.pdf] ([https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/NCFSE-2023-August\\_2023.pdf](https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/NCFSE-2023-August_2023.pdf)), provides valuable insights into the goals of the educational system and the challenges it faces.

Professor Jack C. Richards, a renowned educator, offers insights into the process of evaluating textbooks. In his resource, "Evaluating a Textbook," available at [Professor Jack C. Richards] (<https://www.professorjackrichards.com/evaluating-text-book/>), he discusses methodologies and criteria for assessing the effectiveness of educational materials. This resource is a valuable guide for educators seeking to enhance the quality of their instructional materials.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and the Government of Tamil Nadu provide primary texts for evaluation. "First Flight, Class 10 English Book" by NCERT (2022) and "STANDARD TEN ENGLISH" by the Department of School Education, Tamil Nadu (2022), are essential resources for educators to assess and choose appropriate materials for their classrooms.

Textbook evaluation is a multifaceted process, as demonstrated by studies such as "Textbook Evaluation: A Case Study" by M. Mohammadi & H. Abdi (2014). This case study, published in *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, delves into the practical aspects of evaluating a textbook, providing a real-world perspective on the challenges and successes of the process.

Hicham Laabidi and Abdelhamid Nfissi contribute to the literature with their work on "Fundamental Criteria for Effective Textbook Evaluation" (2016). This research employs quantitative analysis methods, offering a structured approach to textbook evaluation. Additionally, Malika Das's study (2000) on "Women Entrepreneurs from India" utilizes survey analysis to understand the motivations and challenges faced by female entrepreneurs, which is used for the quantitative analysis.

Aniko Hatoss (2004) presents a model for evaluating textbooks, emphasizing the importance of a structured approach. The resource provides educators with a conceptual framework for textbook evaluation, focusing on key aspects that contribute to effective learning experiences.

The administrative perspective is crucial, as highlighted by the resource "Introduction to National Curriculum Framework" provided by Admin (2023). This source, available at [Setu] (<https://setu.etutor.co/blog/national-curriculum-framework-ncf-2023/>), introduces educators to the key principles and objectives of the National Curriculum Framework, emphasizing the significance of administrative support in implementing effective educational practices.

The Oxford English Dictionary, a reputable linguistic resource, offers insights into the meaning of a textbook. Exploring the definition of a textbook is crucial in understanding the role it plays in education. The quick search results can be found at [Oxford English Dictionary] (<https://www.oed.com/search/dictionary/?scope=Entries&q=textbook>).

Munir, Suzanne, and Yulnetri (2021) embarked on a crucial endeavor by developing criteria for evaluating English textbooks in Indonesian senior high schools. While the specifics of their framework are not provided, existing literature on textbook evaluation frameworks can offer insights. Scholars such as Richards and Rodgers (2001) emphasize the importance of considering factors such as content, organization, language, and design when evaluating language teaching materials.

In conclusion, this literature review highlights the diverse approaches to evaluating educational materials, ranging from national frameworks and textbooks to case studies, quantitative analyses, and conceptual models. The combination of administrative guidance, academic research, and linguistic perspectives provides a comprehensive understanding of the intricate process of selecting and assessing educational resources. Educators can leverage these insights to make informed decisions for enhancing the quality of education in their classrooms.



### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Both Qualitative studies and Quantitative studies have been conducted to evaluate the textbooks based on the principles of NCF 2023.

#### 3.1. Qualitative study

The National Curriculum Framework 2023 for school education states that language learning in schools must specifically aim to achieve the following:

1. **Achieving Literacy:** The students, after gaining knowledge of grammatical structures and vocabulary of a language, should be able to apply these skills to understand daily life situations. Achieving literacy means all students demonstrating fluency in reading, writing, and comprehending a language.
2. **Developing effective communication skills and other functional abilities:** The students should be able to think critically, identify and analyze real-world problems, make rational arguments, and arrive at solutions, with the help of the language skills that they learn. They should be capable of thinking and communicating effectively in various situations and build an understanding of the world.
3. **Building literary and creative capacities:** The students should be capable of appreciating the aesthetic aspects of language and exploring it to be creative and imaginative while speaking and writing.
4. **Building multilingual capacities:** The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 guides language development in schools to focus on teaching many languages to develop the multilingual capacities of the students.
5. **Appreciation of linguistic diversity:** India is a country of rich culture, having a wide range of languages. The students can be given samples of various forms of literature across the country to teach them to understand and appreciate the diversity in linguistic cultures.

The NCF 2023 also brings out a few challenges that language learning in schools is currently facing:

1. **Low levels of literacy:** India is in a crisis where many students have not attained the foundational literacy skills, that is the ability to read and comprehend a basic text.
2. **Insufficient time allocated to language learning:** In many schools, the time allotted for language learning is inadequate.

3. **Low-quality learning materials:** A lot of learning materials are of low quality. Good quality materials need a careful selection of relevant content that is age-appropriate and interesting for students to learn from.
4. **Inadequate levels of teacher preparation:** The NEP acknowledges that there has been a severe scarcity of skilled language teachers in India. For a meaningful and enjoyable student experience, teachers with appropriate training and practice in the subject are required.
5. **Ineffective pedagogic strategies:** The teaching practices used should be based on a sound understanding of how students learn languages across various age groups.
6. **Content-completion-focused rather than competency-focused teaching:** Language classrooms have become a place for mechanically going through textbook activities. Focus should be more on achievement of competency and outcomes in students for effective language teaching, rather than focusing on finishing the content given in the textbook.
7. **Memory-based assessment:** Most of the assessments focus on memory of the content given in the textbook, rather than assessing the language abilities. Assessment should be based on language proficiency, communication and functional ability, and appreciation of literature. (National Steering Committee for National Curriculum Frameworks, 2023, pg.135,137)

#### How to evaluate a textbook?

According to Jack C. Richards, textbook evaluation can be divided into three phases: Pre-use, during use, and post-use. In every phase, analysis and interpretation are done. In the pre-use stage, evaluation or interpretation involves subjective judgments, which often differ from person to person. Thus, group evaluations are often useful. Generally, textbook evaluation addresses the following issues:

- i. Goals
- ii. Syllabus
- iii. Theoretical framework
- iv. Methodology
- v. Language content
- vi. Other content
- vii. Organization
- viii. Teacher appeal
- ix. Student appeal

- x. Ancillaries (supporting materials)
- xi. Price

In the during-use and the post-use stages, evaluation is done by collecting information from both teachers and students, which serves the following purposes:

- i. To provide feedback on how well the book works in practice and how effectively it achieves its aims.
- ii. To document effective ways of using the textbook and assist other teachers in using it.
- iii. To keep a record of adaptations that were made to the book.

There are various approaches to monitor the use of a book:

- i. Classroom observation
- ii. Record of use
- iii. Feedback sessions
- iv. Written reports
- v. Teachers' reviews
- vi. Students' reviews

Standards of evaluating educational materials:

Materials that are used in class should:

- Provide a positive experience.
- Encourage learners' aspirations.
- Promote learning.
- Reflect the diversity of the rich culture (Materials Selection, Adaptation, Development, and Evaluation, 2015)

For the qualitative study, two textbooks were selected for evaluation – Class X CBSE English textbook and Class X Tamil Nadu State Board English textbook. With the help of the standards for evaluation, as stated by the Department of Abet and Youth Development, and the parameters from NCF 2023, an evaluation of these textbooks was conducted.

- Both CBSE and the State Board of TN provide good quality materials for the English course.
- The textbooks are developed concerning the NCF principles.
- Both textbooks comply with the standards of material evaluation.

As a result of the evaluation, we find that the following standards are met by both the textbooks:

1. As the standard for evaluation states, the material should provide a positive experience. This standard aligns with all the five aims stated in NCF 2023 for language learning.

2. The second standard of Encouraging learners' aspirations aligns with the NCF principle of developing effective communication skills and other functional abilities.
3. The third standard, which is to promote learning, aligns with the NCF principles of achieving literacy and building literary and creative capacities.
4. The last standard is to reflect the diversity of the rich culture. This aligns with the NCF principle of appreciation of linguistic diversity.

Hence, it is proved that they are developed based on the National Curriculum Framework. It has also been observed that the CBSE textbook is comparatively better than the Tamil Nadu State Board textbook. The textbooks suggest activities be conducted before teaching while teaching, and after teaching a chapter. These classroom activities improve their communication skills and boost their confidence. The textbooks focus on how to make language learning easier and more interesting for students. They provide a set of new vocabulary along with their semantic explanations for every chapter. There are exercises with questions that enable the students to think critically and understand and comprehend the text in a better way. Thus, the textbooks focus on the overall development of the students.

### 3.3. Quantitative study:

As a part of the quantitative study, I conducted a survey for the students of class X and the English teachers, of The B.V.B. School (CBSE) and Bharathi Vidhya Bhavan (TN State Board). The objective of the survey is to identify if the prescribed textbook material satisfies the learning needs of the students based on NCF 2023. I prepared separate questionnaires for the students and the teachers, based on "the aims of language learning" and "the challenges faced in language learning", respectively, as stated in NCF 2023. Each questionnaire consists of 10 opinion-based questions and 2 open-ended questions. (The Harvard Race and Genetics publication, 2011)

To conduct the survey, I sent emails to the management of both schools, seeking permission to allow the respective students and teachers to attempt my questionnaire. (Appendix - 1)

Permission was granted and the survey was conducted. I received 292 student responses and 8 teacher responses. Further, I sent another mail acknowledging and appreciating their efforts, and to convey my thanks to all those who were a part of this process. (Appendix – 2)

The letters of appreciation are part of Appendix – 3.

The responses were recorded and the results were consolidated and analyzed as follows:

Questions asked for the students:

1. Is learning English limited to the chapters in the textbook or does it provide you a guidance for your life? **Positive response**
2. In English, you are taught grammatical structures(subject-verb-object), literary devices (simile, metaphor, irony, personification), and vocabulary. How often do you apply these skills in your daily conversations? **Positive response**
3. Do the course materials (main textbook and the supplementary reader) help you demonstrate fluent reading, writing, and comprehending? **Positive response**
4. Does the textbook facilitate you in acquiring the knowledge of a more comprehensive range of words in various contexts? (E.g.: synonyms, antonyms, homophones, root words, prefixes, and suffixes) **Positive response**
5. Does the English course, and the content in its textbook enable you to think critically, identify real-life problems, analyze them, and work out necessary solutions? **Positive response**
6. How often do you use your English language skills to think and communicate effectively in various situations? **Negative response**
7. Does the textbook limit your interpreting and comprehending skills, or help you to develop these skills further? (E.g., By discussing different meanings of a poetic verse in a class) **Positive response**
8. Does the textbook offer student-engaging activities that allow you to explore your creative and imaginative abilities in your spoken and written expressions? (E.g., composing poems, enacting in dramas, participating in debates or speeches) **Positive response**
9. Does reading the English language textbook create an interest in you to further read novels and short stories of other genres such as fiction and non-fiction? **Positive response**
10. How often do you link the ideas learned from the textbook with the books that you borrow from the library? **Negative response**
11. Does the textbook offer you relevant content and is interesting for you to learn from? **Positive response**
12. Do you have any suggestions that can help to improve the content of the materials (textbook and supplementary reader) provided to you? **Positive response**

(Munir, S., Suzanne, N., & Yulnetri., 2021)

**Consolidated results of the students' survey:**

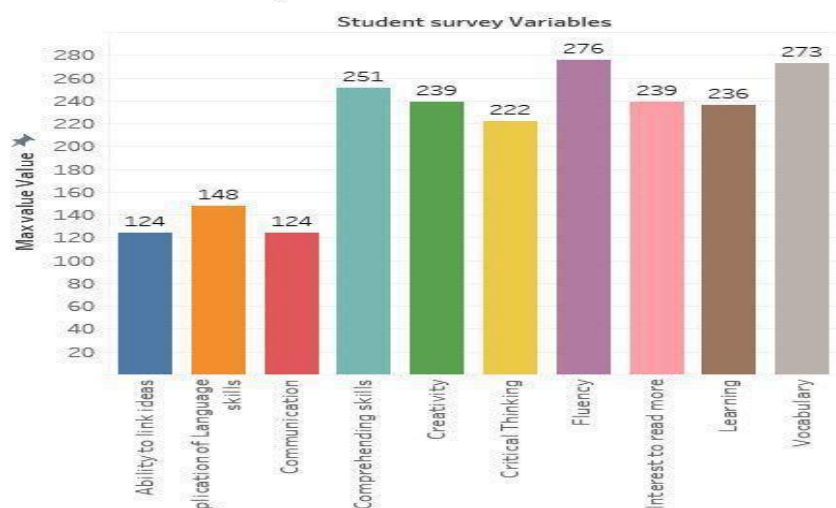
S.No.	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<b>1</b>	<b>Learning</b>		
	Limited to textbook	56	19.18%
	Provides guidance for life	236	80.82%
<b>2</b>	<b>Application of Language Skills</b>		
	Always	45	15.41%
	Often	73	25.00%
	Sometimes	148	50.68%
	Rarely	20	6.85%
	Never	6	2.05%
<b>3</b>	<b>Fluency</b>		
	Yes	276	94.52%
	No	16	5.48%
<b>4</b>	<b>Vocabulary</b>		
	Yes	273	93.49%
	No	19	6.51%
<b>5</b>	<b>Critical Thinking</b>		
	Yes	222	76.03%
	No	70	23.97%
<b>6</b>	<b>Communication</b>		
	Always	53	18.15%
	Often	101	34.59%
	Sometimes	124	42.47%
	Rarely	11	3.77%
	Never	3	1.03%
<b>7</b>	<b>Comprehending skills</b>		
	Limits	41	14.04%
	Helps develop	251	85.96%
<b>8</b>	<b>Creativity</b>		
	Yes	239	81.85%
	No	53	18.15%
<b>9</b>	<b>Interest to read more</b>		
	Yes	239	81.85%
	No	53	18.15%
<b>10</b>	<b>Ability to link ideas</b>		
	Always	36	12.33%

	Often	60	20.55%
	Sometimes	124	42.47%
	Rarely	55	18.84%
	Never	17	5.82%

Total No. of responses
292

(Das, 2000)

Students Survey Results



### Observations:

From the received responses, we can find that the materials are more student-centric and have indeed improved their overall language learning skills. It is great to know that for about 80.82% of the students, learning English provides a guidance for their lives. It is also interesting to note that more than 90% of the students have been able to develop their vocabulary and fluency, with the help of the textbook provided. Out of all the achievements from the language learning, Vocabulary and Fluency are the highest, which means the students develop these skills faster and better than the other skills. There seems to be a good scope in the improvement of the students' critical thinking, comprehending skills and creativity. Though it is saddening to know that less than 50% of the students are able to link the ideas from the textbook to their everyday situation, it is quite satisfactory to know that more than 50% of the students are able to apply the language skills in their day-to-day activities. There is certainly some good progress in the students if the textbook can create interest in them to read more.

Questions asked for the teachers:

1. Does the course textbook provide the students with foundational skills in literacy such as the ability to read and comprehend? **Positive response**
2. Is language teaching driven by the achievement of competencies and outcomes in the students rather

than a focus on merely finishing the content given in the textbook? **Positive response**

3. The time allotted for teaching English is sufficient enough to cover the entire course syllabus and the content of the textbook. **Positive response**
4. How would you rate the quality of the textbook that the course offers? (\_\_\_/10)
5. Does the textbook offer relevant content (words, context, illustrations, layout) that is age-appropriate and interesting for the students to learn from? **Positive response**
6. Is the language used in the textbook easily comprehensible for the student's level of understanding? **Positive response**
7. Do you think that the given textbook is sufficient for the students to develop their reading and writing skills? **Positive response**
8. Does the textbook provide any means to assess the student's language proficiency, communication, and ability to appreciate literature? **Positive response**
9. Is the textbook instrumental in provoking and encouraging the students to read more literature? **Positive response**
10. Does the given textbook satisfy all the pedagogical needs of the teachers? **Positive response**

11. Suggestions, if any, to improve the Materials provided by the Board to further facilitate teaching.

**Positive response**

12. What other materials, apart from the given texts, do you recommend for easier and effective teaching?

**Positive response**

#### Consolidated results of the teachers' survey:

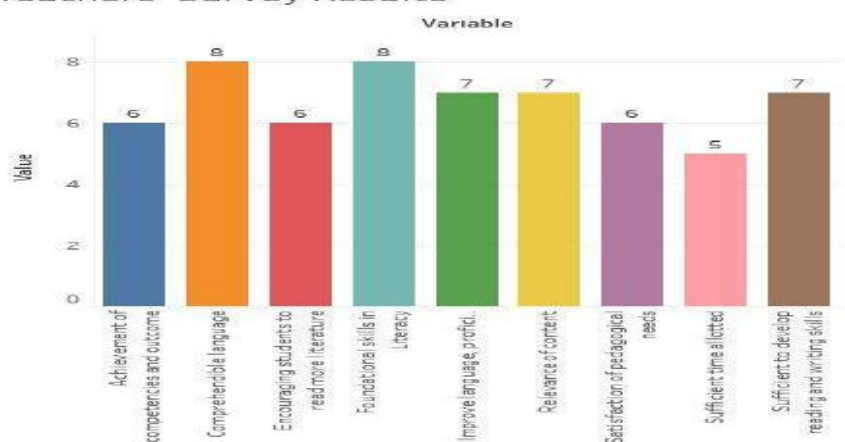
S.No.	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<b>1</b>	<b>Foundational Skills in Literature</b>		
	Yes	8	100.00%
	No	0	0.00%
<b>2</b>	<b>Driver of Language Teaching</b>		
	The achievement of competencies and outcomes in the students	6	75.00%
	Finishing the content given in the textbook	2	25.00%
<b>3</b>	<b>Sufficiency of Time</b>		
	Strongly disagree	0	0.00%
	Disagree	0	0.00%
	Neutral	2	25.00%
	Agree	5	62.50%
	Strongly agree	1	12.50%
<b>4</b>	<b>Rating</b>		
<b>5</b>	<b>Relevance of content</b>		
	Yes	7	87.50%

	No	1	12.50%
<b>6</b>	<b>Language easily comprehensible</b>		
	Yes	8	100.00%
	No	0	0.00%
<b>7</b>	<b>Sufficient to develop reading and writing skills</b>		
	Yes	7	87.50%
	No	1	12.50%
<b>8</b>	<b>Tool to assess the students' language, proficiency, communication, and ability to appreciate literature</b>		
	Yes	7	87.50%
	No	1	12.50%
<b>9</b>	<b>Instrumental in encouraging students to read more literature</b>		
	Yes	6	75.00%
	No	2	25.00%
<b>10</b>	<b>Satisfaction of pedagogical needs</b>		
	Yes	6	75.00%
	No	2	25.00%

#### Total No. of responses

8

Teachers' Survey Results





### Observations:

There is a 100% positive response from the teachers saying that the textbook provides foundational skills such as reading and comprehending, to the students. Also, the language used in the textbooks is easily comprehensible by the students. They assert that the quality of the textbooks is good, the content is relevant for the student's age, and makes the study of language more interesting. Most of them feel that the textbook is sufficient to develop the reading and writing skills of the students and improve their language proficiency, communication, and ability to appreciate literature. Many of them have a similar opinion that the textbook satisfies all the pedagogical needs of the teachers, and the time allotted for covering the entire content of the textbook is sufficient enough for them.

### IV. CONCLUSION

This research has been conducted to evaluate school textbooks to assess if they comply with the policies and principles as stated in NCF 2023 and to find out if they satisfy the learning needs of the students. The main objective of this paper is to state the aims and objectives, and current challenges faced by schools (as stated in NCF 2023) pertaining to English language courses, to evaluate the textbooks based on the NCF principles mentioned above.

For this purpose, a brief description of what textbook evaluation is, and the purpose of evaluation is discussed along with a short introduction to NCF 2023. Further, evaluation has been conducted for Class X English textbooks of both CBSE and Tamil Nadu State Board with the help of both qualitative and quantitative studies. Observations were made and the results have been derived. Based on the above results, we can conclude that the materials developed for Class X CBSE and TN State boards satisfy most of the NCF aims and objectives and also take care of the challenges faced in language learning. They focus on the overall development of the student's language learning. The fact that the NCF aims are fulfilled, proves that the textbooks are of good quality.

### V. SUGGESTIONS

In my opinion, the number of hours given for language learning can be increased to facilitate better teacher-student interaction and to improve of creative imagination of students. The materials can include more classic texts by famous authors. The font size can be increased and the print can be brighter.

### LIMITATIONS

Comparative study of the CBSE and the State Board texts could not be done in the quantitative method.

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# Feminist Resistance in Tehmina Durrani's "My Feudal Lord"

Somya Joshi

Assistant Teacher, Department of English, City Montessori School, Gomti Nagar Extension, Lucknow, India

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**Abstract**— The paper aims to highlight the quiet, yet persistent, feminist resistance that can bloom even within the confines of a patriarchal, feudal society. Narrating her life as the wife of a powerful Pakistani feudal lord Mustafa Khar, Durrani lays bare the systemic oppression faced by women in this milieu: physical and emotional abuse, social ostracization, and a denial of basic rights. She speaks out against the sexual exploitation that is rampant within the confines of marriage, wherein women are often treated as only objects of pleasure and are considered to be suitable for childbearing purposes. However, resistance simmers beneath the surface. Durrani's defiance manifests in subtle acts of rebellion – intellectual pursuits, questioning societal norms, and even voicing her discontent to her husband. This defiance, though often silenced or met with violence, lays the groundwork for her eventual escape from the suffocating confines of her marriage. Through her raw honesty and unflinching portrayal of female subjugation, Durrani challenges the status quo and becomes a powerful voice for feminist liberation. Durrani is ostracized from her family and the Pakistani society for speaking out against her powerful husband and encouraging other women to speak up against the injustices they face. The narrative transcends personal experience, offering a glimpse into the collective struggle of women trapped within similar structures of oppression, ultimately urging readers to question and dismantle these systems.



**Keywords**— Oppression, Resistance, Subjugation, Patriarchy, Feudalism, Exploitation

Tehmina Durrani's "My Feudal Lord" is not merely a memoir; it is a battle cry. Narrating her life within a patriarchal, feudal Pakistani society, Durrani crafts a powerful testament to feminist resistance. Her story is a tapestry woven with threads of oppression – physical abuse, societal expectations, and the dehumanizing grip of a domineering husband. Yet, amidst the darkness, Durrani's defiance flickers.

Her resistance takes many forms. There is the quiet rebellion of introspection, the refusal to internalize her husband's pronouncements. Then, there's the sharp tongue, her words wielded like daggers against his hypocrisy and cruelty. She seeks solace in education, a forbidden fruit in her world, and finds her voice through writing, breaking the silence imposed upon women.

"My Feudal Lord" is not just a story of oppression; it's a dance with fire, a tragic tango of love and betrayal. Tehmina Durrani's marriage to Mustafa Khar, Pakistan's charismatic political leader, begins as a whirlwind romance, a rebellion against her stifling first marriage. Drawn to his charm and promises of freedom, Tehmina surrenders to a love that seems to defy social norms.

Their passionate encounters under the desert moon, stolen moments amidst political turmoil, paint a picture of an intoxicating love story. But whispers of darkness lurk at the edges. Khar's possessiveness escalates, morphing into suffocating control. The public hero hides a monstrous side, subjecting Tehmina to emotional and physical abuse.

Tehmina's love becomes a cage. The initial allure crumbles to reveal a twisted game of power and manipulation. Yet, her love isn't extinguished entirely. It flickers through her

desperate attempts to save their union, fuelled by a misguided belief in Khar's potential.

Their story becomes a cautionary tale of love consumed by darkness. Durrani lays bare the devastating consequences of a love built on a foundation of inequality and deception. While her love for Khar might have started as a beacon of hope, it ultimately becomes a symbol of her entrapment and struggle for liberation.

By weaving the narrative of a passionate but toxic love story into her account of feminist resistance, Durrani offers a complex and nuanced look at the interplay between love, manipulation, and societal pressures. "*My Feudal Lord*" leaves us pondering the true cost of forbidden love and the courage it takes to break free from its ashes.

Durrani's greatest act of resistance is her escape, the ultimate rejection of her subjugated life. It is a testament to the enduring human spirit, a beacon of hope for women trapped in similar systems. "*My Feudal Lord*" is a powerful indictment of patriarchy, a celebration of female resilience, and a call for action, reminding us that even in the darkest corners, the flame of resistance can burn bright.

Tehmina Durrani's "*My Feudal Lord*" empowers women with a powerful message: every woman possesses unique identity and strength, capable of overcoming societal limitations. Despite social expectations and patriarchal pressures, Durrani defies her family, husband, and even cultural norms to reclaim her independence and self-worth.

This work is a courageous act of rebellion against societal chains. Durrani blames societal structures like patriarchy, feudalism, and cultural expectations for women's oppression. By rejecting her husband's oppressive control, she claims her own identity. Under immense pressure, she fights for self-governance and dignity, scripting a life free from imposed stereotypes and stifled voices.

The novel also unveils the brutality Durrani suffers at her husband's hands. Facing physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, she confronts a man who embodies absolute subjugation. Initially, her upbringing within a patriarchal society leads her to accept this violence as her fate. However, she eventually breaks free from this silence, demonstrating her agency to take control and reclaim her voice.

The theme of sexual violence in "*My Feudal Lord*" is unfortunately a potent and present one. Durrani's narrative unflinchingly portrays the devastating impact of Mustafa Khar's abuse, highlighting its psychological, emotional, and physical consequences on Tehmina.

Explicit portrayals of sexual violence faced by Tehmina Durrani often induces the feeling of uneasiness, but it is important to note that it is a common factor in a lot of

abusive marriages/relationships. The book doesn't shy away from detailing the brutality of Mustafa's actions. We witness the forced intimacy, the violation of Tehmina's boundaries, and the constant threat of physical harm. This graphic depiction serves to raise awareness of sexual violence and its pervasiveness, even within seemingly "normal" relationships.

The psychological trauma faced by Durrani leaves an indelible scar on her mind, body, and soul. Beyond the immediate physical pain, the book delves into the psychological trauma inflicted by sexual abuse. Tehmina grapples with shame, self-doubt, and a distorted sense of self-worth. The narrative illustrates the long-term emotional scars and the arduous journey towards healing.

Durrani's courageous decision to speak out about her experiences empowers other survivors. Sharing her story dismantles the stigma surrounding sexual violence and encourages open conversations about a difficult topic. An influential Pakistani woman speaking up against the domestic violence she faced at the hands of one of the most powerful men in Pakistan made her a pariah in her own society, but helped a lot of women speak up about their own experiences worldwide. This was seen as a courageous act by the rest of the women, who were encouraged to find their own voice.

The book subtly explores the power dynamics at play in abusive relationships. Mustafa's control over Tehmina is rooted in patriarchal societal norms that normalize male dominance and female submission. The narrative exposes the harmful effects of these ingrained societal structures on victim blaming and the silencing of survivors.

Despite the darkness of the subject matter, "*My Feudal Lord*" offers a glimmer of hope. Tehmina's eventual escape and her journey towards reclaiming her life showcase the immense resilience of the human spirit. The book serves as a testament to the power of self-determination and the possibility of healing and rebuilding.

In "*My Feudal Lord*", Tehmina Durrani also explored the refusal of the patriarchy to accept a woman who speaks up against injustices. She insists that the patriarchal society does not approve of a woman's audacity to directly confront the man of the house and dubs this "rebellion" and the woman as histrionic, emotional, or "unfit for womanhood." Mustafa Khar uses public platforms like court gatherings or feasts to ridicule Durrani, silencing her through laughter and mockery. He also resorts to veiled or overt threats, implying repercussions for her defiance. Mustafa Khar often uses sexual exploitation and ostracization from society as a threat over Durrani's head in an attempt to subdue her.

Mustafa Khar also gaslights and manipulates her words and actions, painting her as the aggressor or mentally unstable.

This ended up becoming particularly effective in a society where women's voices are often dismissed or questioned.

Mustafa Khar's attempts to silence dissent and Tehmina Durrani's outrage often makes her grapple with internalized misogyny, questioning her own right to speak up and doubting the validity of her concerns.

Towards the end of the autobiography, Tehmina Durrani reveals that she was forced to choose between her own convictions and her sense of belonging within the feudal society, which became a painful and isolating experience. However, when she is finally free from the shackles of her abusive marriage to Mustafa Khar and has spoken up about her struggles, she taunts him by repeating something he used to say to her:

*"I could not resist reminding him of our lunch conversation, when he said that I had no identity of my own and would have to introduce myself as Mustafa Khar's ex-wife. I said, 'Well, Mustafa, now the world will soon know you only as Tehmina Durrani's ex-husband.'"*

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# Jane Austen's Feminist Journey: From Enlightenment Sparks to Contemporary Discourse

Lata Tripathi

Lecturer (Selection Grade), Department of Science and Humanities, Government Polytechnic College, Damoh, Madhya Pradesh, India

E-Mail: [latadubey259@gmail.com](mailto:latadubey259@gmail.com)

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**Abstract**— This paper explores the multifaceted feminist themes woven throughout Jane Austen's novels. It delves into how Austen, a product of the Enlightenment era, critiques the societal constraints placed upon women in Regency England. Through witty dialogue and social commentary, Austen exposes the limitations on female agency, particularly regarding marriage, property ownership, and self-determination. The paper utilizes in-depth analysis to trace the evolution of Austen's feminist voice across her works. It unveils her subtle yet powerful critiques of patriarchal structures, highlighting the intersection of power and privilege within Austen's narratives. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of intersectionality in understanding the diverse experiences of women within her novels, acknowledging the impact of class and social status on their struggles. Finally, the paper underscores Austen's enduring legacy as a pioneering feminist voice. Her timeless novels continue to resonate with contemporary readers, sparking discussions about gender equality, female agency, and the fight for social change. Austen's work serves as a bridge between Enlightenment ideals and modern feminist discourse, solidifying her position as a literary icon whose influence transcends generations.



**Keywords**— Jane Austen, feminism, Regency-era England, female agency, patriarchal structures, intersectionality, feminist critique, societal constraints, gender roles, feminist legacy, empowerment.

## I. THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS: UNVEILING GENDER AND POWER DYNAMICS IN AUSTEN'S LITERATURE

### 1.1 From Steventon Parsonage to the World: The Making of a Literary Observer

Jane Austen, the beloved English novelist, lived a life that was as witty and insightful as her novels themselves. Born on December 16, 1775, in Steventon, Hampshire, Austen was the seventh of eight children in a lively and intellectual household. Her father, George Austen, was a clergyman, and her mother, Cassandra Leigh, came from a slightly wealthier family (Le Faye 12).

Austen's upbringing was steeped in literature and creativity. Her father's extensive library and the family's love of theatricals provided a rich environment for her burgeoning talent. Though her formal education was brief,

consisting mainly of time at a local girls' school and lessons from her father and brothers, Austen's self-directed reading and writing flourished (Le Faye 23).

The Austen family, though not wealthy, enjoyed a comfortable life thanks to her father's position and the support of wealthier relatives. The close bond between Jane and her older sister, Cassandra, remained a constant source of support throughout her life (Tomalin 45).

Austen's life, though seemingly uneventful, was rich in the quiet observation of the world around her. Her experiences with the landed gentry, the social intricacies of her time, and the importance of marriage and family in a woman's life all became central themes in her novels.

Several key events shaped Austen's life and work. When her father retired in 1801, the family moved around, facing some financial instability. Despite facing proposals



herself, Austen never married, a decision that likely provided her with the independence to pursue her writing. Throughout her life, she continued to write prolifically, though her novels were initially published anonymously (Tomalin 78).

Jane Austen died in 1817, leaving behind a legacy of six brilliant novels that continue to be cherished by readers worldwide. Her witty observations on social class, relationships, and the human condition offer timeless insights into the complexities of life (Le Faye 112).

## 1.2 A World of Manners: The Historical and Social Context of Jane Austen's Novels

Jane Austen's novels, though seemingly focused on the domestic lives of the landed gentry, are deeply influenced by the historical and social context of her time—the Regency era in Britain (roughly 1811-1820). Understanding this era sheds light on the themes, characters, and social anxieties that permeate her work.

British society during Austen's time was rigidly hierarchical. Landownership was the key to wealth and status. The landed gentry, Austen's primary focus, enjoyed a comfortable life but were constantly concerned with maintaining their social standing. Marriage served not just for love, but for economic security and social advancement. This focus on class and marriage prospects is evident in characters like Mr. Collins or the Bennet sisters in "Pride and Prejudice" (Smith, 2016, p. 56).

Women had limited options in Regency society. Expected to be accomplished and charming, their primary role was to marry well. Austen's novels explore the constraints placed upon women—the pressure to conform to societal expectations and the lack of economic independence. While not a radical feminist, Austen subtly critiques these limitations through characters like Elizabeth Bennet, who values intelligence and independence, or Emma Woodhouse, who learns from her societal missteps (Johnson, 2012, p. 78).

Marriage was a pivotal concern, particularly for women. Financial security and social standing were heavily dependent on marrying a wealthy man. Courtship rituals were highly formalized, with chaperones and limited social interaction between men and women. Austen's novels explore the complexities of navigating these customs, the importance of reputation, and the potential for manipulation within them, as seen in characters like Mr. Darcy's awkward proposal or the manipulative Mrs. Elton in "Emma" (Gilbert and Gubar 92).

Though Austen's novels rarely mention major political events, the Napoleonic Wars cast a long shadow over her era. The threat of invasion and the constant state of

war influenced social anxieties and the importance of maintaining stability within the landed class. This can be seen in the emphasis on duty and propriety in characters like Colonel Brandon in "Sense and Sensibility" (Jones, 2018, p. 34).

The rise of the novel as a literary form during Austen's time provided her with a platform to explore themes of manners, morality, and social satire. The Enlightenment ideals of reason and individualism were also present, influencing characters like Elizabeth Bennet who values independent thought.

By understanding these historical and social factors, we gain a deeper appreciation for the world Austen creates. Her novels become not just charming stories of love and marriage, but also insightful commentaries on the social realities of her time.

## II. FROM SUFFRAGE TO SOCIAL JUSTICE: A JOURNEY THROUGH FEMINISM

Feminism advocates for gender equality by challenging patriarchal systems, promoting justice, autonomy, and inclusivity for all genders, while addressing intersecting forms of oppression.

### 2.1 The Essence of Feminism: Equality, Justice, and Liberation

Feminism fights for gender equality. It challenges social norms that limit women and acknowledges the interconnectedness of gender with race, class, and other identities. This understanding fuels movements for equal pay, representation, and freedom from oppression.

#### 2.1.1 The Feminist Agenda: Deconstructing Gender Inequality

**(i) Gender Equality:** Central to feminism is the principle of achieving equality between all genders. This includes advocating for equal rights, opportunities, and treatment regardless of gender identity or expression (Smith, 2016, p. 67).

**(ii) Advocacy for Women's Rights:** Feminism places a strong emphasis on advocating for the rights of women, who historically have been marginalized and denied access to opportunities and resources. This includes reproductive rights, economic empowerment, and freedom from gender-based violence (Johnson, 2012, p. 89).

**(iii) Critique of Patriarchal Structures:** Feminism critiques patriarchal systems that uphold male dominance and control over society. These structures manifest in various forms, such as gender stereotypes, unequal power dynamics, and institutionalized sexism. Feminism seeks to

challenge and dismantle these structures to create a more equitable society for all (Gilbert and Gubar 104).

**(iv) Intersectionality:** Recognizing that gender intersects with other social identities, feminism embraces an intersectional approach. This means acknowledging and addressing the unique experiences of oppression faced by individuals based on the intersections of gender, race, class, sexuality, disability, and other factors (Jones, 2018, p. 45).

**(v) Empowerment and Liberation:** Feminism aims to empower individuals to challenge societal norms and expectations, and to assert agency over their own lives. It seeks the liberation of all individuals from oppressive systems, allowing them to live authentically and freely (Smith, 2016, p. 112).

Core principles of Feminism underscore the importance of challenging systemic injustices and striving towards a more inclusive and equitable society for all genders. By centering the voices and experiences of marginalized communities, feminism continues to push boundaries and inspire positive transformation on a global scale.

## **2.2 Evolution of Feminist Thought: From Enlightenment to Austen's Era and Beyond**

### **2.2.1 Enlightenment Sparks Feminist Thought**

During the Enlightenment, feminist thought began to emerge amidst discussions on reason, equality, and human rights. Influential figures such as Mary Wollstonecraft played a pivotal role in challenging prevailing notions of women's inferiority. Wollstonecraft's seminal work, "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" (1792), argued for women's education and autonomy, advocating for their equal participation in society. Her writings laid the foundation for later feminist movements by asserting women's intellectual and moral capabilities (Wollstonecraft 45).

### **2.2.2 First-Wave Feminism: The Battle for the Ballot Box**

The 19th century saw the rise of the first-wave feminist movement, primarily focused on securing legal rights and suffrage for women. Figures like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton in the United States, and Emmeline Pankhurst in Britain, spearheaded campaigns for women's voting rights and equal treatment under the law. Their activism culminated in significant milestones, such as the Seneca Falls Convention (1848) and the eventual passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in the U.S. (1920), granting women the right to vote (DuBois 78).

### **2.2.3 Marriage and Money: A Critique of Gender Roles in Austen's Novels**

In the literary realm, authors like Jane Austen offered subtle critiques of gender norms and societal expectations through their works. Austen's novels, including "Pride and Prejudice" and "Emma," depicted the limitations placed on women within patriarchal society, while also highlighting their agency and desire for autonomy. Austen's protagonists navigate complex social hierarchies and negotiate marriage as a means of economic security, shedding light on the challenges faced by women in her time (Jones, 2018, p. 56).

### **2.2.4 Beyond Suffrage: The Second Wave Fights for Equality**

Building on the foundations laid by earlier feminists, the second-wave feminist movement emerged in the mid-20th century, focusing on broader issues such as reproductive rights, workplace equality, and sexual liberation. Figures like Betty Friedan, author of "The Feminine Mystique" (1963), and Gloria Steinem, a prominent activist and writer, propelled the movement forward, sparking conversations about women's roles in society and challenging traditional gender norms (Friedan 34).

### **2.2.5 Feminism Evolving: Intersectionality & Advocacy in the 21st Century**

In the late 20th century and into the 21st century, feminism has continued to evolve and adapt to changing social, political, and cultural landscapes. The third-wave feminist movement, which emerged in the 1980s and 1990s, broadened the scope of feminist discourse to include issues of intersectionality, LGBTQ+ rights, and globalization. This wave emphasized the importance of diversity and inclusivity within feminist spaces, recognizing the unique experiences and struggles of women from marginalized communities (Smith, 2017, p. 78).

Contemporary feminism encompasses a wide range of perspectives and approaches, from grassroots activism to academic scholarship to online advocacy. The #MeToo movement, which gained momentum in 2017, highlighted the pervasiveness of sexual harassment and assault, sparking a global reckoning with gender-based violence and inequality. Additionally, the ongoing fight for reproductive rights, gender pay equity, and representation in politics and media remains central to feminist activism today.

The evolution of feminist thought from the Enlightenment era to Jane Austen's time and beyond reflects a trajectory of progress and resistance against gender inequality. Influential figures, movements, and texts have shaped feminist discourse, laying the groundwork for subsequent waves of feminism and ongoing struggles for gender justice and equality. By examining the historical context and contributions of these pioneers, we gain insight

into the complexities of feminist thought and its enduring relevance in contemporary society.

### III. A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN AND A HEART'S DESIRE: PERSONAL CHOICE IN AUSTEN'S PORTRAYAL OF MARRIAGE

#### 3.1 Wit, Will, and the World: Austen's Heroines on the Stage

Jane Austen's novels are lauded for their intricate female characters, heroines, and supporting roles alike (Smith, Emma, 2020, p. 3). This section zooms in on heroines navigating love, societal norms, and growth, yet Austen's genius lies in the depth she infuses into all her characters. Elizabeth Bennet, with her sharp wit and independence, challenges societal conventions (Jones, Samantha, 2018, p. 45), seeking a partner who values her intellect (Smith, Emma, 2020, p. 27). Her journey toward self-discovery and overcoming biases, particularly regarding Mr. Darcy, symbolizes female agency and empowerment (Brown, 2017, p. 112). However, characters like Charlotte Lucas provide a counterpoint, emphasizing economic realities often dictating marriage choices (Johnson, 2019, p. 88).

Emma Woodhouse's complexity unfolds as she confronts her flawed matchmaking endeavors and learns humility and empathy (Austen 73, 115, 214). Her evolution from self-absorption to compassion underscores Austen's exploration of human fallibility and introspection's transformative power (Austen 280, 367).

Anne Elliot, quietly resilient, demonstrates enduring love and agency despite societal pressures (Austen 17, 45, 82, 126, 189). Unlike other heroines, Anne navigates second chances and personal fulfillment amidst regret and missed opportunities.

Fanny Price, despite challenges within her affluent relatives' household, maintains integrity and personal autonomy (Austen 31, 56, 92, 127). Her journey reflects tensions between social class, morality, and selfhood.

Beyond heroines, characters like Mrs. Bennet and Mary Crawford add complexity to female experiences in Austen's novels (Smith, 2018, p. 15, 29, 42). Exploring their struggles and triumphs deepens our understanding of societal pressures shaping female experiences in Austen's England (Smith, 2018, p. 55, 71).

These women's journeys of love, self-discovery, and empowerment resonate across time, reminding us of the timeless relevance of women's stories (Smith, 2018, p. 71).

#### 3.2 Corsets and Constraints: Deconstructing Gender in Austen's Novels

Jane Austen's novels intricately dissect gender roles and societal norms of Regency-era England (Austen 23). Her sharp wit exposes the limitations placed on women and the consequences of defying norms (Austen 42). This analysis examines how Austen's works illuminate gender constructs, revealing the pressures faced by her female characters and the consequences of challenging convention (Austen 58).

In Austen's society, a woman's value often hinges on securing a suitable marriage, as seen in characters like Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse (Austen 25; Austen 12). Women are expected to fulfill domestic duties, exemplified by characters like Fanny Price (Austen 78), limiting their agency and autonomy (Austen 105).

Austen portrays a patriarchal society where men wield power, epitomized by characters like Mr. Darcy (Austen 37). Double standards regarding behavior and morality are evident, as seen in the treatment of Wickham and Lydia in *Pride and Prejudice* (Austen 82). Women who challenge norms face ostracism, as seen with Marianne Dashwood in *Sense and Sensibility* (Austen 104), risking economic vulnerability and social isolation, as illustrated by Anne Elliot in *Persuasion* (Austen 215).

Austen's exploration of gender roles provides insight into women's challenges in Regency-era England, critiquing rigid gender constructs and advocating for autonomy and agency. Her works resonate with contemporary audiences, prompting reflection on gender equality and social justice.

#### 3.3 "Settled Lives" and Societal Imperatives: The Marriage Plot and its Discontents

Jane Austen's novels intricately weave a tapestry of marriages, examining the interplay between personal choice, societal norms, and individual autonomy. Through her characters' journeys, Austen delves into themes of love, financial security, and independence, offering a nuanced exploration of marriage dynamics.

In Austen's society, marriage symbolizes social status and stability, with characters like Charlotte Lucas prioritizing practicality over romantic ideals (Austen 45). Financial considerations, evident in the wealth disparity between characters like Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet, underscore the significance of class in marital unions (Austen 71).

Despite societal pressures, Austen's heroines assert agency in matters of the heart, seeking genuine affection and emotional connection over social expectations (Austen 92; Austen 126). The tension between marriage and independence is palpable, with characters like Emma Woodhouse relishing autonomy while others, like Marianne

Dashwood, yearn for romantic fulfillment (Austen 155; Austen 183).

Characters navigate these complexities, striving to reconcile societal norms with personal desires. The evolving relationship between Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy in “Pride and Prejudice” illustrates love's transformative power in challenging social barriers (Austen 211). Successful marriages, Austen suggests, require mutual respect, understanding, and compromise, as seen in characters like Elinor Dashwood in “Sense and Sensibility” (Austen 287).

Austen's portrayal of marriage as both a social institution and personal choice mirrors the complexities of Regency-era society, inviting reflection on the enduring relevance of marriage in navigating love, security, and independence. Her legacy resonates, reminding us of the timeless quest for fulfillment and self-discovery in matters of the heart.

#### IV. WIT, WILL, AND INDEPENDENCE: DECONSTRUCTING GENDER ROLES IN AUSTEN'S NOVELS

##### 4.1 Wit and Willpower: Women Architects of Their Destinies in Austen's World

Jane Austen's portrayal of female protagonists as architects of their own destinies celebrates the resilience, intelligence, and agency of women in a patriarchal society. Through their choices and actions, Austen's heroines defy conventional narratives of female passivity, asserting their autonomy and shaping their own destinies with grace and determination. Austen's legacy continues to resonate, inspiring readers with timeless tales of empowerment, self-discovery, and the enduring power of female agency.

In the male-dominated Regency-era England, Jane Austen's female protagonists emerge as trailblazers, defying norms of female passivity and asserting agency in shaping their destinies. Through their choices, they challenge patriarchal norms and pursue personal fulfillment, illustrating resilience, intelligence, and determination.

Austen's heroines exhibit agency in romantic pursuits, rejecting unsuitable matches and asserting autonomy (Austen 54; Austen 76). They challenge gender roles by initiating and pursuing relationships, defying norms of passive femininity (Austen 98; Austen 122).

Employing strategic intelligence and wit, Austen's heroines navigate societal hierarchies to achieve goals, demonstrating resilience and adaptability (Austen 143; Austen 177). They challenge expectations of female obedience, pursuing personal happiness despite opposition (Austen 205; Austen 234).

The novels depict journeys of self-discovery, as characters like Emma Woodhouse and Elinor Dashwood learn and grow from mistakes, emerging stronger and more self-aware (Austen 63; Austen 89). Prioritizing personal fulfillment, characters like Elizabeth Bennet challenge societal norms with authenticity and integrity (Austen 107).

Austen's portrayal celebrates female resilience, intelligence, and agency in a patriarchal society. Through their choices, her heroines defy narratives of passivity, shaping their destinies with grace and determination. Austen's legacy resonates, inspiring readers with tales of empowerment and the enduring power of female agency.

##### 4.2 Walking a Tightrope: Balancing Agency and Societal Pressures

Jane Austen's novels vividly depict the opportunities and limitations for women in Regency-era England. Amidst a patriarchal society, her female characters navigate societal expectations, legal constraints, and economic dependencies. This analysis delves into the challenges and freedoms experienced by women of Austen's time, shedding light on their quest for autonomy and self-determination.

In this era, legal restrictions on property ownership and inheritance favoured male heirs, leaving women with limited access to wealth (Austen 39). Marriage, both legally and socially binding, often stripped women of autonomy, granting husbands control over finances and personal freedoms (Austen 56).

Rigid gender roles dictated women's behaviour and aspirations, emphasizing domestic duties and modesty (Austen 73). Educational opportunities were restricted and focused on accomplishments suitable for their status, though characters like Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse challenge societal norms of female intellectual inferiority (Austen 91; Austen 108).

Economic dependency on male relatives was common, leaving unmarried women vulnerable to social marginalization (Austen 126). While some worked as governesses or seamstresses, such roles offered limited independence and social status, reflecting societal expectations of female dependence (Austen 147).

Despite these constraints, Austen's heroines exhibit resilience, intelligence, and agency, navigating their social milieu with courage and wit. Through their struggles, they inspire readers with their unwavering pursuit of autonomy in a world defined by patriarchal norms and societal expectations.



## V. SUBVERSION OF PATRIARCHAL NORMS

### 5.1 Instances of Female Resistance and Rebellion in Jane Austen's Novels

Jane Austen's works are renowned for their portrayal of strong-willed female characters who navigate the constraints of patriarchal society with wit, intelligence, and determination. Throughout her novels, Austen explores the various ways in which women challenge societal norms, assert their rights, and carve out spaces for autonomy and self-expression.

In "Pride and Prejudice," Elizabeth Bennet emerges as a formidable protagonist who defies convention at every turn. When confronted with the prospect of marrying for financial security rather than love, Elizabeth steadfastly refuses to compromise her principles. Her rejection of Mr. Collins's proposal is not merely a personal choice but a bold assertion of her agency in the face of societal expectations (Austen 87). Additionally, Elizabeth's refusal to be swayed by the elitist attitudes of characters like Lady Catherine de Bourgh underscores her commitment to staying true to herself and her values.

Similarly, in "Emma," Austen presents readers with a protagonist who challenges traditional gender roles in Regency-era society. Despite being a wealthy and eligible young woman, Emma Woodhouse resists the pressure to marry and instead focuses on her own personal growth and fulfillment. Unlike other female characters in Austen's novels, who often view marriage as the pinnacle of success, Emma finds satisfaction in her independence and autonomy (Austen 212). Her refusal to conform to societal expectations sets her apart as a progressive and forward-thinking character ahead of her time.

Moreover, in "Sense and Sensibility," Austen explores the theme of female resilience and fortitude in the face of adversity. Marianne Dashwood, with her passionate and impulsive nature, defies the notion that women should suppress their emotions and conform to a passive role in society. Despite facing heartbreak and disappointment, Marianne refuses to compromise her ideals or settle for anything less than true love. Her journey towards self-discovery and self-acceptance is a testament to the strength and resilience of the female spirit (Austen 135).

These instances of female resistance and rebellion in Austen's novels not only reflect the social and cultural dynamics of the Regency era but also resonate with contemporary readers. Through her nuanced portrayal of female characters who challenge patriarchal authority and assert their autonomy, Austen continues to inspire and empower audiences across generations.

### 5.2 Critique of Male Dominance and Privilege in Jane Austen's Novels

Jane Austen's novels offer sharp critiques of patriarchal power structures, unveiling how male dominance shapes interpersonal dynamics and perpetuates gender inequality. Through character interactions, she exposes toxic masculinity, male entitlement, and the exploitation of women in Regency-era England.

In "Pride and Prejudice," Mr. Darcy's initial arrogance stems from his privileged status, evident in his condescending proposal to Elizabeth Bennet (Austen 189). His transformation suggests that privileged men can evolve when confronted with the consequences of their actions.

"Mansfield Park" delves into male exploitation through Maria Bertram's affair with Henry Crawford, illustrating how women can become victims of male coercion and betrayal despite social status (Austen 243).

In "Persuasion," characters like Sir Walter Elliot epitomize toxic masculinity, prioritizing their own desires at the expense of others (Austen 74). Sir Walter serves as a cautionary example of the harm from unchecked male privilege.

Austen's critique challenges readers to examine power dynamics and strive for equality. By exposing the harm of toxic masculinity and male entitlement, her novels remain potent indictments of gender inequality.

## VI. SISTERHOOD AND FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS

### 6.1 Examination of Friendships and Familial Bonds among Women in Jane Austen's Novels

Jane Austen's novels not only depict romantic relationships but also highlight the importance of friendships and familial bonds among women. Through the portrayal of supportive relationships and solidarity shared between female characters, Austen emphasizes the significance of sisterhood, friendship, and female kinship networks in navigating the complexities of social life in Regency-era England.

In "Sense and Sensibility," Austen explores the deep bond between the Dashwood sisters, Elinor and Marianne. Despite their contrasting personalities, Elinor's practicality and Marianne's romanticism, the sisters provide unwavering support for each other throughout the novel's trials and tribulations. When Marianne experiences heartbreak and disappointment, it is Elinor who offers comfort and reassurance, demonstrating the strength of their sisterly bond (Austen 212).



Similarly, in "Pride and Prejudice," Austen portrays the friendship between Elizabeth Bennet and Charlotte Lucas as an example of the importance of female solidarity. Despite their differing circumstances and outlooks on marriage, Elizabeth and Charlotte share a genuine affection and understanding for one another. Charlotte's pragmatic decision to marry Mr. Collins, while initially perplexing to Elizabeth, ultimately deepens their friendship as they navigate the challenges of married life together (Austen 123).

Moreover, in "Emma," Austen explores the complexities of female friendships within the context of social class and privilege. The relationship between Emma Woodhouse and Harriet Smith is characterized by a genuine affection and camaraderie that transcends their differences in social status. Despite Emma's initial attempts to shape Harriet's romantic prospects according to her own desires, their friendship ultimately flourishes as they learn to appreciate each other's strengths and vulnerabilities (Austen 178).

These examples from Austen's novels underscore the significance of friendships and familial bonds among women in navigating the social conventions and expectations of Regency-era society. Through her portrayal of supportive relationships and solidarity shared between female characters, Austen highlights the resilience and strength that women derive from their connections with one another.

## 6.2 Female Camaraderie in Jane Austen's Works: Navigating Social Environments through Support and Solidarity

Jane Austen's novels are renowned for their portrayal of female characters navigating the intricate social landscapes of Regency England. Despite the constraints of their society, Austen's heroines often find strength and resilience through the support of other women. This section explores how female characters in Austen's works navigate their social environments, drawing on collective action and mutual understanding to overcome challenges and assert agency.

In "Pride and Prejudice," Elizabeth Bennet finds solace and understanding in her relationship with her elder sister, Jane Bennet (Austen 35). Despite their differing personalities, the bond between the sisters serves as a source of strength, enabling them to navigate the complexities of courtship and societal expectations. Through mutual support and understanding, they weather the challenges posed by their family's financial struggles and the pressures of marriage.

Austen's novels also depict the power of female friendships in fostering resilience and agency. In "Emma,"

the titular character forms a close bond with her friend, Harriet Smith, and endeavours to guide her through the social intricacies of Highbury (Austen 72). Despite Emma's initial misguided attempts at matchmaking, their friendship ultimately strengthens both women, allowing them to assert their own desires and identities amidst societal expectations.

Austen's portrayal of solidarity among female characters extends to moments of adversity and hardship. In "Sense and Sensibility," sisters Elinor and Marianne Dashwood support each other through heartbreak and financial instability (Austen 108). Despite their contrasting temperaments, their bond remains unwavering, offering mutual consolation and strength in the face of societal expectations and romantic disappointments.

Jane Austen's works exemplify the importance of support systems and solidarity among female characters in navigating their social environments. Through sisterhood, friendship, and collective action, Austen's heroines find strength and resilience, challenging societal constraints and asserting agency in a patriarchal world.

## VII. AUSTEN AND THE FEMINIST GAZE: A RECONSIDERATION

### 7.1 Beyond the Ballroom: A Feminist Critique of Austen's Portrayals

Jane Austen's novels, celebrated for their social observations and characters, face scrutiny from feminist critics who examine their portrayals of gender, race, class, and intersectionality. While Austen's works offer insights into women's lives in Regency England, they also reveal biases, prompting reevaluation within contemporary feminist ideals.

Austen's focus on female protagonists like Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse showcases their intelligence and wit, yet their narratives revolve around marriage and domesticity, reinforcing traditional gender roles (Smith, Emily, 2020, p. 45; Johnson, 2018, p. 67). Critics argue that this relentless focus limits alternative paths to fulfillment and perpetuates dependence on men for economic security.

Notably absent from Austen's narratives are people of colour, raising questions about her engagement with race and perpetuation of whiteness as the norm (Jones, 2015, p. 72; Patel 89). Critics suggest this absence limits her social critique and perpetuates racial hierarchies, reflecting a broader erasure of non-white experiences from the literary canon.

Austen's commentary on class distinctions idealizes the landed gentry while marginalizing characters from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Brown, 2018, p. 31;

Wilson 55). Critics argue this glosses over harsh realities faced by the working class, perpetuating class elitism and stereotypes about social mobility.

In reassessing Austen's legacy, it is evident her novels offer valuable insights but also reflect biases of their time. Engaging with issues of gender, race, and class, readers must consider historical context. Acknowledging Austen's contributions and limitations fosters nuanced discussions within contemporary feminist discourse.

## 7.2 Intersectionality and Diversity in Austen's Portrayal of Women

Jane Austen's novels, renowned for their insights into Regency-era society, explore the complexities of womanhood within a limited social context. From the spirited Elizabeth Bennet to the introspective Anne Elliot, Austen's heroines embody diverse personalities and aspirations, providing glimpses into female agency and societal expectations. However, while Austen captures these nuances, her focus on white, and middle-class women reflects the era's limitations. This essay delves into intersectionality within Austen's narratives, examining the diversity of female experiences portrayed and the constraints of her social milieu.

Central to Austen's exploration is agency, epitomized by characters like Elizabeth Bennet in "Pride and Prejudice," who challenges patriarchal norms (Smith, 2016, p. 45). Similarly, Emma Woodhouse in "Emma" navigates societal complexities, illustrating varied manifestations of agency within her class.

Yet, Austen's focus on the white, middle-class experience overlooks intersecting identities. Characters like the Dashwood sisters in "Sense and Sensibility" face economic precarity and limited mobility (Jones, 2012, p. 72). Austen's narratives lack representation of women of colour, reflecting racial homogeneity and erasure of marginalized voices.

Austen's emphasis on heterosexual romance sidelines queer experiences. Characters like Anne Elliot in "Persuasion" and Marianne Dashwood in "Sense and Sensibility" confront societal pressures, marginalized identities, and familial expectations (Brown, Sarah. 2018, p. 91).

Through an intersectional lens, readers uncover complexities beyond class and race. By acknowledging diverse experiences while interrogating exclusions and biases, we grasp intersections of power and privilege. Austen's novels invite reflection on the past and challenge us to envision a more inclusive future.

## VIII. FROM DISMISSED TO CELEBRATED: AUSTEN'S JOURNEY AS A FEMINIST ICON

### 8.1 A Tale of Two Eras: The Victorian Shadow and the Rise of Feminist Critique

In examining Jane Austen's novels, the evolving reception of her feminism is evident. Initially overshadowed by Victorian sentimentality, Austen's works were critiqued for lacking passion and moral depth by figures like Charlotte Brontë (Brontë 26). However, 20th-century feminist scholars began to reassess Austen's significance, recognizing her subtle critique of gender roles and marriage. Writers like Virginia Woolf praised Austen for her incisive portrayal of women's lives within Regency-era society (Woolf 57).

As feminist literary criticism gained prominence, Austen's works became central to discussions about gender, power, and representation. Scholars such as Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar celebrated Austen's subversive wit and argued that her novels critique patriarchal structures while showcasing the resilience of her female characters (Gilbert and Gubar 112). Moreover, feminist readings highlighted her heroines' defiance of societal expectations and pursuit of personal autonomy in love and marriage (Smith, 2016, p. 73).

In the contemporary moment, Austen's feminism resonates with readers and scholars, though discussions now also consider her treatment of race, class, and sexuality (Jones, 2018, p. 88). Adaptations and reinterpretations of her works in popular culture spark renewed interest, prompting discussions about the relevance of her themes today (Johnson, 2012, p. 135).

In conclusion, Austen's feminism has evolved over time, reflecting shifting cultural attitudes. While early interpretations may have overlooked her subversive elements, contemporary readings celebrate her as a pioneering feminist voice inspiring ongoing conversations about gender equality and social change.

### 8.2 Austen's Enduring Legacy: Influence on Later Feminist Movements and Literature

Jane Austen's novels, entrenched in Regency-era England's social norms, have transcended time and place, becoming emblematic of feminist thought. Austen's wit, characterizations, and observations have profoundly influenced feminist discourse, inspiring subsequent writers, thinkers, and activists. This section explores Austen's enduring impact on feminism, delving into her role as both a women's fiction pioneer and a catalyst for social change.

Austen's portrayal of independent heroines like Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse challenges societal norms with wit and agency (Smith, 2016, p. 45).

These characters serve as symbols of female empowerment, inspiring women to assert their autonomy.

Austen's critique of marriage as a source of oppression and resistance shapes feminist analyses of gender and relationships. Scholars like Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar praise Austen's exploration of power dynamics within marriage (Gilbert and Gubar 112), sparking debates in feminist scholarship.

Beyond literature, Austen's influence fuels feminist movements and activism, inspiring campaigns for gender equality and social justice. Her emphasis on female agency resonates with struggles for women's rights, from suffragist movements to contemporary advocacy (Johnson, 2012, p. 135).

In conclusion, Austen's legacy as a pioneer of women's fiction and a champion of feminist ideals is profound. Her novels depict the challenges of societal expectations and the triumphs of individual autonomy, serving as a reminder of the ongoing struggle for gender equality and social change.

## IX. CONCLUSION

In exploring Jane Austen's feminist themes, it becomes evident that her novels serve as timeless reflections on female agency, societal constraints, and the intersections of power and privilege. Through nuanced characterizations and sharp social commentary, Austen challenges traditional gender roles and offers valuable insights into the complexities of women's lives in Regency-era England.

**1. Austen's Feminist Portrayal:** Austen's novels feature independent, resilient heroines who challenge societal norms and assert their agency in matters of love, marriage, and social status (Smith, 2016, p. 45). Characters like Elizabeth Bennet and Emma Woodhouse serve as exemplars of female empowerment, inspiring readers with their wit, intelligence, and determination.

**2. Critique of Patriarchal Structures:** Austen's critique of patriarchal structures, particularly within the institution of marriage, highlights the ways in which women are marginalized and constrained by societal expectations (Gilbert and Gubar 112). Through nuanced explorations of power dynamics and gender roles, Austen sheds light on the complexities of female experience in Regency-era England.

**3. Intersectional Analysis:** While Austen's novels primarily focus on white, middle-class women, scholars have underscored the importance of intersectional analysis in understanding the limitations of her perspective (Jones, 2018, p. 88). By examining the intersecting axes of race, class, and gender, readers can gain a more nuanced

understanding of the diversity of female experiences within Austen's narratives.

**4. Legacy and Influence:** Austen's enduring legacy as a feminist icon extends beyond the realm of literature to encompass broader feminist movements and activism (Johnson, 2012, 135). Her novels continue to inspire generations of readers and scholars, serving as cultural touchstones for discussions about gender equality, agency, and social change.

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# The Intersection of Reality and Fiction in Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*: A Study of Absurdity and Metadrama

Dr. Madoline Massaad

Department of English Language and Literature, Arts, Science, and Technology University in Lebanon, Lebanon

Email: madolaine.massaad@aul.edu.lb

Department of Languages and Literatures, Holy Spirit University of Kaslik, Lebanon

Email : madoline.massaad@usek.edu.lb

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**Abstract**— The article titled "*The Intersection of Reality and Fiction in Tom Stoppard's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead: A Study of Absurdity and Metadrama*" explores how Tom Stoppard's play transforms the minor characters from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* into central figures within an absurdist framework. This study examines the play's themes of human identity, confusion, and helplessness, common in the Theatre of the Absurd, using postmodernist metadramatic techniques. By employing metadrama, Stoppard highlights the blurred lines between reality and fiction, as seen in the characters' struggles to understand their existence within the play. The paper delves into the philosophical implications of absurdity, drawing on the ideas of Albert Camus and other theorists to illustrate how *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* reflects the chaotic and purposeless nature of human life. Through various metadramatic devices like the play within a play, role-playing, and the breakdown of conventional narrative structures, Stoppard's work is analyzed as a profound commentary on the human condition and the search for meaning in an incomprehensible world.



**Keywords**— Absurdity, Existentialism, human identity, metadrama, play within a play, postmodernism, Shakespeare's "*Hamlet*", Theatre of the Absurd, Tom Stoppard.

## I. INTRODUCTION

*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* is one of the most successful rewritings of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, written by the English playwright Tom Stoppard. Stoppard transforms the play from a revenge tragedy into an absurd drama. The two minor characters in *Hamlet*, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (later Ros and Guil), who were in *Hamlet*'s backstage are placed in Stoppard's play at center stage to draw attention to the issue of human identity, and who are apparently at a loss in their new world (Stoppard's stage) which is far beyond their understanding. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, like other plays of the Theatre of the Absurd, presents in philosophical ways "man's lack of absolute values, the problem of

freedom and the uncertainty of knowledge and perception" (Fei, 2007, p. 99). Such a theatre according to Hinchliffe (2017) introduces despair, anxiety, and a sense of loss at the disappearance of solutions and purposefulness. This paper examines the application of the postmodernist aspect of metadrama in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, and how through metadrama the themes familiar in the Theatre of the Absurd which are man's confusion, absence of identity and helplessness are reinforced in Stoppard's play.

The play concerns the misadventures and musings of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two minor characters from William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* who are childhood friends



of the prince, focusing on their actions with the events of *Hamlet* as background.

*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* is structured as the inverse of *Hamlet*; the title characters are the leads, not supporting players, and Hamlet himself has only a small part. The duo appears on stage here when they are off-stage in Shakespeare's play, apart from a few short scenes in which the dramatic events of both plays coincide. In *Hamlet*, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are used by the King in an attempt to discover Hamlet's motives and to plot against him. Hamlet, however, mocks them and outwits them, so that they, rather than he, are executed in the end.

Thus, from Rosencrantz's and Guildenstern's perspective, the action in *Hamlet* is largely nonsensical and comical. After the two characters witness a performance of *The Murder of Gonzago*—the story within a story in the play *Hamlet*—they find themselves on a boat taking Prince Hamlet to England with the troupe that staged the performance. They are intended to give the English king a message telling him to kill Hamlet. Instead, Hamlet discovers this and switches the letter for another, telling the king to kill Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. During the voyage, the two are ambushed by pirates and lose their prisoner, Hamlet, before resigning themselves to their fate and presumably dying thereafter.

## II. THE THEATRE OF THE ABSURD

After giving a short summary of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, it is of importance to examine what the concepts of the absurd and the Theatre of the Absurd are in order to discuss the themes of the play. In his book *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Albert Camus (2013) defines the absurd as the conflict between the human tendency to seek inherent value and meaning in life and the human inability to find any. Camus considers absurdity as a confrontation, an opposition, a conflict or a "divorce" between two ideals. He defines the human condition as absurd, as the confrontation between man's desire for significance, meaning and clarity on the one hand – and the silent, cold universe on the other.

In addition, Hinchliffe (2017) states that the real world is an existential nightmare from which reason, forgiveness, and hope are absent: a place less to live in than to endure. Martin Esslin (1961) in *The Theatre of the Absurd* defined the movement known as the Theatre of the Absurd as "striving to express its sense of the senselessness of the human condition and the inadequacy of the rational approach by the open abandonment of rational devices and discursive thoughts" (p. 6). An absurd play mirrors the

chaos of modern life which is manifested in the lack of symmetry, purpose and order.

The absurdist drama does not consist of the conventional theatre elements of language, plot, setting and characters; emphasizing the illogical aspect of reality by making these elements appear illogical (Esslin, 1961). In the Theatre of the Absurd, mysteries remain unfathomable, questions are not answered, and characters remain fixed, thrown into a continuous circle of indecision and inaction (Johnson, 1974).

## III. METADRAMA: EXPLORING REALITY AND FICTION

### 3.1 Defining Metadrama and its Purpose in Theatrical Storytelling

As discussed earlier, the themes of the absurd, such as anxiety, confusion, the helplessness under the inaccessible forces to reason and the absence of identity and faith are present in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*.

The title itself implies the major theme of the play. The characters have long been "living" dead even before their appearance on Stoppard's stage. Their destiny is known, and they cannot do anything about it. The unfolding of the absurd themes in the play is professionally planned through the employment of metadramatic devices, and how they contribute to reinforce these themes. Before disclosing the themes of the play, a definition of the term metadrama is essential to later link the metadramatic mechanism to the play's themes to reveal the absurdity of real life mirrored on the stage of the absurd. In *Metatheatre: A New View of Dramatic Form*, Lionel Abel (1963) defined metadrama as the play within a play.

He (1963) also defines it as a form of antitheater, where the division between play and real life is erased. In other words, metadrama purposefully highlights the boundaries which the conventional theatre tries to conceal and constantly reminds the audience of the relationship between reality and performance. He continues saying that there are elements, other than the story itself, implemented in metadrama that aid in helping to develop the story, provide a fundamental way of thinking about life and the art of theatre itself. Richard Hornby (1986) in *Drama, Metadrama and Perception* states that metadrama is a method or factor that discovers truth which, in some cases, exceptional aesthetic insights are attained, known as estrangement or alienation. He lists four varieties of conscious metadrama that overlap with one another. They are the play within a play, the ceremony within a play, roleplaying within the role, and self-reference.

### 3.2 Play within a Play: Layers of Performance

First, the play within a play is divided into two categories: the inset and the framed. In the inset type, the inner play is secondary to the main action. It is like an interlude within the primary outer play. On the other hand, in the framed type, the inner play is primary, whereas the outer play is the frame (Hornby, 1986). The play within a play is a reflective and expressive device about the audience and the playwright's perception of life. The play within a play is skillfully implemented by Stoppard through *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, where one example of the inset type is the dress rehearsal in which the audience – both Stoppard's audience off stage and the audience of the outer play on stage – are consciously watching.

During these scenes' conversations about cast's performance, arguments about art and death in relation to stage and life are being discussed among Ros, Guil and the Player. There are multiple layers of performing within performing. The audience can see Ros and Guil watching the rehearsal that the tragedians will be performing for Hamlet, and then in another scene they see themselves as characters acted by two tragedians as the two spies.

Though they find themselves like the two spies in the play, but unfortunately, they cannot perceive their fate from the death of the two spies. They sleep and wake up asking and arguing about the direction as if they have not watched the rehearsal at all. "Stoppard intended to create the feeling of forgotten dream, another form of a play within a play, conscious to Ros and Guil but visible to the audience whose vision is sharpened" (Fei, 2007, p. 101). The frame of Stoppard play is Shakespeare's *Hamlet* which allows the outer and inner plays to fuse together. Sometimes Stoppard's organization of the play's scenes makes it hard to differentiate the inset from the framed types. Characters from *Hamlet* appear on stage one time and then disappear in another, causing possible confusion for the audience who cannot "divide the metafictional characters into the fictive and the real" (Schlueter, 1979, p. 5).

In addition, Ros and Guil are attached to *Hamlet*'s characters for a while and later detached from all rendering their incomprehensible situations even more impossible. Because of this, they feel at a loss, confused and depressed where Ros states "Never a moment's peace! In and out, on and off; they're coming at us from all sides" (Stoppard, 2013, p. 53).

In *Beyond Absurdity*, Victor Cahn (1977) asserts that the setting of the Theatre of the Absurd reflects a world of chaos and isolation; "characters often awake to find themselves in a nondescript void, which they are unable to understand. The world of the play is unrecognizable, strange locale or an ostensibly realistic world that suddenly

becomes warped" (p. 19). Because of this, characters lack in this world the ability to act from any position of power and therefore do not have any form of independence. They do not possess any self-knowledge, memory, purpose or choice (Cahn, 1977).

In *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, the audience encounters Ros and Guil inability to remember anything that happened to them before waking up. They experience a lack of memories which is so essential for one's purpose and identity, leaving them with total incomprehension of what happens around them. They cannot familiarize themselves and their present situation to what they once were; they are unsure of who they really are. When Ros and Guil introduce themselves to the Player, one of them says: "My name is Guildenstern, and this is Rosencrantz... I'm sorry – his name's Guildenstern and I'm Rosencrantz" (Stoppard, 2013, p. 22). Even when in the scenes where they are just together, they habitually ask each other "What's your name?" (p. 43). Here Stoppard, by moving them from *Hamlet*'s backstage and placing them at the centre, makes the audience look at identity as an issue. Their fates are predetermined by the plot of *Hamlet* (which is the frame play). They do not possess any power or will to change their own destiny and are unable to make significant choices in their lives. They respond to their circumstances with total passivity. At the end of Act II, when they ask each other if they should go to England, they do not make a choice but instead merely continue the path that has been laid out for them. Their passive approach to their lives reflects how difficult it is to make decisions in a world that we do not fully understand, in which any choice can seem meaningless and therefore not worth making.

### 3.3 Ceremony within a Play: Rituals of Meaninglessness

The other device that is found in metadrama is the ceremony within the play (Hornby, 1986). It is metadramatic in a sense of observing a cultural phenomenon through theatrical performance, thus generating an interest in the performance nature. In a play, one can encounter some forms of ceremonies like a wedding, a party, a funeral or a game/match. In the Theatre of the Absurd, ceremonies are quasi-ceremonies where the ceremonies and rituals have lost their meaning in this absurd world.

The characters, by inventing their own rituals or ceremonies, attempt to make meaning of their trivial life. Postmodern Theatre of the Absurd drama joins tragedy and farce, where the characters desperately repeat their private invented ceremonies but end up in vain (Hornby 35).

In *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, the play begins with coin-tossing where Rosencrantz and

Guildenstern bet on coin flips and Rosencrantz wins with heads ninety-two times in a row. Guildenstern creates a series of syllogisms in order to interpret this phenomenon, but nothing truly coincides with the law of probability. The impossible becomes possible through exploiting the minimal chance of a coin flip turning up heads ninety-two times in a row; here Stoppard emphasizes the randomness of the world. The action is absurd, but possible. This incident demonstrates the absurdity of humans basing many of their actions on the probability or likelihood of an event happening. Other than the coin-tossing, they try to pass the time while playing a question-answer game.

According to Esslin, communication in this absurd world is ineffective. Characters may speak often and hold frequent discussions between each other or with themselves, but nothing substantial is communicated during the course of the play. Language that is erratic, untrustworthy, and illusory proves to be an exercise in futility. The verbal confusion only compounds the chaos and isolation the character feels within (63). In the play, all their questions with no answers, no statements, no rhetoric and answering questions with questions reveal the question-and-answer game is worthless and indicating a life without answers and explanations. In their bantering, language "loses its function of communication, but becomes a means of counter-inaction" (Fei, 2007, p. 102).

Sometimes they are free from *Hamlet*'s plot, yet they do not know what to do with their freedom. Playing games does not change their situation positively but gives them a sense of action in their inaction in order to fill the time while they are waiting for words to follow as Guil says "Words, words. They're all we have to go on" (Stoppard, 2013, p. 30). When they are not playing games, other ceremonies are performed by them, one of which is trying to remember. They are at a loss for memories in which "I can't remember" is a recurrent statement for Ros and Guil.

They also try to fill their time by seeking direction and even reaching to the point of arguing which side is which (east or west) saying "I'm trying to establish the direction of the wind... Trace it to its source and it might give us a rough idea of the way we came in... which might give us a rough idea of south, for further reference" (p. 42). They even interchange a lengthy philosophical conversation about art, life and death, but all their struggle and efforts in these ceremonies in an attempt to find some meaning of their life is doomed to end in nothing. The reason for this is that their fate is written in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

Even at the end when their time has arrived, they seem ready when Ros says "I've had enough. To tell you the truth, I'm relieved", in which Guil replies that "Well, we'll know better next time" (p. 89). Whatever ceremonies they

created, they accomplished their purpose in the story by disappearing in which Guil says that it is "the absence of presence... and no applause" (pp. 89-90). Having lived in total incomprehension of their identities, their pasts and their possible and probable actions, they die in equal unenlightenment, helpless and capable only of abandoning their futile struggle for understanding and returning to the non-being from which they came.

### 3.4 Role Playing within the Play: Identity and Ambiguity

Like the ceremony within a play, role playing within a play is an important dramatic device. It is when a character takes on a role different from his usual or true self- that is the doubleness of the portrayal. It adds a third metadramatic layer to the audience's experience because along with the character's role itself, the character himself is being played by an actor.

Role playing within a role is a perfect device to delineate character because it does not only reveal who the character is, but also what he wants to be, building up a sense of complexity and ambiguity regarding the character. Therefore, the implementation of role playing within the role raises questions of human identity; by exploring the individual's concerns in relation to his/her society. Identity is an issue in this complicated society in which many modern drama presents the character as having no true identity at all (Hornby, 1986).

Role playing within the play is effectively used in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*. Here the metadrama of the play is manifested in Ros and Guil's dualistic roles, both of which demonstrate the absence of their identities. Ros and Guil taken from *Hamlet* and placed in Stoppard's play to be allowed to explore their existence, yet their destiny is still controlled by *Hamlet*. They exist in both plays, coming in and off both stages.

Though they seem to play major roles in Stoppard's stage, possessing some measure of thinking and free speech, yet they are not comfortable in their new roles and feel at loss without being instructed. Being minor characters in *Hamlet*, they are used to being instructed that when they are allowed to make their own decision, they feel lost. It reaches the point where Guil complains saying that "We have been left so much to our own devices" (Stoppard, 2013, p. 47). And because of this confusion, they do not remember their past, only recalling that they were summoned without knowing by whom and for what.

The "reality" of their new world in Stoppard's play does not function as usual, leaving them bewildered. And because they have difficulty in understanding what they should do, they seem to be bad actors in both plays. When they are engaged in the plot of *Hamlet* in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, the actors do not seem to know



how to act, "But we don't know what's going on, or what to do with ourselves... We don't know how to act... We only know what we're told, and that's little enough..." (p. 48).

Stoppard forces them into doing things or acting on their own, and at the same time, lets them end up playing acts, merely responding to their parts (Fei, 2007). Without their true identities, they face difficulties knowing when they are their genuine self and when they are acting. Not only Ros and Guil are immersed in role playing within the play, but there is also the Player, who is one of the Tragedians. For the player, role playing has become a reality because he is continuously playing a part in some play. In the boat scene, when Guil stabs the Player, the audience and Guil are tricked into believing that the Player is actually killed by Guil, but when the "dead" actor stands up again bowing to the audience and to his fellow tragedians, he makes both Guil and the audience confounded by their discovery that perhaps reality is not always what it seems (Stoppard, 2013). The Player comments on the audience's perception of death onstage as merely an actor's casual exit (p. 84). The audience cannot accept a true death onstage, and thus giving the assumption that the members of the audience are often confused about the nature of truth, as illustrated by their belief as a fictive stage death as true reality (Hinchliffe, 2017).

Stoppard's aim in role plays is not only to assert the nature of reality as deceitful force, but also to assert the role-playing self as a normative element of modern human life where ordinary people just like Ros and Guil are often assigned roles in society to perform, and they have to successfully convince an observing audience of their ability to handle such role. According to Schlueter, Ros and Guil's situation is a "reminiscent of our own acquiescence to the demands of social conventions which constantly force us to assume a fictive identity" (p. 3).

Stoppard's implementation of role playing versus reality reflects that nothing presented onstage is what it seems. Just like Ros and Guil's game of questions and answers where the pursuit of answers will only produce more questions, Stoppard's view on the nature of reality preoccupied by Ros, Guil, and the Player is ambiguous. Stoppard does not give clear answers to the question of what is real and what is fiction. Stoppard has opened his audience up to a world of infinite questions, and therefore a world of infinite possible solutions.

### 3.5 Self-Reference within the Play: Theatrical Reflections

The last device of the metadrama is the self-reference within the play which directly calls attention to the play itself as an imaginative world and thus is strongly metadramatic. It makes the audience examine consciously

what lies behind the play and control their response to the world of drama, since how they perceive the drama is also the means by which they see the world (Fei, 2007).

It is one of the fundamental factors in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*. Stoppard presents theatricality to remind the audience that they are watching actors playing and presenting the nature of theatrical fiction. An example of self-reference is the Player's self-conscious theatricality that sets the performers apart from the audience like "two sides of the same coin" (Stoppard, 2013, p. 16). The Player says that "We're actors... we're the opposite of people! ... We pledged our identities, secure in the conventions of our trade that someone would be watching (pp. 45-46). When the Player separates the tragedians from Ros and Guil, the vision is doubled in which the audience is watching the play, and Ros and Guil in the play are the audience of the tragedians. The Player comprehends his play world very well.

Life onstage is always prewritten, "everyone who is marked for death dies... We follow direction... there is no choice involved" (Stoppard, 2013, pp. 57-58). The Player finds order in art where the script and logic are there. The tragedians construct their own reality by acting, accepting or at least surrendering themselves to the changing reality they are given. This idea echoes Camus' idea of the absurd.

On the other hand, Ros and Guil are bewildered and confused when trying hard to separate life and art, and thus incapable of perceiving the dialectics between the two. Guil's statement "there is an art to the building up of suspense" (p. 7) reflects the suspense between life and art, between reality and fiction, where they have never found a right place that they could feel security and certainty. They both aspire to a story that is well-made "with a beginning, middle and end" (p. 58) like the world they want to be in – a world in good order that they can understand and follow.

They want art to mirror life, so it can reveal significance and meaning which both characters try to seek. Unfortunately, they are given neither order nor meaning. Neither are they made to understand that like the tragedians do. They live in the same play world where the normal rules of probability and expectation are not functioning. The only reality left certain to them as Guil asserts "... the only end is death... if you can't count on that, what can you count on? ... death, it's just a man failing to reappear, that's all... now you see him, now you don't, that's the only thing that's real..." (Stoppard, 2013, p. 61).

In the boat scene, where Guil stabs the Player and is convinced that he is dead but to discover that he was fooled when the Player stands up and bows to the

tragedians and audience. To Guil, by killing the Player, he demonstrates the fictional nature of what he believes to be real. The death of the Player is just another fiction. "Reality can be created and acted" (Fei, 2007, p. 105), but what is truly real? The two protagonists begin from nowhere and are still in the middle of nowhere asking "Who are we?" (Stoppard, 2013, p. 89), unable to identify themselves in their failures to understand a world of art and life "which is a kind of integrity" (p. 20).

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, the main characters of Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, demonstrate to us a confused, helpless world of two common persons who have no sense of identity and certainty. With his skillful implementation of metadrama in the play, Stoppard presents us a kaleidoscopic world through which his two protagonists' baffled situation was vividly observed and perceived. By deftly employing metadramatic devices, Stoppard invites audiences to contemplate the blurred boundaries between truth and illusion, performance, and reality.

Through the bewildered journey of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, the play confronts themes of absurdity, identity crisis, and the futile quest for meaning in a world devoid of certainty. As Stoppard's protagonists grapple with their existential predicament, the audience is compelled to reflect on their own roles in the intricate theater of life. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* stands as a testament to the power of metadrama to illuminate the human condition, leaving us to ponder the enigmatic dance between fiction and reality long after the final curtain falls.

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# A Critical Discourse Analysis on Chapter One of *A Tale of Two Cities*

Dr. Barbara Constance

The University of Trinidad and Tobago, Trinidad and Tobago

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**Abstract**— This article uses Critical Discourse Analysis to elucidate the economic disparities featured in Chapter One of *A Tale of Two Cities*. The analysis focuses on the abstract, orientation, and the paradigmatic and syntagmatic links within the chapter and reveals the ways in which Chapter One sets the stage for the framework, mood and tone for the reader. It prepares the reader for the despondent and drastic occurrences to be unfolded within the novel.

**Keywords**— Critical Discourse Analysis, Economic disparities, Chapter One, Framework, Mood and tone



## I. INTRODUCTION

*A Tale of Two Cities* is a narrative discourse by Charles Dickens on eighteenth century France and England, which highlights the economic disparity between the opulent rich and the deprived poor. The term ‘discourse’ refers to ‘a stretch of language that may be longer than one sentence’ (Salkie, 1995, p. ix), whereas ‘discourse structure’ refers to three distinct but connected components (linguistic structure, intentional structure and attentional structure) within the discourse that exist simultaneously and integratively (Grosz & Snider, 1986). Harris (1951) asserts that structure is a pattern by which segments of the discourse occur (and recur) relative to each other. Taking into consideration the componential analysis afforded through critical discourse analysis, its use, thus, facilitates an in-depth understanding of any narrative. Using components of narrative discourse structure: abstract, orientation, and paradigmatic and syntagmatic links, Chapter One in *A Tale of Two Cities* will be analyzed and evaluated.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Van Dijk (2006) asserts that critical discourse analysis is focused on and motivated by the attempt to understand social issues which are relevant and pressing, particularly as it refers to power, social imbalance, and

abuse. It highlights issues in society that are not only trending but also influence actions and changes within society. Thus, it is sometimes referred to as “a social movement” of discourse analysts who are politically committed to their positions (Van Dijk, 2006).

According to Mogashoa (2014), CDA ‘is primarily positioned in the environment of language’ (p. 105). Thus, language within the text is a mirror into the minds and souls of the characters that displays their epistemologies, and reveals the collective mindset of the wider society and historical point in time. Mogashoa (2014) elaborates that the study of the textual language helps us to encounter the speakers’ ‘beliefs, positions and ideas, in terms of spoken texts like conversations’ (p. 105).

As explained by Van Dijk (2006), critical discourse analysis is not a singular method of research per se, but is an overarching all-inclusive theory that subsumes various types of discourse analysis. These types include sociolinguistics, discourse grammar, narrative analysis and conversation analysis. Whichever the type, analysis is the focus rather than just description, and the analysis generally focuses on political or social difficulties (Van Dijk, 2006).

As it relates to narrative discourse, Elson and Mckeown (2012) submit that the narrative has been used as a vehicle to convey human thought inter-generationally, or from one generation to another. Thus, as human interaction evolves, so too do the depth and complexity of the narrative.

Furthermore, Elson and McKeown (2012) state that 'The analysis of discourse concerns the relations between clauses and sentences that make a document more than the sum of its parts' (p. 3). Likewise, Bamberg (2015) asserts that 'the referential and ideational fixity of writing orients more clearly toward intentions 'behind' the text that are to some degree now inscribed or fixated by writing' (p. 217). Thus, the narrative offers us a stative structure that presents categories and levels that can be used to examine human intention, societal complexities and political identities.

Foucault (1972) highlights the ways in which the multifunctional use of language within can assist in operationalizing 'theoretical claims about the socially constitutive properties of discourse and text' (p. 6). As such, the text mirrors what transpires in society and acts as a repository of human development. However, it is worth noting that there are many versions of discourse analysis (Van Dijk, 1997). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that the same text may yield differing perspective and understandings of the societal context within which it had been penned. According to Fairclough (2004), text analysis, of which linguistic analysis is a subset, is an important facet of discourse analysis. More specifically, Genette (1983) posits that the narrative discourse analysis, in particular, 'implies a study of relationships: on the one hand the relationship between a discourse and the events that it recounts...on the other hand the relationship between the same discourse and the act that produces it' (p. 27).

Notably, narrative discourse analysis can vary based on the focus of the researcher. There is no one agreed upon prescriptive approach by the various mavens of critical discourse analysis with respect to analyzing the narrative discourse. In the case of the present paper, the focus is on diverse aspects of the text and how they help to build the message and the multiple themes within the text.

### III. NARRATIVE DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

#### The Abstract

The abstract helps the reader, because it sets the tone for the novel. According to Wood (2009),

[The] origin of an abstract term lies in the function of summarizing, or standing in place of, a narrative or narratives. The meaning of an abstraction is to be found ultimately in the kinds of stories from which it emerged. Abstraction is thus an inter-textual phenomenon. (p. 484)

The reader is, therefore, able to receive an insight into the contents of the story from inception. This is also reflected in the title of chapter one, 'The Period' and the words, 'It was the best of times, it was the worst of times'

(Dickens, 1972, p. 1). This opening allows the reader to anticipate the action, characters and the theme. The reader can also determine that the story is set in a time that was fraught with marked upheavals, disparities and paradoxes.

Thus, connections can be made to the situation that actually existed in the 'period' in which the narrative is set. There were drastic differences between the rich and the poor belonging to that setting. For the rich, 'it was the best of times', which is revealed in the extravagant lifestyle of Monseigneur, who was seen 'in his inner room, his sanctuary of sanctuaries, the Holiest of Holiests to the crowd of worshippers in the suite of rooms without' (Dickens, 1972, p. 108). This starkly contrasted with the standard for which his office stood. His utter opulence clearly disparate to the poor for whom 'it was the worst of times', and whom The Marquis addressed as 'you dogs' (Dickens, 1972, p. 117). They are also referred to as 'the rats' (Dickens, 1972, p. 117) and 'the common wretches' (Dickens, 1972, p. 114). This vast chasm between the lifestyle of the rich and the poor engenders a rage over the unfairness of the blatant differences and disregard, and sets the stage and expectation for the impending revolution, which was to take place in France. As such, Chapter One grants the reader an insight into the chaos that would ensue later on.

#### The Orientation

There is a smooth, uninterrupted transition into another component of the narrative discourse structure, the orientation. This component gives the reader an idea of the setting and the circumstances involved. The setting in Chapter One is both spatial and temporal. The spatial and temporal settings are indicated by the deixis and the diction used. In terms of the temporal setting, one can examine the first word of the first paragraph, 'it'. This pronoun is paradigmatically linked to the time period. This is known because of the word 'times' that follows and other words in that sentence, which belong to that lexical field, for example, 'age', 'epoch', and 'season'. The pronoun 'it' is also cataphorically linked to the first sentence in paragraph three, 'It was the year of Our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five' (Dickens, 1972, p. 4).

#### The Temporal Setting

The temporal setting is maintained throughout the novel. The time is repeated at the end of Chapter One, 'thus did the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy – five conduct their greatnesses' (Dickens, 1972, p. 6). The narrator maintains the time link by giving particular cues, such as the title in the beginning of the first chapter of Book Two, 'Five years later' (Dickens, 1972, p. 45). The time link is also presented in the last chapter of Book Two which reads, 'The August of the year one thousand seven hundred

and ninety – two was come, and Monseigneur was by this time scattered far and wide' (Dickens, 1972, p. 205). This reveals the time period in Chapter One as being the starting point around which the entire story is linked and pivoted. In order to add credibility to and underscore the time period, the narrator lists social events which have historically occurred in the stated time periods, for example, 'the spiritual messages of Mrs. Southcott' and 'the rapping out' of messages in England. Doyle (1926) declared that spiritual in London was pronounced in the 1850's, with Mrs. Hayden being a particularly influential within that time period. This links the temporal setting of chapter one to the actual historical and cultural events that had taken place heretofore and the events which were to follow in the novel.

### **Spatial Setting**

In terms of the spatial setting, the narrator uses England and France, the name of the countries that are involved. The reader is, thus, oriented towards the events and characters in these locations. These two countries are mentioned in a paralleled fashion, the parallelism being a miniature representation of the back-and-forth movement of the events between them. Moreover, this parallelism continues in the subsequent paragraphs of Chapter One. In paragraph three, the narrator focuses on the then current events in England and then shifts the readers' attention to France in the fourth paragraph. This parallelism continues throughout the novel. In Chapter Two, 'The Mail', there is an apparent shift in focus, with the events taking place in England, where the reader meets Mr. Lorry and is introduced to the circumstances surrounding Dr. Manette. By Chapter Five, 'The Wine – Shop', the reader's attention is then shifted to France once again. This narrative pendular movement continues throughout the novel, in essence moving the story, while allowing readers to compare the events.

### **Syntagmatic and Paradigmatic Relations**

Two other elements of narrative discourse that help in the understanding of Chapter One of *A Tale of Two Cities* are the syntagmatic and paradigmatic links. The syntagmatic links assist in tying the discourse together as a cohesive unit. These links are represented in the ordering of the events and the presence of cataphora, anaphora, deixis and prolepsis. Thus, the narration starts with a description of the times, the presentation of the locations and their monarchs, a description of the events in England, followed by France's events, then England's and, finally, a commentary. This order is maintained throughout the book, highlighting the shifting scenes between England and France. It also underscores the symbiotic relationship between the two nations.

### **Cataphora**

The use of cataphoric links is a major tool used in *A Tale of Two Cities*. Such links linearly precede their linked expressions or postcedents (Pablos, Doetjes, Ruijgrok & Cheng, 2015). The most present cataphoric link, "It", was encountered from the beginning of the first chapter of the novel. The antecedent of this deictic pronoun was later disclosed in paragraph three, where the reader gets a description, elaboration and explanation of 'it'.

### **Anaphora**

Furthermore, an anaphoric link (where the link, such as a pronoun, follows its linked expression or antecedent) is seen in the use of the distal deictic adjective 'that' in 'that favored period' in the third paragraph. The reader is able to connect 'that' with the first paragraph and with the first sentence of the third paragraph, 'It was the year of Our Lord...' This is immediately paralleled with the time of the narration by the use of the proximal deictic pronoun 'this' in 'at that favoured period, as at this.' Another example of anaphora is seen in words like 'both' in the second paragraph, where 'both' refers to the two countries, which were previously mentioned, England and France. One can also identify anaphora in the second sentence of paragraph four in the phrase, 'she entertained herself', where the pronoun 'she' points back to the proper noun 'France' from the previous sentence.

### **Prolepsis**

Another syntagmatic link that can be used to examine *A Tale of Two Cities* is prolepsis. The reference to the 'Woodman, Fate', 'the Farmer, Death' and the 'tumbrils of the Revolution' is an example of prolepsis or flashforward (Simpson, 2004). These referents represent a foreshadowing of future events and are a direct link to the bloodshed and the revolution that readers encounters as they delve deeper into the narrative. The paragraph continues with the mechanism that played a particularly central but disturbing role in the French Revolution.

### **Imagery**

Moreover, imagery was employed such as the expression, 'to come down and be sawn into boards, to make a certain movable framework with a sack and a knife in it terrible in history' (Dickens, p. 5). More of this symbolic machine is mentioned in Chapter Four of Book Three, where it reads, '[a]bove all, one hideous figure grew as familiar as if it had been before the general gaze from the foundations of the world – the figure of the sharp female called La Guillotine.' At the presentation of the term "La Guillotine", the reader would have already been prepared with the use of its foreshadowed image, introduced since chapter one.

Paragraph five, which takes the reader back to England, also has links to the rest of the novel. In this case, prolepsis is seen in the expression 'the highwayman in the dark was a tradesman in the light.' This is mirrored in the case of Jerry Cruncher who was a messenger for Tellson's Bank in the day and a 'Resurrection Man' in the night. To some degree, it is also reflected in the Defarges who sell wine outwardly but are in fact very integral to the planning and execution of the Revolution. Thus, the first chapter of the book is not only paradigmatically linked but also structurally linked internally and with the rest of the narrative discourse.

Focus on the paradigmatic links in Chapter One of the narration would reveal that these links account for coherence. While the syntagmatic links are explicit, the paradigmatic links are implied. The paradigmatic links are the parallels that can be made with the themes. One notices in the first paragraph that there are two basic themes of discernible disparity that are highlighted. One of these themes reflect hope as seen in expressions such as, 'best', 'wisdom', 'belief', 'spring of hope', 'everything before us' and 'going direct to Heaven'. These expressions can be paralleled with the new beginning Charles Darnay found in London and with Doctor Manette being 'recalled to life'. This idea of hope recurs throughout the narrative in parallel themes such as resurrection and renewal. In fact, the theme of resurrection is found in the final chapter of the book where one finds Sydney Carlton recalling the scriptural verse, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life.'

An occurring parallel to the theme of hope is the contrasting theme of despair. This theme of despair is seen in such expressions as 'worst', 'foolishness', 'incredulity', 'darkness', 'winter of despair', 'nothing before us' and 'going the other direction.' These opposites show a strong field of paradoxes in the opening chapter, which continue throughout the novel. One can conclude that the same era that was 'light' to some was 'darkness' to others. This theme of despair is reflected in the lives of those belonging to the lower classes. However, with the Revolution it is apparent that the fortunes of the two major classes had turned, with the despair being expressed by the upper class. It is also paralleled with the similar themes of death and the revolution. Therefore, the first chapter of the novel prepares the reader for the different themes and paradoxes in the novel.

### Diction

Another important element of discourse structure that contributes to an understanding of Chapter One in *A Tale of Two Cities* is that of diction. Diction refers to the words that comprise the discourse. In the first paragraph, one notices that the narrator uses temporal descriptions such

as 'times', 'age', 'epoch' and 'season'. These temporal nouns prepare the reader for a narration that will happen over a period of time. They also suggest that there may be something unique about the time over which the story was told. In the second paragraph, the narrator uses monosyllabic words to describe the monarchs of England and France. One reads, for example, '[t]here were a king with a large jaw and a queen with a plain face' (Dickens, p. 4). The simple words seem to suggest that they were not very cognizant of the anarchy that was to come upon their countries. Therefore, in terms of the knowledge necessary to curb the impending commotions, they were simpletons.

The manner in which the year in paragraph three is expressed reflects the era in which the narration occurs. It is, therefore, consistent with the first and second paragraph. It confirms to the reader of the twenty-first century, that the story belonged to the eighteenth century. This is supported by some factual evidence, such as the 'spiritual revelations' of Mrs. Southcott in England and the 'sentencing' of the youth in France. The words used here all reflect a specific space in time and adds depth and credibility to the story. The diction in Chapter One also helps in giving the reader a sense of time and place. By the time readers conclude Chapter One, they are comfortably oriented.

The discourse narrative in Chapter One also employs a number of metaphors that help to propel the story and keep it tightly woven. From the first chapter, one encounters examples such as, 'it was the season of Light, it was the season of darkness' (Dickens, p. 4). An analysis of the terms quoted here gives readers much more information than is uttered. They are given a few metaphorical descriptions that highlight the time, though not in so many words. In the third paragraph, another type of metaphor, metonymy, is used. This is seen in the sentence, '[m]ere messages in the earthly order of events had lately come to the English Crown and People' (Dickens, p. 4). It is clear that the messages are not directed to a literal physical crown but to the king and queen who are wearing the crown.

Other figurative devices that help the narrative details to cohere include irony and personification. Irony is found in the second paragraph of Chapter One, where it reads, 'it was clearer than crystal to the lords of the State preserves of loaves and fishes, that things in general were settled forever' (Dickens, p. 4). This is ironic since nothing is further from the truth as seen in the anarchy in England and the impending Revolution in France. There is the sense that trouble is brooding in these two countries from the events stated in Chapter One such as the excesses of the rich in France, and the 'daring burglaries by armed men' (Dickens, p. 5) in England. Another clue of impending conflict is discerned in the phrase, 'rolled with exceeding



smoothness downhill.' This irony helps set a tone for the shock that greets the aristocrats because they had no time to see the displeasure and the pain of the oppressed.

The fourth paragraph also presents a combination of sarcasm and irony. Talking about France, the narrator states,

She entertained herself, besides, with such humane achievements as sentencing a youth to have his hands cut off, his tongue torn out with pincers, and his body burned alive, because he had not kneeled down in the rain to do honour to a dirty procession of monks which passed within his view, at a distance of some fifty or sixty yards. (Dickens, p. 4)

This statement reveals the extent of horror that was the norm at that time. This is ironic since the action is described as 'humane' and is carried out 'under the guidance of Christian pastors' who are supposed to be merciful and reflect the life of Christ. This links to the event in which Monsieur the Marquis' carriage killed a child and the fact that he would not have stopped but for 'the latter inconvenience', which is that 'the horses reared and plunged' (Dickens, p. 114). The irony mentioned in Chapter One also gives the reader a reason for the terrible anger that the lower class executed in the revolution.

Additionally, examples of personification are seen in paragraph four. The narrative personifies fate and death. Reference is made to the sufferer 'already marked by the Woodman, Fate' and 'the Farmer, Death' who had already set apart victims to be 'his tumbrels of the Revolution.' One reads further, '[b]ut that Woodman and that Farmer, though they work unceasingly, work silently.' The use of personification here bestows immense power to fate and death. It underscores the inevitability of what is to take place in France. This is reiterated in Chapter Seven of Book Two where the women 'still knitted with the steadfastness of Fate' and 'so much life in the city ran into death' (Dickens, p. 98). To compound this sense of inevitability are the words 'time and tide waited for no man...all things ran their course' (Dickens, p. 117). This gives the sense that the reader is being prepared for the Revolution.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The narrative discourse structure analysis is a legitimate and significant approach to the understanding of literature. It highlights both the syntagmatic and paradigmatic links in Chapter One of *A Tale of Two Cities*. This investigation also reveals the links that extend throughout the entire novel. One can conclude that utilizing critical discourse analysis to examine the structure of the opening chapter of a text aids readers' comprehension of

that temporal position and prepares them for future unfolding events later in the narrative discourse.

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# A Comparative Study of English Translations of Jin Yong's Martial Arts Novels from the Perspective of Reception Aesthetics — A Hero Born and The Deer and the Cauldron as an Example

Xin Mu, Zejuan Li\*

School of Foreign Studies, Yangtze University, Jingzhou, Hubei, 434023, China

\*Corresponding Author

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**Abstract**— This paper selects the English translation of *The Deer and the Cauldron* by British translator John Minford and the English translation of *A Hero Born* by young Swedish translator Anna Holmwood as the objects of study. Based on the theory of reception aesthetics of Jauss, it compares and analyses translation strategies and translation methods used by the two translators who are trying to achieve the greatest degree of field of vision integration according to readers' expectation field of vision in the translation of their respective novels.

**Keywords**— Reception Aesthetics, English Translation of Martial Arts, Horizon of Expectations, Fusion of Horizons



## I. INTRODUCTION

General Secretary Xi Jinping said, "The rejuvenation of a nation is always strongly supported by the flourishing of culture, and the progress of an era is always marked by the prosperity of culture." Wuxia culture is a unique characteristic culture in China. In order to promote the dissemination of Chinese wuxia culture to the outside world, carry forward the traditional culture of Chinese martial arts, and inherit the beauty of the excellent Chinese wuxia culture, there are many domestic and foreign wuxia novel writers and enthusiasts. There are also more and more English translations of wuxia novels who are helping Chinese wuxia culture gradually going to the Western world. As a famous writer of Chinese martial arts novels,

Jin Yong, together with Gu Long, Liang Yusheng and Wen Rui'an, is known as the Four Great Masters of Chinese Martial Arts Novels. His martial arts novels have unique characteristics of Chinese martial arts culture, and are a good medium for the dissemination of martial arts and Chinese culture. His many novels have been translated by foreign translators and have received particular attention in recent years.

In this paper, *The Deer and the Cauldron* translated by British translator John Minford and *A Hero Born* translated by young Swedish translator Anna Holmwood are selected as the research objects<sup>[1]</sup>. Among the many English translations of Jin Yong's novels, these two English translations have won unanimous praise at home

and abroad. John Minford, a British sinologist, scholar, and literary translator, has translated Chinese classics such as *Dream of the Red Chamber* (the last forty times), *Strange Tales of a Lonely Studio*, and *The Book of Changes* into Chinese. Anna Holmwood, a Swedish translator, whose English version of *A Hero Born, Book 1*, was reprinted to the 7th edition in the first month of its publication in the UK and sold like hot cakes. Based on the theory of reception aesthetics of German Jauss, this paper is intended to compare and analyze the translation strategies and methods chosen by the two translators in their respective translations according to the readers' expectation horizons, who are aiming to achieve the greatest degree of integration of readers' expectation horizons.

## II. READERS' HORIZONS OF EXPECTATION IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF MARTIAL ARTS NOVELS

Based on the theory of horizon of expectation in reception aesthetics<sup>[2]</sup>, the author examined the expectation horizons of the readers of western martial arts novels by constructing a corpus of readers' book reviews in the western world. With reference to the current situation of Chinese martial arts works, the author collected readers' book reviews of the English translations of the three works of Jin Yong, *The Deer and the Cauldron* written by John Minford, *A Hero Born* written by Anna Holmwood and *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* written by Oliva Mok. From two authoritative foreign book review websites, namely, Amazon and Goodreads, the author collected 956 reviews. *The Deer and the Cauldron* written by John Minford collected a total of 58 valid book reviews (42 from Goodreads, 16 from Amazon), *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* written by Olivia Mok collected a total of 15 valid book reviews on Amazon. *A Hero Born, A Snake Lies Waiting, A Heart Divided* written by Anna Holmwood collected a total of 883 valid book reviews (795 from Goodreads, 88 from Amazon). The total number of valid book reviews is 956 and 131,192 words. After the corpus was collected, the author pre-processed the corpus, including corpus cleaning, lexical partitioning, lexical labelling and other operations, and finally constructed a corpus of readers' book reviews of the English translation

of Jin Yong's martial arts.

### Corpus Analysis

Antconc was used by the author to construct a corpus for data statistics, and the text descriptive analysis of the corpus was carried out from multiple perspectives, such as high-frequency words, collocational word frequency, modal word frequency, etc., to examine the attitudes of readers of Jin Yong's martial arts translations to the existing translations, and to deduce the horizon of expectations of Western readers when reading martial arts translations.

### Data Processing

Firstly, using the Antconc word frequency search function to remove the deactivated words (such as of, a, the, in and other dummy words), the author screened out a total of 25 high-frequency words with a word frequency of 200 and above (see Table 1). Then, the Cluster function was used to retrieve the list of clusters arranged in order around the high-frequency words. In the fourth step, the KWIC terminology index function was used to search for the high-frequency words in focus, and the File View function was used to view the context of the word in the original language.

Table 1 High-frequency Words

Word	Rank	Freq
book	12	1312
story	19	795
read	22	726
chinese	24	639
characters	29	565
series	33	500
translation	35	493
martial	48	380
fu	52	346
guo	54	341
jin	55	338
kung	56	337
reading	63	311
arts	64	306
yong	68	292
english	71	290
jing	74	278
books	77	268
names	78	264

hero	82	251
time	88	238
translated	89	235
heroes	90	232
character	97	207
action	100	200

### Analysis Results

According to Table 1, the first three high-frequency words are “book”, “story” and “read”, which are commonly used by readers when writing book reviews. Therefore, these words can not be analysed in depth. The fourth high-frequency word is “Chinese”. Through the search of “Chinese” high-frequency collocations in Cluster (see Table 2), the high-frequency collocations are “Chinese history”, “Chinese history”, “Chinese history” and “Chinese history”, “Chinese Culture”, “Chinese Lord”, “Chinese Rings”, “Chinese literature”, “Chinese martial” and so on. The results show that history, culture and other literary elements as the main labels of the English translation of martial arts are also generally concerned by Western readers. Western readers will focus on Chinese history, culture, kung fu and other oriental elements when they read the translation of martial arts, and most of the verbs collocated with them are “know”, which shows that Western readers also want to know a certain amount of Chinese culture when they are reading.

What is striking is the high-frequency phrase “Chinese Lord”. Western readers think that Jin Yong's martial arts works are the Chinese version of *The Lord of the Rings*, so the author briefly understood and analysed *The Lord of the Rings* and learned that martial arts novels

were indeed similar to Western fantasy novels to some extents. Both of them portray legendary heroes and highlight the theme of upholding justice, which reflects the readers' concern about the portrayal of chivalrous characters.

Table 2 High-frequency Collocations of word “Chinese”

Cluster	Rank	Freq	NormFreq
chinese history	1	54	0.085
chinese culture	2	35	0.055
chinese lord	2	35	0.055
chinese martial	4	28	0.044
chinese names	5	22	0.034
chinese and	6	19	0.030
chinese version	7	18	0.028
chinese classic	8	16	0.025

The next high-frequency word is characters, which is a word that intuitively reflects readers' attitudes and readers' concerns, indicating that readers pay special attention to the characters in the novel. The author conducted a word cluster search for it, and searched for high-frequency collocations in the left and right directions. The search results are shown in Table 3. As shown in the table, readers discuss more about protagonists, female characters, the complexity and variety of characters, and minor roles, which reflect their concern about the image of characters in the novel. In the search to the right, the author obtained the key phrase “character names”, and the complexity and diversity of character images in martial arts novels can be reflected by the translation of character names and nicknames.

Table 3 High-frequency Cluster of word “Character”

Cluster(Left)	Rank	Freq	Cluster(Right)	Rank	Freq
main characters	4	20	characters names	14	6
female characters	8	10	characters constantly	32	3
colorful characters	14	5	characters straight	32	3
complex characters	19	3	characters coming	39	2
fictional characters	19	3	characters gliding	39	2
minor characters	19	3	characters guo	39	2

The seventh high-frequency word is “translation”, which will directly reflect the readers' attitude towards the evaluation of the translation of martial arts novels, using

the search function to collocate search, the search results are as follows (see Table 4), and using the KWIC function and file view to check the specific context, and screening

the effective readers' evaluations and analyze the readers' attitudes.

Table 4 Collocates of word "translation"

Collocate	Rank	Freq(Scaled)	FreqLR	FreqL	FreqR	Range	Likelihood	Effect
english	1	2900	78	66	12	1	159.908	2.674
lost	2	810	40	39	1	1	125.656	3.551
literal	4	210	17	14	3	1	69.580	4.264
holmwood	5	700	20	15	5	1	42.936	2.761
anna	7	520	13	8	5	1	24.925	2.569
fu	9	3460	1	0	1	1	21.885	-3.866
kung	10	3370	1	0	1	1	21.176	-3.828
names	12	2640	28	4	24	1	18.102	1.332
exists	13	40	4	1	3	1	18.056	4.569
official	15	80	5	5	0	1	17.925	3.891
inconsistent	15	80	5	2	3	1	17.925	3.891

The readers used English translation to introduce English translations with a high frequency, but most of them were about the English version of a certain book, without a lot of coverage and evaluation of specific contents. The second high-frequency collocation is surprising. According to the search results of the Antconc, we found that "lost in translation" was mentioned in 40 readers' book reviews, which was analyzed by the translator by looking at the specific reviews.

Review 1: And yes details definitely get lost in the translation. I'm frequently disappointed when comparing the Chinese and English sections (the parts i can understand perfectly fine, of course). The dialogue suffers the most in the loss of nuance. it doesn't much matter how the characters express themselves in Chinese-flippant, cutting, incensed, mocking, jovial - once translated into English, they all sound matter-of-fact and devoid of attitude and feeling. Barbs and quips become straightforward statements that convey the meaning of the original words but lack the flavor.

Reader 1 thinks that a lot of detailed information is lost in the translation, such as the most serious loss in the dialogue of the characters, and the emotions of the characters, such as levity, sarcasm, anger, ridicule, and joy are not well translated, which affects the expression of the characters' emotions and the portrayal of their images.

Review 2: Although this only the start of a great saga I can assure one would not be disappointed with it. Yes, the beauty of the book does get lost in translation, yet the

translator has done a somewhat good job to catch the essence of it at the end.

Reader 2 thinks that the translated text has lost the beauty of the original text. It is not discussed in detail, but reflects the reader's aesthetic needs for the translation.

Review 3: Right off the bat, I am going to tell you that I am rating this book 3 out of 5 stars. I don't want anyone to think that this detracts from the book. The story is a Chinese classic. When I heard it was being translated, I knew it would be a huge undertaking. Many had said it couldn't be done. I love the basics of the story, I just feel indifferent because I couldn't connect with it. The characters are very dry and the fight scenes are not as epic as I anticipated. I cannot blame the translator, but it does feel like a lot of the substance of the story got lost in translation.

Reader 3 believed that a large amount of content in the book is missing, specifically its evaluation involves the character image is not full, the fight scene is not grand enough, reflecting the reader's expectations of the fight scene. And this reader thinks that the translator should pay attention to the translation of the description of the fight scene in the translation, so that it reflects the coherence and vividness of the fight scene of martial arts novels.

Review 4: My Chinese definitely isn't good enough to read the original, but I feel like there was a significant amount lost in translation. To be clear, I have the utmost respect for the art of translation and imagine that translating this book in particular was a challenge,

considering the differences ranging from syntax to culture that had to be accounted for. That said, I'm puzzled by some of the translatorial choices made here, including translating and flipping some names and not others (ex: Guo Jing and Skyfury Guo, who are son and father and therefore share the last name “Guo”), the specific syntax of the poetry, and a few more little things that added up over the course of 400 pages. I also found the narrative structure slightly monotonous, a predictable cycle of battles (both of martial arts and, to some extent, of strategy) and training and travel.

Review 5: Quite fun though I felt it may have lost something in translation as there were a few times the language just felt jarring or off centre. The huge cast of characters which was a little intimidating but the fighting scenes were really cool and overall this was a decent read. I can't recommend it to everyone but if you really love the wuxia genre this might be worth picking up.

Reader 4 thinks that it is difficult to translate martial arts novels and that the translator needs to consider the differences from grammar to culture. At the same time, this reader has doubts about the translation of some personal names, syntactic translation and the narrative structure of the fight scenes, while Reader 5 directly specifies the rawness of the language in the translation process. This reflects that readers will not only pay attention to the cultural differences but also unconsciously pay attention to the linguistic differences, including vocabulary, grammar, syntactic structure, etc. Translators

need to focus on the linguistic habits of the English readers during the translation process, and try to conform to the narrative logic in English in order to avoid causing doubts to the English readers.

Review 6: While some readers may argue that the ingenuity of this masterwork is lost in translation, I would say the translator Anna Holmwood did a great job. It is never an easy feat to translate Chinese into English given the many significant differences between the 2 most widely spoken languages in the world. Yes, some details are not translated but it's all done to maintain the flow of the English prose. Overall, it is a pleasant and enjoyable read even for me who have read the Chinese version twice.

Reader 6, on the other hand, was optimistic in terms of the loss of details in the translation, which was regarded as the translator's way of dealing with it in order to balance the English-Chinese language differences and to maintain the fluency of the English language. This further reflects the necessity for translators to pay attention to the English-Chinese language differences in the translation process and to maintain the fluency of the translation.

The next few high-frequency words, “martial”, “art”, “kung fu” are all representative words of Chinese martial arts and kung fu, which intuitively reflect the readers' expectation of Chinese martial arts while reading novels. The translator conducted word clusters searches and screened out the high-frequency word clusters, and the results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5 High-frequency clusters of word “martial” and “kung fu”

Cluster(martial)	Rank	Freq	Cluster	Rank	Freq
martial arts moves	2	10	kung fu movies	1	27
martial arts movies	4	9	kung fu movie	3	23
martial arts fantasy	5	7	kung fu moves	4	22
martial arts masters	5	7	kung fu fights	5	12
martial arts novels	5	7	kung fu masters	6	11
martial arts action	12	5	kung fu fighting	7	8
martial arts literature	12	5	kung fu fantasy	9	7
martial arts movie	12	5	kung fu master	9	7
martial art moves	16	4	kung fu action	12	6
martial arts fiction	16	4	kung fu battles	12	6
martial arts film	16	4	kung fu skills	12	6

According to Table 5, in terms of the content of

martial arts, readers focus on the specific kungfu moves.



And further word search reveals that readers discuss more about the names of the martial arts moves, which indicates that translators should pay attention to the translation of martial arts moves which contain a large number of cultural connotations or strong imagery, all of which require translators to use appropriate translation strategies and methods. The second cluster is martial arts moves, which requires translators to use appropriate translation strategies and techniques. The second word cluster is martial arts movies. After the translator's in-depth observation of the specific context, he found that most readers are loyal fans of Chinese martial arts movies, which is also one of the major motives for them to read English translations of martial arts novels, and therefore they expect to get the same aesthetic experience as that of watching martial arts movies in reading martial arts novels, and the most important thing is the consistency and vivid imagery of the martial arts scenes. The most important thing is the coherence and vividness of the martial arts scenes.

By analyzing the high-frequency vocabulary in the corpus of readers' book reviews, the author came to the following conclusion: when reading English translations of wuxia novels, Western readers are mainly concerned about character portrayal, description of martial arts scenes, Chinese history and culture, wuxia culture, and whether or not the translated language conforms to the English expression habits, etc. According to the above focuses, the translator, under the perspective of acceptance aesthetics, can surmise that the readers' expectation horizons are roughly divided into three categories: cultural cognition expectation horizons, language habit expectation horizons, and aesthetic interest expectation horizons. Among them, cultural cognition mainly involves the translation of cultural load words such as history and culture, martial arts culture, etc. Linguistic habit expectation horizon should pay attention to the differences between Chinese and English, and strive for the authentic expression of the translated language and the conversion of logical thinking, etc. Aesthetic interest expectation horizon requires the translator to focus on the shaping of chivalrous image of the characters and the coherent and vivid portrayal of the martial arts scenes.

### III. HORIZON OF LINGUISTIC HABITUAL EXPECTATION

According to the reception aesthetics, the reader's cultural cognition and aesthetics interests are the higher-level expectation requirements. If the translation wants to achieve the fusion of the reader's cultural cognition and aesthetic interest horizons, the prerequisite is to promote the integration of the reader's horizon of linguistic habitual expectation, so that the translation conforms to the expression habits of the readers of the target language, and the readers are able to accept the translation initially. Therefore, translators must grasp the characteristics of the original text while translating, focus on the selection of appropriate vocabulary expression, jump out of the original sentence form, and not copy the original sentence formation and syntactic structure. In this regard, the two translators studied in this paper are both trying to make appropriate adjustments in vocabulary expression and syntactic structure according to the specific situation<sup>[6]</sup>.

#### Example 1

Original Text	那公子向左侧身，双掌虚实并用，一掌扰敌，一掌相攻。郭靖当下展开“分筋错骨手”双手飞舞，拿筋错节，招招不离对手全身关节穴道。那公子见他来势凌厉，掌法忽变，竟然也使出“分筋错骨手”来。
Anna Holmwood's Translation	The Prince launched forward with both palms, the first in a false move designed to distract. Guo Jing replied with a Split Muscles Lock Bones move, striking rapidly at various points across the Prince's body. The Prince echoed the same technique back.

Chinese makes good use of four-word phrases, short and concise sentences, and focuses on the whole meaning of sentence, while English makes good use of clauses and focuses on form of sentence. In Example 1, Holmwood focuses on the depiction of the gentleman's two palms, and plays down the action of turning to the left in order to show that the gentleman's intention of this action is to disturb Guo Jing. The four phrases are translated into English by focusing on the single word "distract", which

has actually indicated the essence of this sentence. And the next sentence describes Guo Jing's action. And the form of this sentence is consistent with the previous one, using a verb in the main clause and an action clause to present Guo Jing's action. These two people's action descriptions use the same form of expression, which makes the whole scene more contrasting, and is also more in line with the English form of expression.

#### Example 2

Original Text	哼，打开天窗说亮话。
John Minford's Translation	Huh, if you want it plain, you can have it plain!

In Example 2, due to language differences, Chinese often uses ‘明、亮’ to describe the clarity of a sentence, while in Western countries, straight or plain is used to describe the clarity of a sentence. Although there is a difference in expression, Minford here uses words that are in line with Western thinking to translate the original text, which achieves the integration of the reader's linguistic habits through the selection of fixed expressions that are in line with the English expression habits.

#### IV. HORIZON OF CULTURAL COGNITIONAL EXPECTATION

When English readers read the translated wuxia books, what they get most interested in is the rich and unique Chinese wuxia culture in the novels. And the two essential elements of wuxia culture are wu and xia, which complement each other like soul and body containing rich Chinese culture<sup>[4]</sup>. The most direct way to reflect them in the translated texts is the translation of martial arts moves. Therefore, translators need to focus on the translation of the cultural imagery in martial arts stances, so that the translation can not only take care of the original cultural vision of the Western readers to a certain extent, but also expand their cultural vision and help them understand the Chinese martial arts culture. Anna Holmwood's translations of martial arts stances and other martial arts cultural imagery are mostly direct translations depending on the context, and appropriate methods such as free translation, literal translation and explaining are adopted. Some martial arts moves are more obscure and difficult to understand, which need to be explained. However, free

translation is more suitable to these kinds of original texts, because it's better and easier for readers to understand the culture. It's no harm to sound a bit strange, so as to avoid the loss of cultural imagery. John Minford's descriptions of the movements in the martial arts scenes of *The Deer and The Cauldron* is very careful, and he also pursued coherence with the original text when translating the movements. His way of dealing with the action makes the basic style of the action appear in the minds of the readers of the translated language on the basis of retaining the image of the stance. While adopting the careful description of martial movements, John Minford also seeks to have coherence with the original text when he translates the action<sup>[7]</sup>.

#### Example 3

Original Text	九阴白骨爪
Anna Holmwood's Translation	Nine Yin Skeleton Claw

The Nine Yin Skeleton Claw is the most classic martial arts move in Jin Yong's novels<sup>[8]</sup>. When it first appeared in the original text, it only depicted the consequences of encountering this martial arts move—the skull of a skeleton which happened to be able to be inserted into with five fingers, which was creepy and frightening. In addition, there is no direct description of the specific use of this stance, but rather the power of this stance is reflected through a question and answer from the Seven Monsters of Jiangnan, which is finally brought out in a single sentence by Ke Zhene. In Chinese Taoist culture, nine is also often used to indicate the highest and most powerful degree, such as ‘九五之尊’, which is associated with emperors. In addition, there are many other words in the Chinese language that are related to nine. Nine has a special significance in Chinese culture, and Jin Yong must have considered this aspect when he used nine here. The translator, Anna Holmwood, used both direct and phonetic translations: Yin embodies the viciousness of the move, and since it is not possible to find a counterpart in English, it is translated phonetically to be close to the original expression; and the use of skeleton instead of bone embodies the ferocity of the move. The purpose of the translation is fluent and easy to understand, not necessarily to stick to the word by word or hard translation. A wonderful fight has been presented on the paper in one

breath, so vivid!

*Example 4*

Original Text	点穴、打穴
John Minford's Translation	closing point

In martial arts novels, closing points are used to restrict the opponent's movement. For the purpose of conveying the meaning of the statement, John Minford translated the meaning of pointing in the example sentence as opening the opponent's points. His generalisation is intended to achieve a relatively clear description of the specific acupuncture points on the human body. The translation is clearer to the reader of the imported language who lacks knowledge of classical culture.

## V. HORIZONS OF AESTHETIC INTEREST EXPECTATIONS

After analysing the data from the corpus of readers' book reviews, the author concluded that readers have certain expectations for the English translation of martial arts in reading aesthetics, and readers are influenced by early martial arts kung fu movies, expecting that reading the text can bring them the experiences of watching movies. At the same time, they have certain expectations for the characters with different personalities in martial arts novels, which requires the translator to ensure the fluency of the translation, the vividness of the description of the martial arts scenes and the three-dimensionality of the character portrayal in the process of translation through multiple perspectives such as phonetics, vocabulary, syntax and so on. Anna Holmwood's aesthetic interest in this aspect of the present imbalance in the pursuit of truth and pragmatism makes the aesthetic distance between the target language readers and the translated text become larger, which not only makes the readers think that the translated text is boring and tasteless, but even makes it unreadable and impedes the readers' integration of the field of vision. John Minford, on the other hand, seems to be slightly better in the aspect of white space, and the appropriate omission of translation gives the readers enough space for imagination to achieve a better aesthetic effect.

*Example 5*

Original Text	郭靖心知只要给他声张出来，黄蓉与自己不免有性命之忧，下手更不容情，钩、拿、抓、打、招招是分筋错骨手的狠辣家数。
Anna Holmwood's Translation	Not only had Guo Jing lost the medicine, but he was now in danger of alerting the palace to his presence. Lotus, too, would be in mortal danger. He used a move from his Split Muscles technique in an effort to control the boy.

In the original text, the words such as hooking, taking, grasping and hitting are another portrayal of Split Muscles technique. But here, Anna Holmwood simply translates it as a move from his Split Muscles technique, which makes the vivid and realistic dynamic moves in the original text become static and hard and cuts off the tense atmosphere created in the first half of the translation, which is what some target language readers wrote on Amazon as not fluent reading. The translator's omission of specific martial arts actions to achieve a pragmatic translation makes the translation distorted and fails to convey the essence of the original text.

*Example 6*

Original Text	那好极了，武当派的武功一遇上咱们少林派，那是落花流水，夹着尾巴便逃。
John Minford's Translation	Shaolin versus Wudang: it's got to be a walk-over! They'll run away from us with their tails between their legs.

In Example 6, Wei Xiaobao thinks that Shaolin martial arts is better than Wudang. The two expressions of 落花流水 and 夹着尾巴 both express the scenario that a person becomes modest and low-profile after a brutal defeat. Repeatedly translating the same or similar images will easily cause confusion to the target language audience, so John Minford omitted the former in the translation process to reduce the reading burden and obstacles. At the same time, he retained a tail of imagery to give the readers a space for imagination, so as to achieve a more three-dimensional aesthetic effect of the characters.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

In terms of linguistic habits, cultural awareness, and aesthetic interest, both translators' translations have their own strengths and weaknesses. The similarity between the two translators lies in the fact that they both take care of the basic differences between English and Chinese linguistic habits, while the difference lies in the treatment of cultural imagery, adopting different translation strategies and methods according to the contexts, with Anna Holmwood making use of the phonetic translation and annotation, while John Minford makes use of free translation. In terms of the fusion of aesthetic interest horizon, Holmwood pays too much attention to the pragmatic translation and ignores the aesthetic effect of the martial arts movements, while John Minford places more emphasis on the graphic description of the movements and the associations and poetic hints generated by his translations, which makes his translations more aesthetically pleasing.

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# Gender and Racial Discrimination in Maya Angelou's *Caged Bird: A Lament on Slavery*

Dr. Anita Goswami

Assistant Professor Department of English, COER University Roorkee Uttarakhand, India

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**Abstract**— The word “discrimination” is derived from the Latin word *discriminate*- meaning “to separate, to distinguish, to make a distinction.” In American English usage, discrimination often refers to prejudicial treatment of persons. Black feminism emerged as a challenge to the assumptions made by these white feminists regarding their prerogative to speak for all women in general. Black feminism insists that sexism and racism are imbricated in each other, the oppression of women cannot be understood and addressed without reference to racism. According to Claudia Jones, a Trinidad – born activist, “In the film, radio and press, the Negro woman is a not pictured in her real role as a bread winner, mother and protector of the family, but as a traditional ‘mammy’ who puts the care of children and families of others above her own. This traditional stereotype of the Negro slave mother, which to this day appears in commercial advertisements must be combated and rejected as a device of imperialist to perpetuate that white chauvinist ideology that Negro women are ‘backward and inferior.’ Now a days, there are so many poems which is written by using discrimination and segregation as the subject because of the condition which appears in the society. Besides, there are some women poets who write poems by using feminism touches. For example, the image of woman in the society, the position of women among the men, and the discriminations which occur in the women’s life.



**Keywords**— Racism, Sexism, Discrimination, Negro, Feminism

## I. INTRODUCTION

Black feminism emerged out of history of activism, engaged in Mariya Stewart (1803-80), Harriet Tubman (1822-1913), Sojourner Truth (1797-1883) delivered a forceful speech, ‘*Ain’t I a Woman?*’, in the Woman’s Convention held in Ohio in 1851, underscoring her ‘difference’ as an ex-slave. Black woman and contradicting the model of gender in which Euro-American women were both incarcerated and nurtured. In the 1060s and 70s, the black feminist movement emerged from the discontent with the civil Rights movement as well as the white feminist movement. In All the Women are White, All the Black are Men but Some of Us are Brave, Gloria Hull, Patricia Bell Smith explore the intersectionality of black women in the discourse of the civil rights movement and the contemporary feminist movement. This study analyzes discrimination toward

black woman which appears in Maya Angelou’s poems. In this case, the researcher chose three poems of Maya Angelou. Those are “*Still I Rise*”, “*Phenomenal Woman*”, and “*Caged Bird*”. In other to discover them, the study was conducted by using feminism theory and also historical and biographical approaches. It focuses on words, lines, and stanzas of the poems. The research was conducted with the following statement of problems: (1) What is the dominant type of feminism in Maya Angelou’s poems? (2) What are the reasons of using feminism perspective in Maya Angelou’s poems? (3) How are the images of black woman described in Maya Angelou’s poems?

The research design of this study is descriptive qualitative method because the researcher does not use statistical numerical but is requires descriptive analysis of the object. The research is conducted by descriptive



qualitative because the result of the data is word, sentence, and language. After collecting the data from the poems, the researcher put them into some groups which relates to the problem focuses. The researcher analyzes every datum by using content analysis. Based on the research questions mentioned above, the result of the study are as follows. First, the researcher concludes that the dominant type of feminism in Maya Angelou's poem is Radical Feminism because discrimination towards black women is related to the bad history of black people. Second, the reasons of using feminism perspective by the poet is the image of her bad life experiences. The last result is the image of black woman in Maya Angelou's poems which shows the discrimination toward woman in her era. The result of the study can be used as a reference in the research literature itself in educational institution and so on. It is also expected to be useful in several ways. This study gives significance for the researcher to understand and provide more knowledge about feminism. The study may be expected to give significance to the future researchers who conduct studies about literature focusing on feminism or on poems or in using biographical and historical approaches.

Marguerite Ann Johnson (1928-2014) popularly known as Maya Angelou, a prolific writer in African American Literary history, memoirist, famous poetess, etc. best known for her autobiographies especially the first, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, which brought her a universal admiration as a writer and recognition to the African American life and culture. She was a remarkable poet wrote several books of poetry and three books of essays. She helped creating a positive change to the people by giving a mainstream voice to women of color and the black experience in the United States during a tumultuous period of social change. She was also a phenomenal poetess, have written a critically acclaimed poem which was motivational and inspiring. She also had different occupational faces at an early age like sex worker, a night club dancer and performer, cast member of the opera Porgy Bess, coordinator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, worked as a journalist in Egypt and Ghana, etc. She was also an actor, director, produced plays, movies and television programs. She was an activist, Civil Rights Movement, worked with Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. She received over 50 Honorary Doctorate Degrees. Maya Angelou was a great inspiration and a celebrated literary personality even today. The contribution of Maya Angelou's writings to African American Literature is not merely of literary works but also has deep inspirational and motivational aspects to the women of any region and country all over the world then and now. The writings of Maya Angelou, especially her

autobiographies record the birth, her childhood and adult experiences and struggles among the American society as a black woman.

Meanwhile it also represents the life and struggles of every black woman in the American patriarchal society. Her verbal skill has created identity and respect not just to her work and to the nation she dwelled, but has also credited self-identity to every woman's heart. In Maya Angelou's first book of autobiography, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings (1969)* narrates her life from her birth, her childhood with her grandmother Annie Henderson and her elder brother Bailey Johnson, her life in Arkansas and later with her mother Vivian. Her adolescent experiences go on with the troubles and struggles she had and the book ends with rose of her confident and her state of being with her new born son; Whereas in her second book, *Gather Together in My Name (1974)* focuses on her working experiences and the life of single mother. She tries to provide for her young son and find her place in the world. Both books dealt with her life story as a black girl who grew up with the same issues of discrimination, race and racism, domination and as a woman among the patriarchal white society.

## II. THE HISTORY OF FEMINISM

The history of feminism should be grooved from the history of western feminism because feminism as the reaction of women discrimination comes from there. According to Korokke and Sorensen (2005: 24), the history of feminism is divided into three waves. Each wave deal with different aspects of the same feminist issues. continuation of and a reaction to, the perceived failures of second-wave feminism, beginning in the 1990s. Lipstick feminism, girlie feminism, riot girl feminism, cybergirl feminism, transfeminism, or just girl feminism. Born with the privileges that first- and second-wave feminists fought for, third wave feminists generally see themselves as capable, strong, and assertive social agents: "The Third Wave is buoyed by the confidence of having more opportunities and less sexism" Third-wave feminists are motivated by the need to develop a feminist theory and politics that honour contradictory experiences and deconstruct categorical thinking. Third wave feminism is also inspired by and bound to a generation of the new global world order characterized by the fall of communism, new threats of religious and ethnic fundamentalism, and the dual risks and promises of new info- and biotechnologies. A common American term for third-wave feminism is "girl feminism," and in Europe it is known as "new feminism."

This “new” feminism is characterized by local, national, and transnational activism, in areas such as violence against women, trafficking, body surgery, self-mutilation, and the overall “pornification” of the media.

### **The Types of Feminism**

There are many perspectives about feminism. Rosemarie Tong on her book *Feminism Thought A More Comprehensive Introduction* third edition, there are some types of feminism, those are Liberal Feminism, Radical Feminism, Marxist and Socialist Feminism, Psychoanalytic Feminism, Care-Focused Feminism, Multicultural, Global, and Postcolonial Feminism, Ecofeminism, and Postmodern and Third-Wave Feminism. In this research paper the researcher presents four types of feminism, they are Liberal feminism, Radical feminism, and Marxist and Socialist feminism:

#### **Liberal Feminism**

The liberal feminism rose in the seventeenth centuries. Liberalism gives intensity for the equality rights in occupation or education. The feminist believe that democracy is naturally capitalist society. This perspective speaks out to issues such as unequal pay, obstacles to achieving tenure or excelling in certain fields, and the frequent lack of family-friendly policies at many of the institutions and national organizations of higher education. Gender -Inequality theories recognize that women's location in, and experience of, social situation is not only different but also unequal to men's.

Socialist feminism connects the oppression of women to Marxist ideas about exploitation, oppression and labour. Socialist feminists see *women as being held down* as a result of their unequal standing in both the workplace and the domestic sphere. Prostitution, domestic work, childcare, and marriage are all seen as ways in which women are exploited by a patriarchal system which devalues women and the substantial work that they do. Socialist feminists focus their energies on broad change that affects society as a whole, and not just on an individual basis. They see the need to work alongside not just men, but all other groups, as they see the oppression of women as a part of a larger pattern that affects everyone involved in the capitalist system.

#### **Radical feminism**

This type of feminism spreads out in the United States since 1960s-1970s. They consider that both women and men must be educated to see the tradition as one of oppression and be encouraged to create a new one based on a female perspective.

Radical Feminism is a branch of feminism that views women's oppression (which radical feminists refer to as

"patriarchy") as a *basic system of power* upon which human relationships in society are arranged. It seeks to challenge this arrangement by rejecting standard gender roles and male oppression. Radical feminists argue that being a woman is a positive thing in and of itself, but that is not acknowledged in patriarchal societies where women are oppressed. They identify physical violence as being at the base of patriarchy, but they think that patriarchy can be defeated if women recognize their own value and strength, establish a sisterhood of trust with other women, confront adaptable to equality for the women and men. Every human being is created with the same rights and every woman must have the same opportunity in developing their future.

Liberal feminism is trying to make women and men equal, corporate, independent and free to decide their own future. Liberal feminism asserts the equality of men and women through political and legal reform. It is an individualistic form of feminism and feminist theory, which focuses on women's ability to show and maintain their equality through their own actions and choices. Liberal feminism looks at the personal interactions between men and women as the starting ground from which to introduce gender-equity into society. According to liberal feminists, all women are capable of asserting their ability to achieve equality; therefore, it is possible for change to come about without altering the structure of society. Issues important to liberal feminists include reproductive and abortion rights, sexual harassment, voting, education, "equal pay for equal work," affordable childcare, affordable health care, and bringing to light the frequency of sexual and domestic violence against women.

Liberal feminists argue that women have the same capability and capacity as men for moral reasoning and agency, but that patriarchy, particularly the sexist patterning of the division of labour, has historically denied women the opportunity to express and practice this reasoning. Women have been isolated to the private sphere of the household and, thus, left without a voice in the public sphere.

### **III. MARXIST AND SOCIALIST FEMINISM**

**Marxist feminism** is growing up in the second wave during late 1960s and 1970s, in Britain especially. Marxist feminist analysis as the identification of the structural elements that determine the quality and nature of our experience. Guerin (1979:202) states that “Marxist feminists attack the prevailing capitalistic system of the West, which they view as sexually as well as economically exploitative. Marxist feminist thus combines study of class with that of gender”. Marxist feminists argue that the path

to gender equality is led by the destruction of our oppression critically, and form female separatist networks in the private and public spheres.

Radical feminism is the breeding ground for many of the ideas arising from feminism. Radical feminism was the cutting edge of feminist theory from approximately (1967-1975). It is no longer as universally accepted as it was then, and no longer serves to solely define the term, "feminism". This group views the oppression of women as the most fundamental form of oppression, one that cuts across boundaries of race, culture, and economic class. This is a movement intent on social change, change rather revolutionary proportions. Radical feminism question why women must adopt certain roles based on their biology, just as it questions why men adopt certain other roles based on gender. Radical feminism attempts to draw lines between biologically-determined behavior and culturally-determined behavior in order to free both men and women as much as possible from their previous narrow gender roles.

#### ***Caged Bird: A Lament on Slavery***

'*Caged Bird*' is a 1983 poem by the African-American poet and memoirist Maya Angelou (1928-2014). The poem originally appeared in Angelou's collection *Shaker, Why Don't You Sing?* The poem uses the image of a caged bird to explore issues of confinement, oppression, and restriction. The poem is divided into six stanzas. In the first stanza, Angelou describes a free bird leaping in the wind, floating through the air until its wing appears to touch the rays of the sun. She likens this to the bird 'claiming' the sky, like someone claiming a particular territory as their possession. By contrast, the second stanza describes the caged bird which provides the poem with its title. This bird's horizons are far narrower than the free bird's: he (Angelou describes the bird as male) has been rendered almost blind by his anger at having his wings clipped so he cannot fly away. His feet are tied together to limit his movement further. All he can do is sing – so he opens his throat to do so. The third stanza tells us what the caged bird's song consists of. He sings in a frightened manner, about things he doesn't know or hasn't experienced (such as freedom, we assume) but which he longs to have. Although he is imprisoned in his cage, the bird's song can travel beyond the bars of his cage and be heard on a hill far away.

In the fourth stanza, Angelou returns to the free bird, who, she imagines, thinks of the territory of the air and sky which he had claimed as his own in the opening stanza. This bird also thinks of the worms waiting for him on a lawn somewhere, which he will be able to eat. The fifth stanza once again contrasts this free bird's existence

with that of the caged bird. The caged bird stands upon a grave which represents the death of dreams (for instance, of a better life, such as that enjoyed by the free bird). The bird's shadow is cast upon the wall behind it where it stands in its cage, its feet tied and wings clipped, and it once again prepares to sing. The sixth and final stanza is a word-for-word repetition of the poem's third stanza, in which the caged bird sings in a frightened manner, about things he doesn't know or hasn't experienced but which he longs to have. Although he is imprisoned in his cage, the bird's song can travel beyond the bars of his cage and be heard on a hill far away.

Angelou does not make the birds 'white' and 'black', with the caged bird being the latter (unlike, say, Paul McCartney's song, 'Blackbird', about the Civil Rights movement). And through resisting such reductive symbolism, she allows '**Caged Bird**' to resonate as both a poem about racial inequality in the US and a more universal statement about inequality of all kinds, whether caused by race, class, or some other factor. They were marching for several reasons, including jobs, but the main reason was freedom: King and many other Civil Rights leaders sought to remove segregation of black and white Americans and to ensure black Americans were treated the same as white Americans. Slavery was now a thing of the past in the US, but a century on from the abolition of slavery, Black Americans were still not free in many respects. This is something Martin Luther King addressed in his memorable 'I Have a Dream' speech delivered that day at the Lincoln Memorial. In his speech, King outlined a dream or aspiration in which America was no longer a nation divided by racial segregation and discrimination, and African Americans were truly free, not just by being freed from slavery, but by being recognized as equal in the eyes of the nation's laws. Angelou's reference to the 'grave of dreams' in the fifth stanza of her poem may even be intended as an allusion to King, whose 'dream' of racial equality had still not been fully realized. King himself was dead, having been assassinated in 1968. Did the dream of an equal society die with King, Angelou seems to ask? Is it with King in his grave?

Angelou does not make the birds 'white' and 'black', with the caged bird being the latter (unlike, say, Paul McCartney's song, 'Blackbird', about the Civil Rights movement). And through resisting such reductive symbolism, she allows '**Caged Bird**' to resonate as both a poem about racial inequality in the US and a more universal statement about inequality of all kinds, whether caused by race, class, or some other factor. There are just two things which define the caged bird: the fact that he is caged and tied and unable to fly, and the fact that he can sing. In other words, he has a voice, as Martin Luther King

had a voice back in Washington in 1963. And through singing, he can draw attention to his plight and the injustice of his condition. Perhaps Angelou is also recalling William Blake's memorable couplet from his '*Auguries of Innocence*'.

Angelou's poem is not strictly in free verse, because she utilizes rhyme at various points, and there is the ghost of a meter behind her lines. For example, the stanzas beginning 'The caged bird sings' are largely written in iambic dimeter, which involves two iambs per line. But the form is not stringently regular either, such as we'd find in a traditional sonnet, for example. The poem thus combines freedom and restraint, aptly echoing, through its form, the plights of the two very different birds – birds who are, in the last analysis, not different at all, of course, but merely subject to very different circumstances. Maya Angelou's life is filled with challenges but she also filled it with art and beauty. She rose up, indeed a phenomenal woman, and spoke of her experiences. Through her struggles with the world and with herself, she gave the world books, essays, poetry, music, and TV shows and films through which many people found, and continue to find, hope and inspiration. Angelou's works carry with them a wisdom that many people value. It is also undeniable that she has a way with language that enables her to craft works that pleasant to read and hear. This research paper explores how Angelou's contribution to literature, in particular, to Black women's place in literature is undeniable and affirms her reputation as a prolific and inspiring writer.

#### IV. OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

The objective of the study is eradicating the discrimination on the basis of Race, Gender and Ethnicity. It is said by Kimble Cranshaw in her book "*Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex*"; She writes that an individual identity is scattered within the boundaries of Race and Sex. Therefore, she lays emphasis to create an identity beyond class, culture, Race and Sex, these are the barriers in the growth of human psyche and affect human's psychology. For the development of any nation, every individual's has different potentialities and caliver. They may contribute their country and lead society towards pinnacle of success.

#### V. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive method has been implemented in this research work, Through the description of natural symbols, the narrator has tried to make difference between slavery and freedom. Slavery is like in which human' soul and mind

are always trapped. He wants to release from these shackles.

The researcher analyzes every datum by using content analysis. Based on the research questions mentioned above, the result of the study are as follows. First, the researcher concludes that the dominant type of feminism in Maya Angelou's poem is Radical Feminism because discrimination toward black women are related to the bad history of black people. Second, the reasons of using feminism perspective by the poet is the image of her bad life experiences. The last result is the image of black woman in Maya Angelou's poems which shows the discrimination toward woman in her era.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

To conclude, the purpose of this research paper is to explore the psyche a woman who is trapped into the darkness of Crisis of identity, Gender issues and victim of Racial Discrimination. The quest of the poetess is to reconstruct her lost identity against the values of colonialism who demoralize the tribal culture and ritual values. Maya Angelou is one of the black writers who could support herself by her writing. She is praised for her ability to say what important was to millions of black people especially black woman. She is famous for her description of Black people life. She uses her works to praise voice concern about race and woman. She often writes poems and books about racial issues and feminism perspective.

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# Adventures of Two Captains' Trilogy and U.S Exceptionalism in their Foreign Policy: Manifestation of Think Tanks in a literary work

Ellias Aghili Dehnavi<sup>1</sup>, Radoslaw Fiedler<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ph.D. candidate at Adam Mickiewicz university, Faculty of Political Science and Journalism, Poznan, Poland, [ellagh@amu.edu.pl](mailto:ellagh@amu.edu.pl)  
<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-9238-056X>

<sup>2</sup>Full Professor at Adam Mickiewicz University, Faculty of Political Science and Journalism, Poznan, Poland,  
[radoslaw.fiedler@amu.edu.pl](mailto:radoslaw.fiedler@amu.edu.pl) ORCID: 0000-0003-1573-9898

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**Abstract**— *International relations are often perceived as a dry discipline characterized by diplomacy, calculations and realpolitik. However, behind treaties, tariffs and statecraft lies a tapestry of stories, ideas and values that define how we see the world around us. All forms of literature have been used to explore international relations for many years because it provides an insight into human conflict experience among other things like cooperation and cultural exchange. Literature may be sweeping such as Tolstoy's "War & Peace" or biting satire like Orwell's "1984" but they all reveal what makes nations tick; why people do what they do on behalf of their country or themselves alone. In this paper review, we will look at some intriguing ways in which the Adventure of two captains trilogy, as a modern literary work, can shape (and reflect) our understanding about global politics plus tips on how reading more could turn you into a better citizen of the world – one who is empathetic, knowledgeable and reflective; we will also discuss how this work and most of its characters act like the components of a universal think tank with a dynamic mechanism of policy making on a regular basis.*



**Keywords**— *Adventures of two captains, world literature, politics, think tanks, foreign policy and Exceptionalism*

## I. INTRODUCTION

While we try to figure out the world, it can be hard not to pay attention to what political scientists and historians say. However, have you ever thought that maybe there is a more detailed, compassionate and interesting way of understanding global politics? This is where literature comes in handy as an unrecognized hero of international relations. For centuries, writers have been able to express the human experience in such a way that they condense

complex relationships between nations into understandable narratives which deeply touch us. Whether it is through large stories like those found throughout War And Peace by Leo Tolstoy or small personal tales such as Half Of A Yellow Sun by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie; books offer insights about life on earth that schoolbooks rarely do because they connect with our hearts instead of just our brains. Literature does this by sharing emotions behind international disputes alongside people's motivations and

<sup>1</sup> Dehnavi, E. A., & Jafari, E. (2021). Adventures of two Captains as world literature. ResearchGate.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355807774\\_Adventures\\_of\\_Two\\_Captains\\_as\\_World\\_Literature](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355807774_Adventures_of_Two_Captains_as_World_Literature)

universal events that can be seen from both close-up view points' as well vast ones, too; Adventures of two captains' trilogy, as a modern work is not an exception but rather a prominent example; the authors in this trilogy have created a metaphorical "Earth Politics" and deal with different ideology, regional policy and individual political philosophies all across the book<sup>2</sup>.

In *adventures of two captains*, readers can witness the hard politics in the format of a "dynamic narration", this means that the notions and symbols are being personified in the format of connected stories and episodes; even some international relation presumptions that do not have external practices have been well displayed.<sup>3</sup> Other personifications found across the book deal with different topics of importance in the political sciences and international relations, i.e, foreign policy (in this case, the U.S foreign policy) and also real policy making centers (think tanks) this leads to the main question of this study: How Adventures of Two Captains depict the role of think- tanks in shaping exceptionalism tendency in the U.S foreign policy towards other countries? The proper hypothesis is that the adventures of two captains depict the role of think- tanks in shaping exceptionalism tendency in the U.S foreign policy by adopting a metaphorical political narration; this adoption can be explained through the post-modern theories of international relations, meaning buildings, signifiers and signified theoretical roles<sup>4</sup>.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

### 2.1 Post Modernism: Themes and notions.

As an approach to art, philosophy and culture, postmodernism arose in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, mostly as a response to the idea and principles of the modernism; it might seem to some extend radical to regard this theory a new paradigm (in other words, a revolutionary approach) but this theory has some revisionist beliefs at its core, this theory states that there exists no dominant belief and all the phenomenon has their own diversity and complexity; regarding its approach towards languages, postmodernists embrace the plurality of the languages and praise the idea of

intertextuality and meta-narratives, Postmodernism is believed to provide an alternative to fresh methods of analysis and thinking in knowledge, especially by prioritizing the principle of respecting differences in plural particularities, as a counter to the thesis of modernism which believes in the importance of the principle of uniformity and universality<sup>5</sup>.

Building on the mentioned notions, adventures of two captains can be probed from a post-modernistic perspective, the core belief of this work is universal, multi-lateral with an emphasis regarding respecting the plurality of cultures and beliefs; the "inter-universal symbiosis" is a key term which attacks the unchanged belief of "difference" and this notions invites for a more organic togetherness among different cultures and notions.

### 2.2 Different Realities

Knowledge is contextually produced and shaped; therefore there exists no single reality as a direct production of some precise objective measurements; realities are subjective and inter-personal entities that can be shaped and perceived differently; imposed realities are not definite phenomenon and might change during the recognition and learning processes; metaphorical realities of this trilogy, through a reconstruction of the believed realities, open the perception corridors of the readers to the new worlds with their new belief system and hierarchy.<sup>6</sup>

### 2.3 Deconstruction of signifiers and the signified

Postmodernism, with its roots in deconstruction, aims to rebel against traditional identities and structures, in other words, through deconstruction post-modernists embrace a fluid and undefined sense of self. Through purposeful dismantling of established structures, we establish a space of disruption and growth, allowing for unique connections and innovative concepts to emerge<sup>7</sup>; adventures of two captains, through the use of metaphorical discourse, deconstruct the concreteness of notions and the signifiers.

## III. CONCEPTUAL DESCRIPTION

### 3.1 Think-Tanks in the U.S and the Foreign Policy<sup>8</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Dehnavi, E. A., & Amord, P. J. (2019). Adventures of Two Captains: an epic science fiction poem. ResearchGate.

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/379565767\\_Adventures\\_of\\_Two\\_Captains\\_An\\_Epic\\_Science\\_Fiction\\_Poem](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/379565767_Adventures_of_Two_Captains_An_Epic_Science_Fiction_Poem)

<sup>3</sup> Adventures of two captains; Postmodernism Dialectic in: Literature and International Relations. (n.d.). Google Books. [https://books.google.pl/books/about/Adventures\\_of\\_Two\\_Captains\\_Postmodernism.html?id=bTiaEAAAQBAJ&source=kp\\_book\\_description&redir\\_esc=y](https://books.google.pl/books/about/Adventures_of_Two_Captains_Postmodernism.html?id=bTiaEAAAQBAJ&source=kp_book_description&redir_esc=y)

<sup>4</sup> Slović, S. (2020). From modernism towards post-modernism: Rationalism and the enlightenment era. Baština, 50, 121–131. <https://doi.org/10.5937/bastina30-25564>

<sup>5</sup> Sudartini, S. (2024). Postmodernism Paradigm and its View on the Existence of Language. RGSA, 18(7), e05157. <https://doi.org/10.24857/rgsa.v18n7-003>

<sup>6</sup> Dehnavi, E. A., & Amrod, P. J. (2020). Adventures of Two Captains Volume II: A modern epic poem. ResearchGate. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/379566296\\_Adventures\\_of\\_Two\\_Captains\\_Volume\\_II\\_A\\_Modern\\_Epic\\_Poem](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/379566296_Adventures_of_Two_Captains_Volume_II_A_Modern_Epic_Poem)

<sup>7</sup> What is Deconstruction? | A guide to art terminology. (n.d.). <https://avantarte.com/glossary/deconstruction>

<sup>8</sup> Fiedler, R. A., & Dehnavi, E. A. (2024). The Styles in the American Politics Volume II, Conservative Think tanks and their Foreign Policy: A Booklet. ResearchGate. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/379449531\\_The\\_Style](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/379449531_The_Style)

### 3.2 An Abridged Comparative Study

Think Tanks are not modern unknown entities for the societies or the politicians, rather, they are socio-historical centers with various functions and perspectives; they can be divided into different categories based on their function, their funding resources or their dominant political orientation; these centers are different from their academic counterpart in a sense that they can influence the public policy and public opinion, something that universities or academic centers might not be quite successful at.<sup>910</sup>

These centers for interconnected policy making can influence the foreign policy of the countries through manipulating public opinion and the centers of power within one society, in the U.S, this interconnectedness is more visible than other countries for variety of reasons, first, think tank receive their main sources of funding from firms that hold the capital in circulation; these businessmen and businesswomen usually support the think tanks to advance their political preferences in higher hierarchy of one society ( ideological tanks are prominent examples)<sup>11</sup> second, some political figures are among senior members of specific subnational\* tanks, these officials might even step further to influence the foreign policy direction of the country in a particular era; example of such can be traced back to Georg Bush administration era when the neocons ( PNAC)<sup>12</sup> influenced the policy making process involved in the U.S foreign policy and guided the country towards war and invasion of Iraq.

As being said, statistics and the linear line of history well prove that think tanks can and perhaps "should" influence the process of policy making; one can approach this idea from a post-modernistic perspective by stating that the tanks have the capacity to shape the narrations and reconstruct them in more pluralistic forms; in adventures of two captains, "\*\*\*Black Star\*\*\*" is a post-modern think-tank that is fluid and adoptive; black star is both ideological and practical, and to some extent, "specialist" readers can figure out that in most of the visited realms, the discussed initiatives in the black star are conveyed to the elites of that

society hoping for a deeper influence on their foreign policy blue prints<sup>13</sup>.

### 3.3 Public Opinion and Exceptionalism in U.S foreign Policy

American exceptionalism has special linguistic attributions and during the course of history they have been repeatedly used by different scholars and historians; empire of liberty," a "shining city on a hill," the "last best hope of Earth," the "leader of the free world," and the "indispensable nation." These enduring tropes explain why all presidential candidates feel compelled to offer ritualistic paeans to America's greatness and why President Barack Obama landed in hot water — most recently, from Mitt Romney — for saying that while he believed in "American exceptionalism," it was no different from "British exceptionalism," "Greek exceptionalism," or any other country's brand of patriotic chest-thumping; but the truth is that the believers in American exceptionalism think it likely that the American political system, history and values are worth of an international admiration by other nations and countries around the world<sup>14</sup>.

The spread of this ideology among the subjects of the American society can shape the public opinion of the mass in a way that they do not question the "actions and directions" of their politicians regarding the foreign policy of this country; This unchallenged faith in American exceptionalism makes it harder for Americans to understand why others are less enthusiastic about U.S. dominance, often alarmed by U.S. policies, and frequently irritated by what they see as U.S. hypocrisy, whether the subject is possession of nuclear weapons, conformity with international law, or America's tendency to condemn the conduct of others while ignoring its own failings. Ironically, U.S. foreign policy would probably be more effective if Americans were less convinced of their own unique virtues and less eager to proclaim them (same source-14) Metaphorical discourses presented among the lines of adventures have challenged this common belief and instead, have introduced a pluralistic direction that embrace the "good for the all" and praise the merits of collective actions;

s\_in\_the\_American\_Politics\_Volume\_II\_Conservative\_Think\_Tanks\_and\_Their\_Foreign\_Policy\_A\_Booklet

<sup>9</sup> Think tanks (Research institutes & policy institutes). (2021, September 2). Career Advising & Professional Development | MIT. <https://capd.mit.edu/resources/think-tanks-research-institutes-policy-institutes/>

<sup>10</sup> Think tanks. (n.d.). Oxford University Careers Service. <https://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/think-tanks>

<sup>11</sup> Lewis, S. (2023, January 10). think tank. CIO.

<https://www.techtarget.com/searchcio/definition/think-tank>

\*subnational think tanks: These government-related think tanks work at smaller stages than the national level. For example, think tanks that focus on a specific state's policies.

<sup>12</sup> Project for the New American Century. (n.d.). The Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/lcwaN0011283/>

\*\*\*Black Star is the space shuttle in the adventures of two captains and is regarded to be the main headquarter for their mission control and planning.

<sup>13</sup> Dehnavi, E. A., & Amrod, P. J. (2021). Adventures of Two Captains Volume III: Home, Sweet Home! ResearchGate. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/379566625\\_Adventure\\_s\\_of\\_Two\\_Captains\\_Volume\\_III\\_Home\\_Sweet\\_Home](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/379566625_Adventure_s_of_Two_Captains_Volume_III_Home_Sweet_Home)

<sup>14</sup> Walt, S. M. (2019, May 9). The myth of American exceptionalism. Foreign Policy. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/10/11/the-myth-of-american-exceptionalism/>

the pluralistic notions of master "Yimina" are "counter-narratives" of the accepted earthling's exceptionalism; the captains as the counter-narrators of the accepted signifiers are spreading this newly embraced philosophy; through this way they imply the new connections between their own signifiers and the signified.

### 3.4 Deconstruction of the Narrations

"Discourse are not saying what they say" or "narrations are not for the sake of narrations" can be attributed to the notion of the deconstruction; we have to deconstruct a text in order to figure out the hidden meanings, or in other words, each text has a hidden meaning that can't be understood directly; meanings are deciphered in contrast and in opposition to their antonyms ( and by antonyms, we mean a conceptual antonym) the meaning of being is understood when being juxtaposed to not being or nothingness.

In the realm of political philosophy, identities and political terms can be defined in the same way; democracy can be better understood when it's contrasted with terms of the same nature with different functions ( in this case, dictatorship) thin tanks sometimes do the same to amplify the process of policy making in the American society, the PNAC juxtaposed the notions of democracy, human rights and the related concepts with other terms like weapons of mass destruction ( and we all witnessed the consequences<sup>1516</sup>) the authors in the Adventures of two captains deconstruct the accepted mainstream's discourses ( advertised oriented beliefs, etc.) and introduced the other side of the believed trends.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Works of literature can convey a variety of meanings; these works can also bridge different fields of knowledge and broaden our understanding of various subjects; the nature of these works allow us to analyze works and events from new perspectives that we haven't experienced before. Adventures of two captains' trilogy acts as a political literary work; this project is filled with different political notions and hidden meanings and each political subject can be studies separately from a totally new horizon; in this paper, we went through the interconnectivity of disciplines, then narrowed down our scope to some specific political and philosophical terms (such as postmodernism, think tanks and foreign policy) and made a meaningful connection between them; it was then mentioned that adventures of two captains have employed a

deconstructivist method to discuss new narratives; besides, metaphorical political-I discourse have also been employed to show the function of some hard politics' theories in real life ( think tanks and exceptionalism style in foreign policy) works of literature and fiction can be effective in explaining some concepts that might seem difficult to define or understand in real life.

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# Cultural Dances as Performative Arts: A Study of the Cultural Dances Associated with the Newar Community

Prakash Sharma

Lecturer, Department of English, Tribhuvan University, Dhawalagiri Multiple Campus, Baglung, Nepal

[sharmaprakash166@gmail.com](mailto:sharmaprakash166@gmail.com)

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**Abstract**— This paper attempts to analyze the cultural dances associated with the Newar community of Baglung Municipality as performative art from the perspective of Performance Studies theory. An effort is made to clarify the historical context of the dances and their present conditions with the problems and possibilities. Our discussion aims to bring to light the glorious history of the cultural dances and the great possibility to develop the cultural identity of the Newar community of Baglung. Similarly, these dances can be discussed and exposed in the world of academia as performative arts. This study reveals that these dances are facing so many problems at present. They are being victims of the western influence in our culture. These problems can be solved only with the united effort of the local government and the local people. If managed properly, they can function as means of promoting tourism in Baglung. This research work uses mixed method and the critical ideas of Performance Study theorists like Richard Schechner for analyzing the dances as performative arts.



**Keywords**— Cultural dances, cultural identity, performance, rituals.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Baglung Municipality is rich in cultural heritages and history, but it is far behind in getting benefit from it. People of different cultures perform their cultural practices with great enthusiasm. Typically, in the case of performing cultural dances, Newars of this Municipality are far ahead of others. In the past, cultural dances of Newars were so popular that people from the surrounding areas used to come and stay here for many days to watch and enjoy their performances. Such trend, of performing cultural dances was first brought to Baglung from Bhaktapur and Palpa by the Newari people who first came in Baglung from those places. In the same way, Brahmins and Chhetris have their own cultural practices and Magars perform their cultural activities in their own ways. In fact, Baglung Municipality is a place of cultural harmony. Among other cultural practices, cultural dances are popular and performed with cultural importance in Newar community. Hanuman Nach, Basha Nach, Lakhe Nach, Jogi Nach and Ropai Nach are some notable cultural dances of this community in Baglung.

These dances are not just for enjoyment but have strong connection with cultural rituals and have performative value as artistic works. There are guiding ritualistic rules for them. At the same time, the dances have their own value as performative art with different artistic rules of performance. They have their own history and at present, they are facing different problems with the encroachment of western culture upon our traditional cultural practices. If managed properly, these dances have the great potentiality of helping to promote tourism. Their possibilities of promoting them as performative arts can be better explored when they are analyzed with the help of the critical ideas of Performance Study theorists like Richard Schechner, who take performance more seriously.

## II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Baglung Municipality is culturally rich and has its glorious history. Brahmins, Chhetris, Newars, and Magars of this Municipality have different cultural practices. This

Municipality has many cultural heritages, but systematic studies have not been done till now. Now we are having an overview of the ideas expressed by the scholars on Nepalese culture, cultural dances and dances of the Newar community.

Academician Prem Chhota is a renowned writer who has written about different cultural heritages, especially about Newari culture. In his book *Hanuman Nach: A Cultural Identity of Baglung* he asserts:

"Hanuman Nach is a prominent cultural dance of the Newar community. Though it is under Hindu culture, basically Newars have performed it as their cultural dance. In Baglung, its original place is 'Chhahara ko Dhara', which is now in Baglung Municipality 3. A big statue of Hanuman is there. Even at present time, *Hanuman Nach* begins from the same place (69).

This dance is based on the story of *Ramayana*, a Hindu epic, but it is performed especially by Newars.

In the same way, Ganeshman Lachhi in his article "Newari Sanskritima Lekhanach", published in *Madhuparka*, has taken cultural dances and other activities of high importance:

Culture has broad limitations. It is second man-made nature. All the man-made physical and mental means come under culture. The lifestyle, ideology, faith, religion, and philosophy are also culture. Culture is divided into two types: tangible and intangible. Physical cultural heritages, like temples, gumbas, churches etc., come under tangible culture, whereas dances, music, festivals, rituals, jatras etc. which we can't touch, are intangible culture. Government has brought different plans and policies to protect tangible culture whereas nothing is done for protecting intangible culture (20).

As mentioned by Lachhi there are two types of culture: tangible and intangible. Between them tangible culture is focused by the government making different plans and policies, but intangible culture is neglected. But they are also equally important. "So the UNESCO Conference of 2003 began different programs and policies to protect them" (Lachhi, 20). After 2003, the intangible cultural heritages are also getting space.

Such cultural dances are found everywhere in Nepal. Particularly, they are highly popular in the Newar community of Kathmandu valley. "Such cultural dances began in Lichhivi Period and while coming to Malla Period they had already become much famous" (Lachhi, 21). When we talk about such traditional cultural dances, Harisiddhi

Nach comes first. It is believed that this dance is continuously in practice for about the last 2400 years.

Different writers have written about Nepalese cultural diversity, cultural dances of Nepal and the cultural dances of Newar community. "As Nepal has geographical diversity people of different castes tribes and ethnicity live here. It is a naturally beautiful country having spell-binding cultural heritages" (Parajuli 61). Another cultural scholar Prem Chhota in his book *Dhaulagiri Ka Kehi Sanskriti Haru* argues "Nepalese culture is the harmonious uniformity of language, music, dance, norms, values and rituals of people of all castes, tribes and ethnicity spreading from eastern Mechi to western Mahakali" (1). Purushottam Shrestha, another famous cultural scholar writes, "In the different stages of Nepalese history political changes have taken out rulers and ruling systems but such changes never could uproot the root of social cultural practices of life" (6).

When we talk about cultural traditional dances of Nepal we should remember Harisiddhi Nach. According to Ganeshram Lachhi "In Nepalmandal, the researchers have brought out that Harisiddhi Nach is the eldest one. According to the *Bhasha Banshawali* and *Devamala*, before 2400 years the Indian king Bikram Sen (Bikramaditya) from Ujjan Nagar brought his ancestral god Shree Harishiddi in a vase and established it in Nepal. From that time Harishiddi Nach began in Nepal" (23).

Cultural dances of Nepal are based on the geography of our country. They are helpful to strengthen patriotism. Famous cultural scholar Dr. Jaga Man Gurung writes "In Ghatu Nach the water of our own rivers Sapta Gandaki is regarded more pious than that of Ganga, Yamuna of India" (32). While writing about the cultural traditional dances of Nepal Purushottam Shrestha writes "Religious and cultural dances aim at providing entertainment to us and at the same time they present important events and trends of the society. They also provide religious influence as well" (5). Prakash Baral(45), Kantipur correspondent, argues "Kathmandu valley is the mine of art and culture from where they spread to different parts of our country". The place of origin of so many cultural dances is Kathmandu valley.

Such cultural practices are everywhere in the hooks and corners of the country. "Especially they are found immensely in the Newar community of Kathmandu valley. It is the live museum of folk cultural traditional music, songs and dances. Such dances basically began during the Lichhibi period and developed widely up to the Malla period" (Lachhi, 21). Among the three towns of Kathmandu valley Bhaktapur is regarded as rich and prosperous in cultural property like dance, music, songs, jatras and crafty palaces and temples. When King Prithvi Narayan Shah attacked Kathmandu valley in 1825/26 B.S., the members

of the Newar community went to different parts of Nepal, and some of them came to Baglung as well.

Highlighting the "Among others Newar community of our country is rich in cultural dances. Their place of origin is Kathmandu valley. Later they moved to different parts of our country, to trade centers and carried their cultural practices with them. So they are economically as well as culturally rich" (Parajuli 64). More than 40 types of dances are popular in the Newar community. Satya Mohan Joshi, Mrigendra Man Singh Pradhan, Dr Safalya Amatya, Prem Chhota are the prominent writers who have written about the dances of the Newar community.

Mahesh Chandra Pradhan, a scholar of the Newar community, has written about the Newari culture of Baglung Municipality. In his review of Prem Chhota's book *Baglung ko Basha Nach* he mentions:

"Baglung Bazaar, which is 27 2 K.M. west of Kathmandu, is a renowned name of the people of the capital city. The structure of the old market of Baglung as well as the chowks, temples, gumbas, and cultural dances and other performances prove that the Newars who came here were skillful persons and lovers of their culture. They have paved paths for cultural activities and made them part of their life at the same time left great cultural influence to the members of the new generation (II).

Similarly, in his review of the book *Baglung ko Basha Nach* Baikuntha Man Bijuksha writes, "Another purpose of Basha Nach is to keep the memory of late dearer and nearer fresh in mind". He further puts, "The artistic aspect of Basha Nach is so attractive, at the same time its spiritual aspect is very serious." About its history Prem Chhota argues, "Basha Nach began in Baglung in the initiation of Aswini Kumar Shresth" (12).

Ishwor Bajracharya, a retired teacher and active member of Shakya community of Baglung, says "Still now no systematic study of Jogi Nach has been done but it has been shown in Baglung Bazaar every year since long. Mukesh Rajbhandari, a journalist and former chairperson of NJA, Baglung, responds telling, "Newar community of Baglung performs different cultural dances basically in Bhadra, after the completion of the task of paddy plantation". He adds, "Ropai Nach is performed imitating the act of paddy plantation where male participants wear the dress of a female and act as if planting paddy. They go around the town performing the act

Our literature review reveals that Nepal is culturally rich and the Newar community is known for the regular performance of different cultural dances. Although certain plans and policies have been made for protecting

tangible culture, intangible culture is neglected. Up to now, their studies have been done randomly so there is the strong need of analyzing them systematically focusing on their performance in artistic manner. This is the research gap this study aims to fulfil.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the process of data collection and theoretical tool of analysis and interpretation. For the study of the cultural dances of Newar community of Baglung, data are collected using both the primary and secondary sources. As primary source, the persons related to the Newar community of Baglung as well as of Bhaktapur are interviewed. At the same time direct observation of the dances and recorded materials are observed. As secondary sources, different related documents, news articles, and books are studied. As theoretical tools, the critical ideas of Performance Study theorists are used.

#### Performance Study Theory and Performative Arts: A Theoretical Modality

For the better study of the dances and their cultural connection, different theories have been developed. Among others, 'Performance Study' takes performing arts seriously. It is an interdisciplinary field that studies the performative activities and uses performance as a tool to study the world. It is a broad term that includes so many diverse events and activities. It draws theories from different fields like performative art, anthropology and sociology, literary theories and legal studies. Richard Schechner is the pioneer of Performance Studies, and Victor Turner and Abhi Subedi have also contributed. In his innovative text *Performance Studies: An Introduction* Schechner divides performance studies in two categories: Artistic and Cultural Performances. Artistic performances are marked and understood as art like performance of literature, plays and performance poetry etc. Cultural Performances includes events that occur in everyday life in which cultural values are exposed. Rituals such as parades, religious ceremonies, dances, community festivals come under it.

Nepal is recognized in the world as a state having various cultural practices. These cultural practices are fixed in a social frame with their own varieties of different performance practices. As Schechner has said "Rituals are performative: they are acts done; and performances are ritualized: they are codified repeatable actions"(613).As we have already stated that Jogi Nach is performed in different artistic steps having other steps within one and giving meaning. So the performers demonstrate their creative performance based on their cultural identity. As Schechner views:

In every culture, either entertainment or efficacy is dominant; but the situation is never static: one rises while the other declines. The changes in the relationship between entertainment and efficacy are part of the overall pattern of social change. Performance is more than a mirror change, however, it participates in the complex process that creates change (624).

The performance of Jogi Nach and Basha Nach is directly related to the ritual of the *Newar* community. Therefore, the audiences are already familiar with the events the performance refers to. "The performances are social events not separate from the community activity. The actor is an active member of his community...." (Schechner 184). In cultural dances, both the performers and audiences are from the same community.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

##### Historical Context of Jogi Nach and Basha Nach in Baglung

When we discuss the historical context of different traditional cultural dances of the Newar community the roots go to Bhaktapur. Regarding Jogi Nach, there is no uniformity among people of the Newar community of Baglung. Mukunda shakya, the founder chairperson of Shakya Community of Baglung argues "It should have come from Bhaktapur. When the king of Parbat State brought some pot makers from Bhaktapur, they brought Jogi Nach with them and later Shakya Community took the dance as their cultural property". He also adds, "It might be the original creation of our ancestors in Baglung". Prem Chhota, in his book *Dhaulagiri Ka Kehi Lok Sanskritiharu*, writes "The lap of Dhaulagiri Mountain Range is known as 'Kailashkut Parbatmala'. Religiously it is believed that Lord Shiva and goddess Parvati reside there for penance. To pay homage to them, the Shakya community began this dance from the ancient time" (17).

Even the eldest person of the Shakya community Krishna lal Shakya (87) tells that he remembers the performance of Jogi Nach in Baglung from his childhood. As mentioned by him "When I was a very small child our elders used to perform this Nach and we used to watch with joy ". In the past, there was no organized community of Shakyas for performing this dance. In spite of that, they performed the dance in communal form regularly. From past to present the beginning place of the dance is the same. It begins from the eastern side of Baglung Bazaar where there was a temple of Bishwokarma in past and there is Buddha Bihar now. In past this dance was performed for

many days beginning from Ghantakarna to Teej. Later on, it was performed for two to four days and while coming to present time it is performed once a year.

According to Mukunda Shakya (70) "Once in the past Jogi Nach was performed under the management of Buddha Bihar of Baglung as there was no organized shakya community. After the establishment of the Shakya community in 2048 B.S. The dance is organized, managed and performed by that community. Lal Prasad Shakya is remembered while talking about Jogi Nach. He used to play the Dholak, a difficult task in this dance, and lead the performance. Dr Badri Narayan and Krishna lal Shakya were the renowned dancers of their time.

Many cultural dances of Newar community originated from Bhaktapur, and later on spread to different places of the country in the process of migration of Newars. In case of Basha Nach also same rule applies. When we see the historical context of this dance in Baglung it was performed in 1983 B.S. for the first time. As Basha Nach is inseparable from Gaijatra its historical root also goes to the history of Gaijatra. Basha Nach is an added flavor in Gaijatra. Generally on the occasion of Gaijatra, the statue of cow is prepared in different forms and taken around the town, in memory of the family members who died that year. The performance is named differently at different places like: Ghintakishi, Tahasha, Pari Nach, and Toyamacha etc. At the same time, in memory of a dead person, local boys and girls are decorated in the form of different gods and goddesses like: Bishnu, Rama, Krishna, Shiva, Laxmi, Saraswati etc., and taken around the town with music and hymns. They sing songs in praise of god as well as describing the life events of the dead person. They also request God to open the path for heaven to the dead persons. This performance is called Basha Nach. Before the beginning of Basha Nach in Baglung, Tayomacha and Bull were made and taken around the town. This was performed in the beginning under the leadership of Kajiman Chaudhari, Mathabar Chaudhary and Pahalman Chaudhary. According to Prem Chhota(69)

Saty Lal Shrestha, grand- father of Aswinini Kumar Shrestha, came to Baglung from Butwal-Palpa. At Palpa the Newar community from the past used to perform Basha Nach. When he went there he got a chance to see the attractive Basha Nach and thought it better to perform the Nach in Baglung, too. As a result the trend of Basha Nach began in Baglung. For the first time, Basha Nach was performed in Baglung in memory of Krishna Bahadur Shrestha and organized by Aswini Kumar Shrestha.



In the beginning (from 1983 - 2013 B.S.) Basha Nach in Baglung was performed just singing hymns in the name of gods and goddesses going around the town. But, only after 2013/2014 B.S. the written hymns related to the life events of dead persons began to be sung with others." With the increase of awareness from 2013/14 B.S. the written hymns about the life events of the dead persons began to be sung with special focus". (Chhota, 2065, 14). From 1983 this dance is continuously performed as a cultural performance of the Newar community of Baglung. In the past Hira Man Shakya, Govinda Shyam Baidhaya, Badri Narayan Bhari were famous for writing hymns and providing music. At present time Subha Ram Bhari, Uttam Raj Bhandari, Sudarshan Shakya, Mahesh Chandra Shakya are renowned for the hymn, music as well as for the act of singing.

### **Jogi Nach and Basha Nach at Present: Problems and Possibilities**

Now Jogi Nach is performed once a year in Baglung in the month of Bhadra. This dance was once a part of the chain of dances performed by the youth of Newar community of Baglung beginning from Gathemangale to Teej. According to Gaganlal Shakya (59)

"In Baglung Bazaar different cultural dances were performed during the leisure time after the paddy plantation. The chain of dances used to include the cycle of paddy plantation. First dance was Hobai Nach, a dance performed imitating the action of ploughing. Second was Katwal Nach, a dance imitating the action of Katwal (community messenger of the time) inviting female workers for paddy plantation. Third was Ropain Nach, a dance performed imitating the action of paddy plantation. The last dance of the chain of dances was Jogi Nach, a dance imitating the action and activities of Jogi (sage) and going to the holy places for religious purpose after paddy plantation".

Now the chain has been broken. Among them, Ropain Nach and Jogi Nach are regularly performed in Baglung but not the others. For the performance of Jogi Nach the youths of Shakya Community train themselves in the leadership of seniors for a few days. In the past, only male members of the Shakya community used to participate in the dance but recently even the female members are also showing their interest to participate in the dance. As informed by Mukunda Shakya (70) "At present time even the females of Shakya community are participating in different activities of Jogi Nach and at the same time they are also participating as dancers". It indicates that different things have been changed related to the dance with the passing of time.

It is the fact that our cultural activities are passing through the stage of crisis because of the influence of western culture as well as modern means of entertainment. Jogi Nach is no exception. It is also facing a critical situation because of the influence of western culture, availability of modern means of entertainment as well as scarcity of young people capable of the active participation of the dance. Scarcity of young people because of migration to the foreign countries is another problem. Manjul Shakya (38), an active participant in the dance in recent years argues, "At present time we are facing a great problem in the performance of Jogi Nach because of the tendency of the young people going to foreign countries for different purposes". He also adds, "It needs great strength for the perfect performance of Jogi Nach and for this purpose young and trained persons are needed". The lack of youth in the community is hindering the quality of the performance.

The performance of Jogi Nach has also faced financial problems. They need money to buy Dholak, which costs about 10000 rupees and Jhayali, which costs about 12000 rupees. The expenditure of dress up of the dancers and the other decorations as well as cost of preparation and the day of performance and other artifacts used in dancing leads to the total cost of about 100,000 rupees for the performance of a year.

In spite of the different problems that the members of Shakya community are facing for the performance of Jogi Nach, they are regularly performing the dance as the cultural identity of the whole community. Among the cultural dances of Newar community of Baglung, Lakhe Nach and Jogi Nach are performed by the members of Shakya community and associating these dances with their cultural identity. Almost all of them support the performance doing one or another work related to the dance performance. While performing on certain important occasions of Baglung Bazar like Baglung Mahotsab, they don't do the other rituals but just perform the dance. Mukunda Shakya, the founder chairperson and active member of Shakya community expresses his sadness telling that, "Up to now we have got no support from any government organization for the performance, protection and promotion of the dance".

Nepal is rich in cultural heritages. In Kathmandu valley and outside, many traditional cultural dances of different castes, tribes and ethnicities are performed every year. Jogi Nach is a cultural traditional dance which is typical of Baglung as this dance is not performed at other places. Although this dance is managed and performed by the Shakya community of Baglung, it has now become a cultural property of Baglung. Like that of Tharu Nach of



Sauraha, Chitwan, this dance can be made a part of this community to promote tourism in this locality. This will ultimately help for both cultural promotion and tourism development. For the promotion of Jogi Nach local government should provide financial as well as other support. If it is not supported and promoted by the concerned authorities, it might be extinct like other traditional cultural dances.

Basha Nach is a famous traditional cultural dance of the Newar community of Baglung that continues even at present time. For the organization of the performance of this dance, a good amount of money is needed. That is why only selected families can organize the performance of the dance. Only those who are economically strong organize and others participate in the performance.

Our culture is under the cultural attack of western culture. Our cultural practices are labeled as superstitious practices. Because of the influence of modernization, young people of the new generation do not find this performance interesting. They take-part in the performance of the dance out of compulsion not with enthusiasm and interest. This might make the dance more ritualistic and less artistic.

The cultural dances like Basha Nach are related to the cultural identity of the community. They should be performed and promoted regularly. For its continuity and effectiveness as well as regular performance, the members of the Newar community should be aware, motivated and inspired. Mukesh Rajbhandari (49), the former chairperson of NJF Baglung, points, "Still now such performances are not supported by government organizations. Just small financial support can't do anything; it needs holistic planning for the protection and promotion of the cultural dances of the Newar community of Baglung". If we were able to create the united effort of the local government and Newar community with the support of all others, we would be able to promote such traditional cultural dances and develop Baglung as a cultural center for tourists. Their regular performance can only pass from them to the coming generation.

### **The performance of Jogi Nach and Basha Nach**

Jogi Nach is not just tradition, it is an artistic performance. Its effectiveness depends on the performers' performing capacity as well. There should be a perfect combination of music and dance to make it effective. The dancers act like Jogis and sometimes they act as if they are fighting a battle with Trishul and entertain the audience. As Schechner argues, "From theatrical perspective performance is the transformation of technique into entertainment"(455). This dance is so attractive, when the dancers appear in the dress of lord Shiva and Jogis and

begin to dance, the onlookers feel as if real Shiva and Jogis have come.

To perform Jogi Nach, 25-30 dancers of the age of 15/16 to the age of 44/45 are needed. Except the dancers, the persons playing Dholak and Jhaili should be trained ones. Those who play music also dance in attractive and energetic ways in Jogi Nach. Though the dance is performed by the people of Shakya community, all people of Baglung Bazaar watch and enjoy the dance as they feel that it also belongs to them and their cultural property. Regarding this issue Schechner says, "The performances are social events not separate from the community activity. The actor is an active member of his community (...) (184). Those dancers who participate in Jogi Nach need a certain type of decoration. If available they need the tiger's skin with fur to put around the waist, Jata to put on the head, Damaru to play, Trishul of five or six feet of height, a big Chimta, Shankha, bell as well as an artificial snake as Naga around the neck. When the dancers dance with such decoration, the dance becomes splendid and highly attractive. The dancers go around Baglung bazaar performing the dance and some members of Shakya community collect money as donated by the public. Gagan Lal Shakya (49), the chairperson of Shakya Community of Baglung argues, "The collected money donated by the people after watching the dance is utilized for the management of the dance and its preparation".

Jogi Nach begins with the worship of 'Nasal devata' for the perfect completion of the whole performance of the dance. It is done with the song 'Deuthaya' that means song of gods. There are five steps or taals of Jogi Nach. First the taal of movement, second the taal of taking to a particular place and making dance, third resounding all Jogis up in the sky, fourth Daiyo Hop taal (the taal of god) and the fifth the taal of farewell. These different taals have different musical compositions and the dancers have to internalize the taals and perform the dance accordingly. The perfect match of music and the performance of the dancers make the dance artistic whereas mismatching destroys artistry and attraction. So the dancers and the musicians should be trained and expert in their parts.

Basha Nach is performed in memory of the dead persons of the family. This dance is both ritualistic as well as artistic. Performance of Gaijatra is a known celebration in the Newar community. Every year after Rakshayabandan, Gaijatra is performed and on the same occasion, Basha Nach is also performed with a certain artistic flavor. It is organized from the family where someone has died in the year in memory of the dead ones. Young boys and girls are decorated in the form of different gods and goddesses like Ram, Krishna, Bishnu, Shiva,

Laxmi, Saraswati ect. Basically two types of hymns are sung during the performance of the dance: one in the name of gods and goddesses and another describing the life history and the activities of the dead persons.

When we see the performance of Basha Nach, we find three purposes. First is to perform it as the cultural identity of the Newar community. In the participation of the whole community the dance is performed as their cultural entity. Second purpose of the performance is to give the continuity of the memory of the dead persons. Third purpose is spiritual. It is performed wishing the dead soul to be in heaven. Baikuntha Prasad Bijukshaya writes "The spiritual aspect of Basha Nach is as important as its artistic aspects"(II).

In our analysis of the hymns sung in Basha Nach before 2013/14 B.S. We find praise of gods and goddesses like: *Hey Bhagwan/ Bato dekhau/ Swarga Janalai* ( Hay God! Show us the path of heaven) However, after 2013/14 there we find certain change. The shift is in the content of the hymn. From the praise of god the focus began to be given to the praise of the dead persons. One creative person was given the responsibility to compose hymns. One hymn written by Prem Chhota and music composed by Mahesh Chandra Pradhan goes like this:

*Chhadi Gaiyau Hami Sablai*

*Bilayau Jivan Bhar Hamilai Ruyai*

*Hare Rama! Hare Krishna!*

*Kirtan gaiyu*

*Mirta Aatma Lai Mukti Dayu.* ( Chhota,

128)

(You left us all forever, disappeared, putting us in lifelong. Let us sing hymn of Rama and Krishna for Salvation of dead soul)

Basha Nach of Baglung includes both artistic aspects as well as it is a part of *Newari* cultural ritual. Its performance needs artistic quality in dance, song and music. It is not only an artistic performance, it is a part of the Newari culture of Baglung.

### **Performance Theory: Jogi Nach and Basha Nach as Performative Arts**

The term performance is contested, slippery and unstable. This is a part of the vibrancy of the study of performance across disciplines and the Academy. Performance has retained immense popularity in recent years across a wide ranging field of study and activities like arts, literature and social science. Generally to perform is to carry out, accomplish or fulfil special tasks in specific standards. According to Deborah A. Kapchon, "To perform is to carry out something into effect whether it is a story and

identity, an artistic artifact, a historical memory or an ethnography. The notion of agency is implicit in performance" (479). It is whether human or animal or of object. Performance can mean not only theatre but also many other disciplines like cultural, ritual, economical, a parade, a protest, terrorism or almost every branch of human science -sociology, anthropology, ethnography, psychology, linguistics. Hence, previously limited to theatrical performance, now the term has surpassed other types of restriction and has become interdisciplinary.

When we talk about Newars, they have distinct ways of ritual performance based on different religious scriptures as well as their traditional cultural rituals. In Jogi Nach and Basha Nach the performance of the dancers plays the role to actualize the message and take the idea/ theory into practice. "Performance study opens the space between analysis and action and to pull the pin on the binary opposition between theory and practice" (Conquergood 145).

This theoretical ground of Performance Studies theory, opens a new way to the analysis and interpretation of Jogi Nach and Basha Nach of the Newar community of Baglung. Among others, Jogi Nach is a prominent dance of Baglung, especially among Shakyas, and Basha Nach, another traditional cultural dance, is associated with the family of dead people. These two dances represent two types of traditional dances of the Newar community. The members of the family in which someone died the year organize Basha Nach and all the members of the community participate in it, and Jogi Nach is organized by Shakya Samaj or by the community itself and all the members of the community participate in the performance. These two dances have their roots in religion or cultural rituals. There are no written rules about the performance of the dances but traditional practices have been guiding principles. The rules have been passed from past to present orally as Elizabeth Bell argues "Information was stored in bodies in cultural memories and in oral tradition enacted only in their performance" (57). As they are not in written form there is the possibility of some aspects being lost in the past. According to Manjul Shakya (39), a member of Shakya community and a regular participant of Jogi Nach, " There are five tals (rhythms) in Jogi Nach and all of them have their particular names but at present no one can tell those names."

Theorists focus three interrelated concepts while defining performance. Elizabeth Bell (2008) argues performance as both process and product. It is productive and purposeful as well as traditional and transformative. Actually, performance is a communicative process, an exchange or interaction between speaker and listener,

message subscriber and message receiver, the source and the goal.

The effect of the dances also depends on the quality of the performers. Therefore, for the performance of Jogi Nach, the dancers are trained for a few weeks before the performance. The process of performance most often described as emergent "is made of twice behaved behavior and performed action that people train to do that they practice and rehearse" (Schencher 22). The performers wear the dress that differentiates them from others. Although they are normal people, their dress up and other artifacts that they use differentiate them. In Jogi Nach dancers wear clothes like that of God Mahadev and others that of Jogi or sage. In Basha Nach the performers wear the dress of gods and goddesses.

When it comes to performance, we should keep in mind two things: Performances are traditional but at the same time each performance is different from others. While defining Performance, Victor Turner Says "Rituals are the performances of stereo typed activities that are well set in any certain ethnic cultural sequences"(81). Regarding such performance Abhi Subedi argues "Heritage of theatre implies a transmission of dramaturgical and performative experiences from one generation to another. Dramatic heritage is thus the continuation of a culture of performance that is vibrant at a particular time and space" (18). In the case of Jogi Nach and Basha Nach the trend of copying from one generation to another generation is continuing.

## V. CONCLUSION

Based on our discussion of Jogi Nach and Basha Nach of the Newar community of Baglung with the light of Performance Studies theory, we can tell that both dances are a part of cultural rituals of the Newar community of Baglung as well as artistic performances. In both dances, performers are not just artists but also members of their community. That is why both dances have great cultural value in the community. With dances, the members of the Newar community of Baglung feel associated among themselves deeply and regard them part of their cultural identity.

In spite of the great cultural value of Jogi Nach and Basha Nach in the Newar community of Baglung, these dances are facing different problems. The increasing trend of foreign movement of youngsters for study as well as for foreign employment has created the scarcity of the active artists for the performance of the dances. The influence of western culture and modernization has decreased the interest of the people of the new generation toward the performance of such cultural dances. Lack of concern and

help from the government agencies is also causing problems.

The need of the present time is to increase awareness among the members of the Newar community regarding the value of such dances and creating interest and enthusiasm toward them. If such dances of the Newar community of Baglung are protected, performed and promoted in systematic ways, they will open new potentiality of cultural tourism and develop Baglung as a cultural center of Newari culture. In the past such cultural dances were performed even for the promotion of economic activities, this aspect can be revived at present time as well.

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### CORRESPONDENTS

Gaganlal Shakya (55), Ba. Na. Pa. 2, Baglung

Ishwor Bajracharya (63), Ba.Na.Pa.3, Baglung.

John Bajracharya (35) ,Ba.Na.Pa.3,Baglung.

Manjul Shakya(36), Ba.Na. Pa.3,Baglung.

Mukesh Rajbhandari (49), Ba.Na.Pa.3, Baglung.

Mukunda Shakya(70), Ba.Na.Pa.3,Baglung.

Prakash Baral (45), Kantipur correspondent, Baglung

Prem Chhota (72), Ba.Na.Pa.3, Baglung.

Tejeshwor Babu Gongu (72), Suryabinayak, Bhaktapur.



# Defense Mechanism as a Psychological Concept in Afro-American Novel

Abiodun Olukayode TAIRU

Department of English, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Nigeria  
09038280186, tairuabiodunolukayode@gmail.com

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**Abstract**— *The life of average black man offshore African soil is fraught with greater challenges. The study concentrates on defense mechanism as one of the many psychological devices or tools, used ignorantly by Black-Americans as a means of earning their manumission or emancipation from white overlords. Many of these challenges could be both mild and severe, traumatizing and excruciating; causing great mental or physical pain. The extreme of these challenges is that, it leads to early death if the victim or the situation is not rescued. Against this backdrop, the study adopted the concepts based on the psychoanalytic principles established by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) whose theory of the psyche is often today in Eagleton's Introduction to Literary theory (2005) referred to as classical psychoanalysis. This theory also combines with Lois Tyson (1999) African-American criticism to examine black families in black literatures from the psychological point of view. Cases of defense mechanism as a psychological concept are drawn out of four (4) Afro-American literary texts; Richard Wright's "Black Boy" and "Native son", August Wilson's "Fences" and Toni Morrison's Beloved. Major findings are the psychological errors committed by traumatized blacks from their daily challenges and how the errors defined their lives in ruins and their identity as blacks. Major attention was focused on how those blacks were able to defend themselves and possibly gained their emancipation from slavery. The study focused on how the sampled-blacks faced and accepted the confrontational harsh economy and unbreakable political structure created by the whites. The classist nature of the social structure were also considered and how this affects or defines the limitations of blacks as second-class citizens in diaspora.*



**Keywords**— *defense mechanism, psychological concept, Afro-American Novel*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The psychological concepts in its totality are measure of mental reaction or neuron-responses that determines ones action or behaviour mechanically, perfunctorily or routinely in human sub consciousness. Omosule, (2013) in his examination of Lady Macbeth used Freud's psychoanalysis to reveal through the reflection of Lady Macbeth's statement; how desperate and determined she was to prosecute the assassination of Duncan. He stresses that Lady Macbeth's behaviour is a reflection of her innate trait (unconscious) for bestiality. The fundamental claims such as the infiltration of the realm of the *conscious* by the *preconscious* and the *unconscious* is pinned to

psychoanalysis. An overall assessment of what is going on in the sub consciousness of an average black living on American soil will be revealed through the defense mechanism employed by the characters picked from the four (4) texts chosen for this study. Meanwhile, the outcome of the findings will suggest the tendency or what a black man is capable of doing offshore African soil. Care is also taken not to generalise as the behavioural pattern of the chosen characters remain mere behavioural tendency.

Meanwhile, Afro-American literature is a body of literature written by authors of black origin or background but who lived all of their lives in America and writes about



their American experiences. African-American or Afro-American literature is also a balkanized version of American literature. African American literature was dominated by autobiographical spiritual narratives before the climax of slave narratives. African literature as an Art was further glorified and made colourful and flowering with the Harlem Renaissance of 1950s.

The scope of this special Art include, the role of African Americans within the larger American society, blacks as fillers or substitutes to the whites' deficiencies, Afro-American culture, racism, slavery and social equality. The argument of this paper has grown out of an attempt to formulate what it means to be Black in the twentieth century. W.E.B. DuBois wrote in 1903 that 'the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the colour-line'; that race and its variously linear parameters (borders, passages, journeys; traditions and origins; demarcations and discriminations) are still politically central at the end of the century serves as a reminder that the urgency of this message has in no sense diminished.

Situating the politics of race and racism as the problem that haunts and constructs the discourses of modernity, the subjectivities we inhabit and the times in which we live, makes dramatically apparent the ways in which 'race' has become the founding illusion of our identities. Dubois published *The Souls of Black Folk* on the threshold of the twentieth century, and his declaration on its future had its roots in the events, the dreams and the thoughts of the century that had just closed. What he meant by 'Negro' identity cannot be exactly mapped onto the ideologies, the debates and the times out of which Black identities are understood and enacted today. However, the differential and highly contextualised meanings of Blackness and of Whiteness are still closely and significantly bound to the histories inhabited and analysed by Dubois, and cannot be adequately interrogated without those histories.

### Theoretical Framework

Anxiety, fear of persecution and the fragmentation of the *self* are experiences peculiar to the era from Matthew Arnold to Paul de Man: they can be found throughout recorded history. What is perhaps significant is that in this period such experiences become constituted in a new way as a systematic field of knowledge. That field of knowledge is known as psychoanalysis, developed by Sigmund Freud in late nineteenth century Vienna; and it is Freud's doctrines that we now want briefly to summarise. 'The motive of human society is in the last resort an economic one.' It was Freud, not Karl Marx, who made this statement, in his *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*.

What has dominated human history to date is the need to labour; and for Freud that harsh necessity means that we must repress some of our tendencies to pleasure and gratification. If we were not called upon to work in order to survive, we might simply lie around all day doing nothing. Every human being has to undergo this repression of what Freud named the 'pleasure principle' by the 'reality principle', but for some of us, and arguably for whole societies, the repression may become excessive and make us ill. Following the justification of Sigmund Freud theory, the paper unraveled the fear and anxiety of the black characters in the chosen texts for practical analyses.

## II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

### (i) Afro-American Literature

A body of writings and literary works detailing the movements and ordeals of blacks on American soil is what is today referred to as African American or Afro-American literature. Critics cite Wheatley's successful defense as the first recognition of African American literature. As a result of the skepticism surrounding her work, 'Poems on Various Subjects' offers its reader several introductory documents designed to authenticate Wheatley and her poetry and to substantiate her literary motives. Another early African-American author was Jupiter Hammon (1711–1806). Hammon, considered the first published Black writer in American, published his poem *An Evening Thought: Salvation by Christ with penitential cries as broad side* in early 1761. In 1778 he wrote an ode to Phillis Wheatley, in which he discussed their shared humanity and common bonds. In 1786, Hammon gave his Address to the Negroes of the state of New York. Writing at the age of 76 after a life time of slavery, Hammon said and I quote : 'If we should ever get to heaven, we shall find nobody to reproach us for being black, or for being slaves'.

He also promoted the idea of a gradual emancipation as a way to end slavery. Hammon is thought to have been a slave until his death. In the 19th century, his speech was later reprinted by several abolitionist groups. William Wells Brown (1814-84) and t Victor Sejour (1817–74) produced the earliest works of fiction by African-American writers. We cannot talk about African American literature without mentioning the 13th Amendment passed by the late Abraham Lincoln which almost ended slave trade. When we move further in the history, we must examine the good efforts of the early Abolitionists like WEB Dubois, Fredrick Douglass, Boker Taliafero Washington, Henry Louis Gate, and so on.

Of importance also is their secret road networking and stoppages called 'The Underground railroad' which was the

homes of the individual Abolitionist following 'The Northern Star'. Of great reference also is the work and effort of Harriet Tubman who helped more than 500 blacks gained manumission. We can remind ourselves the nostalgic effect of slavery when we talk about the early counties system; cotton and sugarcane plantations where blacks work as indenture servants. When we move forward, we discuss at length about 'The great Migration' towards the Northern Carolina and Philadelphia down to the Renaissance period, then to the Age of Toni Morrison the 1980s winner of Pulitzer award.

### (ii) Defense Mechanism as a Psychological Concept

Defense mechanism is a psychological tool or device unconsciously or perfunctorily used by a frustrated or traumatized being to escape from assailing threats either coming from other super-human being or from the vicinity or environment habited by the victim to remain or stay alive. Sigmund Freud was adjudged to be the first scholar to have discussed this tool or device as one of the psychological devices postulated in his early psychoanalysis theory dated 1939. Other tools are *fear*, *inferiority complex*, *anxiety*, *racial discrimination*, *death*, etc. Terry Eagleton and Louis Tyson also dwell on this theory in their *Literary Theory; An Introduction* (2005) and Tyson L. (1999). *Critical Theory Today* respectively.

## III. APPLICATION/ ANALYSIS

### i. Comparing Bigger Thomas and Paris

If it was not a case of inferiority complex, one of the numerous psychological concepts developed by Sigmund Freud, Bigger Thomas a character in Richard Wright's 'Native son' would not have had to defend himself by preventing Mary Dalton with a pillow case which suffocated her to death when the latter tried to answer the call of her blind mother while Bigger laid her on bed in her room. Bigger having watched nude films and had seen the beauty of white ladies in the movie savored and immediately became hungry of having sexual intercourse with any of them. Mary Dalton who of course a victim of the established circumstances was naive of this psychological disorder of his glorified driver, got herself drunk and was left in the mercy of a black man who could not control his sexual urge and feelings; was almost raped and unfortunately died through psychological error committed by Bigger. Had Bigger Thomas a white young man, the best he could have done was to contest with Jan Earlon Mary's boyfriend and struggle to have Mary to himself the way Paris did to Menelaus to have Helen all to himself in Homer's Troy even though it will result to an all-out war and bloodshed just as the war between The

Greeks and The Trojans which lasted for 10 years with a continuation of another 20 years in Odyssey.

### ii. Defense Mechanism in Black Boy

Of significance is the fight that ensued between Richard and some boys in the novel because his victory over those boys gave him a lot of relief thereafter. Richard fought some boys who waylaid him on his way to the grocery store when he turned six years old. Because the boys are many and are apparently more powerful than he is, they beat him mercilessly and make away with the money his mother has given him to buy, items at the store. This incident happens thrice.

On each occasion, his mother sends him back and gives him money again. On the fourth occasion, his mother gives him a whip in addition to the money and warns him not to come back home without what he is sent to buy. Richard is torn between running away from the boys, and being beaten by his mother and squaring up to the boys. If he is beaten by the boys, he can retaliate, but if he runs home and he is beaten by his mother, he cannot retaliate. He finally chooses to fight with the boys. He succeeds in beating the hell out of them.

The boys flee to their parents. Their parents come to look for Richard and threaten to beat him. He vows to deal with them the way he has dealt with their children. The boys and their parents go back home, surprised about the kind of a boy Richard is. Since then, nobody waylays him again. His mother has done this to instill in him the need to fight back when oppressed. He would not probably have known his potentials if his mother had not handled him in a tough way. We see in Richard's mother a good motivator, someone who does everything in her capacity to bring out the best in a child. This particular incident influences Richard's later actions. At almost each new school he attends, he has to fight with some boys to assert his prowess. Some parents encourage thuggery. The parents of the boys who waylay Richard exemplify such. They do not bother to ask their children what they have done to Richard. They want to defend their children. If Richard does not threaten to beat them, they would have joined their children to beat Richard and may have probably killed him in the process. These parents behave as if they are the only ones who have children. If Richard's parents most especially his mother had come but to defend him, those children's parents would not have found it palatable.

Richard's stubbornness is his own defense mechanism. His stubbornness at childhood knows no bounds; he holds on tightly to whatever he believes is right. When called upon to be the valedictorian, he rejects the principal's address. This action of his is the first of its kind in the history of the

school. His argument was that though the address of the principal is better than his, it does not say what he as a black boy would like to say. He was threatened by the principal, who claims he has the power to fail anyone, even if he has passed. The principal also lures him with a teaching appointment.

Richard, however, remains undaunted. He damns the consequences and goes ahead to read the address he has prepared himself. Some people applaud him after the address but he is not moved by people's reaction. Through this event, Richard portrays himself as an iconoclast; somebody who believes in himself and feels things should be done the proper way, one who is undeterred by the beauty of any office. With this he has succeeded in doing something new. People can use anything to suppress anybody who wants to change the status quo. The principal knows that Richard is right; this is why he wants to use all possible means to make him change his mind. He does not want Richard to attack the issue of class differentiation and colour bar prevalent in his society then.

In contrast, Richard's stubbornness could be compared to that of Kunta Kunte; son of Omoro and Binta Kunte from Uganda in Alex Haley's *Root*. The saga of a slave boy in defense of his black identity who refuses to accept Tobby as a new name given to him by his slave master; the Toubab, a white man. He knew that a change of name is a total loss of his African identity.

### iii. Defense Mechanism in Wilson's Fences

Rose mentions that Cory has been recruited by a college football team. Troy wants Cory to give up on football because the white man will never let him get anywhere with it. He believes that Cory should keep the job he has at the A & P and "get recruited in how to fix cars or something where he can make a living". Bono comments that if Cory is as good at football as Troy was at baseball then the boy will do alright. Troy says that despite his skills at baseball he's still poor. His wife tells him that times have changed since he played baseball – now black people are allowed to play in the major leagues. Bono says that Troy just came along too early. "There ought never have been no time called too early!" says Troy. He talks about how his batting average was way higher than Selkirk's, a guy who played right field for the Yankees back then.

Rose comments that people just had to wait for Jackie Robinson to come along. Her husband says, "Jackie Robinson wasn't nobody" and that he "knows teams Jackie Robinson couldn't even make!" Troy complains that it should never have mattered what colour you were. If you were good at baseball, they should have let you play. He

believes that minorities will never receive the same deference given to white players.

Troy thinks that this son ought to be learning a trade instead of focusing on sports. He has no faith in organized sports; he was a great ball player as a younger man, but never had a chance to play in the major leagues. He is still haunted by the denial he suffered in the hands of whites who never gave him opportunity to play in major leagues despite his distinguished talent in playing baseball.

Rose and Bono tried to convince Troy that things have changed. The significance here is not to use the past to judge the present; what obtained at one time might change within the future. Troy played baseball in his youth, but it was before the days of Jackie Robinson and baseball's integration. Troy couldn't advance to the big leagues because of his race. Baseball, Troy says, never got him anywhere. "Ain't got a pot to piss in or a window to throw it out of" because of the sport. It is part of the dynamics of life that what has less value yesterday may assume higher value today. Troy with all his baseball talent never got to play in the major leagues because the "colour" of the player was a factor then. But that discriminatory consideration no longer exists today.

Troy is still very unhappy about the colour discrimination he suffered at the expense of his talent. He fears the same fate may befall his son in football and doesn't want a repeat experience. He is concerned that his children should do better in life than himself. Cory's dream is attainable, yet Troy will not recognise that. He is blind to the changes that are taking place in society. On the other hand, Troy is far from being passive about the discrimination that touches him personally. He despises the racist practices at his job and attempts to change them. But when it comes to his son, he has a blind spot; he can't see the point of striving for higher attainment.

This conflict deepens as the play progresses. This unpleasant memory is what he wanted to repress reason for not allowing his son Cory to venture into sports because he believes white man will deny him the same way he was denied. This is where defense mechanism comes in.

### iv. Defense Mechanism in Wright's Native Son

By the time Mary arrives home from the outing with Jan, she is thoroughly drunk and so drunk that she could not walk unaided. Bigger thinks of helping her to her room but is initially paralyzed by the fear of what her father, mother or any person, would think if he is seen in a position considered as a compromised one with a white girl.

Realizing that her situation is hopeless, he decides to help her to her room. In fact, at a point, he had to lift her bodily.

While assisting, Mary, Bigger experiences mixed feelings of admiration and hate. At a point he feels that she does not hate him the way other white people do. Anyhow, he manages to carry her to her room. While he holds her in his arms, sensuous feelings are awakened in him and he kisses her. He lays her on the bed. He wants to leave but is apparently held back by uncertain feelings. He grips her breasts and kisses her again, “feeling her move toward him” (p. 116). Suddenly, the door behind creaks and he stiffens. As he turns back to behold Mrs Dalton, he is overwhelmed by terror.

Bigger’s initial reaction to the appearance of Mrs Dalton is to knock her out of his way and make a run for his life. At that instance, the old woman calls Mary’s name. Not wanting Mary to speak and to frustrate her from getting up, which may attract Mrs Dalton to the side of the bed and lead to his discovery, Bigger covers her mouth. However, Mary mumbles and tries to get up again, but Bigger frantically grabs a corner of the pillow and covers her mouth with it.

Apparently impelled by intuition, Mrs Dalton who had earlier thought that Mary “must be asleep” (p. 116) moves towards the bed. As Bigger realises that he is going to be discovered, he is frightened, quickly picks the pillow and firmly covers Mary’s entire face with it. With Mary’s hands and fingernails being used to resist the covering on the face and the likely threat of exposure increasing, Bigger applies pressure with all of his strength in pressing the pillow down. After some moments, he no longer feels the resistance. By the time he takes his hands off the pillow, he hears “a long slow sigh go up from the bed” (p. 117). Mary is dead.

Mrs. Dalton, who is still in the room, but unaware of her daughter’s death wonders whether she was sick. As she moves closer toward the bed, Bigger moves stealthily away. In defense of his crime, Bigger carries Mary’s corpse, puts it in the trunk she had planned to take to Detroit later in the morning. He takes it down to the basement. Here, he tries to put the corpse in the furnace but the size of the furnace appears incapable of taking in the entire length of the corpse. Having put in the feet first, further pushing-in stops at the shoulder. He eventually gets a hatchet, severs the head off and throws it also into the furnace. After taking all he considers the necessary precautions, he pushes the level of the furnace back, pushes the trunk into a corner and goes out through the back door.

The murder of Mary is clearly not premeditated. Bigger is driven into the act by fear of what the white folks would

think if caught alone with a white girl in a room in the night. Consequently, this episode is significant in that it shows how fear can drive people into criminality. It also shows the consequence of the culture of fear, which the white oppression in the United States imposed on the black folks of Wright’s society.

#### **v. Defense Mechanism in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved***

Though the name of Sethe’s third child murdered, her throat having been cut with a handsaw by the deceased mother is not known, but the reason for Sethe’s “rough choice, her infanticide has left much to be desired and food for thought to the critics. *Beloved* explores the all-encompassing destruction wrought by slavery, which affects the characters freedom. The plot of *Beloved* follows two different stories. The first story takes place in present time, which is the year 1873, in Cincinnati, Ohio. The second story unfolds through flashbacks that tell of events that transpired in the past years. The Novel begins with Paul D appearing on Sethe’s porch one day. They have not seen each other in eighteen good years, when they both ran away from Sweet Home, the plantation in Kentucky where they lived as slaves.

Though both escaped captivity, they endured traumatic experiences in the process. Paul D ended up at a prison camp in Georgia, where he worked on a chain gang until a flood created conditions for an escape. For her part, Sethe was nine months pregnant when she fled from Sweet Home, and she had to give birth en route to freedom. Help from a young white woman saved her life and enabled Sethe and her newborn, Denver, to make it to Ohio. There Sethe reunited with the three older children she had sent ahead of her. When school teacher tracked her down, twenty-eight days later, Sethe responded by trying to kill her children to spare them from enslavement or being recaptured, and though three survived Sethe succeeded in killing her eldest daughter.

The memories stirred by *Beloved*’s presence build toward the novel’s twin climaxes. The first climax occurs in chapter 16, which narrates the scene where school teacher arrives at house 124 and Sethe tries to kill her children in the shed to save them from a life of slavery. She wounds her two sons, slits her eldest daughter’s throat, and attempts to bash Denver’s head against a wall. This horrific event changed Sethe’s life, poisoning her reputation in the community and was later haunted by the ghost of her daughter ‘Beloved’ whom she inadvertently killed because of the defense mechanism she adopted.



#### IV. CONCLUSION

The resonant idea deduced from the type of defense mechanism adopted by the characters chosen for this research work is that one which is not in their favour. Bigger Thomas' idea of silencing Mary Dalton with a pillow to prevent the latter from talking so that his presence in Mary's room will not be noticed boomeranged, Richard's chosen stubbornness only ended him as a bully even though he uses that defense method to save himself whenever trouble looms, Troy Maxson's conservative, adamant and impenetrable opposition of Cory's ambition to become a footballer contributed in what almost shattered the latter's big dreams or his chosen future career. Sethe's attempted murder of her sons and daughters and the eventful killing of her eldest daughter makes her become a savage and consequently a gothic character. Memories of past bitter experiences could be too dangerous to repress most especially the type of traumatic slavery experiences discussed in many slave narratives in the whole body of Black Literature.

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# A Review of Research on the English Translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*

Shu Kelu, Li Zejuan\*

School of Foreign Studies, Yangtze University, Jingzhou, Hubei 434100, China

\*Corresponding author

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**Abstract**— After combing through the literature on the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* from 2015 to 2022, it was found that most of the relevant research focused on three aspects: translation strategies, external communication and national image construction, and research based on discourse analysis. However, the research on these three aspects is not balanced. The first two aspects have more literature and more in-depth research, while the third aspect has fewer papers and more scattered research. The analysis shows that the research on the foreign translation of important party and state documents based on discourse analysis shows the characteristics of scientific methods and novel perspectives, and has strong academic value. Research in these three aspects can be further integrated, expanded and explored under the theoretical framework of discourse analysis, which can produce more theoretically innovative research results.

**Keywords**— *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*; translation strategies; external communication; discourse analysis



## I. INTRODUCTION

Edited by the Information Office of the State Council of China together with the Documentation Research Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Foreign Languages Bureau of China (FWB), *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* has been published in more than 20 languages since its release by Foreign Languages Publishing House on September 28, 2014, and distributed to more than 160 countries and regions around the globe with more than 6 million copies, making its popularity overseas a spectacle that has not been witnessed in 40 years. The book mainly contains the important writings of General Secretary Xi Jinping during the period

from November 15, 2012 to May 10, 2022 (including Volume I to Volume IV), which cover a wide range of topics with innovative views, powerfully explaining contemporary China's concept of development, path of development, and internal and external policies, and also serving as a window for countries around the world to learn about China's new Party Central Committee's strategy of governing the country. Since the publication of this work, the research on the English translation of *Xi Jinping on the Governance of the Country* has only been increasing. At present, English is the main common language for international communication and work, so the research on the English translation of this book is very important for the

construction of the foreign discourse system, and it also relates to the enhancement of the overall cultural soft power. In order to further improve the quality of English translation research on current political discourse, it is necessary to systematically sort out the research results of this national translation practice in the past eight years (2015-2022), summarize the experience of the research and discov

er the shortcomings, so as to lay a solid translation foundation for the construction of a discourse system that integrates China and foreign countries.

## II. CURRENT STATUS OF RESEARCH ON THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF XI JINPING: THE GOVERNANCE OF CHINA

The truly valuable discussion must also be mainly supported by Chinese research. The English translation of Xi Jinping on Governance mainly started in 2015, and by searching journals in CNKI, inputting the keyword “Xi Jinping on Governance + English Translation” to manually exclude interview articles, a total of 77 journals were obtained. Among them, a total of 17 journals from CSSCI were obtained. By searching master’s and doctoral dissertations, 93 master’s degree dissertations and 1 doctoral dissertation (as of December 11, 2022) were obtained. The specific statistics are as follows:

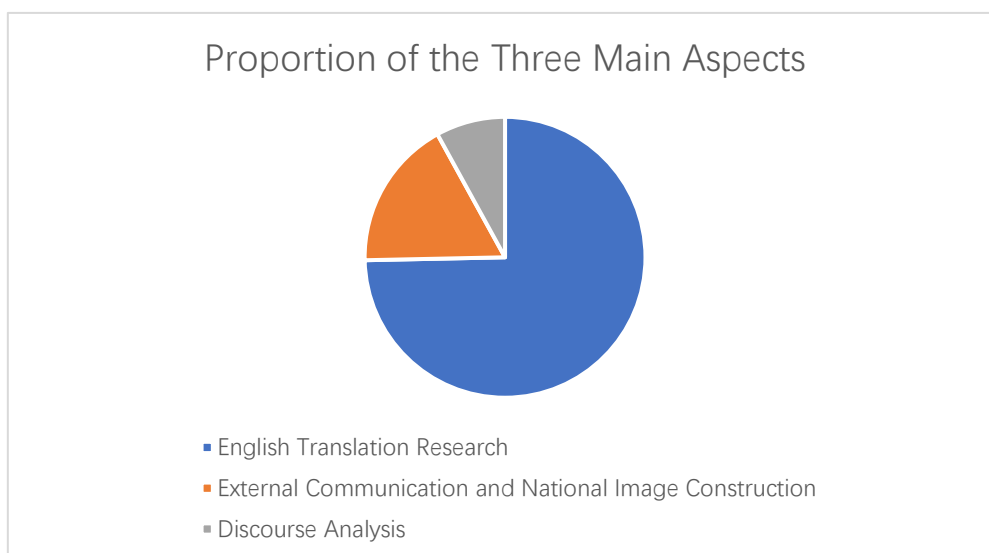


Fig.1

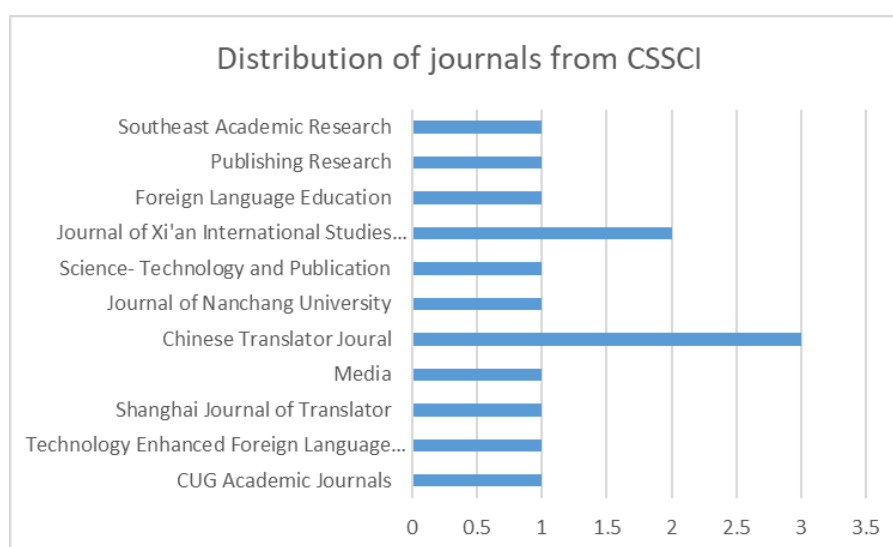


Fig.2

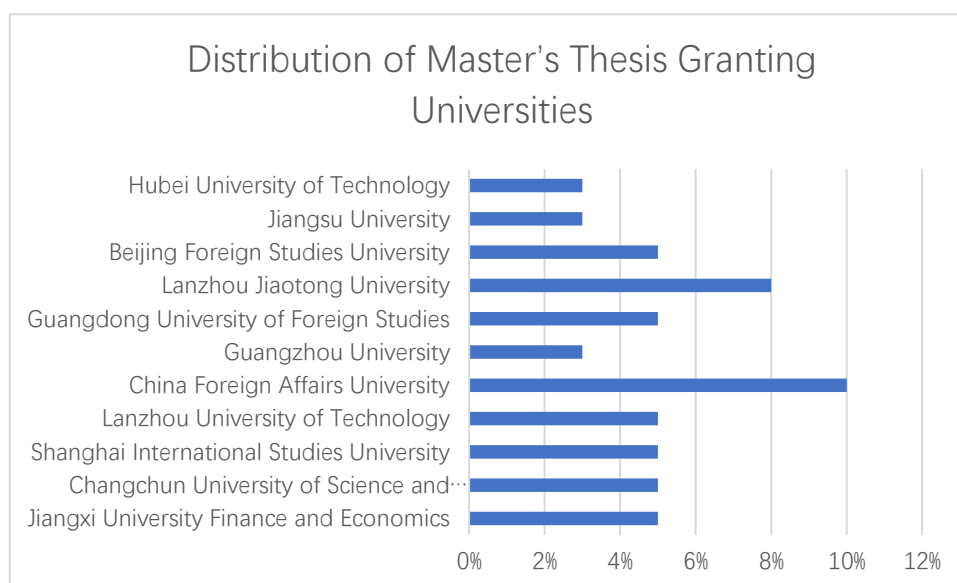


Fig.3

Judging from the distribution of the three major themes of the journal (Figure 1), most of the journal's themes are still distributed in English translation research. It can be seen that the current domestic research on English translation is relatively in-depth and comprehensive. The topics of English translation research are also relatively systematic, with a large number of studies ranging from macro-level English translation strategies to micro-level word translation. It can be seen that Chinese-English translation research has made great progress in the past eight years. The topics of external communication and national image construction are relatively rare among English translation research topics. To a certain extent, this is because external communication and national image construction involve interdisciplinary research, so the research on these two aspects is naturally less than that on English translation. Judging from the CSSCI journal distribution map (Figure 2), only 17 of the 77 journals are from CSSCI, and the overall publication level is low. Among them, the number of articles published in Chinese translation journals is greater than that of other journals. The topics of the published articles are not solely focused on English translation research. Judging from the distribution map of master's thesis awarding units (Figure 3), fifty master's theses are mainly selected for statistics. Among them, China Foreign Affairs University publishes the largest number of papers, and the papers are mainly focused on English translation research. According to the above

analysis, research on the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* is mainly focused on English translation research. Although there is concern about external communication and national image construction, it is far less than the English translation research, and the research is not in-depth enough.

### III. EVALUATION OF REPRESENTATIVE RESEARCH ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In order to make the research results more targeted, this study selected representative papers and also selected 7 monographs published in China or other countries. The selection criteria were the quality, influence and uniqueness of the papers. As can be seen from the previous section, a large number of papers involve research on the English translation strategies of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, and there are also considerable scale studies on external communication and national image construction. Some studies that are discourse analysis and exploration, which are small in number but have a more systematic theoretical nature, which will be discussed separately below.

#### 3.1 English Translation Strategy Research

Dou Weilin and Wen Jianping (2015) took 23 international speeches of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* as examples to examine the characteristics of General Secretary Xi Jinping's pro-people discourse and its English translation strategies, and found that pro-people discourse is embodied in storytelling, borrowing metaphors, citing

classics and using the four aspects of common sayings, the corresponding translation strategies are free translation, literal translation, and back translation. People-friendly discourse is an important feature of the text of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, and its English translation strategy is a key link in language conversion. People-friendly discourse is full of emotions, and its translation needs to adjust the vocabulary, syntax, and rhetoric of the target language to allow this kind of sentiments of being close to the people to be carried forward. The research of Dou Weilin and Wen Jianping mainly focused on conversion strategies at the formal level, touching on the fundamental aspects of translation, and has important implications for the translation of current political discourse.

Taking the concept of cultural translation as a unified guide, Lin Rong and Lin Dajin (2016) proposed that the translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* mainly adopts literal translation, paraphrasing, annotation, and a combination of the above translation strategies. When translating political documents into English, facing cultural words with Chinese characteristics, literal translation is the best strategy based on studying the common characteristics of human culture. However, the most important characteristic of world culture is diversity, so when facing cultural differences, interpretation is sometimes a necessary means of compensation. In-text interpretation is a reader-friendly translation method that greatly enhances the reading efficiency of English readers. However, if you still do not understand the translation after reading it, the translator will have to bother the reader to read the annotations and explanations at the end of the text in order to achieve political goals. The first principle of document translation is "faithfulness". The last point is that the use of the above three translation methods is a combination strategy. This is because the cultural translation concept is not equivalent to a specific translation strategy. On the contrary, the cultural translation concept emphasizes the search for appropriate translation strategies for a certain cultural element, so it naturally includes the use of multiple strategies.

Zhao Xiangyun (2017) proposed that the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* insists on making "readers move closer to the author", and also pays attention to making "the author move closer to readers",

and flexibly uses various translation strategies such as foreignization, explicitation, simplification, and information reorganization, to achieve the harmonious unity between "loyalty" and "acceptability". From the perspective of "readers move closer to the author", quoting classics is the style of General Secretary Xi Jinping's speech. It more vividly puts forward some new conclusions, new formulations, new ideas, and new measures. The Xi-style speaking style of quoting classics further demonstrates his outstanding ability. Language skills and charisma. From this perspective, the English translation of "Xi" mainly adopts the translation strategy of foreignization, so that its language form can be well reproduced in the translation. From the perspective of "bringing the author closer to the reader", the translator mainly adopts translation strategies such as explicit translation, simplified translation and information reorganization. The analysis of translation strategies is of great help in building a foreign discourse system.

Deng Zhongmin and Zeng Jianping (2020) analyzed the translation strategies of repeated sentences in *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* from the perspective of repetitive rhetoric. The translation strategies of repeated rhetoric mainly include omission, substitution and repetition, among which omission is the most obvious, including omission of the same words and sentences and synonymous translation of different words and sentences. The main purpose of provincial translation is to make the language simple and clear. There is no redundancy, making it easier for readers to read. However, omitted translation will also cause the source language to repeat itself and the rhetorical effect will be greatly reduced. In English, omissions or substitute words are often used to express. Due to language differences, blindly literal translation that repeats rhetoric will definitely result in a lengthy, bloated, and monotonous translation. In the same year, Zhu Chaowei proposed that the successful translation of allusions in *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* mainly benefited from the translation strategy of "changing with the situation and being new with the times". These include six translation methods: literal translation, literal translation with annotation, free translation, additional translation, omitted translation and cultural substitution. At the same time, the high-level translation team, sincere cooperation between Chinese and

foreign experts, and strict control procedures are also one of the reasons for the successful dissemination of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* abroad.

Si Xianzhu and Zeng Jianping (2021) found that the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* is highly accepted abroad because its guiding principles for implementing translation methods and strategies are appropriate. First of all, the guiding principle is to clear up doubts and eliminate reading obstacles. When faced with expressions in the target language that may cause dyslexia, the translator needs to exert his or her subjectivity and adopt methods including in-text explanations and extra-text annotations to fully explain them and provide the target language with Readers can effectively interpret China's governing philosophy and excellent culture to eliminate reading barriers. The second step is to connect the rhetoric of the target language text. In order to respect the reading rhetoric psychology and reception style of the target readers, the unique discourse methods of the original text must be rewritten, adjusted, added and deleted as necessary to reconstruct the target language context. Finally, it demonstrates cultural self-confidence. In the face of current political discourse that keeps pace with the times, there is no precedent to refer to when translating. The principle of "putting me first" must be adhered to. The translator constructs a foreign political discourse with Chinese characteristics through self-created concepts. system.

Looking at the development of the English translation strategy of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* from a historical perspective, its development has continued to be in-depth and improved over time, and the research has become more and more detailed. From a macro perspective, we analyze the reasons for the high acceptance of the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, and then analyze the translation strategies. From a micro perspective, we study the translation strategies from repetitive rhetoric. Contribute to the study of English translation of foreign current affairs political discourse.

### 3.2 External Communication and National Image Building

China's comprehensive national strength and international status continue to improve, and the international community has paid unprecedented attention to China. China's international image is still "shaped by others" rather than "self-shaped" to a large extent.

Promoting China to enhance its soft power, eliminate misunderstandings, and disseminate a true, comprehensive, and three-dimensional voice of China requires the best external propaganda work, and a key factor in the success of external propaganda lies in the external translation and dissemination of Chinese discourse. The external dissemination of Chinese discourse plays a vital role in building the country's image. First, Dou Weilin (2016) summarized the successful experience in the external interpretation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*. The English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* is highly accepted abroad, not only because of the breakthrough in the expression of political discourse and the correct use of translation methods, but also because *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* is not limited to traditional distribution models, such as in Book fairs are held around the world, as well as seminars and symposiums. Such proactive actions, especially organizing seminars and symposiums, can greatly promote the overseas dissemination of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, arouse the interest of foreign readers, and effectively interpret and popularize the thoughts on state governance. Zhang Shengxiang and Zhang Miaoqun (2018) pointed out that *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* was widely disseminated in the United States mainly through three main channels: symposiums, news media, and journals and magazines, forming a benign public opinion orientation among different target groups and improving the book's influence in all walks of life in the United States. The symposium was mainly aimed at political elites, and their comments on the book mainly covered four aspects: President Xi Jinping, China's internal policy, Sino-US relations, and China's global strategy. The news media mainly targets social elites and reports on the overall objective evaluation of the book *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* by the American social elites. Journals and magazines are mainly aimed at academic elites and are mainly concerned with the politics, law and economy of contemporary China. Zhang Shengxiang and Zhang Miaoqun discussed the construction of the external discourse system from three levels: political, social and academic. It was systematic and touched on the main issues of the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*. Zhu Yige (2018) emphasized in his research the



importance of translated texts in the construction of national image. The English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* is the self-expression of China's image in the Western world. It not only helps change the situation where China's image is always passively expressed by the West, but also promotes the construction of China's own imageology system. At the micro level, the rhetorical forms of words and sentences during the language conversion process allow the English translation to carry its thoughts on state governance, thereby allowing the English translation text to present a rational world in which politics, economy, military, culture, etc. The organic combination of ideas in different fields highlights the inner horizon of governance thoughts. This horizon is transcendent, that is, it goes beyond the specific Chinese context and is connected with the common theme of human existence, thus establishing a good image of it. Chen Shuangshuang (2018) studied the British Daily Telegraph's coverage of governance thoughts and found that the reported content mainly focused on the "19th National Congress", "One Belt and One Road", "Diplomatic Thoughts", "Anti-corruption and Integrity and Cultural Construction" and other aspects. The form of the report is concrete and visual, but some reports distort the facts and are biased. This is an interference strategy adopted by The Daily Telegraph due to the influence of the Cold War mentality and not wanting to see China's rapid development. , the study recommends that China's mainstream English-language media cooperate with Western mainstream English-language media to build an in-depth reporting platform for China, strengthen exchanges with foreign journalists by holding conferences, and strengthen the construction of China's foreign discourse system through foreign propaganda translation.

In terms of academic promotion, on the one hand, Chinese scholars have translated works on this idea into English and published them in the English-speaking world. On the other hand, Chinese and foreign scholars have cooperated to publish relevant works in English. The former is like *China's New Development Philosophy* co-authored by Hu Angang, Yan Yilong and Tang Xiao (2017). The English translation was published by the internationally renowned publishing house Springer in 2018. The title of the book is translated as *Xi Jinping's New Development Philosophy*, the English translation highlights the subjective

role of General Secretary Xi Jinping and introduces important concepts such as innovation, collaboration, green, sharing and safe development to the English-speaking world (Hu et al., 2018). The latter is such as *The Xi Jinping Era: His Comprehensive Strategy toward the China Dream* co-edited by New York University political science professor Hsiung (2015) and Chinese scholars. Objectively introduce the development path of the new era, let the world understand that the essence of China's rejuvenation is peace rather than aggression, and effectively refute the "China threat theory." Another example is that Ross Terrill, a researcher at the Fairbank Center for China Studies at Harvard University, and Chinese and foreign experts co-authored *Xi Jinping's China Renaissance: Historical Mission and Great Power Strategy* (2016) and *Great Power Leader Xi Jinping: International Perspectives on China's Leader* (2016), these two books are in the form of biographies that the West is willing to accept, with human interpretation, and are available in English The world tells about China's governance thoughts.

The external dissemination of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* is not only to the elite level, but also to the ordinary people. Especially in Western countries, it has become a trend to pay attention to what ordinary people are thinking. The vocabulary and grammar of the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* are very simple and concise, so that ordinary people can accept it smoothly without any obstacles. In order to be faithful to the original work, the initial foreign translation of central documents was very thorough in terms of language equivalence. The translation tended to have a strong tendency to alienate, which resulted in a certain distance between the translation and the general audience. The translation was more suitable for elite readers. However, the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* not only pays attention to being faithful to the content, but also achieves domestication in form. It can be read by experts and ordinary people, and there is almost no obstacle to reading for ordinary readers. For ordinary people to understand China, improving the country's soft power plays an important role.

General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that it is necessary to "innovate the external publicity model." External communication in the new era needs to increase

initiative, cooperate with Chinese and foreign experts, and cooperate with Chinese media and publishers to give full play to their respective expertise and take the initiative to explain. Take the initiative to hold the power of interpretation of governance thoughts in your own hands, establish authority with the right to speak, create international agendas by setting relevant issues, guide international attention and interpretation, safeguard national discourse security, and contribute political wisdom to the world.

### 3.3 Research Based on Discourse Analysis

The research results of discourse analysis, especially critical discourse analysis, have had an important impact in the field of social science research. Tian Hailong (2017a) thinks about translation research based on the theory and method of critical discourse analysis, and raises translation process research issues from three aspects: how the translation is produced, how it is disseminated, and how it is accepted. He believes that translation practice is also a social practice. Due to its novel research methods and unique research perspectives, this concept has shown important academic value in the study of the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* in recent years. Relevant research is mainly reflected in the discussion of discourse theory paradigms, discourse quality evaluation and discourse corpus analysis. Tian Hailong (2017b) studies the new paradigm of the English translation of central documents from a transdisciplinary research perspective. In previous studies of the English translation of central documents, researchers could easily fall into the vicious cycle of "fidelity-flexibility" binary opposition, but discourse research can provide a new research paradigm for the study of the English translation of central documents. This new research paradigm can open a new path for the study of the English translation of central documents to play a greater role in the process of building a discourse system that integrates China and foreign countries. Yin Jia (2017) applied theories such as ideology, meaning negotiation, and discourse construction to study the active role of the translator in the process of external propaganda translation. She studied the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* from the perspective of discourse as social practice. Regarding the subjectivity of the translator, it is found that the translator plays an active role in the

interpretation of the original text's ideology, the choice of meaning in the translation process, and the construction of translation discourse.

The English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* requires "seeking truth and being pragmatic." "Seeking truth" is determined by the nature of the book, which means that the ideology of the original text must be understood correctly, while "pragmatism" means that the ideological acceptance of the readers must be taken into consideration. The discourse strategies used by the translator become external propaganda. Translate the important content of "pragmatic". At present, translation research focuses on the study of language conversion on the one hand, and the cultural turn of translation on the other hand. However, research on the translator's behavior itself is relatively rare. The study of translator behavior is a new growth point in translation research. The translator's initiative in translation is the result of the internal coordination of "seeking truth and being pragmatic."

Li Jingping and Zhang Wei (2022) emphasized in their research that quantitative research on the foreign translation of Chinese discourse should pay attention to diachronic factors. Based on domestic and foreign diachronic corpora, they conducted an in-depth analysis of the translation norms behind different translation strategies of "Lucid waters and lush mountains are gold and silver mountains". The three stages of norm evolution are summarized based on the historical context. The study found that the current translation standards for external publicity have gradually transitioned to translation strategies based on our own discourse stance. Among them, the "concept recontextualization" strategy provides new reference for "going out" to "going in" and provides a new reference for China's external discourse. Translation provides a new ideas. Li Jing (2017) studied the "re-contextualization" of the English translation of allusions in *Allusions Quoted by Xi Jinping*. "Re-contextualization" emphasizes that the re-translation process not only draws on the original meaning of the classics, but also considers the contemporary cultural context for its translation. The extension of meaning also considers the cultural reading habits of the text. The West introduced Christianity into China through science and technology, and China can also implant Chinese culture into Western countries through the "re-contextualization" of

classics and famous sayings.

The application of corpus to analyze discourse characteristics is a technical manifestation of the English translation study of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*. The English translation corpus of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* is huge, and it is difficult to conduct exhaustive sampling by manual reading alone. Some scholars have resorted to language technology to conduct large-scale discourse analysis. Hu Kaibao and Tian Xujun (2017) self-constructed a corpus of Chinese diplomatic discourse and analyzed the foreign policy, cultural value and translation strategies behind the English translation of Chinese diplomatic discourse through corpus methods such as high-frequency words, keywords, modal verbs and the collocation of "we". Hu Kaibao and Chen Chaojing (2018) self-constructed an international news corpus and clarified the diplomatic terminology with Chinese characteristics by searching for changes in the English translation of "One Belt, One Road" in mainstream English media in the United Kingdom, the United States, and India, the number of articles reported, the frequency of keywords, and index lines. The spread and acceptance of English translation in Britain, the United States and India. Liang Linxin (2018: 64, 70) made statistics on the English translation of relevant discourses in *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* through a self-built corpus and found that in terms of vocabulary, the use of literal translation and literal translation + annotation in English translation accounted for 89.3% of the translation skills. English translation focuses on retaining vocabulary with Chinese characteristics and presenting the wonderful Chinese culture to the outside world. In terms of sentences, reverse translation, clause translation and comprehensive translation account for 5%, 40% and 13% of the total translation skills respectively. Translation at the sentence level is no longer limited to direct interpretation of Chinese culture, but is based on the two languages. It uses syntactic features and adopts flexible translation techniques. While translating Chinese culture into foreign countries, it also pays attention to the readers' reading expectations, so that the translation has strong cross-cultural acceptability.

Applying discourse theory and discourse tools to conduct research on the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* gives full play to the sophistication and scientificity of linguistic theory, showing

the inherent characteristics of current affairs discourse translation from a more subtle and systematic level, and This research breaks through the language-level analysis of structural linguistics, and takes language conversion as a social practice to go deep into the level of social construction.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The types of research on the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* are not evenly distributed. There are many works on translation strategies, external communication and national image construction, which are the main topics for related research. If the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* only focuses on the study of translation strategies and does not consider the communication effect of the English translation and the acceptance of readers, then the study of translation strategies will lack the support of reality testing. If the research only focuses on the study of national image construction and lacks an understanding of the study of translation strategies, then the research on image construction can only be limited to the periphery. Neither of the above two aspects of research can systematize the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the significance of the study of the English translation of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* to the research and dissemination of my country's foreign discourse system. From the above, we can know that *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* should focus on strategic research at the micro level, while research on external communication and national image construction should focus on the macro level. Separate research on the two aspects will result in *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* English translation cannot be systematized. The introduction of critical discourse analysis can effectively integrate the two aspects of research, develop an effective structure for the advantages of each research, and allow the extraction of translation experience to be implemented in future translation practices. However, discourse analysis research is still in the preliminary exploration stage of applying relevant discourse theories and tools to translation research, and its scalability needs to be further developed.

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# Impact of Social Influence and Bandwagon Effect in Tourism Students: A Basis for an Action Plan

Mark Alvin H. Abad, Mikaela B. Lacsina, William Bill Strauss S. Corpus, Genina D. Diaz, Angelica I. Francisco, Andrea T. Lapuz, Heidi Mariella T. Sunga, John Paolo S. Nagaño

College of Management and Business Technology, Hospitality and Tourism Department, Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology Cabanatuan City 3100, Philippines

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**Abstract**— The researchers explored the influence of social factors, specifically social influence, and the bandwagon effect, on the travel choices of Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) students. Utilizing a quantitative approach with a descriptive research design, a self-constructed survey was distributed to BSTM students from Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology. Stratified random sampling was employed, resulting in a sample size of 103 respondents. The study found that social media significantly influences the travel decisions of BSTM students, with many relying on travel-related content on platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter for inspiration and information. The bandwagon effect also plays a pivotal role in their travel choices, with students often swayed by the popularity and trends associated with certain destinations. However, the study found no significant variations in the impact of social influence and the bandwagon effect across different academic years. Based on these findings, the study proposes a comprehensive action plan to address these influences through awareness campaigns, personalized counseling, stakeholder collaboration, digital education, continuous research, capacity-building initiatives, community engagement, and regular reviews for ongoing optimization.



**Keywords**— Social Influence, Bandwagon Effect, Travel Behavior, Tourism Management, Decision-making, Social Media.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the ever-changing environment of travel and tourism, understanding the elements that influence people's decisions has become critical, especially for students pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM). These students experience a variety of internal and external factors that influence their decision-making process when selecting travel destinations. Prior research has posited two primary factors affecting BSTM students' travel choices: social influence and the bandwagon effect.

Travel and tourism involve individuals visiting and staying in areas other than their typical environment for various reasons (Barten, 2023). Tourism offers students

a platform for growth beyond academic limits, increasing cultural awareness and practical skills (Sethi, 2023). The rise of the internet and social media has made information and communication technologies crucial in the tourism industry, influencing marketing campaigns, revenue growth, and client relationships. Information about tourist spots is often obtained from friends and online resources, with travelers relying heavily on social media reviews (Varga & Gabor, 2021). Social media has increased social visibility, influencing young travelers (Petrosyan, 2023). Youth travel, a fast-growing segment of international tourism, presents significant socioeconomic opportunities, boosting local tourism businesses and promoting sustainable tourism (UNWTO, 2016).



Social influence involves changes in an individual's behavior, ideas, or beliefs due to their network connections (Sweet & Adhikari, 2023). Social media enables individuals to learn about others' travel choices, influencing their preferences. The bandwagon effect, where people follow others' lead regardless of their own beliefs, also impacts decision-making (Investopedia Team & Kelly, 2023). Social media trends and the bandwagon effect can significantly shape individuals' decisions, fostering conformity and group alignment (Cherry, 2023; Shatz, n.d.; O'Connor & Clark, 2019).

Moreover, social influence, particularly through traveler reviews on social media, plays a significant role in the decision-making process for travel purchases (Book et al., 2015; Tanford & Montgomery, 2014). Practitioners are encouraged to engage actively on social media platforms to attract new customers (Liu et al., 2019). Understanding social influence can help individuals make informed decisions and avoid negative outcomes from peer pressure (Roguska, 2023). Hence, the bandwagon effect can overwhelm critical thinking, leading to decisions that may not benefit the individual (Levitan & Verhulst, 2016). Social media trends can amplify this effect, with people more likely to conform to popular opinions and actions (Cherry, 2023). Embracing trends can also foster social connections (O'Connor & Clark, 2019).

## II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The study aims to contribute to the understanding of travel destination selection among Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) students. Objectives include examining social influence and the bandwagon effect on their travel choices, identifying specific social factors affecting decisions, exploring peer influence and social media's role, and offering recommendations for stakeholders in the tourism industry

### Statement of the Problem

This study aims to unveil the impacts of social influence and bandwagon effects on travel choices of Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) students in Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology through comprehensive analysis.

Specifically, the researchers sought answers to the following questions:

1. How may the profile of BSTM students be described in terms of:

- 1.1 age;
- 1.2 gender;
- 1.3 year level; and
- 1.4 allowance.

2. How does the travel decision of BSTM students may be impacted by the following factors of social influences:

- 2.4 social media presence;
- 2.5 peer recommendations; and
- 2.6 travel ad campaigns.

3. How does the travel decision of BSTM students may be impacted by the following factors of bandwagon effects:

- 3.1 conspicuous consumption:
  - 3.1.1 luxury experiences;
  - 3.1.2 visible consumption; and
  - 3.1.3 social comparison.
- 3.2 consumer behavior:
  - 3.2.4 perception;
  - 3.2.5 motivation; and
  - 3.2.6 attitudes.

4. Is there a significant correlation between the profile of the BSTM students and their decision- making?

5. Is there significant difference between the psychological phenomenon factors on the BSTM students' travel decision when they are grouped according to year level?

6. Action plan will be proposed after analyzing impacts of social influence and bandwagon effect towards decision making

## III. METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The research design for the study "Impact of Social Influence and Bandwagon Effect in Tourism Students: A Basis for an Action Plan" utilizes quantitative methods, specifically descriptive research. This approach gathers quantifiable data from a sample of BSTM students to analyze the prevalence and nature of social influence and bandwagon effects in their travel decisions. Quantitative methods involve collecting numerical data through questionnaires, structured observations, or experiments and statistically analyzing

them to compare, aggregate, or demonstrate relationships among the data.

Population and Sample of the Study

The total sample size of this study is composed of 103, drawn from 20% of the total population of BSTM students from 1st year to 4th year, which is 516 at the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, Sumacab Campus, Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija

Instrumentation

This study will use a survey method to collect data from BSTM students about their travel choices. The survey will consist of three parts: demographics, social influence factors, and bandwagon effect factors. It will use a Likert scale with a 4-point numerical scale to measure attitudes and opinions of the respondents.

Hypotheses of the Study

The study hypothesizes that H01, stating no significant correlation between BSTM students' profiles and their decision-making, will be evaluated against Ha1, suggesting a significant correlation. Additionally, H02, suggesting no significant difference in psychological phenomenon factors impacting travel decisions when grouped by year level, will be compared with Ha2, indicating a significant difference.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Profile of the Respondents

The survey conducted among 103 BSTM students reveals key aspects such as age, gender, year level, and monthly allowances, offering a comprehensive overview of the respondents.

Variables	f n=103	%
Age		
18 and below	13	13%
19-21 years old	72	70%
22-24 years old	18	17%
25 and above	0	0%
Gender		
Male	31	30%
Female	72	70%
Year Level		
1st year	39	38%
2nd year	28	27%
3rd year	20	19%
4th year	16	16%
Allowance		
0-1,500 pesos	13	13%
1,501-3,000 pesos	72	70%
3,001-4,500 pesos	18	17%
4,501+ pesos	0	0%

The profile of BSTM students offers valuable insights into their characteristics and background. A significant 70% of the respondents are aged between 19 and 21 years, which corresponds to the general age range of tertiary students in the Philippines. This age bracket reflects the common educational trajectory from high school to higher education. Additionally, there's a

pronounced gender imbalance among the respondents, with females comprising 70% and males 30%. Academically, most of the students are in their first and second years, constituting 38% and 27% respectively, while third and fourth-year students make up 19% and 16% respectively. Financially, 70% of the students receive a monthly allowance ranging from 1,501 to 3,000

pesos.

## 2. Factors of Social Influence Affecting Travel Choices of BSTM Students

This part explores the factors of social

influence affecting the travel choices of Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management students at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, by examining the roles of social media presence, peer recommendations, and travel ad campaigns.

Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
<b>2.1. Social Media Presence</b>		
The presence of travel-related content on social media platforms influences my travel decisions as a BSTM student.	3.05	Often
I consider travel recommendations from influencers or travel bloggers on social media when making travel decisions.	3.03	Often
When planning a trip, I am likely to seek inspiration or information from travel-related posts on social media platforms.	3.23	Often
I rely on reviews and comments on social media platforms to make decisions about travel destinations or activities as a BSTM student.	3.07	Often
I find myself influenced by the number of likes or shares on travel-related posts when considering travel options as a BSTM student.	2.78	Often
Weighted Mean	3.03	Often
<b>2.2. Peer Recommendations</b>		
Recommendations from friends or classmates influence my travel decisions.	3.09	Often
When planning a trip, I consider suggestions from peers who have visited similar destinations.	3.21	Often
I rely on personal experiences shared by friends or classmates when making travel plans.	3.27	Always
I trust recommendations from peers compared to other sources when deciding on travel destinations or activities.	3.00	Often
I consider my travel companion's suggestion about a certain destination.	3.00	Often
Weighted Mean	3.11	Often
<b>2.3. Travel Ad Campaigns</b>		
Travel advertisements influence my travel decisions.	2.99	Often

When exposed to travel ad campaigns, I consider the advertised destinations or offers.	2.83	Often
I find myself researching or considering travel options after seeing an advertisement.	3.01	Often
I notice travel advertisements while browsing online or watching TV.	3.03	Often
I recall specific travel destinations or deals advertised in campaigns.	2.91	Often
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>Often</b>
<b>General Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.03</b>	<b>Often</b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 Always; 2.50 – 3.24 Often; 1.75 – 2.49 Rarely; and 1.00 – 1.74 Never

The survey results indicate that social media presence significantly influences travel decisions among BSTM students, with a weighted mean of 3.03, indicating that these platforms play a crucial role in their travel planning. Students often rely on travel-related content, recommendations from influencers or travel bloggers, and reviews/comments to gather inspiration and make decisions about destinations and activities. However, the influence of likes or shares on travel posts is slightly lower, suggesting that engagement metrics have a less pronounced impact. Peer recommendations also carry substantial weight (weighted mean of 3.11), with students frequently considering suggestions from friends, classmates, and travel companions. They place a high level of trust in personal experiences and prefer peer recommendations over other sources. In contrast, travel ad campaigns have a moderate influence (weighted mean of 2.95), where students often notice and consider travel advertisements but do not rely on them as heavily as social media or peer recommendations. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of social connections and digital platforms in shaping travel decisions among BSTM students, reflecting a blend of personal

experiences, social influence, and exposure to advertising.

Studies show that social influence significantly impacts travelers' choices, especially through social media and networks. Comments, reviews, and recommendations online affect tourist destination choices and other travel decisions, such as routes, departure times, transportation modes, and activities. Social network members' shared information influences travelers both before and during trips, emphasizing social influence in consumer marketing. Additionally, social influence affects decisions like choosing green resorts and engaging in eco- friendly behaviors (Tanford & Montgomery, 2014; Asvikaa & Gupta, 2018; Sedera et al., 2017; Acain, 2022; Sanders & Geerts, 2019).

### 3. Factors of Bandwagon Effect Affecting Travel Choices of BSTM Students

This part delves into the factors of the bandwagon effect influencing the travel choices of Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management students at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, by analyzing the impact of conspicuous consumption and consumer behavior on their travel decisions.

Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
<b>3.1. Conspicuous Consumption</b>		
<b>3.1.1. Luxury Experiences</b>		
My travel decisions are influenced by the availability of luxury experiences.	2.35	Rarely
I prioritize luxury travel experiences when planning my trips.	2.24	Rarely
Luxury offerings play a role in my choice of destination regularly.	2.28	Rarely

The allure of luxury accommodations or activities impacts my travel choices.	2.49	Rarely
I consider luxury experiences as a deciding factor in my travel plans.	2.34	Rarely
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.34</b>	<b>Rarely</b>
<b>3.1.2. Visible Consumption</b>		
I consider how my travel choices will be perceived by others.	2.70	Often
My travel decisions are influenced by the potential to showcase them on social media.	2.89	Often
I select travel destinations or activities with the intention of creating visually appealing content regularly.	2.87	Often
I share my travel experiences on social media platforms.	3.01	Often
I prioritize visually appealing destinations or activities when planning my travels.	3.08	Often
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.91</b>	<b>Often</b>
<b>3.1.3. Social Comparison</b>		
I find myself comparing my travel experiences to those of my peers or influencers.	2.70	Often
I'm influenced by the travel experiences shared by others on social media platforms.	2.92	Often
I regularly adjust my travel plans based on what I perceive to be the norm among my peers or social circles.	2.77	Often
I seek out destinations or activities that align with popular trends among my social circles.	2.83	Often
I consider the travel experiences of others before making my own travel plans.	2.84	Often
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.81</b>	<b>Often</b>
<b>3.2. Consumer Behavior</b>		
<b>3.2.1. Perception</b>		
My perceptions of a destination's popularity influence my interest in visiting it.	3.09	Often
My travel decisions are influenced by my perception of a destination's appeal.	3.02	Often
I rely on the perceptions of others regularly when forming opinions about travel destinations or activities.	2.99	Often
I consider the popularity of a destination before making my travel plans.	3.12	Often



I seek out information about popular travel destinations or experiences.	3.04	Often
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.05</b>	<b>Often</b>
<b>3.2.2. Motivation</b>		
I find myself comparing my travel experiences to those of my peers or influencers.	3.33	Always
I'm influenced by the travel experiences shared by others on social media platforms.	3.13	Often
I regularly adjust my travel plans based on what I perceive to be the norm among my peers or social circles.	2.96	Often
I seek out destinations or activities that align with popular trends among my social circles.	3.16	Often
I consider the travel experiences of others before making my own travel plans.	3.25	Often
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.17</b>	<b>Often</b>
<b>3.2.3. Attitudes</b>		
My attitudes towards travel trends or popular destinations impact my decision-making process.	3.01	Often
I believe that following travel trends enhances my overall travel experiences.	2.95	Often
I regularly adjust my travel plans based on changes in my attitudes towards certain destinations or experiences.	2.76	Often
I consider the opinions and attitudes of others when making my travel plans.	2.98	Often
I reassess my attitudes towards travel in light of new experiences or information.	2.84	Often
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.91</b>	<b>Often</b>
<b>General Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.86</b>	<b>Often</b>

Legend: 3.25 – 4.00 Always; 2.50 – 3.24 Often; 1.75 – 2.49 Rarely; and 1.00 – 1.74 Never

The survey results illustrate that while luxury experiences rarely influence travel decisions among BSTM students (weighted mean of 2.34), visible consumption (weighted mean of 2.91) and social comparison (weighted mean of 2.81) play significant roles. Students frequently prioritize visually appealing destinations and showcase their travel experiences on social media, reflecting a desire for perceived status and social validation. They often compare their travel experiences with peers and influencers, adjusting their plans to align with perceived social norms and popular

trends. Additionally, students are motivated by the popularity and appeal of destinations, seeking out information about popular travel spots and reassessing their travel attitudes based on new experiences. These findings suggest that social and peer influences, as well as the desire for social recognition and conformity, strongly shape the travel decisions and behaviors of BSTM students, highlighting opportunities for marketers and educators to engage with this demographic through targeted strategies that emphasize social and visual appeal.

Studies show that the bandwagon effect significantly influences travel decisions in tourism. Social influence shapes vacation and destination choices, with individuals often swayed by others' behaviors in their region. This effect is especially strong among non-travelers from the previous year, leading them to choose popular destinations or activities based on others' choices rather than personal preferences (Oan-Oon & Choibamroong, 2024; Garcia & Pino, 2022; Cherry,

2023; Munauwar, 2020).

4. Correlation between BSTM Students' Profile and Decision-Making

This part aimed to uncover relationships between the profile characteristics of BSTM students and their decision-making capabilities throughout the findings.

Profile	rs	N	DF	T statistics	P-value	Decision
Age	0.06	103	101	0.59	0.55	No correlation
Gender	-0.07	103	101	-0.73	0.47	No correlation
Year Level	0.17	103	101	1.77	0.08	No correlation
Allowance	0.02	103	101	0.22	0.83	No correlation

The study aimed to identify correlations between the profile of BSTM students and their decision-making capabilities. The analysis indicated a weak positive correlation between age and decision-making, suggesting that age might not be a primary determinant in evaluating decision-making skills among BSTM students. Gender exhibited an extremely weak negative correlation with decision-making, implying that other variables might have a stronger influence on decision-making abilities in this demographic. Additionally, year level showed a weak positive correlation, indicating that academic progression might play a role in shaping decision-making abilities among BSTM students. Moreover, the study found an almost negligible positive correlation between the monthly allowance of BSTM students and their decision-making capabilities in which suggests that the allowance amount does not significantly influence the decision-making skills of BSTM students.

5. Differences in Psychological Phenomenon Factors Across Academic Years

This part analyzes two key psychological phenomena: Social Influence and the Bandwagon Effect, assessing their impact on travel decisions and exploring potential variations based on students' academic progression.

The study explored if there were significant differences in the psychological phenomenon factors influencing the travel decisions of BSTM students across different academic years. The analysis revealed no significant variations in the Social Influence and Bandwagon Effect factors across the different year levels. This suggests a consistent pattern of influence on travel decisions among BSTM students throughout their academic journey.

Social Influence							
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	F crit	P-value	Decision
Between Groups	0.32	3	0.11	0.65	2.70	0.58	Accept null hypothesis
Within Groups	16.01	99	0.16				
Total	16.33	102					
Bandwagon Effect							
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	F crit	P-value	Decision

<b>Between Groups</b>	0.69	3	0.23	2.01	2.70	0.12	Accept null hypothesis
<b>Within Groups</b>	11.34	99	0.11				
<b>Total</b>	12.03	102					

## 6. Proposed action plan

In response to the identified concerns regarding the influence of social media and bandwagon effects on the travel decisions of BSTM students, a comprehensive action plan has been formulated.

Action Steps	Connection to Problem Statement	Person / Industry Involved	Expected Outcome	Time Frame
Conduct Awareness Campaigns	Many BSTM students may not fully comprehend the influence of social media and bandwagon effects on their travel choices.	Tourism department, Student organizations	Increased awareness among BSTM students about the impact of social influence and bandwagon effects on their travel decisions.	1-2 months
Provide Personalized Counseling	Individual counseling sessions can help students understand how social influence and bandwagon effects affect their decision-making.	Counselors, Academic advisors	Improved decision-making skills among BSTM students, leading to more informed travel choices.	1-2 months
Collaborate with Stakeholders	Engaging with tourism industry stakeholders can provide insights into current trends and practices in destination marketing.	Tourism industry representatives, Local businesses	Enhanced collaboration between academia and industry, leading to more relevant and updated information for BSTM students.	1-2 months
Implement Digital Education	Incorporating digital literacy modules into the curriculum can empower students to critically evaluate information on social media.	Faculty members, IT department	Improved digital literacy skills among BSTM students, enabling them to discern reliable travel information from social media.	1-2 months
Conduct Continuous Research	Ongoing research initiatives can provide valuable data on evolving travel trends and preferences among BSTM students.	Research department, Faculty members	Updated insights into the changing travel behavior of BSTM students, enabling proactive adjustments in educational strategies and industry practices.	Ongoing
Facilitate Community Engagement	Engaging students in community projects related to tourism can provide hands-on experience and deeper understanding of travel impacts.	Local community organizations, NGOs	Increased awareness of the social and environmental impacts of travel among BSTM students, fostering responsible tourism practices.	Ongoing
Conduct Regular Reviews for Ongoing Optimization	Periodic evaluations of the action plan will allow for adjustments and improvements based on feedback and outcomes.	Evaluation committee, Faculty members	Continuous improvement and refinement of strategies to address the influence of social media and bandwagon effects on travel choices among BSTM students.	Bi-annual

The proposed action plan addresses concerns regarding the influence of social media and bandwagon effects on the travel decisions of Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) students. It outlines specific steps aimed at increasing awareness, improving decision-making skills, fostering collaboration with industry stakeholders, enhancing digital literacy, conducting research, facilitating community engagement, and implementing regular reviews for ongoing optimization. By engaging relevant stakeholders and implementing targeted

initiatives, such as awareness campaigns, personalized counseling, collaboration with industry stakeholders, digital education, continuous research, community engagement, and regular reviews, the plan aims to equip BSTM students with the necessary skills and knowledge to make informed and responsible travel decisions. Moreover, this action plan seeks to enhance the educational experience and empower BSTM students for meaningful engagement in the tourism sector while promoting sustainability and responsible tourism practices.

## V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

The study titled “Impact of Social Influence and Bandwagon Effect in Tourism Students: A Basis for an Action Plan” finds that BSTM students are influenced by social media, peer recommendations, and a desire for relatable travel experiences. Key conclusions include the importance of budget-friendly yet quality travel options, the need for robust social media presence by travel companies, and tailored marketing strategies based on demographic factors and year levels. The proposed action plan suggests enhancing social media engagement and leveraging peer influence, with specific strategies for different student year levels to ensure relevance and effectiveness in travel planning.

### Recommendation

Based on the study's findings, recommendations include:

1. Closer collaboration between communities and educational institutions to develop tourism experiences reflecting BSTM students' cultural identity;
2. Educational institutions should integrate the study's findings into curriculum development and provide faculty training on contemporary tourism trends;
3. BSTM students can use the insights for informed travel decisions and seek industry opportunities for practical learning;
4. Researchers are encouraged to conduct further studies on social influence and bandwagon effects in tourism, considering sustainability and cultural variations, and;
5. Engaging in interdisciplinary approaches for a comprehensive understanding of global tourism dynamics.

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# Challenges for Media Management in Mongolia: Television in a Converged Environment

Delgerjargal Maamuu

Ph.D. candidate, School of Journalism and New Media in Xi'an Jiaotong University, Xi'an, Shaanxi, People's Republic of China  
[m.delgerjargal@hotmail.com](mailto:m.delgerjargal@hotmail.com)

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**Abstract**— This paper presents the modernity of Mongolian television media management. The aim is to examine changes in advertising, which is the main revenue source for television stations, and identify problems with financing. The large number of televisions that share the advertisement market creates conditions and demands to focus on quality and choice of products in order to win the competition in compliance with market law. As Mongolia's media landscape evolves, successful television management requires a dynamic and forward thinking approach that incorporates opportunities created by technological convergence while navigating complex regulatory and competitive landscapes. The emergence of the Internet has not only changed the viewing habits of TV viewers, revolutionized the business model of traditional TV, but also led to the development of information technology, and constantly spawned new types of TV media, such as digital TV, internet TV and mobile TV.



**Keywords**— Mongolia, media management, television, media market

## INTRODUCTION

The television media industry is an important part of the media industry, mainly for the production, operation, transmission, and sale of television program information. The research and development of the first television set in the United States in 1927 marked the beginning of the world's television media industry. Mongolia's television media started relatively late, probably in 1967. In the course of decades of development, Mongolia's television and media industry has also undergone rapid changes driven by social progress. Especially after the emergence of the Internet, it has enriched the channels of television and media communication and has also impacted the development of the television and media industries. The Mongolian media market in the TV sector is relatively small compared to other countries, but it has been rapidly evolving in recent years. Mongolia's media market is limited by its 3.4 million population and has more than 114

television channels and periodicals. With the advent of CTV, OTT, and IPTV television, the influence of television advertising waned. There has been a constant decline in the number of viewers who watch television deliberately and stay long in front of the TV. OTT television allows viewers to watch the programs and movies they want in their spare time. According to the research released by the Press Institute, sixteen national televisions have been broadcasting via radio frequencies since 2019, which has remained the same this year. Two TV stations broadcasting in Ulaanbaatar have changed their names, and eight TV stations have stopped their operation. Fourteen local TV stations have ceased operations, a sharp decline from previous years. The average weekly airtime of the national televisions was 127 hours, that of Ulaanbaatar televisions was 123 hours, and the local televisions in provinces broadcast 100 hours a week. The number of television stations, which has been stable in recent years, has decreased. (Mongolian Press Institute, 2023)

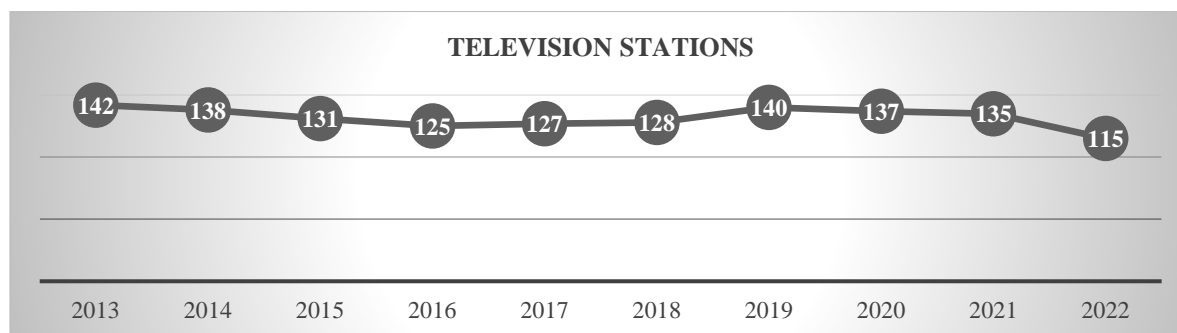


Chart 1. Quantitative changes in TV stations 2013-2022

Source: Mongolian Media Today 2023, Press Institute

77.5% of households in Mongolia have access to multi-channel television services. These households are charged MNT 1,100, or about 0.5 US dollars per month, for the MNB collection under the public broadcasting law and MNT 3,500, or about 1 US dollar per month, for the 18 commercial television stations under the broadcasting law. In the national research report "2021 Basic Survey on Internet Usage of Citizens," financed by the Communications Regulatory Commission (Commission, 2021), the average time spent using the Internet in one day was 7 hours and 13 minutes, while in the 2020 Television Viewing Survey Report of Maxima Consulting Company, "The average time spent by TV viewers is 5 hours and 4 minutes" is noted. It can be seen that the user spends more time on the Internet than watching television. (consulting, 2020) In Mongolian media, business information is not openly accessible to the public. On the other hand, the owners see the publishing business as a means of protecting their political position and economic interests rather than making a profit. The Mongolian TV sector faces several challenges, including declining advertising revenues,

political interference, and a lack of investment in local content production. The sector is also vulnerable to disinformation and propaganda, which have become major concerns in recent years.

#### Ownership and Media Market in the Television Sector

The Mongolian television market is dominated by a few major state-owned and private broadcasters. The dominant majority of television stations are still owned by private companies and individuals. Mongolian National Broadcaster (MNB) is Mongolia's public service broadcaster, operating multiple national TV channels. As the only public service media group, the MNB commands the largest audience in the country. The television industry in Mongolia has undergone significant changes in recent years, including the growth of private channels and increased competition. However, state-owned broadcasters like MNB still hold a dominant share of the market. More than 90% of all televisions are owned by private entities, 5% by state organizations, and 5% by non-governmental entities.

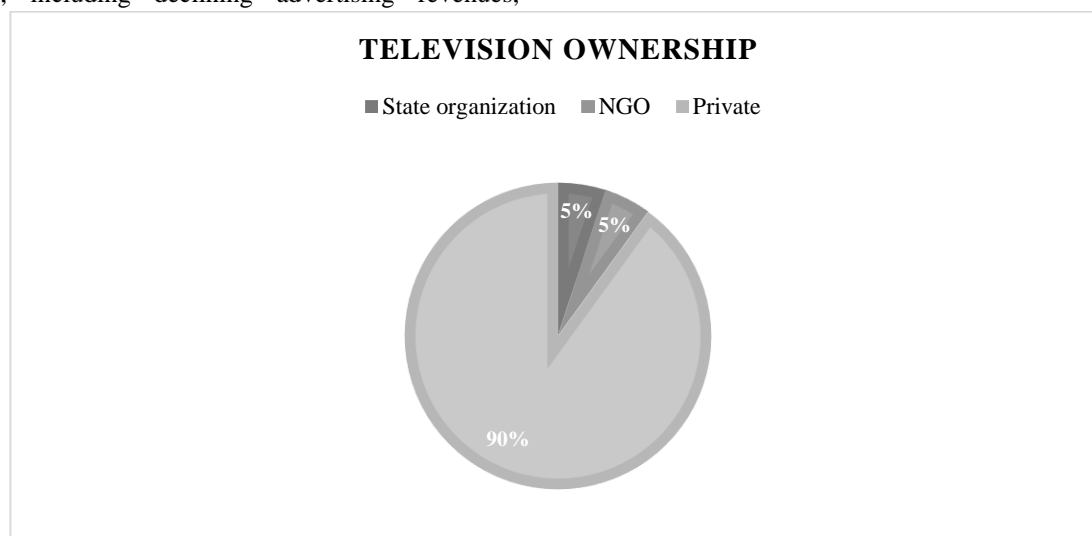


Chart 2. TV ownership 2022

Source: Mongolian Media Today 2023, Press Institute

Viewership is spread across these major channels, with no single broadcaster having a monopoly. Viewers have access to a mix of news, entertainment, and cultural programming across the different networks. Maxima Consulting LLC, an independent research organization, presented the current state of the Mongolian media market in 2019. According to the report, international commercial television revenues are from advertising at 85–90% (sponsorship at 2%), content sales at 10–15%, and large project investments. But in Mongolia, advertising accounts for 50% (including bartering for 20%), sponsorship for 15%, 10% for paid and subscription news programs, 7% for content sales, and 18% for subsidies from owners and other hidden sources. (maxima.mn, 2019) In addition, the organization has published a comprehensive report on television viewer ratings in Mongolia since 2014 and a list of the top 20 advertising suppliers in the television market. In 2014, the Government of Mongolia was ranked 19th in terms of payment for the overall advertisement income. Since 2018, the government has been leading in advertisement payments. It can be seen that one of the main contributors to advertising in this industry is the government. In the City Capital budget of 2023, the Capital Governor's Office has a budget of 650 million MNT, or about 208 thousand US dollars, for media expenses. (<http://shd.mn/mn/images/shd/upload/2023-niis勒-tosov-15-togtool.pdf>, 2022)

The Mongolian TV market continues to evolve, with factors like the rise of online streaming and changing consumer habits impacting the traditional broadcast landscape. But the major state and private channels remain the primary sources of television content for most Mongolian households.

To develop media industry management, there is an opportunity to increase capacity and raise funds by participating in external projects and programs in addition to internal sources. Since foreign investment is prohibited in the media industry by law, steps are being taken to attract domestic investment. Specifically, the first public joint-stock company in the media sector was established in April 2022, and its shares are traded openly through the Mongolian Stock Exchange. TenGerLig Media Group (TMG) management has announced the establishment of the first public or joint-stock company in the Mongolian media industry. The Group was established due to a merger of three companies: Mongol HD TV, Promedia Network, or VTV, and Unread Media, and the current exchange rate (as of May 22, 2024) is 2034 MNT, or about 1 US dollar. 10% of the total shares were allocated to the group's employees. This strategy sets a new standard for other media organizations. Because shares are owned by many investors and shareholders, they are independent of one owner,

reduce the interference of owners and politicians in editorial policies, and allow the public to own the media company, control its operations, and benefit from profits and returns.

Government and business organizations' advertisements serve as the primary source of income for media organizations. Donations, subscriptions, content payments, and paid services supplement this income. In the media business, there is no reliable data on revenue sources, neither for advertisements nor for newspaper sales, cable subscriptions, or phone-in fees. This is obviously also true for paid-for content and bribery. (UNESCO, 2017) Therefore, it is extremely difficult to assess the financial situation in the television business. On May 3, 2021, the "Eguur" news agency reported that there is an estimate that the combined Mongolian media sector amount is about 50 billion MNT and an average of 17 million US dollars. (eguur.mn, 2022) However, this is a rough figure, and media agency funding and revenue information remain confidential.

### **Economic Viability and Business Models**

The Mongolian television sector is struggling with economic sustainability. The current business model fails to secure the economic freedom of the press, as many media companies face limited cash flow and difficulties paying salaries or investing in better training for their employees. Despite these challenges, there is a willingness among consumers to pay for news, suggesting potential for new business models. In response to the changing requirements of the time, significant changes are taking place in the field of media management, including management and marketing. As a result, media editorial offices are striving to familiarize themselves with world journalism's achievements in this area and learn from their experiences in order to find a niche in the information market, compete for readers, and operate profitably. In addition to broadcasting television programs over the internet, Channels 2 and 3 have also started working on this. (Zulikafl, 2018)

One of the trends that has been gaining momentum in the media of Mongolia in recent years is the consolidation of the media under the rule of one company. Today, 6–12 media are grouped into one company, and the process of merging among the media is accelerated. A real example of this is the acquisition of daily and weekly newspapers, magazines, information sites, television, and shortwave radio stations by media companies such as Mongol News Group, Media Group, and Mongol Mass Media Group. Only the Mongol Mass Media Group has a TV channel called Eagle News, an education channel, a music box channel, Dream Television, an Asian box channel, a movie box channel, a sports box channel, Toim magazine, FM 91.1

radio, and the news website [www.eagle.mn](http://www.eagle.mn). The good side of this direction is that it does not require money because there is a large company behind it. However, the vulnerable side is that it can become a platform for the views, opinions, and influence of the same company, politicians, businessmen, and authorities behind it. This destroys the balance of information and creates a negative perception among the public. Similar situations are often observed in the activities of modern media companies.

TV charging international models have become more mature, and management has established a business model of "viewing fee + advertising + information fee." With the development of the traditional television media industry, a cross-border integrated TV shopping model has gradually emerged. The advertising model is one of the most traditional business models in the television industry. It mainly refers to the fact that users watch TV programs for free and the revenue from those programs. This model is used to fund production and other operational activities. At present, the relevant research is mainly based on case analysis, which provides new inspiration for the innovation of TV media business models based on advertising profitability. (Jingyu, 2016)

The charging model means that viewers need to pay a certain fee to watch related TV programs. In view of the TV charging model, there are large differences in development at home and abroad, and foreign development is more mature, while the country is subject to an immature content market and an imperfect competition mechanism. The creativity and production capacity of program content are relatively insufficient, and it is currently facing the dilemma of commercial operation and profitability. On the one hand, pay-TV operators must take effective preventive measures to prevent the impact of this emerging video service on their traditional services. On the other hand, they must proactively adopt corresponding strategies to deepen their relationships with various content providers and provide the same high-quality video services. Mongolian channels and platforms for watching Mongolian content from anywhere in the world are growing strongly in Mongolia, including ORI TV, LOOK TV, VOO and MO TV etc. Namely, charging 4 USD per month for Ori TV.

Mobile TV is a business that uses smartphones with operating systems and streaming media video functions to watch TV. It can be regarded as a product of the expansion of network TV services on mobile terminals. Its emergence has made mobile terminals one of the important platforms for television media, and mobile operators have also become important stakeholders and played a significant role.

### Changing Audience Habits

The rapid growth of smartphone usage and high-speed internet access in Mongolia has fundamentally altered audience consumption patterns. Younger viewers, in particular, are increasingly turning to online platforms and on-demand content, posing a significant challenge for traditional television broadcasters. However, the media industry remains overly dependent on traditional advertising, missing out on opportunities presented by digital platforms. The model in which television content is created based on a strict classification of viewers by age and interest groups has lagged behind. Production, where the target audience and potential audience overlap and include every member of the family, dominates the television market. (Unursaikhan, T., 2018) By attracting as large an audience as possible, broadcasters increase their value to advertisers, who compete for greater exposure. In this way, content production has effectively been subsidized by advertisers. (Kawashima, 2020)

The programs produced by television media vary for each issue, and the audience of the programs also differs. Television media need to combine the audience with advertising according to the intersectionality of the audience to expand the audience and increase the program ratings without additional advertising investment. (Qingqing, 2018)

### Adapting to Digital Transformation

Digital transformation in the media industry has also been discussed among scholars concerned with its impact on the public interest and democracy. News organizations have traditionally been viewed as bolstering the public interest and democracy through the provision of up-to-date, accurate, neutral, and well-researched information, investigations, and commentary. (Franklin, 2014)

To remain competitive, Mongolian television networks must invest in developing robust digital strategies, including building user-friendly streaming platforms, enhancing their social media presence, and leveraging data analytics to better understand and serve their audiences. As audiences become more fragmented across multiple platforms, television networks in Mongolia are facing declines in traditional advertising revenue. This is forcing them to explore alternative revenue streams, such as subscription-based models, branded content, and strategic partnerships. One of the key challenges facing Mongolian television is the rise of online streaming and digital media consumption. As Mongolian viewers, especially the younger demographic, increasingly turn to digital platforms for their content needs, television networks must adapt their strategies to remain relevant and competitive. By leveraging



digital technologies, broadcasters can explore new avenues for content distribution, targeted advertising, and audience engagement.

With the development of the Internet, online variety shows are becoming more and more favored by advertisers. Under the impact of the Internet, the business system of traditional television media must be reformed and transformed from a single model to a multiple model. The main profit of television media comes from advertising. Under the diversified model, television media has a close relationship with advertisers. It can carry out advertising planning according to the needs of advertisers, combine program production to create personalized programs, and find audiences through the Internet to avoid online group marketing without advertising investment.

### Legal Challenges

The regulatory landscape in Mongolia's media sector has yet to fully address the complexities of the converged environment. Outdated laws and ambiguous policies can hinder the ability of television networks to adapt and innovate, creating an uneven playing field. As the industry evolves, policymakers must navigate the complex task of updating regulations to foster innovation while ensuring a level playing field and protecting consumer interests. The media industry became one of the three primary industries of strategic importance in Mongolia under the "Law on the Regulation of Foreign Investment" (2012). Because of this law, foreign investment in the media industry is restricted, and it has become a matter of national security. The Law on Broadcasting received approval from Parliament in 2019 and took effect immediately in 2020. This law defines the legal basis of broadcasting services, creates a favorable market environment for fair competition, and regulates relations related to broadcasting services that meet national and public interests. (Delgerjargal, 2024)

In addition, the law on advertising applies to Mongolia, but the broadcasting law regulates the communication of advertising on radio and television. As a public television station, the MNB enforces a legal provision that advertisements cannot exceed 2% of the total airtime. The Broadcasting Law establishes the duration of advertising broadcast by other television stations to be no more than 15 minutes for advertising broadcast every hour. When looking at the requirement that ads not exceed 15 minutes per hour, television overstated them by an average of 1-4 hours per month, and when the violation was taken by day, it exceeded them by an average of 2–8 minutes per day. A Communications Regulatory Commission study found that all 18 broadcast television stations had an ad surplus. 30 of the commercial stations had not exceeded at all, while 21

channels had an ad surplus. (Commission, radio and television monitoring report, 2022)

### CONCLUSION

As Mongolia's TV landscape continues to evolve, it is imperative that media managers and journalists adapt to the changing environment to ensure the integrity and viability of the industry. The challenges facing media management in Mongolia's television industry are multifaceted, requiring a comprehensive and innovative approach to navigate the converging media landscape. Successful television networks will be those that can seamlessly integrate their traditional and digital strategies to meet the evolving needs and expectations of Mongolian audiences. The Mongolian TV sector is a dynamic and rapidly evolving market, with a mix of local and international content and a growing number of digital TV households. However, the sector also faces significant challenges, including political interference, declining revenues, and the spread of disinformation.

Addressing these challenges will be crucial for the long-term sustainability and growth of the Mongolian TV sector. To address these challenges, media managers in Mongolia must adopt a more holistic, cross-platform approach to content creation, distribution, and monetization. Investing in digital capabilities, data analytics, and audience engagement strategies will be crucial for television networks to thrive in the converging media environment. In addition, a new business model needs to be developed, and the legal environment needs to be improved.

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# Narratives of subversion and resistance: Looking at travestilities through materialist discourse analysis

Wesley Felipe Andrade Assis<sup>1</sup>, Márcia Fonseca de Amorim<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Master's student of Language at the Federal University of Lavras (Universidade Federal de Lavras – UFLA)

<sup>2</sup> PhD in Linguistics and professor of Linguistics in the Department of Language Studies (Departamento de Estudos da Linguagem – DEL) at UFLA.

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**Abstract**— *This study discusses the subject's view of him- or herself. Specifically, it examines the gaze of subjects who call themselves transvestites, who are treated in this study as subjects, with a focus on their social-discursive construction from the perspective of the self. In other words, we seek to understand how these subjects constitute themselves as beings in the world through materialist discourse analysis. Additionally, we seek to bring elements of the social universe of transvestites from the narratives produced by them, aiming to understand how the coloniality of gender acts on their constitution and to consider the appointments and procedures of exclusion narrated in their experiences. We used the following to support the proposed reflections: studies by Pêcheux (1995, 2014) and Orlandi (2012) on subject-discourse-ideology; Foucault's concept of discursive formation and the will to truth (1996, 2008); Butler's (2021) work on hate speech; and Butler's (2003), Bento's (2011), Jesus' (2012), Louro's (1997), Nascimento's (2021) and Vergueiro's (2012) examinations of gender and sexuality. This study provides a better understanding of how transvestites constitute themselves as subjects in society due to the subversion of gender coloniality, the acts of violence they face, and the social erasure they suffer because they do not adapt to a crystallized imaginary of the body.*



**Keywords**— *Gender, narratives of the self, transvestility.*

## I. INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study aims to promote an analysis of the social representation that subjects who call themselves transvestites construct of themselves based on the narratives they produce. The term “transvestite” is frequently used in Brazil, historically stigmatized, and used to designate a Latin and feminine identity, as it has no translation into other languages. In his studies on transvestites, Jesus (2012) states that people belonging to this group do not cross-dress in the sense of dressing to look like someone else; many transvestites have a transsexual identity, and the most respectful way of treating them as a transvestite involves acknowledging their femininity.

To meet the objective of this study, we chose discourse analysis (DA), which has a materialist nature, because this

theoretical proposal addresses the subject-history-ideology relationship. In the field of discourse analysis, elements of psychoanalysis, linguistics and historical Marxism are articulated, so its knowledge is dialogued with the social sciences and the philosophy of language. In this field, “the aim is to understand language making sense, while symbolic work, part of the general social work, constitutive of man and his history” (Orlandi, 2012, p. 15). The study proposal includes qualitative research so that the researcher can obtain an interpretive understanding based on the following methodological procedures: (i) structured interviews with transvestites and (ii) analysis of the transvestites' narratives based on the theoretical assumptions of materialist discourse analysis.

## II. A BRIEF PRESENTATION OF MATERIALIST DISCOURSE THEORY

As its name suggests, discourse analysis focuses on discourse, and although this does not specifically include language and grammar, these issues are addressed in related studies. According to this theoretical perspective, discourse is a sociohistorical object, defined as the effect of meaning of the actions that subjects promote in different language practices and the principle of human existence (Orlandi, 2012).

According to Orlandi (2012), in discourse analysis, language is not addressed as an abstract system but rather with (relatively autonomous) language and its exteriority, that is, with the conditions of production of the discourses propagated by the subjects in society. Discourse analysis addresses “the language-discourse-ideology relationship” (Orlandi, 2012, p. 17). From this perspective, language is treated as the specific materiality of discourse and thus is essentially ideological. Discourse, in turn, is the specific materiality of ideology.

The production conditions of a given saying involve the subjects who interact in a given situation, the social representations that are attributed to them, the interaction situation itself, what is said and the memory evoked by the saying. According to Courtine (2016, p. 20), “the notion of conditions of discourse production regulates, in AD, the relationship between the linguistic materiality of a discursive sequence and the historical conditions”.

Anchored in the studies by Pêcheux, Orlandi (2012, p. 17) argues that “there is no discourse without a subject and there is no subject without ideology”, since language only makes sense through the interpellation of the subject to a given ideology.

To explain the notion of ideology, Pêcheux (1995) cites two propositions that support Althusser's thesis: (i) there is only practice through and under an ideology, and (ii) there is only ideology by the subject and for subjects. The indefinite article that is used in the first proposition refers to the thought about the “differentiated” plurality of ideology. The second proposition refers to the category of subject, which is constituted only in and by ideology.

Ideology is the condition for the constitution of the subject and the senses in the world. In materialist discourse studies, the individual is interpellated, by ideology, into a subject to utter ideas and meanings. Ideology functions in the subjects' unconscious, being responsible for their interpretations and the way they read gestures in a given time and a given discursive situation. In this proposal, the subject is simultaneously free and subjected to ideology: he or she utters a given saying because he or she submits

him- or herself to the language and the historicity inherent to the discursive practices.

According to Pêcheux (1995, p. 160), ideology “provides evidence by which ‘everyone knows’ what a soldier, a worker, a boss, a factory is [...], evidence that makes a word or a statement ‘they mean what they truly say’”. Therefore, the evidence camouflages, through a possible transparency of language, the material character of the meaning, the words and the utterances. The author defines this material character of meaning by its constitutive dependence on the complex whole of ideological formations.

The author defends the thesis that the meaning of a word/expression does not exist “in itself”. The meaning will be determined by the subjects' ideological positions, which are situated in a sociohistorical process in which a particular word/expression is produced. Thus, words/expressions change their meaning according to their positions, or rather, through the ideological formations of a given subject who utters them.

For discourse analysis, language is opaque, incomplete and subject to misunderstanding, and as such, the discourse and the subject are being constructed by history. Thus, the meanings of discourses are found not only in them, in the intentions (conditioned on ideology) of the subject, but also in the relations with exteriority (history). As Orlandi (2012, p. 25) argued, “language only makes sense because it is inscribed in history”.

Extending this discussion, memory – an uncontrollable part of the subject in the production of discourse – is treated as interdiscourse, that is, what has already been said and “forgotten”. Interdiscourse, which is also called discursive memory, is “the discursive knowledge that makes possible all saying that is at the base of the sayable, supporting each word” (Orlandi, 2012, p. 31). Thus, this set of discourses made and already forgotten reinforces the idea that saying is not the property of a specific subject since discourses only make sense because they already make sense (Orlandi, 2012).

According to Orlandi, all sayings uttered in all circumstances of interaction are found at the confluence of two axes: “that of memory (constitution) and that of actuality (formulation)”. Based on this game, the senses are (re)constructed. Language results from the tension between the same and different paraphrastic and polysemic processes, respectively. These refer to creativity and rupture, the displacement of meanings, as different discourses and meanings are produced in this process. The former, on the other hand, involves productivity because saying is maintained and is the return of what has already been said; rather, it is the rescue of interdiscourse.

However, as Orlandi (2012) notes, the aforementioned processes are not independent because, through repetition (productivity), the new (creativity) process is always imminent.

In this field, it is necessary to understand what constitutes meaning since it does not exist in isolation but is determined by the ideological positions put into play in the sociohistorical process in which words are produced (Orlandi, 2012, p. 42). Therefore, meaning is made not only by the speaker's intentions and by memory but also by discursive formations, which determine what can and should be said. The meaning – ideological effect – demands of the discursive formations for its construction.

Pêcheux (2014) argues that the effects of meaning are constituted through the relationships within a given discursive formation. Given this, the discursive formations comprise two points: (i) the words do not have meaning in themselves, so the meanings will be derived according to the discursive formations in which these words are inscribed; and (ii) the same words can have different meanings in different discursive formations.

When addressing discursive formation, Foucault (2008, p. 43, author's emphasis) states that,

In the case where it is possible to describe, among a certain number of utterances, such a system of dispersion, and in the case where among objects, the types of utterances, the concepts, the thematic choices, it is possible to define a regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations), we will say, by convention, that it is a *discursive formation*.

Thus, historical conditions are necessary to be able to say something about a given object of discourse, so a particular idea cannot be discussed in a different historical time. Therefore, the object does not preexist itself; it exists under conditions or complex relationships; that is, its existence occurs under discursive formations.

Given that we understand some of the relevant categories of AD for this study, the next section addresses language as a procedure of exclusion and addresses the issue of gender.

### III. LANGUAGE AS A FORM OF EXCLUSION

Subjects are formed in and by language, and the constitutive power of language preexists and preserves all the acts that subjects attribute to it. In her studies on insult, Butler (2021) notes that, unlike language, it takes a specific proportion in time. The author states that one of the first forms of linguistic insult that is understood is to be called a name and adds that not all denominations to which

the subjects are designated are insulting since such invocations may also be one of the constitutions that take a certain subject to be constituted in language. This exemplification of the constitution of the subject has been defended in materialist discourse studies as interpellation, as discussed above.

Butler (2021, sp.) ponders that “if to be called is to be addressed, the offensive denomination risks introducing into the discourse a subject who will use language to counter the offensive denomination”. That is, the insulting name, in addition to immobilizing or repressing a particular subject, can also produce other possibilities of speech acts, such as, for example, a subject's unpredictable response.

In this sense, the author uses the words of Richard Delgado and Mari Matsuda to say that “words hurt”. From this perspective, certain words and certain callings threaten the physique because, by the various denominations, the body can be protected as well as injured.

Language supports the body but can also threaten its presence at the same time (Butler, 2021). In view of this, the author argues that the ways in which language can violently threaten subjects may be linked to a need that every individual has for an interpellative/constitutive call of the Other. Using the studies by Toni Morrison, Butler (2021) argues that oppressive language is not a simple representation of violence but rather of violence because language puts its particular mode of aggression into action. The philosopher also adds that the purpose of the violence of language is to capture that which is not named (the “ineffable”) to destroy it and then continue its living functioning.

However, oppressive language can be fruitful or flawed (Butler, 2021). Every language act is vulnerable to failure; therefore, according to the philosopher, it is necessary to explore this vulnerability to face it. However, the abusive speech act does not cease to be an abusive speech act if it fails. Moreover, for the injury to be fruitful, Butler (2021) considers that the speech act needs certain conditions and certain places of power so that its meaning effects are materialized. This issue will be addressed more specifically later in the analysis.

From this same perspective of eliminating the unnamed (the “ineffable”), Foucault (1996, p. 8-9) argues that “in every society the production of discourse is at the same time controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a certain number of different groups”. procedures”. Thus, the author presents some procedures for discourse exclusion that include the opposition of true and false.

The procedure of opposition between the true and the false is historically constituted by the will to knowledge. In this

procedure, true speech, which is characterized by being the one that pronounced and granted justice, the one that was said by someone in law in a specific ritual, “is no longer the precious and desirable speech, since it is no longer the speech linked to the exercise of power” (Foucault, 1996, p. 15). Therefore, starting from this opposition, from the Platonic division, the will to truth occupies a place in history.

Like other systems of exclusion, the will to truth is based on institutional support and is accompanied by sets of practices in society. However, according to Foucault (1996, p. 20), it is also driven by the way in which knowledge is presented to the people. Furthermore, the will to truth exerts a kind of pressure and power of imposition on the subjects’ discourses, but “only a universal truth appears to our eyes”. The objective of this will to truth is the destruction and erasure of what is not yet in the field of truth, of what is unnameable for the sayings that occupy the space of truth.

Butler (2003) argues that the construction of the subject is linked to procedures of legitimation and exclusion and argues that feminist criticism needs to include an understanding of how the category of woman is constituted and dominated by the very structures that seek their own emancipation. In this sense, there is a political problem that the feminist movement faces in a possible statement that the term “women” means only a single identity. The representation of “women” (in plural) was transfigured as a problematic point, a factor of anxiety, as stated by Butler (2003, p. 20):

If one 'is' a woman, this is certainly not all that one is; the term cannot be exhaustive, not because the predefined gender traits of the 'person' transcend the specific paraphernalia of its gender but because gender has not always been constituted in a coherent or consistent manner in different historical contexts and because gender establishes intersections with racial, class, ethnic, sexual and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities.

In other words, the notion of gender cannot be separated or divided from cultural and political intersections – spaces in which gender is performed and perpetuated. From this perspective, Louro (1997) argues that different markers, such as class, gender and race, cannot be characterized as independent because the violence that each marking suffers is embedded within another marking. Vergueiro (2012) also claims that markers such as those mentioned and those of nationality, sexuality, religiosity and educational level influence the composition of the subjectivities of these bodies.

According to Nascimento (2021, p. 21), the category “women” (used to reinforce the different social, personal and collective experiences that the term “woman” is able to incorporate) and the category “femininities” (used to “understand the ways in which subjects within feminism dialog with what the social imaginary determines as 'feminine', and which, based on this cultural script, produces cocreations and subversions” (Nascimento, 2021, p. 20)) should be able to encompass the experiences of trans women and transvestites. However, in feminism, the author states that discourses that aim at sexual differentiation through anatomical aspects are propagated.

In the history of gender and sexuality, transgender people are situated in places where they do not exist. Nascimento (2021, p. 35) characterizes trans women and transvestites as foreigners to their gender in this situation in her questions:

Do all women experience *otherness*, that is, the *other* way of being, in the same way? Situating historically and within social and power relations, as Foucault (2003) teaches us, would not the white, cis, heterosexual, middle-class, Christian, thin and without disabilities woman be the *Other* for the white, cis, heterosexual, middle-class, Christian, thin and without disabilities? If the woman, in the aforementioned markers, is the *Other* of the White Man in the aforementioned manners, what social places do the other subjects and other subjects occupy within the social hierarchies? (author’s emphasis).

The notion of otherness is not static and can be understood through other experiences, such as those of transsexual women and transvestites. For Nascimento (2021), the otherness of trans women and transvestites is beyond because they are characterized as a different image of what is given as man and woman in a society. The author classifies trans women and transvestites as the Other of the Other and argues that this is one of the reasons that such subjects are not recognized and represented in feminist struggles.

In contrast, the adhesion of trans women and transvestites to feminism can occur when it is understood, in society, that transvestitism is a gender of its own that goes beyond a binary gender—male and female. According to Nascimento (2021), many transvestites and transsexuals feel like women, but some transvestites do not consider themselves women because they understand themselves as a third gender; thus, they do not understand themselves as either men or women.

By distancing themselves from the binary (male or female), transsexual women and transvestites experience different forms of violence. Bento (2011) says that the



idealized forms of gender generate hierarchies and exclusions and that the attempt to disregard the presence of other gender performances that distance themselves from the binary and heterosexual makes different subjects feel abnormal and out of place. Nascimento (2021) also argues that people who call themselves trans and transvestites occupy a nonplace compared to the normative gender. This occurs because these bodies do not correspond to the—biological—truth imposed by the “cis” theme. Therefore, the experiences of otherness that trans people and transvestites experience “remove them from a condition of human intelligibility imposed by cis bodies, which have privileges in gender coloniality” (Nascimento, 2021, p. 40). Regarding this gender coloniality, Vergueiro (2012) argues that when cisgenderism is defined as an expression of gender that is legitimized by dominant cisgender norms, it contributes to a possible decolonization of gender. For the author, the objective of using the concept of cisgenderism as an analytical category is to “disauthorize discourses and practices that naturalize the cisgender norm, understanding transgender and noncisgender individualities, therefore, as marginal positions and resistance to cisgender colonial domination” (Vergueiro, 2012, np).

Following these discussions, the next section addresses the analysis of two excerpts of self-narratives made by two transvestites in light of the materialist theory.

#### IV. TRANSVESTITES IN NARRATIVES

This study aims to analyse excerpts from two narratives of subjects who called themselves transvestites based on the theoretical assumptions of materialist discourse analysis. For this study, two excerpts of the testimonies of two transvestites whose pseudonyms (chosen by them) are Raissa Raiana and Mirela were used. The excerpts used in the analysis were chosen because they narrate how transvestites see themselves as social subjects from the perspective of themselves and, in a way, of the other towards themselves.

For the development of the research corpus, the transvestites were asked to make a narrative of their experience and of their construction as a subject, based on the following questions: Considering that every subject constructs a representation of him- or herself and of others, what representation do you build of yourself? What is it like to be a transvestite in a society as complex as ours? Tell us a little about your experiences.

We examine the excerpts to discuss how Raissa Raiana and Mirela construct a representation of their group in social practices, the acts of violence that they faced, and

the social erasure that they suffered because they did not adapt to a crystallized imaginary of the body.

In addition, the proposal of the NURC Project (Norma Urbana Culta) was used in this study to transcribe the interviews since, in addition to documenting and studying the educated spoken norm, this project helps the analyst examine the effects of meanings that can be constructed from each interview. These effects can be examined through either the pauses given by the interviewee during her speeches or the stronger tonality used to utter a particular word, and this approach is helpful for transcribing speech in a more academic format.

In this clipping 1, Raissa Raiana, a young transvestite, narrates the difficulty of representing the transsexual and transvestite category because she does not suffer or have experiences that are experienced by other people who recognize themselves as transsexual women and/or transvestites:

##### Cutout 1: Raissa Raiana

(...) because we are few bodies and because some of these bodies either use or are in spaces that are not constructed... thought out or reflected on to receive us... then... we automatically begin to have a political representation in these spaces... as if we represent the whole... and this representation is not an optional representation... it is a compulsory representation... not everyone wants to be representing the trans community... sometimes... they just want to be living her life... (...) my pains as a trans person may be different from that of another trans person because of the other aspects... I'm black... I'm trans... I'm poor... a combo of complete vulnerability ((laughed))... but... there are other white UPPER middle class trans people... and... then... I do not represent these people... they went through another type of training reality... which is not MINE... (...) we also have to understand that this representation that we have... a lot of times... it speaks a lot to the media in my... in my head... so... at least about a representation that we have of trans people in the media... now... that we are having representation of trans people in roles... how should I say... in social media... more realistic... whether through TV series... such as... for example... *POSE* and everything else... Liniker... who is... for example... a singer... has these issues.. So... but... for a long time... it was linked in the social imaginary... as a whole or was it just representing that... the position of trans people as prostitutes... right? while subjects who were not worthy of trust and subjects mocked... such as... for example... the caricature they had of Vera Verão... is a clear example of what we had in the Brazilian media... the entire

construction of trans identity within Brazil... (...) and these roles... they are only being redone now... this representation... both mine and the collective's... now... with the election of Erika Hilton... with the election of Duda Salabert ... with Gabriela Lohan acting in Globo's seven o'clock soap opera... and now that these roles are being changed... right? and having a demystification... I think it would be the word... of what it is to be trans and how these people... they can and should be present in everyday life... in everyday life... (...) I was already called a whore of Babylon in the market by a lady I had never seen in my life before... she simply felt comfortable calling me a whore of Babylon... I went to investigate later because I I'm not a very religious person... I was... I was a little happy... well... right? by which it means the expression of a woman who did not adapt to the current standards of the time... and was fucked for all patriarchy... machismo and custom and religion... so... I think that is the kind of thing she wanted me to do. offend... but in the end it was not that much of an offense... I was a little happy with what the expression itself meant... although she did it consciously with the intention of offending me...

Raissa Raiana states that because other people in the community do not occupy the same space as her (due to the marginalization that these bodies suffer), she feels an obligation to occupy a political position of compulsory representation even though she does not speak for all women, whether cisgender or transsexuals or transvestites. Notably, the demands of a middle-class white transsexual woman are different from the demands of a peripheral white transsexual woman.

Nascimento (2021), taking up the studies of Beauvoir, who states that women are marked by the Other and, therefore, occupy a hierarchy of submission to that Other, questions whether all women experience otherness in the same way and argues that they do not. On the one hand, a black woman does not have a relationship of reciprocity with a white or black man. On the other hand, transsexual women and/or transvestites are not considered to have a reciprocal relationship with cisgender women and men. Thus, Nascimento (2021) criticizes this thesis by Beauvoir because it does not present intersections.

Nascimento (2021) also argues that there are different otherities; that is, otherness is not only for women; it is also for black men, even those who benefit from sexist and patriarchal society, who suffer racial violence, for example. Therefore, the idea of the Other is not fixed; because it is mutable, it moves.

In her narration, Raissa Raiana, says that she may suffer different pains than other trans people and transvestites because of these intersections. In this case, Raissa Raiana is the Other of the Other of the Other, that is, she is the Other of the cisgender woman, who is the Other of the cisgender man, because her image is far from what is normatively imposed in a society that prioritizes the binary of men and women.

The interviewee also compares her experience with that of white upper-middle-class transgender people, saying that she does not represent these subjects because they have received a different education from her. This is related to Raissa Raiana's race and financial condition. From a perspective that encompasses race and class, Raissa Raiana distances herself even further from a "first" Other (the cisgender, white, heterosexual, upper-class man without disabilities), and even his experiences may be closer to the experiences of white transgender women. From the upper middle class, the interviewee still distances herself from this Other because she is a poor and black person who does not have the same experiences as other white and/or middle/upper class people due to racial and socioeconomic factors.

These intersections of Raissa Raiana need to be demarcated because discussions about gender should not only move around the binary or nonbinary but also focus on the interior of the various groups that construct their subjectivities: racial, ethnic, religious, class, etc. (Vergueiro, 2012). If one is a woman, that is not all one is, as gender is embedded in other intersections that are discursively constructed (Louro, 1997).

However, why is this representation of Raissa Raiana compulsory? The human intelligibility imposed by cisgender bodies that have privileges in gender coloniality results in the nonparticipation of bodies that depart from the "cis" theme. Thus, we affirm that bodies such as those of Raissa Raiana do not actively participate in different discursive practices in society, such as those that occur at the university. Therefore, by participating in the academic field, Raissa Raiana subverts the logic that the place of transvestites is in prostitution.

The representation of Raissa Raiana at the university is compulsory because, in most universities, no transvestites participate. Their representation is sucked in at different times, as the informant states: "So... we automatically begin to have political representation in these spaces... as if we represented the whole...". She also talks about spaces that are not "built" and "thought out" to receive bodies such as hers. On this issue, we can use Bento (2011), who defends the point of view that because they do not adapt to the system, bodies that distance themselves from the

binary and the heterosexual – more specifically, the trans and transvestite bodies – are often limited and prevented from existing. Thus, these bodies are situated out of place outside the university, as in this case.

For many years, the representation of trans women and transvestites was crystallized and linked to prostitutes. This representation was perpetuated and repeated in different discursive practices, especially practices related to television. One of the reasons that this representation was preserved in the Brazilian media was the presence of the caricature of Vera Verão (conducted by actor and comedian Jorge Laffond) in a TV program. The construction of the character was the construction of the identity of all trans women and transvestites throughout Brazil, and its representation built, at many times, the stereotyping of transsexual women and transvestites because Vera Verão was debauched, extravagant, barracks and bad-natured.

In his studies, Pêcheux (1995) argues that the meaning of a word/expression is determined only by the ideological positions in which that particular word/expression is produced. Thus, the meaning of the expression “whore of Babylon” – a term that the lady at the market called Raissa Raiana – does not exist in itself because this expression changes its meaning according to the ideological formations through which a given subject utters it (Pêcheux, 1995).

In this light, “words change meaning according to the positions of those who use them. They ‘take’ their meaning from these positions, that is, in relation to the ideological formations in which these positions are inscribed” (Orlandi, 2012, p. 42-43) and in relation to discursive formations—by the positions in which a given saying is situated in a given discursive chain. The meaning of the expression “whore of Babylon” is derived according to the discursive formations in which it is inscribed. The position of this saying uttered by the lady in the market evokes meanings through history, or rather, through interdiscourse, given that the words resume other words and, thus, they are part of the discourse in a relationship with other sayings in memory. The expression “whore of Babylon” takes up meanings that concern the religious discourse.

This expression is included in the seventeenth chapter of the Book of Revelation in the Bible, which states that “the woman wore a dress the color of purple and bright red and was covered with ornaments of gold, precious stones and pearls. In her hands, she held a golden cup full of wine, which represented her indecent practices and the filth of her immorality. On her forehead was written a name that has a secret meaning: ‘Babylon the great, mother of all the

harlots and all the immoral people of the world.’”<sup>1</sup>. Given the saying, one can ponder that the whore of Babylon is a biblical character who is portrayed as a being without religion, as a beast, an evil that is the creation of abominations.

On the one hand, because it constitutes a particular discursive formation and not another, the term “prostitute of Babylon”, directed at Raissa Raiana, recovers meanings that refer to a possible nonsalvation of the transvestite. Therefore, the transvestite is seen as an abomination that needs to be judged and mistreated for not following the precepts considered good and virtuous. In other words, the lady (subject of her discourse) is positioned to a given ideological formation, and the sayings she utters come from certain discursive formations that correspond to a given ideology (Pêcheux, 1995).

On the other hand, Raissa Raiana is positioned in a given other ideological formation. Therefore, the words she utters are words from other discursive formations that are far from the discursive formations of the words uttered by the woman in the market. Raissa Raiana interprets the expression “prostitute of Babylon” differently from the way in which it was uttered because all meanings have an ideological character (Orlandi, 2012). Therefore, Raissa Raiana says she was happy to be called by the expression because, for her, the term means “a woman who did not adapt to the current standards of the time”, which is subversive to patriarchy, machismo and religion. Furthermore, the denomination made by the lady is based on hate speech and constitutes an insulting act. Given that the saying uttered by her is situated in a given discursive formation and not in another, we can infer that this saying does not overflow with richness for those who receive it. This is affirmed because, according to Butler (2021, sp), “the statement according to which certain types of speech not only communicate hatred but also constitute injurious acts presupposes not only that language acts but that it acts on its addressee”. in an injurious manner”.

However, in his studies of denominations, Butler (2021) states that, like all speech acts, not all denominations are fruitful because they are susceptible to failure. Raissa Raiana, in the clipping, narrates that the name she received was intended to insult her, as “I think she wanted to offend me like that”. However, as argued, speech acts may or may not produce effects. Some speech acts are considered performative failures, or rather, do not have the effect(s) of the act that is conjectured (Butler, 2021), as demonstrated in the words of Raissa Raiana: but in the end, it was not that much of an offense. In other words, the saying “whore of Babylon”, uttered by the lady to Raissa Raiana with the

<sup>1</sup> [www.bible.com/pt/bible/211/REV.17.NTLH](http://www.bible.com/pt/bible/211/REV.17.NTLH).

intention of threatening and judging her, is a flawed speech act since it produces sequences of consequences different from the “original context” expression, such as the happiness expressed by the transvestite in the narrative: I was a little happy with what the expression itself meant.

The representation of transvestites is constituted through a discursive memory, that is, by interdiscourse, in a process of reproduction of sayings, the saying that trans women and transvestites are prostitutes is repeated today, returning to ideas that have already been said about this group of people. This also occurs in the abovementioned representations, in which the imaginary that these subjects are violent, drugged, aggressive, lack confidence and full of sexually transmitted infections is reproduced by different segments of society.

However, this repetition of a single representation of trans women and transvestites erases other representations of other subjects that do not fit into it. The dangers of a single saying, in this case, a single representation, will also be exposed in the testimony of another informant of this study: Mirela. When narrating herself, she tells about one of her sorrows: her relationships outside the workplace. For this transvestite, people’s veiled prejudice does not allow her to build friendships outside the place where she works.

#### Cutout 2: Mirela

(...) and the worst prejudice in this whole situation is the veiled prejudice... I live this veiled prejudice... and many pretend they like me... that they adore me... but underneath they hate me. ... just like I said before about pasta... I have never been to a coworker's house... to invite me to a Sunday pasta dinner... to invite me to a barbecue... to invite me for a drink. .. “We are going to have a round of drinks here at home, invite Mirela”... no... “I like it and respect it, at work, on the street. I do not want this type of person in my house, I do not want that kind of person in my house”... which is very sad... right? (...) many times when I am invited to a conversation circle or a lecture... in a conversation... I always talk about the training I have... and a lot of times people talk like this... “Oh, do you want to show yourself”... no... because in this society I always have to be reassuring myself... “look, I can handle it, I can do it... look, I'm here”... understand? it is a society that... we trans women and transvestites... we seek every day acceptance and understanding of a society that does not see us as... does not see me as a professional... society sees me as The transvestite ... and that... for me... is very sad... I want to be known as Mirela... nursing technician... as Mirela... social worker... not as The transvestite.

When she is not invited to celebrations or even to meetings with friends, Mirela suffers violence. We can also say that although many manifestations of offensive language are characterized by the use of certain terms, other forms of language can also be substantiated by insult (Butler, 2021), as in the case of Mirela. The informant is not invited and is not reminded by different subjects who surround her to perform activities together: a pasta dish with friends on Sunday, a barbecue with coworkers, etc. The abusive language, in this example, is grounded in the silence and in the omission of other subjects in relation to Mirela.

Bento (2011) suggests that the so-called ideal genders (masculine and feminine) produce hierarchies and, therefore, exclusions. Therefore, Mirela (a transsexual woman who identifies herself as a transvestite) deviates from the ideal gender, leading to her social exclusion and segregation in the different discursive practices that involve other subjects. When prioritizing binary genders, nonbinary genders are considered false and abnormal. Because they are abnormal, the idea that subjects such as Mirela should not share the same relationships as subjects who have a gender expression considered normal is solidified.

Mirela explains other people’s thinking as follows: “I like and respect her, at work, on the street. I don’t want this type of person in my house; I don’t want that kind of person in my house”. From her point of view, these people only tolerate her in places where they are obliged to tolerate her. In other discursive situations, they want her distant because they do not see her as someone who can frequent the same places frequented by “normal” people. This can be reinforced by the imaginaries that trans women and transvestites carry, those of prostitutes, of violence and of people without confidence.

The segregation of Mirela from the homes of individuals who participate in her daily life may also be related to a possible threat that she may cause to the traditional Brazilian family. Mirela’s existence challenges the binary truth, and because it is a threat to this crystallized truth, it is rejected from other possible relationships.

At other times in history, trans women and transvestites were persecuted by a hygienist culture in Brazil when they were labelled threats to normality and/or good customs. An example of this is the 1987 tarantula operation, carried out by public policies organized together with civil and military police and the press. Under this coercive practice, transvestites who worked on the streets of São Paulo were hunted, imprisoned, tortured and killed, with the aim of cleaning up the city and eliminating threats to the traditional family. At the time, this was justified due to the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) epidemic—a virus that was attributed to the *queer* community for many years.



As exemplified, the regulatory practices and the coloniality of gender can have a series of consequences for bodies that do not correspond to the institutionalized truth. In this study, we assume that gender coloniality, or rather, heterosexualization and the cis-generation of bodies, manufacture oppositions that are only contemplated in a binary logic (male and female). One of the consequences of this logic is the nonexistence of different identities that depart from binarism. These identities, such as those of Mirela, must not exist because they are unintelligible; in other words, they are incomprehensible in the binary field. Mirela's words highlight the differentiated treatment received by transvestites in various social instances. As she said, society sees her as "the transvestite" and not as "the Mirela". To be accepted, a transvestite often needs to present herself as someone who has a degree and a job and avoids prostitution.

We can also say that the fact that Mirela breaks the paradigms of what it is to be a transvestite is a subversion. In the imaginary, as already seen, a transvestite is one who is in prostitution, one who should not be trusted, one who is violent, etc. We believe that the informant subverts this false generalization about the category "transvestite" because she vacates this place that is imposed on her, occupying other spaces, as stated in "I want to be known as Mirela... Mirela... social worker".

The existence of subjects such as Mirela subverts the impossibility of corporeal plurality that is imposed by the binary system. Its existence is shown and differs from the norms given, in the binary system, of the sexual category. What Mirela says refutes crystallized precepts that refer to the body, causing significant dispersions and (re)productions of different experiences that are not situated in binary compulsion (Vergueiro, 2012). In the same vein, Mirela's experience, when defined within the experiences of women and/or femininity, is understood in the fields of humanity and gender (Nascimento, 2021). Therefore, her experience is one of the factors that denatures the crystallized imaginary of what it is to be a woman, of what it is to be a transvestite.

Furthermore, based on Orlandi's (2012) statement that the polysemic and paraphrastic processes are not independent because, through repetition, the new is imminent, it can be said that the representation of Raissa Raiana, Mirela and the collective of trans people and transvestites is displaced in a polysemic process that creates and breaks meanings already constructed referring to an idea. In this process, different sayings and meanings are produced, and displacements of rules are produced that affect the subjects and meanings in the discourse. There are other meanings for the representations of trans women and transvestites. Raissa Raiana exemplifies this by citing subjects who are

not in prostitution but in politics and the arts in Brazil, such as Erika Hilton, Duda Salabert and Gabriela Lohan, who not only represent their respective bodies but also different bodies that are still in the stigma of prostitution, violence, drugs, STIs.

The representations of these bodies can break the crystallized imaginary of transvestites. For example, subjects who look at Erika Hilton humanely on television, in politics, more specifically, may also look at a transvestite who is on the street, on the corner, in a more humanistic way. The body of the transvestite who works on the street is paraphrastically represented by the body of the Federal Congresswoman, just as the body of the transvestite – who is in prostitution – paraphrastically represents the body of Erika Hilton, Duda Salabert, Gabriela Lohan, Raissa Raiana, Mirela, among other trans people and transvestites.

## V. FINAL REMARKS

Through the analysis of Raissa Raiana's and Mirela's testimonies, we can say that the constitution of these transvestites is marked by the social representation that the group of transvestites has, by the violence they suffered in their lives, as their deletion in the different social practices, as well as by the violence they suffered in their lives. as by the sayings that challenge them in society.

We have also seen that the different intersections – of class, sexuality, race, etc. – involve the constitution of the interviewees, given that their subjectivities are not limited to the social representation they assume because the gender of a subject is interrelated with other intersections. Because they are demarcated at certain intersections, such as races (in the case of Raissa Raiana), Raissa Raiana suffers different pains than other subjects.

The sayings in society have created a single representation of trans women and transvestites, especially in the Brazilian media, delegitimizing and erasing representations of transvestite subjects that do not fit this single truth. However, we also claim, in this study, that there are different transsexual identities that break meanings already constructed regarding the idea of what it is to be a transvestite: a plural identity that encompasses different experiences and bodies.

We also address the exclusion procedures and the nominations narrated by the two transvestites in their experiences. In this study, the will to truth, the exclusion procedure, was related to a binary will to truth. This single truth is intended to erase subjects who move away from binarism – men and women. She tries to exclude all bodies that are not named in the binary field, that is, in the field of truth, such as the bodies of Raissa Raiana and Mirela.



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# Voices of Pathos and Protest from Dalit Women in Contemporary Indian Society

Aayushi<sup>1,\*</sup>, Dr. Sunil Kumar Jha<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of English and Modern European Languages, Banasthali Vidyapith, Banasthali, Jaipur (Rajasthan)

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of English and Modern European Languages, Banasthali Vidyapith, Banasthali, Jaipur (Rajasthan)  
Corresponding Author

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**Abstract**— Majority of the news that are reported on the violation of human rights in contemporary Indian media points towards the insolent and dissolute mind-set of a group of people conquered by caste hierarchy. The victims of this degenerated mentality happen to be the marginalised and oppressed masses in society who have been silent sufferers for centuries. In such a struggle, Dalit women cannot refrain themselves from the revolutionary struggles to attain equality and freedom. Being a social activist, I put forward my thesis in my attempt to join hands with Dalit women in India, who are victims of oppression from within and outside their community. They are prone to physical assaults, verbal assaults, sexual harassment and exploitation, rape, forced prostitution and domestic violence in addition to poverty and hunger. With fiery determination, Dalit women have been fighting with their pen, expressing their brutal experiences and their stiff resistance against the obnoxious caste hierarchy. Poetry being the most striking form of expression brings forth their utmost discontent with the caste system and proclaims their vehement dissent. This thesis is an attempt to analyse the poetry of Dalit women and the propositions of the dialectics of pathos and protest. The study also problematizes Dalit women's poetry, which as a form of activism and resistance can in fact, bring a change in the lives of the ordinary Dalit women in India.



**Keywords**— Dalit Women, Indian Society, Pathos and Protest

## I. INTRODUCTION

Dalit women in India face systemic and structural discrimination since they are Dalits, women, and members of the underprivileged community. These people have frequently experienced physical abuse and violence within the household, which has left them vulnerable to emotions of exploitation, alienation, and loneliness. The goal of the Ambedkar movement, which was led by social reformers like Phule, Ambedkar, and Periyar, was to provide Dalit women with access to education and to challenge the social norms of the day. However, most of these movements were limited to certain regions and did not classify issues based on gender, caste, or class. The inability of the economy to provide work possibilities and the absence of equality were both factors that contributed significantly to the situation of Dalit women after the country gained its independence. To

discern the state of being for Dalit women through the use of Dalit female language, Dalit feminist theory had to be established. Ahmad (2020) The aim of this study is achieved by an examination of the several facets of Dalit assertion in literary works, historical documents, and cultural contexts. In her insightful analysis of women's contributions to the Chalo Udupi development, Ananya (2016) highlights the importance of women pioneers and their capacity to inspire more women to join the dissent for the development of Chalo Udupi. The work of Bama, "Sangati Events" (2005), This work, which was analysed by Holmstrom, provides one of the strongest arguments for the difficulties that Dalits face in contemporary society. Furthermore, this book delves into the intricate relationships that Indian culture has between socioeconomic class, position, and orientation.

Chakravarti, 2003 The author of this work dissects the point of confluence between rank and orientation as a women's activist. The link between gender and caste is the author's specific area of expertise. The results of this research offer valuable insights into the ways in which caste hierarchies and gender oppression interact, with a particular emphasis on activist discourse. This action is meant to emphasise the significance of the prior subject. Mangubhai, Lee, and Irudayam (2014) Given the various forms of persecution that are marked by brutality based on station, class, and orientation, it is crucial to present a convincing image of Dalit women's experiences within the Indian context. This is an attempt to combat the misuse that these three components convey. Karmakar's (2022) This article's goal is to investigate the connections between multidimensional Ness and women's rights, drawing on the viewpoints of Jennifer C. Nash and the research completed on Dark women's activist analyses.

## II. DALIT WOMEN'S VOICES OF PATHOS AND PROTEST

There is a saying that goes, "Voice is the right and the ability to make oneself heard and to have one's experiences and perspectives available to others; to participate in the construction of the self and to decide how to represent that self to others." This is Ashby. Because Dalit women have been historically marginalized in society, Dalit literature believes that it is imperative to bring to light the issues and viewpoints of Dalit women that have been buried and unrepresented. This organization is dedicated to this important cause and provides its members with a unique sensibility that allows them to communicate their lives and experiences. In her article titled "Can the Subaltern Speak," Gayatri Spivak discussed the presuppositions that are associated with subaltern studies and brought attention to two challenge areas. She suggested that the subaltern is unable to communicate verbally due to the fact that they do not possess a site of enunciation that allows them to do so. Furthermore, she maintained that the women occupied that radical space due to the fact that they were both women and subjects of colonial rule at the same time. She makes the following statement: "The ideological construction of gender maintains the male dominant position as both the object of colonialist historiography and the subject of insurgency." If, within the framework of colonial production, the subaltern is unable to speak and there is no history associated with them, then the subaltern as a woman is even more thoroughly buried in the shadows". She became embroiled in controversy as a result of the incorrect interpretation of this theory. Spivak's idea of subalternity, on the other hand, does not imply that the subaltern is incapable of communicating. The word "speak" has been

given a particular value by her in the essay that she has written. By "speaking," Spivak meant the interaction that takes place between the speaker and the receiver. The message that the subalterns are attempting to convey goes through a complete and utter transformation whenever they attempt to talk. Due to the fact that other people are not yet prepared to listen to them, it is an ongoing process. Despite the fact that people are turning a deaf ear to the pleadings of the subalterns, the communication system fails, and there is no transaction that takes place. In addition, because of the disparity that exists in the society, the subalterns are unable to engage in commerce with other people. Due to the fact that only the colonizer had the ability to talk, the subalterns who were subservient to the control of the colonizer were unable to speak. It is the "subject" that is responsible for determining the entirety of the concept of "voice," and the category of "other" does not have a voice of their own. The subalterns were once again subjected to subjection by the upper class elites not long after the institution of the colonial authority. It is particularly prevalent in India that women continue to be subordinated. When this occurs, the subaltern is portrayed as a figure of radical difference, the "Other," who is unable to communicate. This is not because they are physically incapable of speaking; rather, they are not a part of the discourse. Dalit women, on the other hand, identify poetry as their agency, which allows them to represent themselves and become active participants in their discourse. Therefore, their poetry are not merely representations but also acts in addition to that.



Fig.1: Dalit Women

By recovering their fundamental rights and visibility in public areas that have been denied to them, poetry written by Dalit women serves as a conduit for reinforcing their voices, which have been lost during the process of reclaiming their voices. As part of this creative endeavor, these poets speak the truth to those in command. They are demonstrating their resistance through the usage of these poems, which are centered on the impudent unfairness that exists in society. The poetry written by Dalit women are reflections of their rage and agitation at the ways in which they are compelled, trapped, and coerced to comply with the moral and ethical precepts that are mandated by caste hierarchy and patriarchal norms. A protest against the

myriad of crimes and injustices that have been inflicted upon them as a result of the dualism of caste and gender, the voice of Dalit women is therefore their resistance. Poetry is a sort of literary activism that permits the voiceless soul to speak to the structures of power, even if they are not heard. This voicing via poetry is an inevitable form of literary activism. The poet, on the other hand, acquires the ability to speak out loud, and poetry becomes a sort of empowerment, an endeavor to make the voices of Dalit women heard. Within this framework, the purpose of this chapter is to conduct an in-depth analysis of whether or not the act of writing through the medium of Dalit poetry by women has been able to bring about a change in the socio-economic position of Dalit women. Women of the Dalit caste, who are twice alienated due to the shifting of caste and gender, find that Dalit feminism provides them with a means of expressing their voice. To differentiate itself from mainstream Indian feminism, which has been criticized for marginalizing Dalit women, Dalit feminism has been referred to as a "discourse of discontent" and "a politics of difference". "Dalit feminists work at the grassroots level and are aware of the fissures of identity, class, and caste," says Rajani Tilak, a social activist and writer who is of Dalit descent. Feminism within feminism" is how she describes the concept of Dalit feminism. As was said earlier, the ideology of Dalit feminism evolved in order to theorize its own position in respect to mainstream feminism, which it believed had overlooked the presence of Dalit women. On the other hand, they were unable to fully accept "the Dalit male aesthetics and politics," which placed an emphasis on the caste angle to the exclusion of issues pertaining to gender. Similar instances of racial discrimination and marginalization in the lives of Black women in the United States of America led to the establishment of the Black Feminist movement in the 1970s. Both of them are unable to renounce their color or caste, despite the fact that caste is a product of human ingenuity and race is, to a certain part, defined by biology or pre-ordained. The concepts of blackness and caste are at the core of their identity. The white male masters exploited the black women as their sexual savages and breeders so that they could take advantage of them. The black women were slaves who were denied all of the rights that humans had. African-American men and women rejoiced in their liberation after the abolition of slavery. In spite of this, Sarojini Sudha argues in her thesis titled "From Oppression to Optimism through Self-Spun Philosophy" that "during the Black Liberation Movement of the 1960s, black men over-emphasized white male sexual exploitation of black womanhood as a way to explain their disapproval of interracial relationships" (114). This is in reference to the fact that black men have a strong desire to exert control over the sexuality of black women.

The concept of Dalit feminist aesthetics is founded on the necessity of comprehending the myriad of complexities and layers that comprise the lives of Dalit women, as well as applying this perspective to the evaluation of literary works. Self-reflection and self-interrogation are both components of this critical analysis. The organization works toward altering people's consciousness and offering them opportunity to think and behave in a different manner. What distinguishes Dalit feminism from other forms of feminism is the audacity and courage that Dalit women have shown in order to advocate for themselves. As in the poem "Another Mother Mine" by Shiva Ingole, when Dalit males speak for their women, they are saying the following:

I am the only one who has tattooed songs of freedom on the bare torsos of women in this place, and I have also set drums of defiance on the lips of women.

When one listens to the male authoritarian voice, they would have the impression that the independence of women is only superficial. In addition, the male equivalents have a tendency to assume control of the female voice and use it for their own purposes. In a same vein, the representation of the pains and sorrow of Dalit women by uppercaste women cannot be compared with the voices of Dalit women. One example is the poem "Tirugane" written by the Kannada poetess Hema Pattanashetty, which includes the following:

It is the tale of my companions. Having conversations with those around me, rather than just telling stories. However, are the tender agonies of feelings that are delicate?

In light of the context, it is appropriate to talk about the resistance of Dalit women against the historical duality of patriarchal and gender oppression, the possibility of otherness, sexuality, and other forms of social injustice, as expressed in their poems. In ancient Indian culture, it is possible to observe the subjugation of women, which was a mode of operation in which they were viewed as objects to be protected. The fact that women are not granted the right to education, independence, or riches is made abundantly clear by the Manusmriti, which is the Hindu scripture that is considered to be the source of law. In addition to putting women in a position of subordination, this thesis also places them in a position of disadvantage. It is declared by Manu:

In the Manusmriti, chapter V, verse 147, it is said that "nothing must be done independently, even in her own house." This applies to girls, young women, and even elderly women. The protection that she receives from her father during her childhood, her husband during her youth, and her sons during her old age is indicative of the fact that



a woman is never capable of achieving independence, as stated in Manusmriti IX.3.

It is therefore quite curving that Manusmriti conspires against women in society, so preventing her from exercising her independence and uniqueness within the confines of the home. When a woman is a mother, her husband, and her son, they become sentinels of her mind, body, and soul. In this context, Manu is not alluding to the punishment that will be handed out to those men who do not follow his laws. For women, these rules are absurd since they prevent them from exercising their freedom and holding decision-making power even when they are in their latter years. This law-giving book not only restricts the freedom of expression and existence of women, but it also denies them the right to receive information, as demonstrated in the stanza that follows:

There is no valid reason for women to study the Vedas. Sanskaras are performed by them without the use of Veda Mantras because of this reason. Due to the fact that they are not permitted to read the Vedas, women are not aware of any religious doctrines. The elimination of sin can be accomplished by the recitation of Vedic mantras. According to Manusmriti IX. 18, women are considered to be as impure as the falsehood since they are unable to say the Veda Mantras. This is cited in Agarwal.

When the Manusmriti describes women as dirty and untruthful, it makes a reference to men as being truthful and trustworthy. In this situation, it is unfair that males are permitted to know the Vedas and mantras, which are meant to cleanse them of their sins through rituals, while women are compelled to practise these practices. Women are relegated to the role of helpless slaves under the rule of men, and they are denied access to the power of knowledge, which has the ability to dispel darkness and bestow all the advantages of purity and autonomy. Manusmriti goes on to justify the exploitation of DaUt women as sex objects and promotes child marriage. It also suggests that child marriage should be encouraged.

A man who is thirty years old will marry a young woman who is twelve years old and who satisfies him. Or a young lady of eight years old and a young man of twenty-four years old. According to Manusmriti IX.94, if the performance of his obligations will be hindered in any other way, he is required to become married sooner.

The act of sexually exploiting a shudra woman is permissible for any Brahman, Kshatriya, or Vaishya man, as stated in Manusmriti IX.25 (quoted in Agarwal 20-21).

It is necessary to challenge this injustice that is being committed against women in general and Dalit women in particular. According to the Brahmins, even the murder of a Dalit lady is considered to be a minor offense, and it is seen to be on par with the murder of an animal. As a result, Dalit women are the most susceptible victims of the laws that are imposed by the Hindu faith. The speech of Dalit women who are voicing their disapproval of the Chaturvama system of caste hierarchy in the ongoing struggle to dismantle the inequitable society is a clear indication of the protest that is being directed against Manusmriti. One example is the poetry "A Song" written by Smritikana Howalder, who is of Bengali descent. In this poem, she criticizes Manu, the law-giver, for dividing the community into different castes. In her argument, she contends that God did not create castes, and that it was Manu who was responsible for bringing the catastrophic night into the lives of women. Manu was the one who divided the human race and referred to women as "Sudrani," which was a derogatory term. It is brought to her attention that everyone mindlessly and unquestioningly adheres to Manu's laws, which are the means by which man is expelled by man. As the poet puts it, she is expressing her disapproval of the unequal society.

It is said that Sudra does not deserve equality. When it comes to our society, Brahmins are at the pinnacle, while Sudras are at the bottom. The nation is in pain and is bleeding. When it comes to blood, there is no distinction between a Brahmin and a Sudra. Every single test will turn out to be incorrect.

It is Howalder's hope that individuals will break down this caste division and light the lamp of knowledge in order to illuminate society. It is the goal of Dalit women to shatter the closed hierarchy that exists within society and to demand that they be granted equal position in society.

The works of Dalit feminists are an expression of the voices of Dalit women, which serve to place their presence in society and demonstrate their resistance to the unjust caste system and gender oppression. As a means of speaking out against the injustice that they are subjected to, the pathos that Dalit women experience is sometimes expressed via the poems that they write. There are times when people have the impression that poets are in a subservient place in society and that they are lamenting about their lives. On the other hand, they discover a solution that allows them to break free from the cycle of enslavement, achieve a position of power, and express their disapproval of society. Thus, their voices convey both the grief and the protest that they feel. It is possible to interpret the passionate verses as sources of validation for their feminist thoughts, which



delve deeply into the duality that is associated with the myths of gender and caste fairness.

Jyoti Lanjewar, a poet who writes in Marathi, explores the unequal gradation of suffering that the supreme Almighty inflicts upon the poet through the poem "Firewood." As a result, the poet becomes the voice of every single woman in the entire planet. In the beginning of the poem, the poet makes a declaration that the hands of the creator ought to have trembled before giving birth to the shattered remnants of a woman's life that is pointless. Before he made the decision to tie up its continuously twisted bundle of nightly farewells, he ought to have given it some more thought. A question is posed by the poet:

With millions of bodies at His disposal Why to me all the pain, the conflagration?

An explanation is required by the poet for "this tangle of pain" that is extending out from birth to birth, as well as for her dreams that were forgotten, buried, and offered as sacrifices to gods that are unknown to her. Through the use of an interrogative sentence, she expresses her anguish and protest: "Was I the only Firewood?" Twenty. She likens herself to a bundle of firewood in her comparison. Symbolically, firewood represents a life that is pointless and is just designed to be consumed by fire in the face of insult and discard.

In another poem titled "sting," Jyoti Lanjewar, who writes in Marathi, expresses her disapproval of the way women are treated unfairly. It is unclear to her how much longer she will have to suffer through the deadly sting. Within the context of women's liberties, the poet investigates a number of pertinent themes. In the words that follow, she makes an attempt to locate herself among the annals of history. She sometimes sees herself in the indigenous culture of the land as the Great Goddess Durga, other times as Yashodhara, the wife of Siddhartha, and other times as Draupadi. According to her, women continue to endure the brunt of pain throughout the years, albeit under different names. In this section, she continues her questions:

What is a woman supposed to be after all?  
Originator of sin ? Graveyard of insults? Or Then  
the embracing motherhood: On whom nature  
gazes - The daily devouring flesh?

It is necessary to provide answers to all of the concerns that the poet has raised, as she concludes the poem by declaring that those individuals who have been robbed and smashed "broke the umbilical cord/ only to become a man in the end."I/

The poem "Gleaning" by Jupaka Subhadra illustrates the anguish that a Dalit lady experiences as a result of her constant labor as a slave. The poet embodies the typical dalit

woman who faces challenges in her life from the wee hours of the morning until the late hours of the night. The speaker of the poem is a woman who, in the midst of the scorching heat, ventures out to get drinkable water. Despite the fact that the soles of her feet are burned, she pauses for a moment to express her feelings of melancholy. She has a strong attachment to the work that is done in the household of her landlord, but she is unable to find the time to work on her own house:

I had to get up early and go to the landlord's house to sweep their yards and smear dung-water; I have to do this immediately. Place water in the water troves so that their animals can drink it; I need to remove the feces and the odor from their cattle sheds, and I need to carry piles of debris that are making my scalp more rigid. There is no time for me to work at my own residence.

Their enslavement includes the conditions of poverty and famine. According to the speaker, she is given stale food as a form of alms for the laborious and boring work that she performs on a daily basis. Illustrations of lives that are prone to poverty include the winnowing tray, the blunted broom, and the thatched home. She is required to do a great deal of effort and must remember to keep herself secure, even from the pursuit of the landlord:

when I went for gleaning the left-over, I stumbled on a ridge being chased by the Patel With bated breath I swept the grains That fell in the dust and in the cracks of stones While threshing, loading and carting. But I couldn't shove even a fistful of grains Even as I sieved a heap of soil and winnowed the dust separating the gravel. I couldn't get a measure of grains

The tone of her voice is one of desperation as she says, "When is this bonded life going to end?" The "strategic essentialism" argument that Spivak presents is worthy of being mentioned in this particular setting. It is imperative that feminists bring attention to the phenomenon known as "the feminization of poverty." This refers to the manner in which job practices and pay, divorce law and settlements, and certain laws contribute to the fact that in many nations, women constitute the majority of adults who are living in poverty. Although it is true that many women do not live in poverty and that there are other factors that contribute to poverty outside an individual's gender, in order to effectively combat the poverty that some women experience, it is necessary to employ the strategic essentialism of bringing attention to the gendered aspect of economic inequality. In this context, discrimination on the basis of caste is fundamentally one of the primary causes for the socioeconomic status of Dalit women.

In one of the poems written by Sukirtharani in Tamil. During the process of translating her, she articulates the voice of a Dalit lady who makes her living by beating the drum. The beginning of the poem starts with a description of the bedroom, which is described as "scattered with sunlight like crumpled balls of paper, they stir." This description suggests the deteriorated state of the lady's room as well as her body. The central theme of the poem is her attempt to make sense of existence. The fact that her "shrunken buttocks" sway whenever she goes by is a clear sign of her financial situation. The poet paints a picture of the existence and living conditions of the unfortunate lady who wakes up to the sound of a song that has no melody. People are looking at her with curious eyes and asking her about the lyrics of her songs. Those who are unable to grasp the meaning of the lady's song are provided with the following translation by the poet:

I translate her poverty the hunger she eats, the hunger she expels, her dwelling place whose air is sprinkled with untouchability her oppressed community. I speak the words, becoming her

A poem is written by the poet, which is a translation of the lady's life. The poem combines the feelings of the oppressed people with the tragedy of the Dalit woman who is struggling to fill her stomach, the atmosphere of untouchability that surrounds her, and the woman herself.

The poem "O Woman in the Dark" written by Kalyani Thakur in Bengali is a heartfelt tribute to the "wonderful" beauty of the woman who has the courage to speak up and break the quiet. It provides a clear explanation of some of the aspects of a Dalit woman's life that usually go unspoken. Having absorbed sufficient strength, the lady is now able to fight back against the world in order to ensure her own survival. "... poisoning the ancient yoke" is something that she has successfully accomplished over the course of her life. She is someone who has learned to swim against the flow. Due to the fact that she is "strong and hard," the autumnal gale is unable to cause damage to her sails. The 'endless dark' is where she spends her entire working day. To the woman who is a Dalit:

Mortar and pestle are her mates - The woman's, who grinds spices: Her idiom they know.

The language and rhythm of the toiling woman is familiar to the non-living things in nature for they always converse and act to her pace. They know the wetness of her sweat. This kind of an attachment or experience is inaccessible to the upper caste women who confine themselves to the domestic space.

The poem "Debt" written by Sukirtharani in Tamil is a very unsettling piece of writing that makes reference to the laborious work that Dalit women do. In addition to being a source of portrayal of the suffering, this poem is also a source of protest against the immoral culture that made members of lower castes feel inferior. A portrait of a Dalit woman getting ready to go to work is presented at the beginning of the poem on the page. Her working equipment consist of a piece of hide that has been sewed into the base of the basket and a scrap-iron sheet with a blunt edge that has been heaped with ashes that have been gathered. She comes to a stop behind a house, when she notices a square iron sheet from a nail hanging from the ceiling. It is raised by the lady with one hand, and she then places a handful of ashes inside of it. She uses her forearm to scrape the jagged edges of the hole, and then she sweeps and scoops the object from left to right, gradually tilting it into the basket:

And when it is full, and heavy on her head with the back of her hand she wipes away yellow water streaming down her brow

In Hira Bansode's (Marathi) poem "Look Mother", another facet of a mother- daughter relationship is seen. The daughter consoles her mother who is a widow and urges her to be strong enough to face the hard situations in life. Dalit women show more boldness in character because they are the ones who earn for running the family. They believe in living by the sweat of one's own brow. She says:

Mother, we are people from the backwoods, it is an old habit with us to stitch together our sorrows and joys with thorns

The girl, who is far away from her mother doing household chores for a living, feels secure at the very thought of her mother. Like a bird, she feels warmth under the wings of her mother:

We live so far apart, but it is as though your wings were always spread over me. You watch over me and my burden of tiredness, of pointless work, grows a little lighter

The poem conveys the warmth that comes from a deep attachment between a mother and her daughter. After her father has passed away, the young woman in the poem is doing her best to muster the bravery to bear the weight of her family on her shoulders. In addition to her own obligations, she is concerned about the feelings that her mother is experiencing. Within the context of a traditional Indian family, the male is the one who assumes the role of being responsible for the children and families. The majority of women who do not have a son will find solace in the home of her brother during this difficult time. According to the patriarchal society, women are expected to remain within the confines of the home. However, in the

case of the Dalits, women are expected to shoulder the same tasks as men. They are more powerful and their own autonomous. They confront the challenges and circumstances they are facing and hold out hope for a more favorable future. The reassuring words that the daughter spoke to her mother are evidence of this:

Don't you think we now need to bear these wounds  
without wincing? Let go of the pain a little, see  
how everything will become light

The mother figure is shown in the social condition in Jyoti Lanjewar's poem "I Never Saw You," which is written in Marathi. The poem is written from a newly awakened consciousness. When it comes to experience, sensibility, and expression, it is at the forefront of breaking new territory. The poem is a strong depiction of the life of a Dalit lady who works hard and is a mother who struggles to bring up her children despite the many challenges that she faces. In the sweltering heat, the mother is shown hauling vats of tar, fixing roads, helping to construct a dam on the lake, harvesting cotton, pruning the unyielding land, carrying cement on her head through the scaffolding of big constructions, and performing a variety of other difficult jobs. Her soles are seen burning. "Here, the poet shows the unfortunate state of an oppressed lady, who struggles with her surroundings in order to bring up a new revolutionary generation that is capable of altering their "names" (92). The mother in the poem is so powerful that she encourages her children to pursue an education and "relieve me of the loaded baskets of labor" (69), even when she is in the midst of challenging circumstances in her life. As a result of witnessing her mother in such depressing conditions, the poet is able to fully realize her sadness. With a necklace of golden beads at her throat, bangles and bracelets on her arms, and rubber chappals on her feet, she claims that she has never seen her mother wearing a brand new silk sari that is bordered with gold. She also claims that she has never seen her mother wearing these things. As an alternative, she has witnessed her working barefoot in the roadways that are on fire. It is a daily gamble that her mother works with a hungry stomach in order to provide for her children. Her mother is a hard-working laborer who performs a variety of laborious tasks for the benefit of her family. The woman who is being discussed here is not the kind of person who could sit quietly and pray with beads; rather, she is the kind of person who, even in the midst of her own death, struggles and wishes for a life of happiness for her children and grandchildren.

Poets who are members of the Dalit community take a profound look at the women who have gladly given up their lives for the sake of society. The poem "Yashodhara" written by Hira Bansode in Marathi is a reflection of the

hardships endured by Yashodhara, the wife of Gautama Buddha. Yashodhara was abandoned by her husband when he decided to pursue spirituality in order to fulfill the requirements of his soul. Yashodhara is the first person to be addressed in the poem.

O Yashodhara! You are like a dream of sharp pain,  
life-long sorrow. I don't have the audacity to look  
at you. we were brightened by Buddha's light, but  
you absorbed the dark until your life was mottled  
blue and dark, a fragmented life, burned out, O  
Yashodhara!

Eleanor Zelliot speaks about Hira Bansode's Yasodhara as a poem which opens up new vistas:

both in the field of creative ideas of the Buddhist  
women of Maharashtra and in the field of what  
women bring to Buddhism. The humanness of the  
Buddha, as opposed to the divine status of Hindu  
gods or leave the world austerity of Hindu saints,  
is one message of the poem. But there is another  
message, which is more unusual. Hira, herself a  
married woman, looks at Yasodhara, the Buddha's  
wife, as a tragic figure, an abandoned woman, and  
yet a woman who somehow is a part of the  
Buddha's final accomplishment

The poet not only conveys her sorrow at the loss of her beloved, but she also expresses her sorrow over the fact that they had goals for finding an identity that they were unable to achieve. She displays a combination of personal impulses and social concerns, which is something that can only be seen in women who have experienced political awakening. It takes a lot of courage for her to acknowledge that her husband is a source of motivation for millions of people who are actively fighting for freedom because of his actions. She takes great pride in comparing her companion to the sun, which was responsible for stirring up a religiously oppressed people and fighting for its liberation regardless of nationality or religion. It is the poet who embodies the spirit of those Dalit women who have the courage to sacrifice their entire life for the sake of freedom and dignity.

This poem is the poet's way of expressing her disapproval of the Brahminical system, which was responsible for her excommunication from the town, her labeling as an untouchable, and her complete destruction. Within the context of the poem, the term "me" does not refer to a single individual but rather to the entire community of Dalits that she represents as a single entity. In his response, Jajula Gowri takes issue with the division of labor that serves as the foundation for the caste system. In point of fact, caste is not only a division of labor but also a division of persons who perform labor. In his opinion, Ambedkar states that "it is a hierarchy in which the division of laborers are graded

one above the other" (Rodrigues 263). As a voice of the Dalit feminist movement, Gowri expresses her opposition to this gradation in the following manner:

The political diplomacy of the rich dragged me  
into the streets Enframing occupation on me They  
weighed my labour in an unjust balance They  
made me the needle of the balance and pierced  
mine own eyes with the same.

Here, the poet expresses his feelings over the injustice that occurs when one is denied the freedom to choose one's occupation. Gowri makes a compelling case for the fact that those who are marginalized do not have the right to make their own decisions. When it comes to the fifth vama, the poem expresses its disagreement with the practice of relegating the Dalits to the status of "Untouchables" or "panchamas."

Even among the Sudras, excommunication is  
permitted. There was a fifth 'Vama' that they  
smeared over me. -!In the pretext of forced labor,  
they drained every last drop of blood from my  
body. Bones are all that are left, and my own buddy  
is currently pursuing them while grinding them  
into flour and singing the mantra of harmonious  
coexistence.

Jajula Gowri reacts against the injustice and ill-treatment the Dalits had to endure in life. She detests being a slave in life and determines to assert her identity as a human being;

I can bear it no longer It's time I thought of my  
own place Co-existing with people inhuman I'm  
deceived time and again Crushed among  
yesterday- today and tomorrow I'll keep myself as  
myself

Slave, a thought-provoking poem by Hira Bansode (Marathi) critiques the repercussions of male-dominance specifically in the Indian cultural context. She highlights the ill-fated lives of the most popular and respected Indian mythological heroines, Sita, Ahalya and Draupadi. Despite being three of the "panchkanyas" hailed by the Hindu orthodox tradition they had to undergo severe trials and tribulations as seen in the following verses:

Where Sita entered the fire to prove her fidelity  
Where Ahalya was turned to stone because of  
Indra's lust Where Draupadi was fractured to serve  
five husbands In that country a woman is still a  
slave

Through the use of the most honest lyrical verses, the poem exposes hypocrisy and the acceptance of double standards. There is a large amount of imagery that is used to show Draupadi, who is typically seen as the most highly empowered lady out of the three, but whose fate was

unfortunately "fractured to serve." In the final sentence, "to be bom a woman is unjust," the famous dictum of Simone de Beauvoir, which states that "one is not bom, but rather becomes a woman," is echoed and repeated. This is found in *The Second Sex*, page 267,000. In order to stress the fact that it conveys a strong satire against the patriarchal culture, the statement is repeated multiple times.

It is only possible for the heartfelt companion to traverse the physical portico of caste proportions. Despite the fact that she goes to the home of her friend who belongs to a lower caste, she is hesitant to let go of the psychological and emotional attachment that she has with caste sentiments. The poem concludes with a series of rhetorical queries, such as "Are you going to tell me what mistakes I made? Are you going to tell me my mistakes?" (38-40)" In an ironic turn of events, the poet inquires of her friend whether she has ever gone to her home in order to discover her shortcomings and instruct her on how to live, rather than focusing on the friendship that exists between them. At this point, the friend's sense of superiority is called into doubt. It is no longer possible for the poet to allow himself to be humiliated in the name of caste and untouchability. They do not want to have somebody in charge of their lives deciding what is right and wrong, as well as what is good and bad. One of the things that is being addressed here is the tendency of individuals from higher castes to think of Dalits as being uncivilized or messy. When it comes to society, the Dalits are revered and have their own distinct identity. For the sake of hierarchy, there is no need for anyone to question them. Like the poet notes, the legacy of untouchability is deeply ingrained in people. This is a fact that cannot be denied. For the sake of the betterment of society, it truly needs to be altered.

### III. CONCLUSION

With regards to fighting the covering severe frameworks that Dalit women are exposed to based on rank, orientation, and financial position, the strengthening of Dalit women by means of account obstruction is an undertaking that is complex and essentially significant. Dalit women are recuperating their organization, testing predominant accounts, and intensifying their voices by means of different sorts of activism, including yet not restricted to writing, oral narrating, web stages, and various kinds of activism. To lay out their characters, request equity, and sort out for change, Dalit women might involve story opposition as a solid instrument. This is accomplished by highlighting the interconnectedness of oppressions, discrediting dominant narratives, and exposing and criticizing caste and patriarchal institutions. Initiatives to empower Dalit women must continue to emphasize their voices, experiences, and



agency while also encouraging solidarity and collective action to overthrow oppressive structures and build more inclusive and equitable communities.

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# Synthesizing Dichotomies in Tom Stoppard's Play *Arcadia*

Dr. Bani Dayal Dhira

Department of English Studies, Dayalbagh Educational Institute (Deemed to be University), Agra, India

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**Abstract**— The research paper connects thematic complexities in Tom Stoppard's play *Arcadia* (1993) with paradigm shifts in science. A remarkable illustration of science as a metaphor for human behaviour, *Arcadia* alternates between the early 1800s and 1993, interlinking the scientific pursuits of characters across time periods. Stoppard dexterously introduces Chaos Theory into the play through a young girl, Thomasina Coverly, who intuitively anticipates Fractals in the early nineteenth century. The playwright takes his readers through a world first ruled by Newton's laws, then one where those laws are revised by the laws of Thermodynamics, and then one where they are revised yet again by Chaos Theory. The paper brings out a series of dichotomies latent in the plot structure of the play - Classicism versus Romanticism, Science versus Humanities and Newtonian Determinism versus the Second Law of Thermodynamics, which signify the presence of order and purpose amid the apparent randomness and disorder in the universe. *Arcadia* is an apt exemplification of how order arises from chaos.



**Keywords**— *Arcadia*, dichotomies, Newtonian determinism, order and chaos, Second Law of Thermodynamics

## I. INTRODUCTION

This is the way the world ends,  
This is the way the world ends,  
This is the way the world ends,  
Not with a bang, but with a whimper!

-T.S.Eliot

The renowned British playwright and screenwriter Tom Stoppard (b.1937) is widely celebrated for his wit, intellect and innovative use of language. *Arcadia*, a remarkable exemplification of the impact of the Second Law of Thermodynamics on the human psyche, refers to a wide array of subjects, including mathematics, physics, thermodynamics, computer algorithms, fractals, population dynamics and Chaos Theory. The play earned the prestigious Olivier Award for Best Play in London, and in America, it received the New York Drama Critics Circle Award.

Stoppard challenges the readers to decode the mysteries of existence and limitations of human understanding with a

captivating delineation of modern scholars' struggle to interpret the clues left by past scholars.

The paper uncovers latent thematic dichotomies in Stoppard's *Arcadia* through which the plot unfolds, bringing the intersection of science, literature and human relationships to the fore.

## II. *ARCADIA*: A BRIEF THEMATIC OVERVIEW

*Arcadia* unfolds at Sidley Park, an aristocratic estate in Derbyshire, England. The plot of the play alternates between two distinct periods separated by nearly two hundred years, remarkably portraying the scientific pursuits of the modern characters with the intellectual initiatives of the past characters. The first half of the play depicts the early 1800s (1809-1812), presenting an engaging conversation between an intelligent teenage girl, Thomasina Coverly and her tutor, Septimus Hodge. Thomasina's understanding of science is much ahead of her time. The action in the second half of the play takes place in 1993, with a group of modern scholars, Hannah

Jarvis, Bernard Nightingale and Valentine Coverly, who probe the house's history and its inhabitants.

Though Chaos Theory is still nearly two hundred years away from being developed, Stoppard works it into the plot of the play through a thirteen-year-old math genius, Thomasina Coverly, who manages to invent fractal geometry and comprehend two central principles of Chaos Theory - entropy and its irreversibility. Thomasina's discoveries are explained in the present-day setting of *Arcadia* by her descendant, Valentine Coverly, a mathematician, who is deeply engaged in studying the historical records and documents related to the estate's past, mainly the early nineteenth century. He concentrates on the work of his ancestor, Thomasina Coverly. Stoppard explains the workings of chaos theory through Valentine's research on the grouse population.

*Arcadia* revolves around the interplay between past and present, order and disorder, depicting the nature of truth and knowledge. Stoppard takes his readers through a world first ruled by Newton's laws, then one where the laws of Thermodynamics revise those laws, and then one where they are revised yet again by Chaos Theory. Elisabeth Angel-Perezon writes:

With *Arcadia* Stoppard suggests that post-modernism, fragmentation and chaos are reclaimed if not by order, at least by determinism. In Chaos theory, Stoppard finds the oxymoronic and paradoxical vision of a world which becomes disorganised as a system but organised as chaos. The Stoppardian new problem play elects complexity as its thesis and conveys a message which is both conservative and iconoclastic.

### III. SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES IN SCIENCE: A GLANCE

Classical Physics, primarily developed by Sir Isaac Newton (1643-1727), posits a deterministic universe operating as a machine governed by cause and effect. Predictability extends to human choice and action in this framework, making free will and autonomy subject to the deterministic system.

The arrival of the Second Law of Thermodynamics shook the Newtonian world with the realisation that the level of disorder is constantly rising in the universe, and the amount of potential energy is steadily depleting. In *Great Ideas in Physics* (1992), Alan Lightman explicates:

The second law says that some processes in nature are one-way arrows, never going backwards, never returning the

world to its initial condition. The machines are running down. The universe, on average, is dissipating itself. (61)

The emergence of Quantum Theory sent shock waves through the Newtonian world, shattering the clockwork model and destabilising notions of certainty. At the end of the nineteenth century, Max Planck (1858-1947), a leading German physicist, argued that light was not merely a wave (as previously believed) but made up of "quanta" or discrete packets of energy. Albert Einstein (1875-1955) extended Planck's discovery in 1905 with his theory that light does not always behave like a wave but sometimes behaves like a particle. This 'wave-particle duality' forms the basis of Quantum Theory and is still one of the greatest enigmas of the quantum world. In 1926, Erwin Schrodinger (1881-1961) also developed his famous Schrodinger equation, the fundamental equation in Quantum Physics.

With the current social, political, and moral upheavals, uncertainty has crept into almost every facet of the world. Chaos theory, a mathematical sub-discipline also known as the Science of Chaos, is based on discovering that highly chaotic systems are rich in information and often exhibit some underlying pattern. Nature is highly complex and mysterious, and Chaos Theory examines its extraordinary unpredictability.

### IV. EXPLORING DICHOTOMIES IN ARCADIA

A close analysis of *Arcadia* reveals that the plot progresses with interesting thematic dichotomies: Order and Chaos, Classical Newtonian Determinism and the Second Law of Thermodynamics, Regular Euclidean Geometry and Irregular Geometry (fractals), and Humanities and Science.

The argument between Lady Croom and Mr Noakes over the changes being made in the Sidley garden aptly illustrates the clash between the tidiness and order of the Classical style and the rugged, gothic appearance of the Romantic. Hannah passionately exclaims to Bernard:

The whole Romantic sham, Bernard! It's what happened to the Enlightenment, isn't it? A century of intellectual rigour turned in on itself. A mind in chaos suspected of genius...The decline from thinking to feeling. (39)

Further, Stoppard presents this dichotomy through the characters of Septimus and Thomasina. Even though Thomasina lacked sufficient mathematical background, through her intuition, she could understand the Second Law of Thermodynamics, contradict Classical-Newtonian

Determinism, and discover the foundations of Chaos Theory and irregular geometry (fractals). Septimus, a strong advocate of classical Newtonian science, discards her discoveries as mere whimsical stories until he understands the implications of her discoveries. Later, after her death, as a hermit at Sidley Park, he spends his entire life proving these discoveries through English Algebra.

In the modern context, Stoppard depicts the dichotomy between Classicism and Romanticism through Hannah Jarvis and Bernard Nightingale. Hannah embodies classical temperament with her classical reserve and objective approach, which she demonstrates while investigating the mystery surrounding the nineteenth-century hermit at Sidley Park. She did not draw hasty conclusions based on her intuition but rather strove for evidence to prove that the hermit was none other than Septimus Hodge, Thomasina's tutor, whose love was shattered with her premature accidental death. Hodge devoted the remainder of his life to proving her theories using English Algebra.

On the other hand, the character of Bernard Nightingale represents the Romantic temperament. He relies more on the methods of subjective investigation in developing his theory. Without evidence, he believed Lord Byron had killed Mr Ezra Chater in a duel at Sidley Park in 1810. Later, when Hannah proves him wrong, he immediately leaves Sidley Park embarrassed and devastated. His character depicts recklessness, predominance of emotions over rational thinking, arrogance, greed, pomp and biased research. He values literature and personalities more than scientific progress.

The dichotomy between Science and Humanities forms an important part of *Arcadia*. Valentine Coverly's background in science, mathematics, and Chaos Theory helps him understand Thomasina's discoveries. Through Valentine, the playwright explains the major shifts in science and reveals the relevance of past scientific discoveries in the present time.

The argument between Valentine and Bernard brings out the dichotomy between science and humanities. In scene five, Valentine and Hannah do not accept Bernard's belief that Lord Byron killed Mr Ezra Chater in a duel over his wife due to a lack of objectivity and concrete evidence. In the arguments that follow, Valentine stresses the importance of scientific advancement and asserts:

The questions you are asking don't matter, you see, It is like arguing who got there first with the calculus. The English say, Newton, the Germans say Leibnitz. But it doesn't matter.

Personalities. What matters is the calculus. Scientific progress. Knowledge.(82-83)

The character of Bernard stands for the superiority of art and humanities. He holds the view that artistic genius exceeds scientific understanding. For him, literature and philosophy are more important than science and its progress. He says:

Oh, you're going to zap me with penicillin and pesticides. Spare me that and I'll spare you the bomb and aerosols. But don't confuse progress with perfectibility. A great poet is always timely. A great philosopher is an urgent need. There is no rush for Isaac Newton. We were quite happy with Aristotle's cosmos. Personally, I preferred it. Fifty-five crystal sphere geared to God's crankshaft is my idea of a satisfying universe. I can't think of anything more trivial than the speed of light. Quarks, quasars- big bangs, black holes – (83)

Another significant dichotomy fundamental to the play is between Classical Newtonian Determinism and the Second Law of Thermodynamics. In the Age of Enlightenment, scientists compared the universe to a mechanical clock, which works as a perfect machine with its gears governed by Newton's laws of physics, making every aspect of the system perfectly predictable. They believed that events within this universe are bound by causality in such a way that any state of an object or an event is completely determined by its initial state. They believed that since prediction is possible in the deterministic world, free will, autonomous human choice and action become subject to the same predictable system. This is generally referred to as Classical Newtonian Determinism.

Stoppard delineates this dichotomy through the characters of Septimus and Thomasina. Even though Thomasina lacked sufficient mathematical background, through her intuition, she could understand the Second Law of Thermodynamics, contradict Classical-Newtonian Determinism, and discover the foundations of Chaos Theory and irregular geometry (fractals). Septimus, a strong advocate of classical Newtonian science, discards her discoveries as mere whimsical stories until he understands the implications of her discoveries. Later, after her death, as a hermit at Sidley Park, he spends his entire life proving these discoveries through English Algebra.

Thermodynamics has originated from the study of engines. Most early engines built in the Enlightenment era were

slow and clumsy, converting only 2% to 3% of the fuel into useful work as they used heat conduction between bodies at different temperatures. Nicolas Leonard Sadi Carnot (1796-1832), a French mechanical engineer who is regarded as the father of Thermodynamics, mentioned in his book *Reflections on the Motive Power of Fire* (1824) that the conduction of heat between bodies at different temperatures is a wasteful and irreversible process, which must be eliminated if the heat engine is to achieve maximum efficiency. His notion formed the early version of the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Later, Emile Clapeyron (1799-1864), a French engineer and physicist, further developed the work of Sadi Carnot, which was further elaborated by Clausius and Kelvin, who developed the concept of 'entropy' and the Second Law of Thermodynamics.

Entropy is a thermodynamic property. The second law states that all processes go only in one direction, which is the direction of greater and greater degradation of energy, in other words, to a state of higher and higher entropy. This implies that thermal energy always flows spontaneously from regions of higher temperature to regions of lower temperature, and the process reduces the state of order of the initial system. Therefore, entropy is an expression of disorder or randomness. In the play's very first scene, Thomasina understands the concept of entropy and discusses this topic by putting forth her rice pudding example. She enquires about the reasons underlying this:

Thomasina: When you stir your rice pudding, Septimus, the spoonful of jam spreads itself round making red trails like the picture of a meteor in my astronomical atlas. But if you need to stir backwards, the jam will not come together again. Indeed, the pudding does not notice and continues to turn pink just as before. Do you think this is odd?

Septimus: No.

Thomasina: Well, I do. You cannot stir things apart. (8)

The problem of rice pudding is a direct consequence of the Second Law of Thermodynamics, which states all processes go only in one direction, which is the direction of a greater and greater degradation of energy, in other words, to a state of higher and higher entropy. The rice

pudding problem not only indicates the irreversibility of time but also points to the irreversibility of the process, which answers her puzzle and makes Thomasina doubt Newtonian determinism. We all know that time flows in a specific fixed and irreversible direction.

In scene seven, Septimus gives an essay from the Scientific Academy in Paris to Thomasina in which the scientist much like Thomasina finds a contradiction in Newton's Theory of Determinism. She exclaims with joy seeing the French Scientist's results in line with her intuitive ideas:

Septimus: He demonstrates the equation of propagation of heat in a solid body. But in doing so he has discovered heresy- a natural contradiction of Sir Isaac Newton.

Thomasina: Oh! He contradicts determinism?

Septimus: No!... Well perhaps He shows that the atoms do not go according to Newton.

Thomasina: Well ! Just as I said! Newton's machine which would knock our atoms from cradle to grave by the laws of motion is incomplete! Determinism leaves the road at every corner, as I knew all along, and the cause is very likely hidden in this gentleman's observation.

Lady Croom: Of what?

Thomasina: The action of bodies in heat. (114)

In the seventh scene, Thomasina, due to her intuitive understanding of entropy and the Second Law of Thermodynamics, could perceive deficiency in Mr Noake's model of the steam engine. She expresses her ideas about the same in the form of a diagram (known as a Heat Exchange diagram today) and gives it to Mr Noakes. When a confused Septimus asks her to explain the meaning of her observation, she explains as follows:

Thomasina: Oh...yes. Newton's equations go forwards and backwards, they do not care which way. But the heat equation cares



very much, it goes only one way. That is the reason Mr Noakes's engine cannot give the power to drive Mr Noakes's engine. (118-119)

On being warned by Septimus that everybody knows about the inefficiency of a steam engine, her sarcastic remark, "They know it about engines!" clearly shows her confidence in the universality of her intuitive ideas, which were later discovered and established as entropy and the Second law of Thermodynamics. The idea of the heat death also stems from the Second Law of Thermodynamics. According to this, the mechanical movement of the universe will run down as work gets converted to heat in time, finally, leading to heat death.

Towards the end of the play, in the seventh scene, when Septimus begins to understand Thomasina's intuitive ideas regarding the Second Law of Thermodynamics, entropy and the heat death of the universe, he exclaims, "So, we are all doomed!" to which Thomasina cheerfully replies "yes". Septimus shows his understanding of Thomasina's theory and says, "So the Improved Newtonian Universe must cease and grow cold. Dear me." (128)

The dichotomy between regular geometry and irregular geometry reinforces the dichotomy between classicism and romanticism, with regular geometry representing classicism and irregular geometry representing romanticism. In the third scene, Thomasina expresses her displeasure over the equations formulated by Septimus, which, according to her, are limited to commonplace manufactured forms. She wants to create the kind of equations that make the unpredictable nature. Through deterministic chaos, Thomasina intuitively feels that irregularity triggers the emergence of life. The conversation between Thomasina and Septimus is interesting:

Thomasina: God's truth, Septimus, if there is an equation for a curve like a bell, there must be an equation for a curve like a bell, there must be an equation for one like bluebell, and if a bluebell, why not a rose? Do we believe nature is written in numbers?

Septimus: He (God) has mastery of equations which lead into infinities where we cannot follow. (52)

In the same scene, Thomasina tells Septimus :

Mountains are not pyramids and trees are not cones. God must love gunnery and architecture if Euclid is his only geometry. There is another geometry which I am engaged in discovering by trial and error, am I not, Septimus? (114)

In Scene four, Hannah and Valentine come across Thomasina's Mathematics Primer through which they come to know of Thomasina's discoveries. They see the following written in the book :

I, Thomasina Coverly, have found a truly wonderful method whereby all the forms of nature must give up their numerical secrets and draw themselves through numbers alone. This margin being too mean for my purpose, the reader must look elsewhere for the New Geometry of Irregular Forms discovered by Thomasina Coverly (58)

Hannah and Valentine discover that the pages of Thomasina's book are filled with iterated equations or equations that feed solutions of one equation into the next step/iteration. Valentine explains to Hannah:

What she is doing is, every time she works out a value for y, she's using that as her next value for x. And so on. Like a feedback. She's feeding the solution back into the equation, and then solving it again. (61)

Valentine relates his technique, which he is using in his grouse numbers research work in the twentieth century, to Thomasina's method developed almost two hundred years ago. He further explains that what Thomasina discovered years ago is now called Fractals. He tells Hannah that the unpredictable results of iteration are like the unpredictability of nature. Valentine elucidates:

If you knew the algorithm and feed it back say ten thousand times, each time there'd be a dot somewhere on the screen. You'd never know where to expect the next dot. But gradually you'd start to see this shape, because every dot will be inside the shape of this shape, because every dot will be inside the shape of this leaf. It wouldn't be a leaf, it would be a mathematical object. But yes. The unpredictable and the predetermined unfold together to make everything the way it is. It is how nature creates itself, on every scale, the snowflakes and the



snowstorm. It makes me so happy. To be at the beginning again, knowing almost nothing. (64)

Valentine iteratively plots the beautiful "Coverly set" on his computer screen using Thomasina's equations and tells Hannah:

In an ocean of ashes, islands of order. Patterns making themselves out of nothing. I can't show you how deep it goes. Each picture is a detailed of the previous one, blown up. And so on. Forever. Pretty nice, eh?" (103)

In *Arcadia*, the passions for love and intellectual pursuits are shown to be in constant conflict throughout. The playwright offers a solution through the proposition of marriage and the philosophical justification for sex. The play touches upon the theme of love versus intellect through Thomasina's character. Sexual knowledge gets in the way of Thomasina's maths lesson. She also discusses the conflict between emotion and intellect during her history lesson. Thomasina applauds Queen Elizabeth, who did not give away land or power, succumbing to the passion of love. In the modern context, the great Hannah Jarvis is like Thomasina's Queen Elizabeth, unswayed by romantic passions. She believes, as did Thomasina that romantic inclinations would destroy or distract her from her work. Hannah refuses warmth or emotion: she refuses a kiss, denies Bernard's propositions, laughs at Valentine's proposal, and brushes off Gus's flirtation.

Nonetheless, Hannah, unlike Thomasina, towards the end of the play, could not resist her emotion for the bashful Gus all waltz. The conflict between emotion and intellect is resolved with Hannah's realisation that the two are inseparable. Hannah unconsciously understands this interconnection between the two and is driven by the mystery of both.

The dichotomy between 'Order and Chaos' is predominant throughout. The scenes in the play keep bouncing from the past to the present in a non-linear manner and finally, in the last scene the juxtaposition of the past and present reflects the chaotic structure of the play and showcases how everything is gradually dispersing into a state of chaos and entropy, and yet within that chaos, order is to be found. Valentine summarises this idea: "In an ocean of ashes, islands of order. Patterns making themselves out of nothing." (103). Even though the characters constantly attempt to define the order in the world through their ideas and theories, they are continually overturned. Even the table which collects props from both periods is a strong example of the dichotomy between order and chaos. In "Science in Hapgood and *Arcadia*" (2001), Paul Edwards explains:

At the end of the play, the table has accumulated a variety of objects that, if one saw them without having seen the play, would seem completely random and disordered. Entropy is high. But if one has seen the play, one has full information about the objects and the hidden 'order' of their arrangement, brought about by the performance itself. (174)

## V. CONCLUSION

*Arcadia* dexterously portrays how contradictory phenomena can coexist paradoxically at the same time and in space. According to John Fleming, Stoppard "shows an acceptance of uncertainty and instability as being the central component of the world; however, his plays also embrace order, logic and those things that provide stability in an uncertain world" (22). The ultimate message is nature is unpredictable and random, the universe is moving towards disorder and "the paths of glory lead but to grave", yet, there is order in this disorder. Seeing order in disorder refers to seeing the purpose of our life amid the baffling diversity and complexity of the universe. In the long march of history, humankind has always been driven by purpose, which makes order emerge from chaos.

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# The Endeavour for Civil Rights in Githa Hariharan's 'I Have Become the Tide'

Dr. Vadnala Jyothsna Devi

Post Graduate Teacher in English, Telangana, India.

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**Abstract**— This is a novel which lime lights on a long-established social problem which is endemic in the country. Several castes and religions are common in the diverse nature of our nation. The rituals and customs are the way of our living which is a part and parcel of our lies. Although India attained independence, develops in every field socially and economically in spite of that the evil deep rooted casteism in the mental attitude of man is not deviated and its consequences influence unpropitious on civil rights, education. existence and moral values of men. 'I Have Become the Tide' is the anecdote of three different stories of unlike periods.

**Keywords**— Civil rights, Fraternity, Gender revolution, Humiliation, literacy, social equality, Submissiveness.



## I. INTRODUCTION

Though India is a secular state, the citizens of it are still under grieve, thrives for the secular freedom. 'I Have Become the Tide' deals with the caste and caste-based society of India and how the roots of caste circulate in the blood of people and resist in their minds. The long pressure and submissiveness, sacrifices, gender revolution in the minds of effectuate race is well-proved in the novels.

Chikkiah character in I Have Become the Tide is an example for the struggle for existence. Chikkiah who lost his father, in search of his home finds a village where all the people are treated equally but later became aggravate due to unversed of casteism. Krishna, a true professor works for the reality existed in the history and tries to bring into the present genuinely, put to death on the name of violation of one's categories and beliefs. Ravi, Satya, Asha undertake unfairness of caste as a mark of 'Pariah'.

## II. THE ENDEAVOUR OF VARIOUS CHARACTERS FOR CIVIL RIGHTS AND AGAINST CASTEISM IN 'I HAVE BECOME THE TIDE'

Chikkiah is an innocent fellow lives along with his father at the outskirts of the village. He could not understand why he resides at the border of the village where dense bushes covered as a wall. He is called as an untouchable; beats a drum for the funeral of the people. He is called to the village to climb the coconut trees, to lift the baskets, to remove dead cows and other animals in the upper cadre people's streets and to does other works in the village. He wonders the water he takes from the pond is also an untouchable pond. Hariharan comments on the people's attitude on untouchability through Chikkiah as:

He gazes at the pond without a label, the untouchable pond, he and others like him, cannot do without it. The pond means water for people and animals to drink; water for living beings and animals to bathe; water to wash clothes and swim in; water to play in; water to dump dead and living refuse into; water to be filled in pots and taken to home. It is a pariah

pond they touch all the time, a pond that touches their lives like a lover, devoted to them, performing his duty day and night. There is nothing Chikkiah does not know about this hush water body. (IHBT 4)<sup>[1]</sup>

Casteism is dominant in our country since the ancient time. The people are categorized on the basis of work they do and mostly poor, downtrodden are treated as untouchables and isolated from the civil locality. They are utilized for various purposes but often humiliated. Outcast people are prevented to take food along with other men, they are seated separately, prohibited to enter or use public places, common properties. They are treated as thralldom and embargo from the social inter course.

According to the research journal on "Constitutional flaws of India's attempt to promote equality and a look at the United States constitution as a solution" by Siely Joshi states that:

The caste system is divided in to four well-defined vocational groups like the Brahmins which contains priests and teachers, the Ksyatriyas are the rulers and warriors, the Vaishyas consist of merchants and traders, and laborers and artisans are considered as Shudras. The intial three classes are considered as 'high caste' which dominates the potentiality and purpose of the Indian community. The last division is Shudras are meant to be in the service of all other classes, importantly serving as retainers. The Shudras are called as 'Dalits', who are even considered as the 'untouchables' as they are contemplated to offshoot of the four acknowledged castes. (Siely 200)<sup>[2]</sup>

Chikkiah often remain starved for many days. His father is a cattle skinner, beats drum and drinks liquor with little earnings and infuriates on him one day his father becomes overtired of beating drum, remains silent and never wakes up. His death made Chikkiah to be silent for a long time. He runs away from his father's funeral site. He tolerates a hefty cognitive hassle of being alone. He could not leave anything except the unhappiness. He has no friends, neighbours or relatives. The only father is also isolated him with his death. Chikkiah has experienced a lot of despair. He feels at his shack as:

How empty! A whole life and this is what remained to prove his father had lived: a couple of bent vessels; a few rags; a drum; a reeking lota; and the smell of vomit, shit, death. How else do we keep living? He had longed for his father to be quiet then. But now that the old man was silent, Chikkiah felt furious with the

hut, its empty place where his father used to be, it's miserable lota, and the drum finally gone mute. (IHBT 7, 8)<sup>[3]</sup>

He is unbearable to the silence of his father's absence and runs out of the hut. He feels that his father is alive and things of the song which his father used to sing always. He recalls his father's song though he could not understands it properly.

"Where is that land

Where water flows free?

Tell me. Tell me.

Where is my land

Where water flows free?" (IHBT 9)<sup>[4]</sup>

Chikkiah in a boat with two strangers who consoles him and be haves in a natural manner. No person interrupted him while he is in the boat journey. Chikkiah has to light up on his self-life which maybe present outside of the river bank. He moves away from the journey of cattle skinner on the other side of the river and reaches Anandagrama.

Chikkiah observes that new world where geezers like him are multitude in that reason who treats him as a brother and friends. Putamma introduces the strangers to Chikkiah as:

There is Siddha the potter, Chenna the cobbler, Gundanna the toddy tapper. And in Anandagrama, where we are going now—you will meet weavers and sweepers and shit-carriers and farm workers. But you will also meet city officials and scholars and poets, other elder brothers and sisters, and our wise Prabhu. (IHBT 68)<sup>[5]</sup>

The people are differentiated based on the work or occupation from the ancient time. They are classified as Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudhras. The Brahmins raised and brought up the idea of Varna who are considered as low class whose occupation are like hunters, weavers, farmers, laborers, sweepers who are deprived economically works under the commands of high cadre men. Brahmins and Kshatriyas are honoured and enjoy their social position. Whereas Sudhras are out cast people knock around in the society.

According to the report of "Human rights Watch against Racism, Racial Discrimination" as:

Caste is an incline-based and inheritable in nature. It is attributed firmly by one's birth into a specific community, despite of the belief

practiced by the independent person. Caste designates a system of unbending civil stratification into graded groups defined by descent and work. Under several caste systems all through the world, caste discordness also domineer in families, marriages and common social communication and divisions that are reinforced through the practice and hazards of social rejection, financial outlaws, and even physical assault. (Human rights Watch)<sup>[6]</sup>

Sidda, one of the friends of Chikkiah baffled why some people are wealthy and some are odious, substandard and suffer merely for the minimum necessities of life though every living being is made of some kind of flesh. The difference itself is created in the hands of super natural power.

Chikkiah marries Mahadevi, daughter of basket weaver, becomes the washer man, he knows all the streets and places of the city. He never strains to visit the houses of officials and upper caste people. He works at the river, washes clothes, rinses, spread it and allows it to dry. He sinks while washing clothes, describes various walks of life.

“This potter hums with spinning wheel,  
that cobbler drones a note for each nail.  
The weaver’s song twines thread  
with thread.  
I too sing when cloth slaps stone.  
But you, you don’t raise your voice.  
My lord, my friend:  
You’re the song,  
the song that sings itself,  
O river of a thousand faces.” (IHBT 124)<sup>[7]</sup>

Chikkiah leads a simple life with his family in his limited world although he is treated as an out-caste member prohibited to mingle with general people, he leads a joyful and satisfactory life in Anandagrama. A remarkable incident takes place which brings drastic changes in his life. When his daughter dies of natural calamity, he becomes perturbed and muted. He sits at the bank of river and sings in his mind as:

“In a past life I was untouchable.  
they smelt my shadow and fled.  
the meat I ate was rotten.  
I bathed in a stagnant pond in a past life.  
That was the past.  
Tie me, tether me so I do not stray there again.

Keep me here, in current and whirlpool,  
O river of a thousand faces.” (IHBT 157, 158)  
[8]

Chikkiah lives through emotional disturbances when his father and daughter deceased. He is much dejected when he is alone and discriminated from the village people. He runs into ebbs and flows of destiny. Githa Hariharan delicately knitted rational grapple of Chikkiah at various stages of life in *I Have Become the Tide*.

Asha, Ravi and Satya are friends belong to schedule castes. Mother of Asha, a tailor, parents of Ravi are daily wage laborers and Satya’s mother is an agricultural labour. All belong to backward families, wish to get good education and starts their journey of career.

Over fifty years, since constitution of India promises of free, and mandatory, elementary education for every child till the age of fourteen with specific care and consideration to be given to provide the academic development of scheduled castes. Uneducation constantly contaminates nearly two-thirds of the Dalit population when compared to one-half of the common population. The literacy gap among Dalits and the rest of the population is at the rate of 39 percent between 1961 and 1991. Various government schools in which Dalit students are enrolled are inadequate with basic facilities like classrooms, teachers, and teaching aids. A majority of Dalit students are registered in regional schools where students undergo serious disadvantages in the employment when compared to those who study in English speaking schools. In spite of state assistance in elementary level education, Dalits also undergo a drastic drop-out rate. (Human rights Watch)

As they could not spend money for coaching, studies themselves and share notes to one another. Asha joins in a nursing college as her parents convinced to do that course. Satya takes admission in a medical college and Ravi takes seat in B.Sc, zoology. They enter in to a college with hope of recognition as humans rather than the label of caste, but they confess as Dalits and humiliated. When they meet at the beach after three months of college, hesitates to speak on their experiences as others maybe hurtled and disappointed. Hariharan remarks on their mental status as:

Already it is stubborn for them to describe one another what those days are apart have been. Possibly Satya, Ravi and Asha are afraid that if they say anything aloud, say ‘This is what they speak to me,’ or ‘This is what they treat to me,



this is what happened to me,' they will all may lose heart. It is just the starting of the war; the first semester and the very first year. Who knows what more they would have to tolerate? (IHBT 33, 34) <sup>[9]</sup>

Asha admits in the college after the verification of all the original certificates but still she has to attend an interview as she is from weaker section, requires scholarship to continue her studies. The interviewer criticized her as she has born to serve people naturally being and outcaste, selected nursing course. Even the list in the admission chart on the notice board also mentioned to the students name attached with the category as common quota, specific caste and handicapped quota.

Asha allotted her room in analphabetic manner. She accompanies her room with Priya. When Priya takes to her aunt's house for lunch, when they come to know that she is Harijan, their attitude towards her changes. Priya's aunt does not allow her to enter in to kitchen, she says, "No, no, don't come into the kitchen.' Her smile wavered. 'You're a guest, after all.'" (IHBT 41) <sup>[10]</sup> Asha senses awkward as she is mis-treated as being untouchable, though in every first page of text book it is disclosed in a highlighted lines as; "Untouchability is a sin, Untouchability is a crime, Untouchability is inhuman." (IHBT 42) <sup>[11]</sup> Every civilized person knows it is a sin, crime, inhuman to discriminate on the name of caste but the lines are restricted in the pages of book and do not applies practically. Asha wrestles inwardly on the differentiation of people on the name of social class.

It has become common to Asha to get segregated. Mrs. Kumari always embarrasses Asha with her deportment. She makes students into various groups to perform the practicals but leaves Asha solitary. She declares to students in different batches and assigns the work like to maintain home and ward neatly, make them to practice in a proper way and she is given to clean all the washrooms. Mrs. Kumari assigns Asha to "Take care of the sanitary wing is much important. Wipe all the bedpans and urinals entirely, after that the walls and floors of the bathroom." (IHBT 141) <sup>[12]</sup> It indicates the miserable condition of students often abused and ill-treated by the high caste people though they are well educated. In the education system where should not find any place caste repeatedly suppressed through the medium of it.

Asha comes to know that Satya is no more. She could not digest or imagine his absence and becomes stony. But a layer of water passes from her eyes like a small stream. Hariharan remarks Asha's bewail as:

When she comes to know, that she doesn't require to open the book to learn why it has return to her? She has to sit. Her legs are hollow—no, they are filled with gravel, cement, and stone. She limps back to her room carrying herself such an old woman. She holds the thin book as if it is a heavy, as heavy as a limp body. (IHBT 264) <sup>[13]</sup>

Satya's excitement in a medical college is transient. He needs to select a room beside wash rooms row. In the class, he is alone, no person sits beside him. He could not take seat at the back of the class as he is unable to understand the lecturers and take notes. Even professors neglect his responses in the class being he is from reservation category, snatched the seat from the standard students. Satya sits alone, reads his diary, and takes his food single in the dining hall and as to stay lonely in his room aside. Hariharan talks about Satya as:

The only dream Satya wants to keep in view current is the immediate goal-surviving, anyhow, all the four and a half years in college and then one year of internship, so that can get the degree. In the meantime, all he has to do is hard work, work to survive the loneliness, and the hundred of pinpricks a day. (IHBT 91) <sup>[14]</sup>

Dr. Sharma detest Satya, he never calls him by his name, only uses pronoun 'he' or 'noun' Sharma always attempt to molest Satya with his words. He makes him to sit at the back while he listens the class and even when attempting the exam. Satya quietly bends his head and writes the test. But all his efforts are useless as he is just passed in the examination. Dr. Sharma reacts towards Satya as, "You may think you have brains,' you have just about passed this time. Next time, you would fail." (IHBT 136) <sup>[15]</sup> Satya begins to concentrate on anatomy books to write the examination in a better way. Dr. Sharma calls him to the cabin and blames him that he has copied all the other exams as he achieved good marks in them. He frequently demean Satya whenever has a possibility.

He reads a small book of Ravi which is about the family of Kannadeva belongs to Anandagrama poets. The book discusses on the ancestors, their agony, sufferings and experiences. The time travels from long years ago to the current period of but the socio-financial conditions are not remarkably varied. The people are illiterates at that time and present they can educate their wards at least for school level but could not attain high position. Satya can understand the raised voices, protests, struggles of the people and priests during the Kannadeva period for the identity, fraternity and social equity. The concept of egalitarianism is still in dilemma.



Dr. Sharma indicates him to wait after completion of the anatomy class and enquire about his attendance. He becomes furious on Satya as appearance to his class is not up to the mark and behaves with him harshly. The conversation between Satya and Sharma is:

Dr. Sharma gestures Satya to wait. he said that. 'Your attendance is not sufficient what it should be? Satya is puzzled as have never skipped a single anatomy class. Dr. Sharma shows his eyebrows with anger. 'That is what you say, but in my attendance, sheet has a different fable. But now, let me give you a casual warning.' The word 'casually' has never sounded so unfriendly before. 'Murthy in the office was said to me your scholarship may be held up for some time because of poor appearance. There are certain rules, you know. You could not get rid of the rules.' (IHBT 200)

[16]

Satya in his room takes his diary and writes his internal turmoil that he is against the caste and prevents to look back in the history about it. He writes that all the human beings are one and alike but the roots of caste prevailed deep in the system that it cannot be uprooted from the society easily. He desires to consider the persons of low caste as other ordinary humans. Hariharan point outs the craves of Satya in his words as, "We have already gone beyond caste; caste is history. But caste has been existing for many long years. It may not convert in overnight, can it?" (IHBT 190) [17] Satya needs to send scholarship money to his mother. Earlier he borrowed some money from Ravi and even Rahul. He goes to an account section to collect the endowment from Mr. Murthy but Murthy insults him that money is simply granted for him and provides the attendance sheets where he has slipped two classes of anatomy in a week. And due to the poor presence in the class, his scholarship is put on hold. Satya sells his bicycle and post the money to his mother, diary and blue note book has parceled to Ravi and Asha through courier post. He possesses hard work, honesty, has love of his mother and other family member, a true friendship of Asha and Ravi, motivation of Chikkiah's words, yet he endures trauma.

He writes his heart rendering emotions in a note book as:

"This is a cobbler's child.

Do not sit next to him.

This is a washer man's child.

Do not speak to him.

This child's mother lifts buckets of shit.

Run away from him.

My tears for these children have dried up.

Must my voice too grow silent?" (IHBT 257)

[18]

With the mistreat of professor and suppression of every act of him make Satya to get depressed, annoyed and leads to end his life. By means of Satya's character, Hariharan portrays how castaway people are subjugated, put to shame and make them difficult to survive in their lives. They are treated as untouchables where they are not permitted to attain sophisticated position in their lives. This causes an obstacle to the right to equality, ethnicity, right to self-defense of the nation.

Ravi studies in Government College; he has roommates called Ramesh and Harsha. The three members belong to backward classes two are Schedule Caste and one is schedule tribe. As animals are divided in two different groups like class, phylum and kingdom based on their diverse life styles and relationships with one another; human beings are also classified in to lower and upper classes, Jatis and Varnas. Ravi thinks that the lower castes so called 'Dalit' are related to one another. Their houses are same at one particular reason. They know each other and discuss about one's problems and happiness. The Harijans live unitedly and have same blood and similar groups. He recalls his grandfather's words about the manner of high categorized people as:

'They take us for all the undignified works. Carrying carcasses of dead cows, shoveling shit and carrying basketfuls of it. Burying dead bodies. 'He stopped then mused aloud, 'Death is as important as birth. I know that, but there is something I do not understand. Why should your brother's body or your father's body become something polluting?' (IHBT 106, 107)

[19]

Ravi is motivated with the words of Senthil, a physics lecturer come across Bhim Shakti meeting. He is mesmerized with the loud, clear pitch of Senthil, who speaks about Ambedkar, education, agitation and organization. He uses the word 'Bahujan' which adds inner strength to Ravi. Senthil holds on to a flag in his hand roars as 'Jai Bhim', which is followed by each and every individual over there. Senthil not just delivers speech, he also sings to inspire others. He sings as:

"Just yesterday I read their history  
and found I was missing.

My grandfather in his soiled dhoti,  
my mother working on all fours,

my brother beaten to death.  
 I couldn't find them.  
 All I found were words like walls.  
 Today I tell you:  
 Your history has too many missing people.  
 My words, my history, will break your walls.  
 My people will break your walls." (IHBT 133, 134) <sup>[20]</sup>

He begins to read the books related to the history of caste. He spares much time on the internet center or in the library engaged with the books other than zoology. He gathers a lot of information from the medieval history. He acknowledged from Professor Senthil and his grandfather that all the minor works such as leather works, sanitary, skin carcasses, cobblers are granted to the lower caste people.

Ravi is energetic with motivational thoughts. He does not want to waste his time, he studies a lot on social science than his biological science. He studies about Indian constitution, About Ambedkar and his speeches on caste, refers English dictionary and reads the messages uploaded in social media. He takes appointment of Senthil and goes to meet him. The security stops and enquires about him. Ravi answers proudly that he is 'Dalit'.

Mr. Krishna, a professor writes on Kannadeva. Some of the monotheists make it controversial that Kannadeva saint has depicted as poet and reformer. Krishna is in quest of truth makes a journey of research for the details of Kannadeva's life. He reads H.L.Nrasimhaiah and others books in the library, he meets many people travels to numerous places in search of facts on Kannadeva. As a part of his journey of research he observed that the actual name of Kannadeva is Kannappa. He belongs to 'pariah' family who is the first person goes to school, takes education and later turns to Kannadeva. He preaches peace and the way of living. Krishna discovers palm leaves where he observed the inscription about Kannadeva's life. Krishna interacts with number of people in his voyage. While he communicates with village persons, perceives through the songs they sing in a mild flow about the reformer as he was a symbol of peace. The intensity of search on truth makes Krishna scuffles to afford meticulous efforts to acquire the genuine elements of the hypothesis.

### III. CONCLUSION

Githa Hariharan portrayed Anandagrama as a place where people live despite caste they live with unity with different occupations for their livelihood. It resembles

unity in diversity of the nation. Besides Anandagrama, priests are to be considered as superiors after God. Their words are precious. Everyone including king follows the priests as they are regarded as messengers of God. But Brahmins and priests treats Anandagrama people as 'impure'. They assign all kind of inconsequential works to them and considered as polluted people. The degradation of the moral values towards same genesis is shambling block to the secular state like India. Chikkiah and his family, many tribes of Anandagrama and Satya are humiliated perpetually in the contest of survival they adopted mortality. Krishna puts his hard work to reveal that Kannappa is an actual Kannadeva who has secular thoughts, Endeavour for the equality, liberty and existence of the underprivileged people.

Thus the novel exhibits of how human characters struggles at critical situations and survived. The novel educates the wretched condition of sinless people as a consequence of the inhuman and non-secular measures of certain rabbles. It created a psychic sympathy on the various characters among the readers. It also spotlighted on the creation of new cultures accompanied by modern values with a realistic approach.

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# Unleashing Students' Leadership and Global Citizenship Skills through ELT for Increased Employability

Souad Belabcir

Moulay Ismail University, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Meknes, Morocco  
[S.belabcir@edu.umi.ac.ma](mailto:S.belabcir@edu.umi.ac.ma)

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**Abstract**— *To meet the demands of a globalized world, English learners need to develop employability skills that qualify them to achieve academic and professional success. The global market is in desperate need of leaders who can surpass all cross-cultural barriers and embrace global citizenship. Employees are required to develop leadership and global citizenship skills so as to enhance their creativity, productivity and sustainability in the workplace. Against this backdrop, English Language Teaching (ELT) seems to be an essential means for empowering students' leadership and global citizenship skills so as to facilitate their holistic development. To investigate this issue, the current study adopted a quantitative research method using a close-ended questionnaire sent to 58 Moroccan ELT teachers. The data gathered was analyzed through the SPSS (Statistical Package of Social Sciences) in the form of descriptive statistics in order to explore teachers' perceptions regarding the promotion of leadership and global citizenship in ELT and to suggest effective classroom practices to reach this purpose. The study at hand will contribute to expanding literature on employability skills development in ELT. Furthermore, the implications and recommendations proposed will guide ELT teachers in fostering leadership and global citizenship among English learners.*



**Keywords**— *Leadership, global citizenship, employability, ELT, classroom practice, teachers.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In a world of globalization, technological revolution and economic development, the teaching and learning of English has taken global dimensions that necessitate the development of prerequisite skills and competencies to enhance learners' employability and increase their ability to deal with global issues. English has the potential to develop students' communicative and socio-cultural skills through the use of linguistic and cognitive strategies that foster interpersonal relationships (Crystal, 2012). It also enables individuals to communicate across borders and engage with people from diverse backgrounds (Byram, 1997; Higgins, 2012) by being utilized as a lingua Franca in different social, cultural, economic and political contexts. Eventually, English can help learners to empower their leadership skills by managing individual or group relationships successfully, using effective communicative methods and encouraging them to adopt a global perspective to the current

problematics they encounter in today's world. These skills seem to be among the job requirements most sought by employers in different fields and industries around the world.

Yet, leadership skill development and global citizenship education did not receive the necessary attention in Moroccan education policies and practices, which has contributed to students' lack of employability skills (Chbani and Jaouane, 2017). The Moroccan educational reforms have known a wide gap between theory and practice in promoting leadership and global citizenship (Elbakkali, 2020; Idrissi et al., 2021). The reforms did not provide a clear strategic plan on how to concretize the suggested recommendations into educational practices to improve the quality of higher education and prepare graduates for workplace challenges. Furthermore, many barriers seem to hinder the integration of global leadership skills into the Moroccan educational system including

traditional pedagogical approaches, lack of teacher training, inappropriate access to informal learning, limited access to or use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and a lack of cooperation with families and NGOs (Elbakkali, 2020; Idrissi et al., 2021; Assissou et al., 2023). For this reason and others, the current study strives to explore Moroccan ELT teachers' perceptions towards the promotion of leadership and global citizenship in ELT classrooms for employability skills development and to suggest the most effective classroom practices to achieve this aim.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Employability skills development

The competitive nature of the global job market has raised a number of challenges to educational systems around the world to start thinking of bridging the gap between higher education and the job market needs. Universities are supposed to equip students with the required skills that facilitate their integration in the workplace and allow them to progress in their professional career.

Employability was defined by Dacre Pool & Sewell (2007) as "having a set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that make a person more likely to choose and secure occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful". In other words, employability is not only having the necessary skills and attributes to get employed but also being able to maintain a job and /or find another one if needed.

Businesses are finding that their future success depends heavily on having a workforce that has social, cognitive and emotional skills. The National Soft Skills Association found that 85% of job success comes from having well-developed soft skills, and a large-scale study into the future of jobs and jobs training identified soft skills as the most important skills required to succeed in the workplace of the future (Rainie & Anderson, 2017). Yorke (2006) stated that employability skills do not benefit only graduates but also the organizations where they are hired. Being equipped with the necessary employability skills increases businesses productivity and enables the employee to assume the roles and responsibilities assigned to him/her competently (Tejan and Sabil, 2019). That is why, universities, training institutions and employers should assist graduates into developing the desirable employability skills to meet the job market requirements.

Many studies investigated employers' perceptions of the needed employability skills in different fields and cultural contexts. However, there is no consensus in literature on which core skills are the most or the least important. In a

study conducted by Bennett (2002) on employers demands for transferable skills, he found out that the most important sought skills by employers are: communication, teamworking, IT and organization, whereas today's graduates lack foreign languages, initiative, self-confidence and leadership. Similarly, a large-scale survey conducted by Vivian et al. (2018) to examine 91,000 employers' experiences and practices in different sectors in the United Kingdom, he discovered that a number of job applicants lack personal, technical and practical skills which led to skill-shortage vacancies. Many of these skills are related to operational aspects of the role, as well as complex analytical skills. The main personal skills pertained to time management, leadership, sales and customer handling skills. Likewise, the Future of Jobs 2020 report identified leadership and management skills as being third among the top 10 most in-demand expertise areas (Assissou et al., 2023).

In Morocco, studies have shown that overall, employers are not satisfied with Moroccan graduates' employability skills (Chbani and Jaouane, 2017; Tejan and Sabil, 2019; Belkbir, 2023) and that there is an ultimate need for graduates to develop the prerequisite soft skills before searching for a job. Tejan and Sabil (2019) stated that graduates lack important employability skills such as "leadership, analytical mind, communication and creativity that are necessary to create a competitive spirit within a work team in any company or business". Accordingly, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (2018) asserted that the major obstacle to the economic growth in Morocco is the low quality of human capital which lacks the necessary skills to meet the needs of the Moroccan industry.

Respectively, the World Bank report on Morocco's Jobs landscape (Lopez-Acevedo et al., 2021) affirmed that the quality of the Moroccan educational system is put at stake because of the high rates of unemployment in postsecondary and tertiary education. This fact was explained by the mismatch between the skills taught and the increasing demands of the Moroccan job market. Eventually, educational policies should address graduates' employability skills development seriously by implementing effective strategies and measures based on partnerships with employers, training centers and universities so as to improve graduates academic, technical and personal skills.

### Leadership and global citizenship for employability

The world business today is in search for global leaders who can interact with people from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds, take initiatives and create opportunities of success in the wider global community. Kotter (1996) defined leadership as: "the process of influencing others to



understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives". In contemporary studies, leadership is considered as the ability to independently set goals and involve others in the process of achieving common goals or realizing shared values (Uaikhanova et al., 2022). Thus, leadership is a process-oriented ability that focuses on how individuals understand, interact and agree on a set of strategies and methods to realize common objectives and goals.

On the other hand, global citizenship is seen by the United Nations as "the umbrella term for social, political, environmental, and economic actions of globally minded individuals and communities on a worldwide scale." In other words, it is the belief that all individuals are citizens of diverse communities, the fact that push them to act for the common good of all societies not only theirs. Developing this global identity requires individuals to explore "the world interconnectedness, assimilate and accept diversity, understand global issues, advocate international cooperations and collaborations and cultivate values of tolerance, empathy, compassion and respect for others" (TGCI,2018).

The global economy today is very competitive due to the growing waves of migration particularly brain drain, workforce replaceability, reliance on technology and shortage of job opportunities. Hence, the lack of essential job requirements among job applicants affects international businesses and impedes sustainable development. For this reason and others, global leaders should be equipped with the prerequisite skills, strategies and competencies to communicate with others effectively. They are supposed to put up with diverse cultures, which enable them to improve other soft skills such as adaptability, flexibility, problem solving, emotional intelligence and others.

Also, they need to enhance their information technology competence so as to make use of various technological gadgets and tools to perform tasks creatively. Additionally, they have to possess global information literacy; to know what information is needed, where to find it, and how to evaluate and reflect on contradictory sources of information in a rapidly changing and complex global information environment (Bloch and Boske,2009).

Promoting global leadership development has lot of benefits both for individuals and for organizations. For individuals, it can lead to increased self-awareness, confidence and a better career development. For organizations, it may improve cross-cultural communication, increased innovation, and stronger partnerships with international stakeholders. It can also help organizations to respond to the needs of customers around the world which improves productivity and brings about prosperity in the global

market (AIESEC,2023). Ultimately, global leadership development is not only the responsibility of the individual through autonomous and life-long learning but it is also the charge of the global community to offer more international opportunities for learners both academically and professionally.

### **Promoting Leadership and global citizenship in ELT**

Factors such as globalization, economy development, technological revolution, pedagogical reforms and the shift from teacher-centered approaches to learner-centered ones, have contributed to the flourishing of teaching and learning English to help learners develop personally and professionally and to meet the increasing demands of the global job market.

English language teaching and learning has been identified as an essential means to develop students' global leadership skills (Bletcher et al.,2017; Chirciu,2020; Sohrabi et al., 2022; Lutge et al.,2022; Bendeck et al.,2023) as it enables students to use language to communicate with people from different socio-cultural backgrounds, in diverse contexts and for various purposes. This fact enables learners to develop intercultural competence and empathy (Byram,1997). Additionally, the status of the English language as a lingua franca used all around the world, gives students access to a large data of information from multiple sources which opens up global and updated issues (Bendeck et al.,2023). Besides, learning the English does not only help students to develop their language skills but also activates the use of cognitive strategies that increase high order thinking skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, analysis, evaluation and others. These skills are necessary for global leaders to assume their responsibilities and roles either individually or within teams and to face the challenges encountered in global complex situations.

In this regard, ELT promotes Global Citizenship Education (GCE), considered as one of the crucial instruments to achieve sustainable development goals. According to UNESCO, education aims to have students of all ages with knowledge, attitudes, skills, and values against global problems such as inequality, poverty and others. To say it differently, education is not merely a tool of transferring knowledge but a "social transformation apparatus" that leads to global positive change and contributes to the achievement of a sustainable future through enhancing students' skills, competencies and aptitudes (Akçay et al., 2024).

In literature, many countries like the USA, South Korea, China, Canada and other European countries have started to integrate global issues and orientations in curriculum content (Davies and Pike,2010). Uniformly, teacher education programs in United Kingdom and Germany

initiated the inclusion of global citizenship education and sustainable development methods to raise teachers' awareness to global dimensions and train them on becoming active citizens in the future (Shreiber and Siege, 2023). One of the ELT frameworks proposed to support global citizenship education is Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) (Sohrabi et al., 2022) that can be used to focus on knowledge area related to global citizenship.

Conversely, leadership development among ELT learners is the outcome of a combination of both theory and practice. Students are supposed to engage in a process of learning, doing, reflecting and actively experimenting with leadership styles (Chapman, 2024). Consequently, many researchers suggested the implementation of experiential learning as an approach to leadership development (Bletscher et al., 2017; Pang and Yeung, 2019; Uaikhanova, 2022). Experiential learning engages people in a cycle of life situations where learning occurs naturally. This cycle is composed of two pairs of opposite ways of assimilating information (Experiencing and Thinking) and transforming it into knowledge (Reflecting and Acting). When one engages deliberately with all four modes of the Experiential Learning Cycle, deep learning takes place. Navigating the experiential learning cycle depends on learner's individual learning style; each learner chooses to go through the cycle according to his/her preferred learning style. Thus, the learner needs to be aware of his/her learning lifestyle and the preferred approaches of those with whom he or she interacts, which helps to foster stronger relationships, an appreciation of diversity, productive outcomes, and effective teamwork (Kolb, 2019).

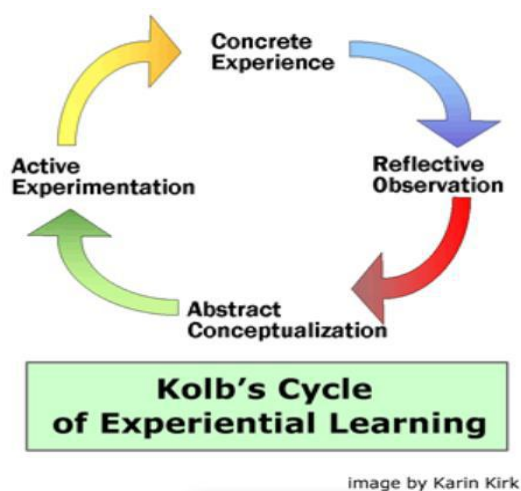


Fig.1.: The cycle of experiential learning (Kolb, 2015)

As a result, experiential learning appears to offer a well-established background for global leadership development among learners in general and ELT learners in particular. Nevertheless, the implementation of experiential learning in

higher education faces a number of challenges such as large classes, students' mixed abilities, lack of technological gadgets, lack of teachers' training, limited resources and time constraints.

### III. METHOD

With all the chances that leadership and global citizenship offer to ELT learners in terms of both academic and professional realization. It was necessary to identify teachers' perceptions about the importance of developing these two skills and the best classroom practices they can apply to reach this aim. Against this backdrop, the purpose of this study is to identify Moroccan ELT teachers' perceptions about developing leadership and global citizenship and to suggest the most effective classroom practices that can help to develop future global leaders.

#### Research method and design

The current study adopted a quantitative research method that relied on the collection and analysis of numerical data. The research design used is a survey study design that aims to describe teachers' perceptions and their best classroom practices for global leadership development. Survey studies are widely used in research thanks to their practicality for being economical, time and energy saving and their ability to describe the opinions, attitudes, experiences and other characteristics of a group of individuals or an entire population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

#### Sampling

The population targeted in this survey study is Moroccan ELT teachers for a number of reasons. Perceptions of Moroccan ELT teachers concerning leadership and global citizenship development have not been investigated before. Studies in Morocco focused on analyzing and evaluating education policies, teacher leadership and curriculum development (Laadem, 2019; Ait-bouazid, 2020; Elbekkali, 2020; Idrissi et al., 2021; Assissou et al., 2023). Hence, teachers' perceptions on developing leadership and global citizenship for employability in ELT classrooms, did not receive the necessary attention.

Furthermore, teachers' attitudes and understanding of global leadership may affect their classroom practices; without holding positive attitudes towards the development of global leadership in ELT, teachers may underestimate its relevance for students' employability and do not engage in improving students' leadership and global citizenship skills. Additionally, teachers' awareness of the subskills required within these two skills will guide them to transform their theoretical understanding into practical measures.

The sampling strategy used is convenience sampling. It is one of the non-probability sampling methods for both

quantitative and qualitative data collection and by which samples are selected based on the researcher's subjective judgment rather than on random selection. This strategy is largely used for selecting a sample from a close population group and for its speed, cost-effectiveness and availability of the sample (Creswell & Clark, 2018).

#### Data collection and analysis

Any well-grounded research should follow rigorous data collection and analysis procedures to answer the research questions and achieve the research purpose. The current study has collected data through a close-ended survey questionnaire sent to Moroccan ELT university teachers. The questionnaire contained yes or no, multiple choice and likert scale questions. The questionnaire items were adopted and adapted from the Cambridge Employability Skills Framework for ELT (2022) and from miscellaneous literature on the research topic. As a result, n=58 ELT teachers responded to the questionnaire over a two weeks period.

The data gathered was entered and codified in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for the processing and analysis of data. The type of statistical analysis selected is a descriptive analysis in the form of percentages and means illustrated in tables and graphs. After the analysis of data, an interpretation of statistics helped to draw conclusions regarding ELT teachers' perceptions of developing leadership and global citizenship for employability and to suggest effective classroom practices that can help to meet that goal.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study revealed that Moroccan ELT teachers have positive attitudes towards developing leadership and global citizenship in ELT classrooms and are aware of the importance of promoting these skills for employability skills development. Moreover, they listed a set of classroom strategies and practices that can enhance students' global leadership.

In terms of demographic data, the total sample consisted of N=58 Moroccan ELT teachers. (62.1%) of the respondents are females while (37.9%) are males as clearly shown in the graph below (Figure 2.)

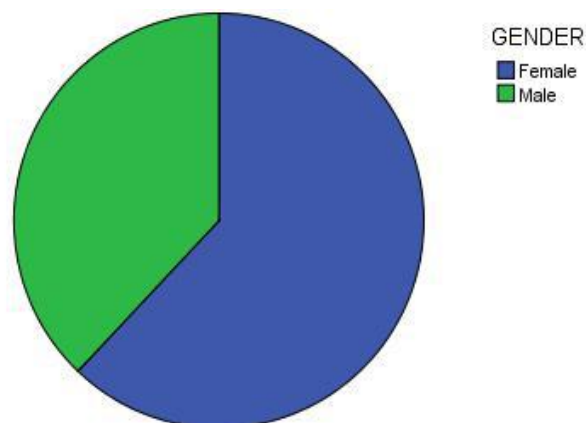


Fig.2.: Distribution of gender in the study

Regarding the importance of soft skills for employability, all the participants (100%) believe that the teaching of soft skills is important for employability. This fact is aligned with findings in other international and Moroccan studies (Tang, 2018; Subramaniam, 2013; Kayli and Okiridu, 2020; Chbani et Jaouane, 2021; Aziz and Zaidoune, 2022; Eker Uka and Bedir, 2023; Elouaali et al., 2024;). Moroccan teachers think the integration of soft skills in Moroccan education is of paramount importance because many students lack these kind of core skills for employment (Chbani et Jaouane, 2021). Similarly, Elouaali et al. (2024) concluded that soft skills play a vital role in learners' success in the job market, the integration of these skills in the Moroccan educational system is highly recommended. Likewise, Tang (2018) asserted that female and male university teachers believe that the implementation of soft skills in teaching and learning is becoming mandatory as curriculum reforms stress on learning activities that help in building these skills. Nevertheless, several Moroccan studies (Laadem, 2019; Elbakkali, 2020; Ait Bouzid, 2020; Chbani et Jaouane, 2021; Idrissi et al., 2021) pointed out to the difficulties teachers' face in developing students' soft skills.

Concerning the relationship between ELT and global leadership, the majority of the respondents (89.7%) believe English language teaching promotes leadership and global citizenship among students while a minority of (10.7%) does not share the same view as presented in the graph below (Figure 3.)

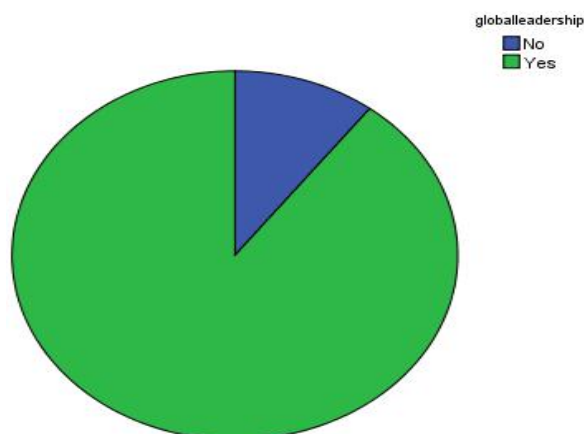


Fig.3.: Teachers' perceptions about promoting leadership and global citizenship in ELT.

The finding is similar to literature on ELT and global citizenship. ELT has been found an essential means to developing students' leadership and global citizenship due to its status as a lingua franca used in different contexts. It has also proved to improve students' communicative skills and intercultural competence (Byram, 1997) via interacting with people from different socio-cultural backgrounds. As a matter of fact, ELT can enhance other core and personal skills such as critical thinking, flexibility, adaptability and problem-solving.

In addition to that, English language learning permits students to have access to multiple information sources which widens their perspectives, updates their background information and increases their understanding of global issues. In the same vein, the Cambridge Employability Skills Framework for ELT (2022) explained that learning an additional language already encompasses many of the core skills such as communication, collaboration and critical thinking and that there is lots of scope to develop these skills in an integrated way through the teaching of English. Eventually, thanks to English language learning, students can sharpen their global leadership skills and grow into responsible actors in worldwide communities.

The participants were asked a yes or no question about receiving trainings on teaching leadership and global citizenship. Most of the respondents (70.7%) stated that they have not benefited from trainings on teaching leadership and global citizenship while (29.3%) of the participants did, as shown in figure 4.

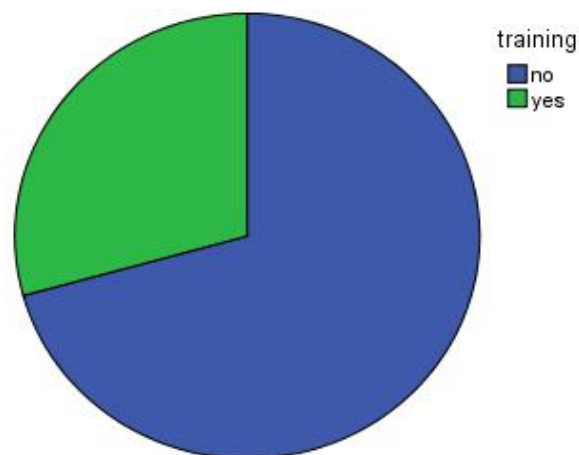


Fig.4: Teachers' trainings on teaching leadership and global citizenship

This result is similar to other findings. In a study conducted in Saudi Arabia, Alzuoud et Gaudel (2020), concluded that the teaching of language and core skills is vital to the success of ELT. However, they recommended the integration of teacher-training course to facilitate teachers' mission. Subramaniam (2020) also asserted that the effective integration of soft skills in teaching is conditioned by providing teachers with pre-service trainings that involve "detailed content, skill specification, teaching and learning activities and evaluation". And this, should be integrated in the curriculum of teachers' training centers or institutes.

In Morocco, English teachers do not benefit from comprehensive trainings, the main focus is the teaching and learning of language skills. That is why, teachers expressed their urgent need for trainings to integrate core skills such as intercultural competence, critical thinking, problem-solving, leadership and others. Fortunately, some countries in Europe and Asia in addition to the United States started to incorporate global citizenship issues in teachers' trainings (Davies and Pike, 2010). Assisou et al. (2023) reported that when English teachers were asked about their teaching effectiveness, most of them were hesitant and listed a number of barriers that impede their teaching, among which we find the lack of inadequate training opportunities. In fact, trainings can develop their teachers' leadership and increase their readiness to develop students' employability skills. Consequently, the effective integration of soft skills in ELT reflects teachers' attitudes, skills and knowledge.

The integration of Leadership and global citizenship in ELT is better optimized by being aware of the most important global leadership skills that students' need for employability. The participants were asked to select the most important leadership and global citizenship skills relevant for employability skills development in ELT,



through a five-point likert scale question. The scale was coded as explained in table 1. and to analyze this interval scale, the mean is very significant (Pimentel, 2010):

From 1 to 1.8 = not important

From 1.81 to 2.60 = moderately important

From 2.61 to 3.40 = neutral

From 3.41 to 4.20 = important

From 4.21 to 5 = very important

The distribution of means in the table revealed that the participants believe all the proposed global leadership skills are very important to promote in ELT but the highest mean  $M=4.40$  was noticed in developing intercultural awareness and demonstrating understanding of team values and culture. This fact confirms the idea that ELT can promote different students' leadership and global citizenship skills especially intercultural competence. Teachers think that ELT can enhance leadership skills by encouraging students to fulfill their own responsibilities and roles within groups, taking initiatives, managing teams and adopting a strategic approach in work. Additionally, it can enhance their global citizenship by developing their intercultural awareness, helping them to address global issues and taking initiatives globally which guide them to understand the team values and culture.

All the leadership and global citizenship skills proposed were adapted and adopted from the Cambridge employability skills framework for ELT (2022). The framework provides a map of the most important employability skills that employers need, and allows English teachers to gain a deeper understanding of the subskills involved in each one, to integrate them into their teaching. The framework proposes eight key areas of competency: collaboration and teamwork, communication, innovation and problem solving, critical thinking and decision making, professional development and management, emotional intelligence, digital literacy and leadership and global citizenship. This latter, is divided into the component skills listed in table 1.

In literature, though studies investigated employers demands in many countries to try to identify the most important skills to develop among graduates (Bennett, 2002; Bouzidi, 2009; Mansour et Dean, 2016; Vivian et al., 2018; Tejan and Sabil, 2019; Belkbir, 2023). Until now, there is no agreement on the most or least important employability skills to develop. Nevertheless, the Cambridge framework offers a new and unique perspective of employability skills, as it relates them to the teaching and learning of English.

*Table 1.: Teachers' perceptions regarding the most important leadership and global citizenship skills to promote in ELT.*

Global leadership skills	N	Min	Max	Mean
• Fulfill own responsibilities within a team.	58	2	5	4,22
• Understand the role and responsibilities of the team.	58	2	5	4,38
• Take the initiative to address issues.	58	2	5	4,29
• Manage groups of people effectively.	58	2	5	4,26
• Take a strategic approach to one's area of work.	58	2	5	4,22
• Generate support through effective communicative strategies.	58	2	5	4,22
• Encourage new initiatives on global issues.	58	2	5	4,05
• Develop intercultural awareness.	58	2	5	4,40
• Demonstrate awareness of ethical issues relating to organizations.	58	2	5	4,33
• Demonstrate understanding of the team values and culture.	58	3	5	4,40
<b>Valid N</b>	58			

Not important (1), Moderately Important (2), Neutral (3), Important (4), Very Important (5).

The development of global leadership in ELT classrooms requires the adoption of innovative teaching and learning methods that match students' needs, interests and learning styles. The table above clearly presents the most effective classroom practices selected by teachers. According to the means, all of the classroom practices proposed are

perceived as important to develop students' global leadership but the highest means were noticed in giving students actual responsibilities ( $M=4,19$ ), encouraging students to volunteer and help others ( $M=4,10$ ), assigning presentations individually or in groups, using games and



encouraging students to explore activities and clubs (M=4,09).

Although educational policies highlighted the importance of preparing students to become global future leaders, no serious measures or implementation procedures were taken to reach this goal (Al Idrissi et al, 2021; Al Abri et al,2022).

To enable students to understand themselves and others and manage their interpersonal relationships and interact with others from a global perspective, “educators must address leadership development through an innovative, multi-dimensional approach of examination, education, experience, and exposure” Cohen (2010) cited by Bletscher et al. (2017).

Table 2: Teachers' perceptions about the most effective classroom practices to develop leadership and global citizenship.

Classroom practices	N	Min	Max	Mean
• Have students describe their roles and responsibilities in a group work.	58	1	5	3,78
• Give opportunities for each learner to take the role of the leader.	58	2	5	3,98
• Encourage students to search how organizations address global issues.	58	1	5	3,60
• Encourage students to discuss how they exercise their rights and duties in the community.	58	1	5	3,98
• Assign role plays.	58	2	5	3,98
• Discuss controversial issues of opposing views.	58	2	5	4,02
• Encourage students to set goals either individually or in groups.	58	2	5	3,91
• Find examples of successful leaders you can use to teach your students about leadership skills.	58	2	5	3,74
• Encourage students to volunteer and help others.	58	2	5	4,10
• Assign presentation projects either individually or in groups.	58	2	5	4,09
• Give your students actual responsibilities.	58	2	5	4,19
• Encourage your students to explore activities and clubs.	58	2	5	4,09
• Conduct debates.	58	2	5	4,02
• Use games to teach students how to play fair and stay positive in a competition.	58	2	5	4,09
Valid N	58			

Not important (1), Moderately Important (2), Neutral (3), Important (4), Very Important (5).

Many researchers and scientists proposed the experiential-learning approach to develop students' global leadership (Braskamp,2008; Bletscher et al.,2017; Pang and Yeung,2019; Uaikhanova ,2022).Students seem to like experiential learning in the form of internships, education abroad, community research and service learning, which offers them better opportunities for reflection, analysis , synthesis and essential for their holistic development (Braskamp ,2008) .Eventually , giving students actual responsibilities , encouraging them to volunteer and help others , and giving each learner the chance to take the role of the leader , constitute a positive context for active learning based on being involved in interactive learning experiences that enhance students' global leadership skills.

In the same regard, it is essential to immerse students in emotionally rich and cognitively complex learning

experiences that present multiple occasions to deal with and discuss global and local differences to improve students' communicative skills and information processing strategies (Bloch and Booske ,2009). Raising discussions around globally oriented issues appears to train learners on listening actively to others, communicating their ideas effectively and providing tangible arguments. Also, it teaches them to respect opposing point of views and enlarges their breadth of thinking. For this reason and others, conducting debates and discussions on controversial issues in ELT classrooms and discussing how student exercise their rights and duties in the community, enhances students' personal skills such as critical thinking and problem solving and raises their awareness towards active citizenship (OXFAM, 2015). However, this is not possible if students lack information literacy skills.

In order to have access to a wide range of information worldwide, students ought to recognize when information is needed, have the ability to locate it, evaluate it, create it and use it effectively (American Library Association, 2000). Information literacy skills enable students to keep up with the latest information on world issues, know about the current and future challenges that can face humanity in all nations. Moreover, having updated background knowledge facilitates individuals' social inclusion and helps them to achieve personal and professional goals (UN, 2016). Educators can take full advantage of information literacy if it is linked to the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools and gadgets in ELT classrooms. Students must be offered opportunities to do research on global matters, give presentations either individually or in groups based on previous research and information analysis and encourage them to explore how organizations address global issues. This would guide them to use different internet and multimedia sources adequately and appropriately.

Consequently, flipped classroom strategy can be adopted to allow students to interact with different technological tools and come up with new knowledge that can be shared later in classroom discussions either in individual or in group work activities. Since information literacy skills are among the most sought employability skills by employers around the globe and the association between English language learning and technology seems to be highly advantageous, learners can benefit from the potential of ELT and become successful global leaders.

Teachers' role in developing students' leadership and global citizenship is greatly determined by their classroom management strategies. In order to develop global leadership, the role of the teacher is often that of facilitator and supporter, as students train themselves to negotiate, make decisions, solve problems and work either individually or with others (OXFAM, 2015). Furthermore, teachers are supposed to create a positive environment in ELT classrooms, to raise students' motivation and engagement. Involving students in fun, interesting and exciting learning experiences is vital not only to achieve the desired learning outcomes but to disseminate cultural values such as tolerance, coexistence, cooperation, initiative and others. Likewise, studying in a pleasant, democratic and stress-free environment supports students in their emotional journey towards academic achievement.

To do this, teachers can use games and fun activities. Also, allow students to express their opinions and share their feelings. In this regard, Al Abri (2022) argues that listening to students, sharing thoughts and ideas with them about global issues, contribute to global citizenship education

(GCED). In addition to that, developing leadership and global citizenship entails transcending classroom settings into community-based learning experiences. Students should be encouraged to join clubs, centers, associations and community networks both at the local and international levels so as to apply their leadership skills and competencies in authentic and real-life contexts. Such occasions expose students to relational and cross-cultural interactions that foster their global engagement and enhance their global leadership skills like critical thinking, self-awareness, empathy and effective communicative skills (Bletscher, 2017). Ultimately, developing global leadership in ELT classrooms necessitates a multi-dimensional, globally-oriented and technology-based approach to empower students' leadership and global citizenship skills.

Since that leadership and global citizenship are among the most sought employability skills today, being equipped with this kind of skills gives candidates an edge and show employers the great potential they can bring to their businesses. Leadership and global citizenship skills can increase applicants' competitiveness and their chances of finding satisfying jobs. Additionally, their ability to get job opportunities in different international cross-cultural contexts arises. This fact also benefits employers as they find qualified employees ready to face the workplace challenges and to contribute to the success of the businesses they belong to. Eventually, fostering global leadership skills among language learners does not only assist their personal and professional growth but it is also a real booster for economy, that enhances its productivity and sustainability locally and globally.

## V. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THEORY AND PRACTICE

### Implications for future research:

In literature, there is a scarcity of research on leadership and global citizenship in ELT contexts. For this reason and others, researchers, educators and syllabus designers should conduct more research on this issue to unveil many of the aspects that are still ambiguous such as the creation and implementation of global leadership programs, curriculum development, classroom practices, teachers' and students' perceptions and other topics that can help to understand global leadership and suggest effective strategies and procedures to develop it among language learners.

Future researches may adopt more in-depth research approaches using qualitative research methods and instruments based on classroom observation in order to have a concrete idea of teachers' strategies to develop global leadership in ELT classrooms. Moreover,

undertaking cross-sectional or longitudinal experimental studies can provide valuable insights on the effects of global leadership programs application on students' skills development levels over defined periods of time. In Morocco, researches on leadership and global citizenship were limited to textbook and educational policies' analyses (Laadem, 2019; El Bakkali, 2020; Ait-Bouزيد, 2020; Idrissi et al., 2021). As a result, more empirical studies are needed to stress upon the actual development of global leadership skills among Moroccan students in relation to the job market demands.

#### **Implications and recommendations for future practice:**

Investigating Moroccan ELT teachers' perceptions regarding the development of leadership and global citizenship in ELT for employability skills development has helped to come up with a set of recommendations that foster Moroccan students' global leadership skills:

- Educational policies have to be translated into clear and definite measures to develop leadership and global citizenship.
- ELT teachers' pre-service and in-service trainings should involve global leadership education to raise teachers' awareness to the importance of developing these skills among language learners and to train them on the most appropriate strategies to reach this objective.
- Curriculum developers ought to integrate leadership and global citizenship skills while designing syllabi for English language learners. Also, more globally oriented materials and resources should be available for ELT teachers.
- Institutions should make ICT tools available for both teachers and students in order to have immediate and permanent access to information.
- Teachers and students should benefit from internet connection in their classrooms and on campus.
- Institutions need to build international partnerships to enable students to use the English language in authentic settings and to enhance their global citizenship awareness and leadership skills.
- Teachers need to adopt innovative teaching and learning methods such as blended learning, community-based learning and project-based learning to transcend classroom settings and encourage life-long learning.
- Experiential learning seems to provide a positive background for global leadership skills development by engaging students in actual

responsibilities and tasks that prepare them to become future leaders.

- Educational institutions should be more open to the global economy by equipping learners with the necessary job requirements that meet the global market needs.
- Teachers ought to create a safe, positive and democratic learning environment to motivate students and engage them to achieve a better academic and professional performance.
- Integrating soft skills in ELT is pivotal for students' personal and professional growth.

## **VI. LIMITATIONS**

The study contributes to expanding literature on global leadership particularly in the Moroccan context, where there is a shortage of studies examining this issue. However, the study is limited by the number of respondents, that is why future researches with larger samples can help to reach more reliable and valid results. Furthermore, the lack of empirical studies on the research topic hindered the in-depth exploration of ELT classroom practices that promote leadership and global citizenship promotion. Still, the current study has shed light on the necessity of bridging the gap between ELT classrooms and the global economy through the empowerment of employability skills specifically leadership and global citizenship.

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

The investigation of the perceptions of Moroccan ELT teachers regarding the promotion of global leadership in ELT for employability revealed that teachers hold positive attitudes towards developing leadership and global citizenship in ELT settings. Teachers believe that ELT promotes leadership and global citizenship skills in particular developing intercultural awareness and understanding others values and culture. Additionally, teachers highlighted the significance of soft skills development for increased employability. Yet, the development of these skills entails the implementation of a multi-dimensional approach to English language teaching that proposes rich, interesting and pleasant learning experiences, which do not only respond to students' various needs and preferences to succeed academically but also contribute to their prosperity as future active citizens.

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# Aesthetic Experience and Universal Consciousness: Parallels between Nietzschean *Tragedy* and Abhinavagupta's *Nāṭya*

Virosh Singh Baghel

Research Scholar, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, BITS Pilani, Pilani, Rajasthan (India)

Email: [p20190066@pilani.bits-pilani.ac.in](mailto:p20190066@pilani.bits-pilani.ac.in) (BITS mail); [viroshsinghbaghel@gmail.com](mailto:viroshsinghbaghel@gmail.com) (personal)

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**Abstract**—Nietzsche argues that tragedy, a synthesis of the Apollonian and Dionysian artistic principles, uncovers the universal essence of human existence—suffering—offering metaphysical solace to its spectators that helps them bear this reality and affirm life amidst the “terrors and horrors of existence.” Apollo and Dionysus represent individuality and universality in tragedy. The Apollonian aspects—plot, stage, and characters—highlight individual distinctions, whereas the Dionysian element, music—the chorus—embodies the universalised consciousness of human fragility. This Dionysian effect, infused through music, fosters a state of self-forgetfulness in the spectators, dissolving their individuality. Abhinavagupta believes that drama (*nāṭya*), which is the object of aesthetic experience, presents the generalised emotions through *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa* in which the empathetic spectator (*sahṛdaya*) identifies oneself with that of the character, and its situations. This transforms the aesthetic spectacle into a collective consciousness (*ekaghanatā*) in which all the spectators are de-contextualised from their spatio-temporal boundaries and experience the aesthetic taste, i.e., *rasa*. Abhinavagupta also argues that such aesthetic experience (*rasāsvāda*) is akin to spiritual experience (*brahmāsvāda*), aligning his aesthetic theory with the philosophy of Kashmir Śaivism. The paper aims to identify and analyse the universal elements inherent in the aesthetic experience of tragedy and *nāṭya*, aiming to extrapolate the concept of universalised consciousness through these art forms.



**Keywords**—Abhinavagupta, Aesthetic Experience, *Nāṭya*, Nietzsche, Tragedy, Universalised consciousness

## I. INTRODUCTION

Friedrich Nietzsche and Abhinavagupta share a common understanding of the aesthetic experience—particularly experiencing tragedy and *nāṭya*—as a potent means through which spectators attain a state of self-forgetfulness, which is unbounded by spatial and temporal aspects and enables them to have a universalised experience of consciousness. In *The Birth of Tragedy* (hereafter *BT*), Nietzsche articulates the experience of tragedy as a metaphysical solace that enables individuals to confront and affirm life's inherent suffering through art. According to him, the duality of Apollonian and Dionysian

principles underpins the essence of Greek tragedy, creating a medium through which spectators can experience a profound sense of unity with the primordial forces of nature. This experience, Nietzsche argues, allows for the temporary transcendence of individual boundaries and culminates into a shared, universalised consciousness that justifies existence as an aesthetic phenomenon. Parallel to Nietzsche's view, Abhinavagupta, drawing from the rich lineage of Śaiva-Tantra tradition, presents a nuanced theory of aesthetic experience in which experiencing aesthetic taste, known as *rasa*, serves as a conduit for achieving a state of universalised consciousness.

Abhinavagupta posits that through empathetic engagement with drama (*nāṭya*), individuals can transcend their egoic boundaries, merging their consciousness with the collective whole. This experience, akin to spiritual realisation, engenders a profound sense of bliss (*ānanda*) and oneness (*ekaghanatā*), highlighting the intrinsic capacity of aesthetic experience to elevate human consciousness beyond the confines of mundane existence. The juxtaposition of Nietzsche's and Abhinavagupta's perspectives offers a fertile ground for investigating the mutual relationship between art, especially tragedy and *nāṭya*, and the pursuit of a universalised consciousness. This paper aims to comprehensively analyse the perspectives of both thinkers regarding the aesthetic experience that generates a profound sense of unity among the individuals (spectators) and elevates their ordinary consciousness to a universalised state. This analysis leads to the argument that certain universal components exist within the aesthetic experience, enabling the spectators to comprehend universality despite being impacted by individuality.

## II. NIETZSCHE ON TRAGEDY AND THE UNIVERSALISED EXPERIENCE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

In *BT*, Nietzsche contends that "art is the highest task and the true metaphysical activity of this life" (*BT*, Preface) because it can transform our metaphysical framework that shapes our beliefs and influences our experience and understanding of the apparent world.<sup>1</sup> He argues that life is full of suffering and can only be affirmed through art because "only as an *aesthetic phenomenon* is existence and the world eternally justified" (*BT*, 5). He means to say that the world and human beings are merely an "artistic projection" (*BT*, 5) of the real creator-artist, the *primordial unity*, i.e., nature, which resembles a child playing in the sand, creating random shapes only to destroy them later (*BT*, 24). This notion is inspired by Schopenhauer's philosophy,<sup>2</sup> which posits that the world, including all entities and causal relations, is a *representation* of a metaphysical 'Will' that transcends individuation and differentiation. Nietzsche characterises the primordial unity, the "non-individuated reality," as akin to a child playing on the beach, whimsically creating and destroying forms out of the sand, finding joy in creation and destruction (Geuss, 1999, XXIV). Such contradiction of creation and destruction, producing both pleasure and pain, is represented by the Greek gods Apollo (creation) and

Dionysus (destruction), highlighting the cyclical nature of life and death.

Nietzsche argues that the inherent contradiction of human experience, marked by the coexistence of pleasure and pain, is effectively conveyed through art, especially Greek tragedy, which distracts individuals from the "burden and heaviness" of existence (*BT*, 18), producing a genuine affirmation of life. Tragedy combines two contrasting artistic principles: the *Apollonian* and the *Dionysian*. Apollo, the god of measured restraint and the "divine image (*Götterbild*) of the *principium individuationis*" (*BT*, 1) celebrating individual distinctiveness, is realised in tragedy through plot, narrative, and characters. Conversely, Dionysus, associated with unrestrained revelry and disorder, challenges the principle of individuation, often depicted in tragedy by the chorus. Nietzsche states, "*Tragedy arose from the tragic chorus* and was originally chorus and nothing but chorus" (*BT*, 7), highlighting that tragedy evolved from ancient Dionysian religious rituals. Initially, tragedy was a communal ceremony where large groups of men sang *Dithyrambs* to honour Dionysus, often dressing as *Satyrs*—mythical half-human, half-goat followers of Dionysus symbolising wild, instinctual nature. These satyrs, embodying Dionysus's spirit, represented the untamed aspects of nature and humanity, signifying chaos, *ecstasy*, and the transcendence of societal and personal boundaries. Nietzsche, thus, posits that the essence and primal form of tragedy is captured in the *satyric* chorus, which involves the "collective music-making," marked by intoxication (*Rausch*), fostering communal unity and enabling individuals to engage with the fundamental reality. It permits a temporary transcendence of the individual ego and establishes a metaphysical connection with the universal essence of life.

Moreover, when discussing the Dionysian music—the chorus, Nietzsche appears to have drawn inspiration from Schopenhauer's idea of music, considering it as a universal language while contending it as a form of "world-symbolism" (*BT*, 6) that communicates to all individuals irrespective of their analytical systems. It (music) is considered the "language of Dionysus," which has a universal quality that "shake[s] us to our very foundations," directly impacting the body and indeed controlling the body because it involves "a new world of symbols" (*BT*, 2). Thus, according to Nietzsche, when listening to the Dionysian *dithyrambs* and then, at a later refined stage of tragedy, the *tragic* chorus, "man is stimulated to the highest intensification of his symbolic powers," i.e., the symbolism that involves the whole of the body to dance and juggle in ecstasy, that leads to "the destruction of the veil of maya," and the formation of a

<sup>1</sup> A. E. Denham, p.170 (2014)

<sup>2</sup> Nietzsche & Geuss, *BT* § 1, p.17 (Footnote 26) (1999) (Originally published in 1872)

“oneness as the genius of humankind, indeed of nature itself” (BT, 2). Here, Nietzsche seems to suggest that through the intoxication elicited by music, an individual experiences the “height of self-abandonment” (BT, 2), losing all *Apollonian* capacities linked to dream imagery. This immersion in Dionysiac *ecstasy* leads to self-forgetfulness, a feeling of oneness with nature. Thus, Nietzsche argues that in a tragedy, when the spectator identifies with the tragic hero, he is dominantly affected by the Dionysian chorus, which communicates the tragic truth of the hero's downfall. This truth leaves the spectator shocked and aware of his ephemeral existence, shielded by the Apollonian elements of orderly scenes, narratives, and objects. As a result, the spectator gets de-contextualised from spatial-temporal settings and “feels himself to be not simply united, reconciled or merged with his neighbour, but quite literally one with [...] the mysterious primordial unity” (BT, 1).

Tragedy, thus, becomes “a supreme *art*” (BT, 22) because it reveals to us the innate sufferings of life while also highlighting the *metaphysical solace* which communicates with the spectators that “life is indestructibly mighty and pleasurable” (BT, 7), enabling them to justify life amidst the harshness of existence. Despite providing a grimmer look of reality, tragedy provides a ‘tragic pleasure’ that liberates us from the “greedy urge for [worldly] existence and reminds us with warning hand that there is [...] a higher delight, for which the fighting hero is preparing himself [...] not by his victories but by his destruction” (BT, 21). This represents an encounter with transcendence, a momentary experience wherein one transforms into a higher being capable of enduring and even elevating the inherent terror of life. Thus, in Nietzsche's view, the Dionysian, in the form of a chorus which infuses *Rausch*, takes the individual to the very essence of reality, metaphysically transmuting him into the collective realm of unity with nature. Dennis Sweet (1999) argues that the purpose of tragedy, for Nietzsche, is “to bring the spectator to a peculiar psychological state whereby the ordinary sense of individuality is lost, and an aesthetic experience of the wholeness and unity of nature is achieved” (Sweet, 1999, p.354). Likewise, Lucy Huskinson (2004) argues that tragedy “takes the individual to the very essence of reality, and it metaphysically transmutes him into the collective realm of unity with nature” (Huskinson, 2004, p.17). Thus, the tragic experience, in Nietzsche's view, transforms our ordinary consciousness into an aesthetic one, allowing us to grasp the metaphysical comfort in life's indestructibility and the *illusoriness* of individuality. This process induces a universal resonance, fostering a shared experience of *self-forgetfulness* and unity with nature, thereby

facilitating an experience of universalised consciousness that helps us justify life and perceive the world as an *aesthetic phenomenon*.

### III. ABHINAVAGUPTA AND THE UNIVERSALISED EXPERIENCE OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN NĀṬYA

Abhinavagupta developed his aesthetics based on the philosophy of the *Śaiva-Tantra* tradition,<sup>3</sup> contending that self-realisation is not only related to the spiritual-yogic practices but can be attained through *Tantric yoga*, which aims at both *bhukti* (enjoyment) and *mukti* (liberation), both of which can be pursued side by side,<sup>4</sup> and highlights the importance of experiencing beauty through aesthetic experience, or *rasāsvāda*. Following the natural corollary of the *Śaivite* thought, Abhinavagupta situates the aesthetic experience within the second level of *tattvas*, named *Śakti*, defined by self-awareness. He argues that the essence of aesthetically pleasing experience stems from an uninterrupted mental state (*sthāyīn*), perceived through innate consciousness and personal experience, not external stimuli. Thus, the aesthetic or *rasa* relishing is self-evident and can only be fully appreciated through direct engagement and subjective perception.<sup>5</sup>

In his *Abhinavabhāratī*, Abhinavagupta claims that “the aesthetic enjoyment of *rasa* consists of a completely extraordinary sense of wonder or mystic delight (*camatkāra*) and is totally different (*vilakṣaṇa eva*) from memory or recollection (*smṛti*), *inference*, and worldly feelings of happiness, etc.” (Kulkarni, 1998, p.58).<sup>6</sup> In claiming so, he points towards the universal essence of *rasa* because he says it “consists exclusively in aesthetic relish,” which itself consists in knowledge which is completely “different from all other empirical or mundane kinds of knowledge” (Kulkarni, 1998, p.59).<sup>7</sup> Likewise, in his *Locana*, Abhinavagupta posits that *rasa* is non-worldly (*alaukika*) because it arises from *vyāñjanā* or *dhvani*, the poetic and literary power of suggestion, which is also considered the “most significant part of the poetry.”<sup>8</sup> He exemplifies this by describing a man's joy

<sup>3</sup> See K. C. Pandey, p.86 (1959); Masson and Patwardhan, XI (1985); K. P. Mishra, Preface (2006)

<sup>4</sup> B.N. Pandit, p.5 (1990)

<sup>5</sup> *Sā ca rasanā na pramāṇavyāpāro na kārakavyāpāraḥ svayam tu nāpramāṇikaḥ* – (Abhinavagupta, 2010, Ch.6 § p.299)

<sup>6</sup> *Tathā hi laukikacittavṛtṭyaṇumāne kā rasatā tenālaukikacamatkārātmā rasāsvādaḥ smṛtyaṇumāna-laukikasaṃvedanavilakṣaṇa eva* – (Abhinavagupta, 2010, Ch.6 § p.298)

<sup>7</sup> *sā ca rasanā na pramāṇavyāpāro na kārakavyāpāraḥ svayam tu nāpramāṇikaḥ svasaṃvedanasiddhatvāti rasanā ca bodharūpaiva kintu bodhāntarebhyo laukikebhyo vilakṣaṇaiva* – (Abhinavagupta, 2010, Ch.6 § p.299)

<sup>8</sup> Ajay Singh, p.233 (2022)



upon hearing, “A boy is born to you,” a joy sparked by direct meaning (*abhidhā*). However, the evoked rasa, or emotional essence, does not originate like this joy. It is not produced by denotation nor through indirect means like metaphor (*lakṣaṇa*), quality expression (*guṇavṛtti*), or devotion (*bhakti*). Rather, “this process of tasting arises in a sensitive person through his empathy upon apprehending the vibhāvas and anubhāvas, an empathy made possible by his heart’s being in tune (*hrdayasaṁvāda*) with the poetic message” (Abhinavagupta, 1990, 1.4 g L, p.108). Additionally, Abhinavagupta posits that rasa is an aesthetic pleasure that largely stems from a unique form of knowledge or consciousness. If rasa were expressible solely through literal word meanings, it would be, thus, worldly (*laukika*). But, rasa, when suggested through alliteration that lacks direct sense, highlights experiences not found in daily life, which serves as additional proof for the *alaukikatva* (non-worldliness) of rasa (Kulkarni, 1998, p.56). Thus, according to Abhinavagupta, rasa is an aesthetic relish that cannot be directly produced in the physical world. Instead, it is invoked through drama or *nāṭya*, regarded as the object of aesthetic experience. Abhinavagupta claims that “*nāṭyameva rasāḥ*” or “drama is rasa” (Abhinavagupta, 2010, p.303) because drama engages us with sight and sound, and its comprehension is not merely intellectual but is realised through direct experience in the form of aesthetic relish, or enjoyment (Mishra, 2006, p.62).<sup>9</sup>

Abhinavagupta, aligning with Bharata, holds that rasa emerges from bhāva rather than the other way around, with bhāva meaning “to bring into being” or “to pervade.” For example, *sthāyibhāvas*, the enduring emotional states shaped by latent impressions (*vāsanās*) and memories (*saṁskāras*) from past experiences, are universal in all rational beings and serve as the source of rasa. Abhinava asserts that when a nāṭya depicts a specific combination of vibhāvas, etc., it stimulates the spectator’s inherent sthāyibhāva, enabling them to savour the corresponding rasa. For instance, if the combination of *vibhāva*, etc., stimulates the sthāyīn of sorrow (*śoka*), already present in the spectator’s mind, he experiences the pathetic/sorrowful (*karuṇa*) rasa. Thus, bhāvas are of a universal essence out of which the rasa arises, ultimately resulting in an unadulterated and universalised experience because the elements, such as vibhāvas, etc., are also *alaukika*.<sup>10</sup> However, such relishing is not possible until one becomes a *sahṛdaya* who shares *hrdayasaṁvāda* with the poet, i.e., when the artistic creation resonates with the innate sensibilities of the *sahṛdaya*.

Consequently, the *hrdayasaṁvāda* with the poet leads to the state of generalisation (*sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*) whereby the depicted events and their associated emotions (*vibhāvas*, etc.) are generalised and become universally applicable. As a result, the process of *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa* embodies a universality that diminishes the spectators’ sense of individuality, separating them from the everyday emotions experienced in ordinary life and leading them to a site called *tanmayībhāva*, in which they identify themselves (their emotions) with the emotion portrayed in the situation. Identifying oneself with the characters and situations leads to a de-contextualisation of personal emotions, fostering a connection with the universal aspects of the performance. According to Abhinavagupta, such a state “nourishes the generality and forms a uniformity (*ekaghanatā*) among the perceptions of all the spectators. All the spectators experience the same rasa because they all have the same latent impressions of that permanent mental state in their mind” (Mishra, 2006, p.109).<sup>11</sup> This collective experience—which is more or less similar to the Dionysian experience in Nietzsche—occurs as spectators shedding their individual consciousness, feeling a sense of unity, and collectively savouring the rasa with equal intensity. Masson and Patwardhan (1985) argue that when such identification (*tanmayībhāvana*) takes place, “the ego is transcended, and for the duration of the aesthetic experience, the normal waking “I” [*aham*] is suspended,” thus culminating into a stage where “all normal emotions are gone” and “the hard knot of “selfness” has been untied” that, ultimately results “in an unprecedented state of mental and emotional calm” (Masson and Patwardhan, 1985, VII; Kulkarni, 1998, pp.14-15). Subsequently, the spectator’s self becomes increasingly united with the mental states (*cittavṛttis*) that arise in response to the aesthetic experience. Ultimately, this union of self and mental states leads to a state “where the self is manifested united with cittavṛttis [...] [and] is called by the synonymous words like *camatkāra*, *carvaṇā*, *nirveśa*, *bhoga* etc.” (Mishra, 2006, pp.68-69).<sup>12</sup> Upon experiencing *camatkāra*, the spectator attains a state of pure emotion, elevating them to a heightened level of pleasure (*ānanda*), distinct from ordinary life experiences. This intense, undiluted joy, termed *ānandaikaghana*,<sup>13</sup> mirrors the bliss

<sup>9</sup> *Bhinnavṛttāntāsvādāna-rūpasamvedanasamvedyam vastu rasasvabhāvamiti vakṣyāmaḥ* – (Abhinavagupta, 2010, Ch.1 § p.3)

<sup>10</sup> Abhinavagupta, Ch.6 § p.298 (2010); V. M. Kulkarni, p.58 (1998)

<sup>11</sup> *Yasyām vastusatām kāvyārpitānām ca deśakālapramātrādānām niyamahetūnām anyonyapratibandhavalāt atyantamapasaraṇe sa eva sādhāraṇabhāvaḥ sutarām puṣyati ata eva sarvasāmājikanāmekaghanatayaiva pratipattiḥ sutarām rasaparipoṣāya* – (Abhinavagupta, 2010, Ch.6 § p.295)

<sup>12</sup> *Ata eva vicitro rasāsvādāna-camatkāra-varṇaniveśa-bhogādhyavasāya-paryāyaḥ tatra yad avabhāsate vastu tannāṭyam* – (Abhinavagupta, 2010, Ch.1 § p.38)

<sup>13</sup> J. L. Masson and M. V. Patwardhan, VII (1985)

of spiritual experiences (*brahmāsvāda*) and is closely linked to self-realisation.

Abhinavagupta contends that both experiences involve self-forgetfulness and are marked by an absence of material desire, categorising them as non-worldly (*alaukika*). They eliminate the subject-object duality, merging the self with the external world. Additionally, there is a loss of time and space awareness, resulting in total immersion in the present moment without consciousness of the surroundings. Ultimately, both experiences culminate in a universal sense of repose (*viśrānti*), indicating a fulfilment where no further action is required. Analysing Abhinava's perspective, Loriliai Biernacki (2011) contends that according to Abhinavagupta, the aesthetic experience "involves melting and an opening of the heart, and it is comparable to the state of the highest bliss" (Biernacki, 2011, p.263) because it is a sibling (*sahodara*) of the experience of Brahman, who is the bearer of the universalised consciousness. Thus, for Abhinavagupta, the aesthetic experience, bearing a resemblance to spiritual experience, entails certain universal elements like the ownerlessness of the self and surpassing one's individualised consciousness, which makes it reasonable to argue that consciousness becomes universalised in an aesthetic experience of nāṭya.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The paper has argued that both Nietzsche and Abhinavagupta emphasise that the aesthetic experience of tragedy and nāṭya is not just a simple experience of drama on stage but rather a transformative process that requires the spectator's empathetic engagement, leading to the dissolution of individual boundaries and the realisation of a shared universal consciousness. Nietzsche talks about the importance of *Dionysian* music—the *chorus*—that provides a *metaphysical solace* with the help of *Apollonian* imagery, that life is indestructible and individuality is an *illusion*. Consequently, the spectator foregoes life's challenges, albeit momentarily, and merges with others and the primordial nature, experiencing a universalised consciousness in the tragic moments of life. Abhinavagupta emphasises the importance of drama and talks about the necessity of being a *sahṛdaya* who can share a sympathetic response with the poet, leading to a generalisation of emotions that results in a uniformity of the spectators. As a result, they all experience a sense of wonder (*camatkāra*), which, ultimately, is an experience of unadulterated bliss, known as *ānandaikaghana*, akin to the bliss of a spiritual experience (*brahmāsvāda*). It implies that the experience of tragedy and nāṭya leads to an expansion of consciousness, causing the individual to lose

their sense of individuality and be immersed in shared emotions. This, in turn, de-contextualises them and unites their consciousness with the collective whole, giving them a glimpse of a universalised sense of consciousness.

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# The Influence of NCT Dream as Lemonilo Brand Ambassador on NCTZEN Purchasing Decisions (Survey of Instagram Account Followers @nct\_indonesia)

A. Rahman Hi, Juwono Tri Atmodjo, Vania Utamie Subiakto, Ghina Aulia Putri

Faculty of Communication Sciences, Mercu Buana University

dr.a.rahman@mercubuana.ac.id, trijuw@gmail.com, vania.utamie@mercubuana.ac.id ghinaaauli Putri@gmail.com

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**Abstract**— Brand Ambassador is someone chosen by the company to represent a product. NCT Dream was chosen by Lemonilo to represent their products and bring Lemonilo closer to the younger generation. The purpose of this research is to find out how much influence NCT Dream as Lemonilo's brand ambassador has on purchasing decisions for NCTZEN (survey of followers of the Instagram account @nct\_indonesia). This type of research is descriptive research with quantitative methods. This research was conducted in May 2023. The number of samples in this study were 100 respondents to followers of the @nct\_indonesia Instagram account, using a sampling technique, namely simple random sampling and using the S-O-R Theory (Effendy, 2003). The results of this study are seen from the  $t$  test, namely  $t\text{-count} > t\text{-table}$  ( $5.606 > 1.660$ ) meaning that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted besides that the  $R\text{-Square}$  in this study is 24.3% while the other 75.7% is explained by other factors. This shows that the use of NCT Dream as Lemonilo's brand ambassador for purchasing decisions for NCTZEN (Survey of Instagram account followers @nct\_indonesia) is effective.



**Keywords**— Brand Ambassador, Lemonilo, Purchase Decision, NCT Dream.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The internet is something that is really needed by society to help human life. With the internet, humans are helped in carrying out activities such as increasing knowledge from all over the world regarding various fields, making communication, entertainment, shopping and business easier according to Wiratama (in Sulaiman, 2018). Seen from the perspective of Indonesia, it is a unitary country consisting of various ethnic, cultural and religious diversity, which has become an inherent identity in society (Subiakto: 2022). This diversity results in the needs of communities being different and continually changing from one another. According to datareportal.com, there will be 212.9 million active internet users in Indonesia in 2023. The number of active social media users in Indonesia is 167 million people in January 2023. This figure is equivalent to 60.4% of the country's population (Kemp, 2023). As

reported by datareportal.com, the country with the most social media users is Indonesia, with active Instagram social media users reaching 106 million.

Instagram itself is a social media that is increasingly popular and increasingly used by all groups, from children to adults. With Instagram, it helps companies to improve awareness of the community. Using a brand ambassador who has millions of fans, popularity and a good career path can create brand awareness towards a company because brand awareness is able to influence consumers to make purchasing decisions. Lemonilo uses the social media platform Instagram to promote and introduce its products to consumers.

Lemonilo is a local company that has a healthy lifestyle concept because it sells healthy products without preservatives, flavor enhancers and artificial coloring and other ingredients that are often consumed by Indonesian

people. So it can be consumed by everyone and has an affordable price. In 2017, Lemonilo first launched its product, namely Fried Noodle Flavor Instant Noodles on its online platform.

On January 10, 2022, Lemonilo announced that NCT Dream as *Brand Ambassador (BA)* the latest. To evaluate usage, brand *ambassadors* use 4 elements according to Rossiter and Percy, namely: *Visibility, Credibility, Attraction and Power*. NCT Dream is a boy band from the country of Ginseng, South Korea, which consists of 7 members, namely Mark, Renjun, Jeno, Haechan, Jaemin, Chenle, and Jisung. NCT Dream officially debuted on August 25 2018. NCT Dream has an achievement, namely getting the title million-seller or sales of more than 1 million albums and NCT Dream became the youngest group to achieve this title. Apart from that, recently NCT Dream managed to take home the highest award at the Seoul Music Award, reported by the Detikhot article.

There is no need to doubt NCT Dream's popularity in Indonesia because in 2019, NCT Dream held its first solo concert in Indonesia. In just 0.2 seconds, tickets were sold out (Kpop Indonesia, 2020). According to Shinta Nurfauzia, Co-CEO of Lemonilo, Lemonilo and NCT Dream have the same mission, namely to build a young generation who have the key to success by creating a healthy lifestyle. Lemonilo also believes that NCT Dream will bring a new color to consumers and this collaboration will be able to bring Lemonilo closer to the younger generation.

The activities carried out by Lemonilo x NCT Dream were enlivened with the hashtag #Lemonilo NCT DREAM on the Lemonilo Instagram platform. The content that Lemonilo has created is attractive to consumers and increases brand awareness. As a brand ambassador that is liked by the younger generation, NCT Dream's support for lemonilo will influence their purchasing decisions and encourage a healthier lifestyle. Because audiences follow NCT Dream's messages, many are interested in following Lemonilo. The author chose to make NCT Dream fans or what is called NCTZEN as respondents. The Instagram account @nct\_indonesia is one of the accounts *fanbase* from NCTZEN who has followers the high is 146,000 *followers*.

Based on the explanation above, it can provide a goal, namely to find out how big the influence of NCT Dream is brand *ambassador* Lemonilo on NCTZEN purchasing decisions (survey of followers of the Instagram account @nct\_indonesia).

## II. THEORETICAL STUDIES

### Brand Ambassador

To build consumer trust in the products offered, every company must create a direct marketing strategy that can influence consumers about a product. Companies can use public figures as brand ambassadors as promotions in marketing their products. Of course consumers will be more interested in products used by public figures. can influence the purchasing decision for a product, the following is the definition of Brand Ambassador. According to Soehadi, quoted by Prawira (2012), explains that a brand ambassador is someone who presents the best portrait or image of a product.

This person is usually a celebrity or other popular person. Meanwhile, according to Lea Greenwood (2012: 88), "Brand ambassador is "a tool used by companies to communicate and connect with the public, regarding how they actually enhance sales". Companies use brand ambassadors to influence or persuade consumers. This aims to make consumers interested in using the product, especially because the selection of brand ambassadors is usually based on the image of a famous celebrity (Devi Gita, 2012).

Models that can be used to align characteristics *brand ambassador* is the VisCAP model. For this reason, celebrities or public figures who are used as brand *ambassadors* should be evaluated. The VisCAP model was developed by Rossiter and Percy (Rama Kertamukti, 2015:69) which consists of 4 elements, namely:

1. *Visibility*, how much brand *ambassador* is known by the public
2. *Credibility*, relates to expertise and objectivity such as a celebrity's ability to convince consumers of a product
3. *Attraction*, the appeal of the celebrity
4. *Power*, the ability of celebrities to attract consumers to buy

Based on the definitions above, it can be interpreted that a brand ambassador is an effort made by a company to influence or invite consumers by using celebrities as icons to present the best image of a product, so that consumers are interested in using the product.

### Purchase Decision

The purchasing decision is one of the stages in the purchasing decision process before post-purchase behavior. In entering the purchasing decision stage, consumers have previously been faced with several alternative choices, so that at this stage consumers will take action to decide to buy

the product based on the choices determined. The following are several definitions of purchasing decisions according to experts. According to Buchari Alma (2013:96) states that purchasing decisions are as follows: "Purchasing decisions are consumer decisions that are influenced by financial economics, technology, politics, culture, products, prices, locations, promotions, physical evidence, people and process. So that it forms an attitude in consumers to process all information and draw conclusions in the form of responses that emerge as to what product to buy."

According to Kotler & Armstrong (2016: 177) define purchasing decisions as follows: Consumer behavior is the study of how individuals, groups, and organizations select, buy, use, and dispose of goods, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy their needs and wants. which means that purchasing decisions are part of consumer behavior. Consumer behavior is the study of how individuals, groups and organizations choose, buy, use and how goods, services, ideas or experiences satisfy their needs and desires.

According to (Kotler, 2000), the purchasing decision process follows the stages that buyers go through to reach a purchasing decision, namely:

#### 1. Problem Identification

The purchasing process begins with problem identification, where the buyer identifies a problem or need. Buyers perceive the difference between the actual state and the desired state.

#### 2. Information Search

Consumers will find out information related to the product they are going to buy, but maybe not. If there is good and satisfying information, consumers are likely to buy it. If there is no information about the product, consumers are unlikely to buy.

#### 3. Evaluation of Alternatives

At this stage, consumers use information to evaluate alternative brands in the choice set.

#### 4. Buying Decisions

There are two factors in consumer buying decisions, namely the intention to buy or the decision to buy.

5. Post-Purchase Behavior At this stage the consumer have made a decision to proceed further after purchasing a product or/service. Whether the product or/service offered meets consumer expectations, this influences consumers in the future.

### III. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses descriptive research with quantitative methods. According to Sugiyono (2018), the quantitative paradigm is positivistic research because it is based on the philosophy of positivism which considers sources of understanding to be objective, measurable and visible to the five senses. The sampling technique in this research is simple *random sampling* so that members of the population are taken randomly without paying attention to the existing schemes in the population (Sugiyono, 2001). This research method is a survey method, a method carried out online with followers of the Instagram account @nct\_indonesia. To collect data from respondents using a questionnaire online google forms. The focus of this research itself is the influence of NCT Dream as the Lemonilo brand ambassador on NCTZEN purchasing decisions (survey of followers of the Instagram account @nct\_indonesia). The model in this research is S-O-R (*Stimulus – Organism – Response*).

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Analysis of Respondent Characteristics

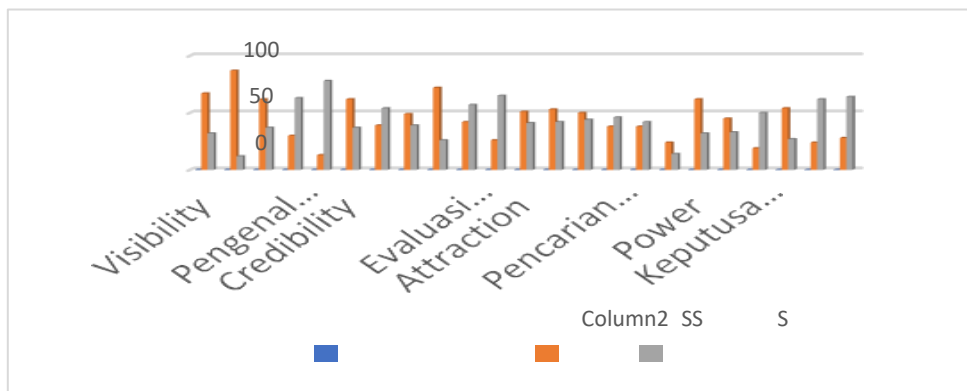
In this research the influence of NCT Dream as *brand ambassador* Lemonilo on purchasing decisions was 24.3%. Respondents from this study were dominated by women at 99% with ages 21-25 years at 65%. This can be proven from several test results and questions from each dimension of variable X and variable Y. It is proven from the following diagram:

From the diagram above it is known that the influence *visibility* from this research it was 87% towards problem recognition, namely 78%, influence *credibility* by 72% and alternative evaluation by 65%, the influence of Attractiveness (*Attraction*) NCT Dream as *brand ambassador* Lemonilo at 53% against information search at 46%, influence *power* NCT Dream as *brand ambassador* amounting to 62% of purchasing decisions, namely 64%. So it can be concluded that the highest influence from this research is visibility which indicates popularity as a *brand ambassador*, *considered* very effective for buyers in getting to know a product.

The results of this research were obtained through primary data by conducting surveys and distributing questionnaires to followers of the Instagram account @nct\_indonesia. The sample used in this research was 100 respondents and filled out the questionnaire via Google Form in June 2023. Then the answers from the respondents were processed and grouped based on the instrument in the frequency table.

## T Test Results

Gambar 1. Hasil Uji T



The results of the NCT Dream variable are as *Brand Ambassador* (X) obtained from 100 respondents. The positive and significant influence on the Purchasing Decision variable (Y) from the research results can be shown with a significance value of ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ) with  $t$  count  $>$   $t$  table ( $5.606 > 1.660$ ). and the regression coefficient value is 0.638. It can be concluded that the hypothesis in this study, namely  $H_0$ , is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted, meaning that NCT Dream as *Brand Ambassador* (X) influences NCTZEN Purchase Decisions (Y).

## V. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion in the research, the researcher concluded that NCT Dream as brand *ambassador* significantly influences purchasing decisions. This can be seen from the results of the Determination test which shows that it is known that the R-Square value or coefficient of determination value is 0.243, which means that the influence of variable X (NCT Dream as *Brand Ambassador Lemonilo*) on variable Y (Purchasing Decision) of 24.3% while the other 75.7% is explained by other variables or factors outside this research such as quality, product price, promotion, brand image and so on. And the results of the  $t$  test in this research are the significance value of variable X (NCT Dream as *Brand Ambassador*) against variable Y (Purchase Decision) is 0.000 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ) or  $t$ -count  $>$   $t$ -table ( $5.606 > 1.660$ ). This means that the hypothesis in this research is that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted. This proves that there is an influence of NCT Dream as *Brand Ambassador Lemonilo* on NCTZEN Purchase Decisions (Survey of Instagram account followers @nct\_indonesia).

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# Evaluating the Camping Tourism Potential: A Foundation for a Development Plan at BSP Nueva Ecija Council Training Camp in Palayan City

Robin Cumpio, Faye Delrine Magsacay, Precious R. Manlusoc, Missy C. Riñen, Jara Mae B. Valdez, Bernadette C. Valencia, Mark Alvin H. Abad

College of Management and Business Technology, Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, Cabanatuan City 3100, Philippines

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**Abstract**— This study embarked on a thorough assessment of the camping tourism potential at the BSP Nueva Ecija Council Training Camp nestled in Palayan City, employing a comprehensive analysis rooted in the 5 A's of tourism framework. Various dimensions of the campsite, comprising accommodation, attraction, accessibility, activities, and amenities, were scrutinized with a paramount focus on meeting the diverse preferences and needs of campers. Through a descriptive qualitative methodology, the research delved into the campsite's appeal to campers, evaluating the range, quality, and availability of lodging options tailored to their requirements. Additionally, it examined the natural and cultural attractions surrounding the campsite, assessing their allure to camping enthusiasts and nature aficionados. The study thoroughly assessed the campsite's accessibility, considering factors such as transportation infrastructure and ease of access from different locations, ensuring convenience for campers. Furthermore, it explored the breadth and diversity of activities offered at the campsite, evaluating their capacity to engage campers and enrich their camping experiences. In addition to evaluating the campsite's physical attributes, the research scrutinized the existing facilities and infrastructure at the BSP Nueva Ecija Council Training Camp. This entailed evaluating their current state, functionality, and adequacy in meeting the needs of campers, ensuring a comfortable and enjoyable stay amidst nature. Moreover, the study analyzed the camp's promotional strategies, with a particular emphasis on environmental sustainability, responsiveness to market trends, safety measures, stakeholder engagement, and economic viability. These factors played a pivotal role in shaping the campsite's image, attracting campers, and fostering a positive camping experience. A SWOT analysis matrix was developed to identify the campsite's internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats specific to the camping context. This provided invaluable insights for strategic planning, enabling stakeholders to capitalize on strengths, address weaknesses, seize opportunities, and mitigate threats effectively, tailored to the camper experience. Through this comprehensive evaluation, the study aimed to establish a robust foundation for the development plan of the BSP Nueva Ecija Council Training Camp, ensuring its sustainable growth as a premier camping destination. By enhancing the overall camping experience, the campsite can significantly contribute to the tourism landscape of Palayan City, fostering positive socio-economic impacts for campers and the local community alike.



**Keywords**— Camping Tourism Potential, BSP Nueva Ecija Council Training Camp, 5 A's of Tourism.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the most important economic sectors of the national economy. The tourism sector generates 5% of the national GDP and 6% of employment (Petrella and Torrini 2019). The tourism industry has many sectors and sub-sectors that provide tourists with different experiences among which are camping and nature tourism. Nature has always been essential to human existence. They could never truly be isolated from nature, not even by the advances of urban civilization. Going to, visiting, strolling, and camping in natural settings to get away from regular life while surrounded by antiquities is proof of this truth. Thanks to the growing number of natural tourism destinations and visitors, natural-based tourism (NBT) has become a main part of the tourism industry and economy (Mäntymaa et al., 2018, 2019), especially in the areas with rich natural resources and scenery. It contributes to alleviating local community's poverty (Yuxi & Linsheng, 2020), providing pecuniary stability to conserve biodiversity, and promoting interest in nature (Kim et al., 2020) Nature-based Tourism (NBT) is a fast-growing part of tourism industry making a main section of economy in the areas with rich natural resources and scenes (de Los Monteros, 2002; Mäntymaa et al., 2019; UN-WTO, 2016).

On May 10-18, 1969, the map of the city was placed in the national and international scene when the 4th National Jamboree participated by 7,805 participants, 68 councils represented and 8 overseas scout associations-403 representing United States, Japan, China, Thailand, Australia, Malaysia, Israel and Pakistan, was held in the city's BSP Nueva Ecija Council campsite 1259 "Jamboree of Experience" was the description labeled to the event where "National Self- Sufficiency through Scouting" served as the primary theme of the national jamboree. A major highlight of the event was the donation of the venue as a permanent BSP Nueva Ecija Council campsite which was opened by then-President Ferdinand E. Marcos.

Camping is an activity where individuals travel away from home to spend a night or more outdoors in a natural setting (Hewer et al., 2015). Camping is unique compared to other tourism activities because it is an outdoor activity itself, is overnight accommodation, and is closely related to other outdoor activities including hiking, water sports, and site-seeing (Caim Consulting Group, 2019; Craig, 2019). In fact, a recent survey indicates that "campers are continuing to make strong connections between camping and other outdoor recreation activities, considering them to be one in the same" (Caim Consulting Group, 2019, p. 4). The number of active campers grew 4% from 2014 to 2018 to include 78.8 million households (Caim Consulting Group, 2019), and camping has an

annual economic impact of approximately \$167 billion (Outdoor Industry Association, 2017).

In most developing countries, camping is in a fledgling period and may strongly develop in the future. Recently in China, in accompaniment with the improvement in people's incomes and living standards, tourists have been seeking more diversified ways to travel, including camping. In fact, the National Tourism Administration of China has indicated that camping tourism is an investment priority during China's thirteenth five-year plan period (2016–2020), which indicates that the large-scale construction of campgrounds is ready to proceed.

This study utilized the SWOT analysis to establish a solid foundation for the development plan. According to Gürel and Tat (2017), SWOT analysis is as old as the concept of strategic planning that emerged in the literature in the 1960s with a concept strategy being used in business management. Therefore, it is not a new technique but has been widely used to assess the status and prospects of businesses and organizations.

Therefore, in this regard, the researcher conducted an assessment of the camping tourism potential at the BSP Nueva Ecija Council (Boy Scouts of the Philippines) Training Camp in Palayan City. This evaluation delves into various aspects such as 5 A's of tourism, existing facilities and infrastructure, campsite promotion, and SWOT Analysis to establish a solid foundation for the development plan.

This research utilizes a qualitative approach to assess and evaluate the tourism sector of Palayan City. In qualitative research, questions delve deeply into a topic, relying on observations, interviews, and other non-numeric data to gain a thorough understanding. While qualitative questions are typically open-ended, the researchers in this study employed a survey questionnaire to help structure the inquiry and uncover the ideas, beliefs, and motivations of the target demographic.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims to lay a solid basis for the BSP Nueva Ecija Council Training Camp's development strategy, assuring its long-term success as a prime camping destination. The objectives include analyzing the campground in terms of the five A's of tourism, current facilities and infrastructure, campsite promotion, and SWOT analysis to lay the foundation for a development plan.

## Statement of the Problem

This study examined the camping tourism potential at the BSP Nueva Ecija Council (Boy Scouts of the Philippines) Training Camp in Palayan City in order to establish the foundation for the development plan. Specifically, it aims to answer the following questions:

1. How may the BSP Nueva Ecija Council Training Camp be evaluated in terms of 5'As of tourism;
  - 1.1 accommodation
  - 1.2 attraction
  - 1.3 accessibility
  - 1.4 activities and
  - 1.5 amenities?
2. What are the existing facilities and infrastructure at the BSP Nueva Ecija Council training camp?
3. How may the camp be evaluated in promoting camping tourism? In terms of:
  - 3.1 environmental sustainability
  - 3.2 market demands and trends
  - 3.3 safety and security measures
  - 3.4 stakeholder engagement
  - 3.5 economic viability and revenue generation
4. Create and develop a SWOT analysis matrix for the BSP Nueva Ecija Council

## III. METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This research utilizes a qualitative approach to assess and evaluate the tourism sector of Palayan City. In qualitative research, questions delve deeply into a topic, relying on observations, interviews, and other non-numeric data to gain a thorough understanding. While qualitative questions are typically open-ended, the researchers in this study employed a survey questionnaire to help structure the inquiry and uncover the ideas, beliefs, and motivations of the target demographic.

### Respondents

The participant involved in this study were selected from the management of the BSP Nueva Ecija Council in Palayan, Nueva Ecija. This selection was made based on their expertise, experience, and knowledge of the operations and activities conducted within the council. Given their roles within the BSP Nueva Ecija Council, the participant were deemed to possess the necessary insights and understanding to provide valuable responses to the questions posed in the study.

## Instruments

The research instrument included a robust process of informed consent, incorporating essential elements such as the study's title, purpose, duration, and commitment to maintaining the confidentiality of gathered information. This ensured that participants were fully informed and empowered to make voluntary decisions about their involvement. Moreover, conducting in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, such as the coordinator from the BSP Nueva Ecija Council, provided valuable insights and perspectives crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Additionally, the researcher employed guided survey questionnaires to systematically collect data, allowing for structured analysis.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. BSP Nueva Ecija Council Training Camp be evaluated in terms of the 5'As of tourism;

#### 1.1 Accommodation

##### a) Accommodation inside the camping site

At the BSP Nueva Ecija Council, accommodations are designed to meet the different needs of both campers and staff. Campers are welcome to stay in camping tents set inside the picturesque campsite, providing them with a unique opportunity to embrace the natural surroundings and immerse themselves in the outdoor experience. Meanwhile, executives and staff members have access to a dedicated headquarters complex that has been thoroughly constructed to meet their lodging needs while at the campsite. This careful approach ensures that all persons, whether campers or staff, have appropriate accommodations, creating an inclusive and enriching environment in which everyone may fully participate in their responsibilities and activities within the camp community.

According to Andrey et al., 2014, being close to nature in a sustainable way with a tent or a caravan is popular. The range of camping accommodations is large. Unlike other types of accommodation, tourists can bring their accommodation with them when camping, while the camping ground provides the space and infrastructure. Camping as a type of accommodation offers many different levels, and everyone will find a suitable style or comfort.

##### b) Accommodation outside the camping site

At the BSP Nueva Ecija Council, individuals seeking accommodations beyond the campsite have a range of options available, including hotels and apartments. This variety allows campers and staff to

choose lodging that best meets their interests and needs. Whether you like the lavish luxuries of a hotel or the homey comfort of an apartment, there is something to suit everyone's needs. This varied range of accommodations enhances the overall experience at the council, allowing individuals to adjust their stay to their preferences and assuring a memorable and pleasurable visit for everybody.

According to Andrey et al., 2014, nowadays there are many types of camping grounds with different orientations, whether it is a leisure paradise with a pool landscape or a direct location by the fjord with its boat landing stage for fishermen. There is something for everyone. Like hotels, they have classification systems that show what level of comfort and facilities they have.

**c) Specific size of the land area**

The BSP Nueva Ecija Council owns two land titles totaling 255,669 square meters in size, with an additional 18,207 square meters available. These combined pieces of property give plenty of room for numerous activities and facilities under the council's management. The wide land area provides prospects for development and expansion, enabling the execution of future projects and initiatives to better serve members and the community. Furthermore, the increased land allotment boosts the council's capacity for expansion and the achievement of its long-term goals and objectives.

According to the National Office Memorandum No. 16 Series of 2014. The Jamboree Organizing Committee/Host Region/Council shall: Prepare and develop a campsite good for 1 hectare for every 1,000 Scouts and Adult Leaders with the following facilities:

**d) Maximum capacity of campers in the campsite**

According to the BSP Nueva Ecija Council, the maximum number of campers allowed in the campsite depends on their individual needs and desires. Through a customized approach, the council can effectively accommodate a wide range of group sizes and preferences, resulting in an inclusive and enjoyable experience for all participants. The BSP Nueva Ecija Council recently hosted 9,176 campers during the 52nd provincial jamboree, an impressive feat. This outstanding accomplishment not only demonstrates the council's organizational abilities but also its dedication to giving its members and the community large memorable and gratifying outdoor experiences.

According to the National Office Memorandum No. 16 Series of 2014. The Jamboree Organizing Committee/Host Region/Council shall: Prepare and develop a campsite with the facilities of Grand Arena that can accommodate a general assembly of at least 10,000

Scouts and Adult Leaders (ideally 0.8 sq. meters per camper) and Activity Areas for at least 8 major activities per day. (Size will depend on the nature of the activity)

## **1.2 Attraction**

**a) Existing attraction at the campsite**

The BSP Nueva Ecija Council's premises are home to a range of interesting attractions that enhance the entire camping experience. Since the property is designed for survival skills and the like, attractions are built to support survival skills activities that are far from urban life. These features include a mini-forest, a lake, a fish pond, and a mini-park.

According to Cheng-fei lee (2020), the results revealed that the current development of Taiwan's camping tourism urges more investment for improving the basic function of infrastructure, creating more supporting infrastructure for relaxation and social interaction, and trying to integrate as much as natural attractions into the camping surroundings. It is concluded that a camping destination is a complex structure whose attractiveness is determined by its capacity to allow visitors to experience the great outdoors with comfort and security and in close contact with nature.

**b) New attractions at the campsite**

The BSP Nueva Ecija Council stays dedicated to its basic objective of providing a location for Jamboree events that prioritize learning and progress over tourist attractions. This demonstrates its commitment to encouraging personal development and creating a supportive environment for skill and connection building. By remaining loyal to its original goal, the camp continues to be a significant resource for education and self-improvement.

According to the National Office Memorandum No. 24, Series of 2023: Through the years, the Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP Nueva Ecija Council) has played and continues to play a primordial role in the community and society as a youth organization that encourages and helps young people develop their individual potential and capabilities and raise their level of awareness and importance of their responsibilities for social development.

## **1.3 Accessibility**

**a) Main challenges ensuring accessibility at the campsite**

The main challenge at the BSP Nueva Ecija Council is the lack of parking spaces. This makes it difficult for camp attendees to obtain convenient parking spaces. With insufficient parking, there is a risk of congestion and discomfort for all camp attendees. The



significant demand for parking reflects the camp's appeal and the valuable opportunities it offers for personal and professional advancement.

According to the National Office Memorandum No. 16 Series of 2014. The Jamboree Organizing Committee/Host Region/Council shall: The Jamboree Organizing Committee/Host Region/Council shall: Prepare and develop a campsite with Transportation facilities.

#### **b) Forms of transportation offered at the camp**

At the BSP Nueva Ecija Council, transportation services are not provided, and cars are not permitted to enter the campsite, particularly when there are a large number of campers during events. As a result, campers typically rely on walking as their major mode of transportation once they arrive. This pedestrian-friendly strategy invites campers to fully explore the natural surroundings while also fostering a sense of community as they interact with other participants on foot. However, it is crucial to note that under some conditions, such as when there is lots of space available, cars may be allowed onto the campsite.

Before the era of automobiles, numerous World Heritage Sites (WHS) were established, characterized by their compact layouts, diverse mix of activities, and the necessity for various modes of transportation, particularly walking, for both visitors and residents (Frank et al., 2003). Bass and Livingston (2019) examined the historic districts of Bath (UK) and San Luis Obispo (US), focusing on preservation strategies and adaptations for automobiles, particularly regarding parking facilities, to assess their impact on walkability.

#### **c) Forms of transportation available outside the campsite:**

The BSP Nueva Ecija Council is positioned next to the busy roadway of Palayan City, which covers a land area of 101.40 square kilometers (km<sup>2</sup>), or 1.76% of Nueva Ecija's total land. This provides the council with easy access to a variety of transportation choices. These kinds of transportation, including jeeps, vans, buses, trucks, bicycle rentals, and tricycles, are easily accessible just outside the camping grounds.

According to Maparu and Mazumder (2017), Roads and transportation are substantially related to local living standards because better roads and transportation improve tourist flow, linking remote areas to one another. Better connectivity and transportation make a region attractive and reduce its development gap.

#### **d) Different means of transportation that campers can employ to access the campsites**

Campers can use a range of modes of transportation to get to the campsites during the Jamboree events. These include standard vehicles that can easily accommodate campers and their belongings, such as trucks, vans, buses, and jeeps. In addition to these standard options, campers can choose less usual modes of transportation, like bicycle rentals. This provides a more daring and environmentally friendly method of exploring the campgrounds. But it's crucial to remember that during the event, cars are not allowed inside the camp.

According to AlKahtani et al. (2015), accessibility is defined as the ability of tourists to conveniently reach a destination, and individual differences among them (gender, income, and education) may affect the perceptions of accessibility among tourists and their subsequent travel decisions.

### **1.4 Activities**

#### **a) Activities offered at the campsite**

Campers at the BSP Nueva Ecija Council can participate in various activities tailored to their specific interests and needs. These activities cater to a variety of interests, providing opportunities for adventure, leisure, and educational experiences. Whether they prefer hiking, tree planting, treasure hunting, city tours, rappelling, obstacle courses, youth forums, air scouting voyages, or other activities.

According to Barron et al., 2020; Yohana & Wijiharta, 2021, the important point of Scouting is the concept of fun and varied activities. Scouts have the potential to instill positive values in everyday life through activities that are liked by children.

According to Hadiputri & Listyaningsih, 2022; Prihanawati & Hidayah, 2018, several factors support the successful implementation of extracurricular scouting. Engaging and enjoyable activities, the support of the school community, and the cultivation of creativity among scouts are identified as critical factors.

#### **b) Camping events that the campsite organizes**

The BSP Nueva Ecija Council organizes a variety of camping programs designed for different interests and age groups. These events include annual jamborees, regional and national venture camps, as well as specialized advancement training sessions designed for both youth and adults. Each of these events provides participants with a unique opportunity to engage in outdoor activities, leadership development, skills training, and relationship building.

According to the Research by Smith et al. (2018) conducted a longitudinal study on the impact of Jamboree participation on youth development, focusing on self-

confidence, teamwork, and leadership skills. They found that Jamborees provide a unique platform for young participants to enhance their self-esteem, interpersonal skills, and ability to work collaboratively in diverse teams.

#### **c) Other events that the campsite organizes**

According to Palayan's history, the BSP Nueva Ecija Council has a long history of organizing notable events, such as the well-known 4th National Jamboree in 1969 that gathered scouts from several nations. This event was crucial in the city's transition to cityhood. Additionally, the camp hosts local festivals, fairs, historical meetings, and cultural events. Furthermore, it hosted the Central Luzon Regional Venture Camp.

Jamborees promote community engagement, cultural exchange, and social responsibility among participants. Cruz (2016) researched the social impact of BSP Nueva Ecija Council Jamborees, highlighting the opportunities for scouts to interact with diverse communities, participate in service projects, and learn about local cultures. These experiences foster empathy, cooperation, and a sense of civic duty among young scouts, contributing to positive social change.

#### **d) Strategies used by BSP Nueva Ecija Council to encourage participants in the activities**

The BSP Nueva Ecija Council promotes camper participation by carrying out effective, efficient, and appealing programs as specified by the camp coordinator. These programs are geared to accommodate varied interests, skill levels, and leadership and life skills, creating an inclusive environment where campers may actively engage and develop new talents.

According to Brown and Jones (2019), explored the role of Jamborees in fostering leadership competence among youth. Their qualitative study involved interviewing Jamboree participants and leaders, revealing that the camp environment encourages participants to take on leadership roles, make decisions, and contribute to group success, leading to increased confidence and initiative.

### **1.5 Amenities**

#### **a) Maintenance and cleanliness of the amenities**

During scouting events, the BSP Nueva Ecija Council is committed to keeping the campsite clean and safe. To do this, a variety of protocols and standards are put in place and closely followed. The BSP Nueva Ecija Council ensures cleanliness through routine inspections, maintenance checklists, effective waste segregation, composting, water conservation, and waste disposal monitoring. These procedures are strictly observed to ensure clean and safe surroundings on the campsite.

According to Garcia (2018), he examined the ecological impact of Jamborees and emphasized the importance of incorporating eco-friendly initiatives such as waste management, recycling programs, and conservation projects. Jamborees serve as platforms for instilling environmental values and encouraging sustainable behaviors among scouts, contributing to a culture of environmental responsibility.

#### **b) Developed, developing or future projects for campsite amenities**

The BSP Nueva Ecija Council has developed projects such as picnic areas, designated camping pads, portable water stations, waste disposal sites, hiking trails, nature walks, and interpretive loops within the campground. Additionally, the campsite has a session hall, stage, guest house, and scout quarters, but they are not sufficient due to the population. Modern restroom facilities with flushing toilets, sinks, and showers have not been developed as they don't suit campers' needs.

In progress are projects including an obstacle course, glamping and picnic areas, a stage at the grand arena, wall climbing, rappelling, improvements to water and other resources, scout quarters, camp gates, and drainage and canals.

Future projects for the BSP Nueva Ecija Council include constructing a two-story building for staff quarters and session halls with kitchens and comfort rooms. These facilities can also be utilized to generate income for the council. Additionally, plans include building a grotto for Catholic scouting, four sets of Wood badge areas with session halls, campfire places, and model campsites, as well as four sets of flags, an Olympic-sized swimming pool, a covered court, a perimeter fence, a guest house, a Baden-Powell Hall, a multi-purpose hall, toilet and shower facilities, an emergency response facility, and a scout museum. Furthermore, there are plans to construct camp roads, two transformers, a visitor center, a security post, solar street lights, and a Baden-Powell monument.

According to Khadaroo and Seetanah in: Jafari and Xiao (2016), in a broader sense infrastructure includes physical, legal, environmental and mental amenities which contribute to making tourism products enjoyable, reliable and sustainable.

### **2. Existing facilities and infrastructure at the campsite**

Existing facilities and infrastructure can be found at the BSP Nueva Ecija Council, such as campsites, restrooms/CR, picnic areas, trash and recycling receptacles, campfire rings or pits, hiking trails, a visitor center, and playgrounds. The BSP Nueva Ecija Council

provides security patrols, emergency evacuation routes, and security gate barriers during events. However, certain facilities and infrastructure, including a first aid station, information boards, and a camp store/convenience store, are only operational during events. The campsite is pet-friendly, but bringing pets/animals during events is not encouraged. Additionally, the campsite has electricity available for everyone's use, but Wi-Fi is only accessible to staff. Showers are available, but they may not accommodate many campers, so campers are taught to improvise restrooms. There is also a water station (water tank), and the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) provides water to campers due to the population. Staff members are stationed for trail marking and signage, depending on the needs of the program/event, and there are dump sites available. Visitor registration and check-in are provided by the campsite during events.

According to the article of Sanni (2023), a campground situated in an attractive and convenient location is more likely to attract campers and generate positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

### **3. BSP Nueva Ecija Council evaluated in promoting camping tourism in terms of:**

#### **3.1 Environment Sustainability**

The BSP Nueva Ecija Council is being evaluated for its promotion of camping tourism. It adheres to environmental compliance standards set by DENR, and when trees are cut down, reports are submitted to DENR. Additionally, BSP Nueva Ecija Council is a partner of DENR.

Furthermore, there are designated campsites to minimize damage to natural areas. For instance, their mini forest serves as a developing recreational space within the campsite. Specific recycling programs and initiatives are in place, along with measures to reduce water waste and a structured garbage collection schedule.

Moreover, the camp engages in environmental activities like tree planting and a clean and green program. There are also strict guidelines to prevent environmental degradation, including restricted areas designated for rehabilitation purposes. Fire-designated pits or fire rings are provided for campfires, and strict fire safety rules are enforced.

Lastly, the camp is equipped with emergency signs such as fire exits, evaluation signs, fire alarm indicators, first aid stations, and more.

Johnson and Smith (2017) conducted a comparative analysis of Jamboree programs with a focus on environmental conservation. Their findings highlighted the positive impact of outdoor experiential learning and

nature-based activities during Jamborees in fostering a sense of responsibility towards natural resources and ecosystems.

Environmental education is a key component of BSP Nueva Ecija Council Jamborees, promoting awareness and action towards conservation and sustainability. Santos (2019) conducted a case study focusing on environmental education initiatives during Jamborees in the Luzon region. The study highlighted the integration of eco-friendly practices, nature exploration, and environmental workshops into camp programs, enriching participants' understanding of ecological issues and their role as stewards of the environment.

#### **3.2 Market Demand and Trends**

The BSP Nueva Ecija Council doesn't hold events on a monthly basis; instead, the events are held annually and are based on the needs and requests of the participants. These events draw a significant number of campers every year. The campsite conducts promotional campaigns videos, clips, and pictures that contribute to higher attendance at each event. These promotional campaigns are posted on their Facebook page, where they share ongoing activities at the campsite. Every held event consists of different activities that are designed for the campers. They keep records of the number of campers visiting using a statistical record system. Thus, the BSP Nueva Ecija Council has collaborative efforts with the Provincial Tourism Office that result in heightened visibility and visitation to the campsite.

According to a study, with social media marketing and search engine marketing (SEM), it is easy to attract customers' attention at any time because they tend to focus on social communication. In addition, as claimed by the 2018 Chief Marketing Officer survey, the majority of businesses allocate around 13.8% of their advertising funds to social media platforms (Ashley and Tuten 2015; Moorman 2018; Voorveld 2019).

#### **3.3 Safety and Security**

To ensure the safety and security of the campers of BSP Nueva Ecija Council, there are security personnel stationed both inside and outside the premises, as well as designated emergency exits and evacuation routes, trained personnel on hand to assist in an emergency, and visible signage throughout the campsite bearing emergency contact information and safety guidelines. However, since all of these are only in place during the event, installing CCTV cameras around the site is not advised.

According to the Boy Scouts Of The Philippines National Office Of Manila, Memorandum. No. 16, Series of 2014: The Guidelines aim to ensure that maximum

safety and precautionary measures are well taken care of by the Jamboree Organizing Committee and its working sub-committees, as well as the Jamboree Executive and Technical Staff, to preclude potential sources of accidents, loss of lives and damage to property in the conduct of National, Regional and Council Jamborees.

### 3.4 Stakeholder Engagement

There is enough staff at the BSP Nueva Ecija Council to accommodate campers. They require at least one volunteer or accommodating adult for every group of campers. Every time an event is approaching, the BSP Nueva Ecija Council regularly talks with locals and community members about campground operations. Since the BSP Nueva Ecija Council is essential to the development of Palayan into a city, the BSP Nueva Ecija Council has worked with the provincial government of Nueva Ecija as well as with private and local enterprises to promote tourism in the area. The BSP Nueva Ecija Council indeed consults with government organizations about laws and regulations.

According to the "National Guidelines for Hosting and Conducting Scout Jamborees" of the National Office Memorandum. No. 16 Series of 2014: The Regional Offices and Local Councils hosting and/or organizing such events shall see to the appointment of committee members to plan, organize, and implement these guidelines in place, especially for the members of the Camping and Activities Committee at the local council and the regional levels.

### 3.5 Economic Viability and Revenue Generation

The Economic viability and revenue generation of the BSP Nueva Ecija Council involve several aspects. Firstly, the campsite provides employment opportunities and supports local businesses through a concessioner program, where small markets are invited to operate within the campsite premises, contributing to its development. Additionally, increased tourism driven by the campsite benefits not only the local economy but also the entire Nueva Ecija region. Events held at the campsite promote economic activity and showcase local culture through various activities such as interfaith events and city tours. Environmental initiatives, such as tree planting, contribute to community sustainability efforts. Revenue generated by the campsite supports local infrastructure development, and its positive reputation attracts visitors, further boosting the local economy. Community engagement fosters sustainable growth, including initiatives like community immersion programs. Moreover, the campsite earns revenue through activities such as entrance fees and the transportation services can generate income for campers. It also offers opportunities

for community livelihood, such as providing skills training like candle making. Additionally, campsites require an entrance fee of 10 pesos per person for campers from outside Nueva Ecija, and nearby businesses benefit from camper spending, benefiting not only themselves but also the entire Palayan area. While residents may benefit economically, there are concerns about the environmental impact of the campsite.

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, experts project the travel and tourism industry to inject over two and a half billion dollars into the U.S. economy over the next ten years. Tourism is a significant economic force and knowing how it supports small businesses is essential to local communities. Small businesses in tourism-dependent areas benefit greatly from increased tourist spending. In addition to generating revenue, it also promotes the local culture and heritage. Tourism supports small businesses to significantly boost the local economy. Tourists spending money at local businesses help to create additional jobs, generate business income, and support local suppliers and service providers.

## 4. Analysis of SWOT Results for BSP Nueva Ecija Council in terms of 5 A's

### Accommodation

The BSP Nueva Ecija Council excels in accommodation by maintaining a dedicated headquarters for its executives and staff, offering diverse lodging options beyond campsites, and efficiently organizing large events such as the province-wide jamboree. These strengths contribute to flexibility and enhance the camping experience. However, a potential weakness is balancing modern amenities with a natural, immersive environment. Opportunities for improvement include adding new facilities or leisure activities, partnering with nearby businesses to enhance the overall experience, and expanding facility sizes to host larger groups. Environmental factors, especially weather conditions, pose significant threats to outdoor activities and comfort.

### Attraction

The council emphasizes survival skills through activities that provide experiences outside urban settings and is dedicated to offering spaces for Jamboree events that focus on development and educational opportunities. This approach promotes skill development and meaningful connections. However, there is a minor weakness in the lack of additional facilities or amenities beyond survival skill exercises. Opportunities include enhancing and increasing current attractions, offering a broader range of experiences, and expanding educational initiatives.



Environmental threats such as weather and natural disasters can impact the quality of attractions.

### **Accessibility**

The high demand for parking spaces reflects the camp's popularity and its significance in providing growth opportunities. Its location near a busy road allows for easy access via various transportation modes. However, weaknesses include limited parking spots and vehicle restrictions that could inconvenience campers. To improve accessibility, the camp could address parking issues, provide alternative transportation options within the campground, and partner with nearby transit companies to enhance camper access and comfort. Persistent parking problems might deter potential campers, negatively impacting the camp's reputation and enrollment.

### **Activities**

The council offers a diverse range of activities, enriching the camping experience and attracting a broad audience. Its historical importance and community impact are showcased through significant events like the 4th National Jamboree. By creating programs that align with campers' interests and leadership skills, the council fosters an inclusive and engaging environment. A weakness is the lack of specific data on program effectiveness or camper satisfaction, which could impede efforts to assess and enhance program quality. Opportunities include regularly updating and expanding activities based on camper feedback and emerging trends, and improving program descriptions to draw more participants. Failing to keep up with changing trends in camping and outdoor activities may lead to a decline in attendance and relevance over time.

### **Amenities**

The camp's strengths in amenities include promoting a healthy environment and enhancing the overall camping experience by following strict cleanliness and safety protocols. However, as the camper population grows, insufficient facilities and amenities may lead to discomfort and dissatisfaction. Opportunities for improvement involve continuously expanding and upgrading facilities and amenities based on camper feedback and evolving needs to boost satisfaction and encourage repeat visits. Poor management of cleanliness and safety can result in negative camping experiences, damage the camp's reputation, and pose health and safety risks.

### **Analysis of SWOT Results for BSP Nueva Ecija Council's Existing Facilities and Infrastructure**

The BSP Nueva Ecija Council has several strengths in its facilities and structure, such as ensuring camper and staff safety through security patrols, emergency evacuation routes, and security gate barriers during events. Additionally, the presence of electricity and water stations improves convenience and accessibility for campers. However, a notable weakness is the insufficient number of restrooms and showers, which can create problems during peak times, leading to long waits or forcing campers to find alternative solutions. Opportunities for improvement include adding more lavatories and showers to better accommodate the increasing number of campers, thereby improving overall cleanliness and comfort. Failing to address these infrastructural issues and camper needs could lead to declining camper retention and attendance rates over time.

### **Analysis of SWOT Results for BSP Nueva Ecija Council's Evaluation in Promoting Camping Tourism**

#### **Environmental Sustainability**

The BSP Nueva Ecija Council is dedicated to environmental sustainability by following DENR guidelines, implementing recycling programs, designating specific camping areas to reduce environmental impact, and participating in conservation activities like tree planting. Strict regulations and fire safety measures also ensure environmental protection and camper safety. However, relying solely on emergency signage and fire safety protocols might not be sufficient for comprehensive environmental management. Opportunities for improvement include collaborating with local organizations to enhance the effectiveness of environmental projects. A major threat is the potential for negative publicity from environmental incidents, which could harm the camp's reputation and deter tourists.

#### **Market and Demand**

The council promotes camping tourism effectively through active social media engagement, increasing event participation and awareness. A statistical record system helps track camper numbers accurately and organize future events. However, the lack of ongoing market research or feedback mechanisms might result in missed opportunities to align with changing camper preferences and trends. Opportunities include partnering with the Provincial Tourist Office to increase visibility and visitor numbers, and conducting regular market research to tailor events to camper trends. A threat to market success is insufficient promotional efforts, which could lead to decreased attendance and revenue.

### Safety and Security

Camper safety and security are significantly enhanced by the presence of security staff, clearly marked evacuation routes, emergency exits, and trained professionals. However, a lack of sufficient CCTV surveillance may hinder effective monitoring and addressing of security risks. Opportunities for improvement include installing surveillance systems, maintaining continuous security measures, and strengthening relationships with local law enforcement for additional support. A potential threat is security lapses during non-event periods, which could attract trespassers or intruders, putting campers at risk.

### Stakeholder Engagement

The council excels in stakeholder engagement by having sufficient staff to supervise and assist campers, fostering positive relationships and community involvement through regular updates to locals about campsite activities, and consulting with government agencies for legal compliance. However, high volunteer turnover can disrupt program execution and service delivery. Opportunities to enhance engagement include expanding volunteer recruitment and training programs and forming new partnerships with private businesses to attract a wider range of visitors and boost the camp's financial impact. Changes in government regulations or policies could threaten camp operations, requiring adjustments to compliance methods.

### Economic Viability

The campsite supports local economic prosperity by creating employment opportunities, promoting entrepreneurship through the concessionaire program, and boosting the local economy via increased tourism. Its strong track record attracts tourists and stimulates local business growth. However, reliance on admission fees and revenue generation may limit the ability to diversify income sources and achieve financial sustainability. Opportunities include diversifying revenue streams with additional recreational activities or services and investing in skills training and community livelihood programs to empower local residents and expand economic opportunities. Regulatory changes related to environmental management could threaten economic viability by increasing operational and administrative costs.

### Prioritized Strategies for BSP Nueva Ecija Council in terms of 5 A's

#### Accommodation

- Focus on expanding lodging options and adding leisure activities to accommodate larger groups and boost camper satisfaction.

- Balance modern amenities with a natural setting by upgrading current facilities while preserving a rustic environment.
- Collaborate with nearby businesses to enhance the camping experience through joint ventures and services.
- Develop contingency plans and improve infrastructure to reduce the impact of adverse weather on camping activities.

#### Attraction

- Invest in upgrading and diversifying current attractions to provide a wider range of experiences.
- Expand educational programs to reach a broader audience and encourage ongoing learning.
- Address the shortage of amenities by building new facilities to support survival skills and other activities.
- Implement strategies to minimize the effects of weather and natural disasters on attractions.

#### Accessibility

- Expand parking facilities and implement efficient traffic management solutions to address parking shortages.
- Introduce shuttle services or other alternative transportation modes within the campground to reduce congestion and improve accessibility.
- Partner with local transit companies to enhance access to the campground and improve camper convenience.
- Actively manage and enhance the camp's image to mitigate any negative perceptions caused by parking issues.

#### Activities

- Regularly update and expand the range of activities based on camper feedback and new trends. Implement metrics to evaluate and improve program quality and camper satisfaction.
- Highlight the unique features of each event to attract more participants and increase engagement.
- Stay responsive to changing trends in camping and outdoor activities to remain relevant and boost attendance.

#### Amenities

- Continuously upgrade and expand facilities based on camper feedback to improve comfort and satisfaction.

- Maintain strict cleanliness and safety protocols to ensure a healthy environment for campers.
- Regularly incorporate camper feedback into planning and development to meet evolving needs.
- Proactively manage health and safety to prevent negative experiences and protect the camp's reputation.

#### **Prioritized Strategies for Existing Facilities and Infrastructure**

- Address the limited number of restrooms and showers by adding more to accommodate peak usage times.
- Ensure the availability and proper maintenance of electricity and water stations to enhance camper convenience.
- Maintain strict security measures, including patrols and emergency routes, to ensure camper safety.
- Continuously invest in infrastructure improvements to meet growing camper demands and improve retention rates.

#### **Prioritized Strategies for Promoting Camping Tourism**

##### **Environmental Sustainability**

- Collaborate with local organizations to improve the effectiveness of environmental sustainability efforts.
- Develop more comprehensive environmental management practices beyond emergency signage and fire safety measures.
- Actively manage public relations to minimize the impact of potential environmental incidents on reputation.
- Educate campers and staff on sustainability practices to promote a culture of environmental responsibility.

##### **Market and Demand**

- Regularly conduct market research to stay in tune with evolving camper preferences and trends.
- Enhance promotional efforts through social media and partnerships with the Provincial Tourist Office to increase visibility.
- Establish ongoing feedback channels to collect insights and improve future events.

- Explore new marketing channels and strategies to reach a broader audience and boost attendance.

##### **Safety and Security**

- Improve surveillance by installing comprehensive CCTV systems to monitor and address security risks.
- Continuously review and upgrade security protocols to ensure camper safety at all times.
- Strengthen relationships with local law enforcement for better resource allocation and support.
- Implement robust security measures during non-event periods to prevent unauthorized access and ensure safety.

##### **Stakeholder Engagement**

- Expand volunteer recruitment and training programs to ensure adequate staffing and smooth program implementation.
- Form new partnerships with private businesses to diversify visitor demographics and increase financial impact.
- Maintain regular communication with local communities and government agencies to foster positive relationships and ensure compliance.
- Stay informed about regulatory changes and adapt operations to maintain compliance and operational efficiency.

##### **Economic Viability**

- Explore additional recreational activities and services to create new income sources and enhance financial sustainability.
- Support skills training and community livelihood programs to empower local residents and boost economic opportunities.
- Continuously monitor the campsite's economic impact and adjust strategies to maximize benefits for the local community.
- Proactively adapt to regulatory changes to manage operational and administrative costs effectively.

## **V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusions**

The BSP Nueva Ecija Council serves as a leading influence for outdoor education and community engagement, providing various opportunities for people of all ages to connect with nature and develop personally. Through prioritizing inclusivity, the council ensures that all, from campers to staff, feel welcomed within its

environment. Despite obstacles like limited parking, the council's vast land area offers ample space for activities and facilities, signaling growth and improved service for its members and the local community. From thrilling adventures to eco-friendly projects, the camping experience is both fulfilling and environmentally conscious, nurturing a love for nature while safeguarding it for future generations. Additionally, the council's backing of local businesses and cultural activities not only stimulates the economy but also fosters stronger community bonds. While safety precautions are in place, continuous enhancements are crucial for the welfare of campers. Essentially, the BSP Nueva Ecija Council remains a beacon of optimism, providing avenues for learning, personal growth, and community cohesion. Through collaborative efforts and a commitment to advancement, its influence will only continue to expand, shaping a brighter tomorrow for all involved.

### Recommendations

1. Implementing eco-friendly practices, such as waste reduction and energy-saving measures, serves as a model for the community, promoting environmental consciousness at the campsite. The BSP Nueva Ecija Council consistently maintains cleanliness and effective waste management, ensuring waste accessibility for campers even during non-event periods.
2. Maintaining safety at camps involves consistent training, updated emergency protocols, and facility inspections to boost confidence in council services. Installing CCTV cameras in camping areas during and outside of the event, prioritizing safety over the camping experience, is essential for safeguarding campers, staff, belongings, and the campsite itself.
3. Expanding parking facilities to accommodate more visitors is a priority for the council, enhancing convenience and encouraging greater participation in events. A parking attendant will contribute to a smooth and efficient parking operation during the event.
4. Include BSP Nueva Ecija Council Training Camp to the tourism development plan of Palayan City Tourism to get a budget.

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# Prior knowledge Activation through the Use of Effective Reading Strategies

Ouafaa Belouiza<sup>1</sup>, Bani Koumachi<sup>2</sup>, Abdelkhalk Er-Rechydy<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>PhD candidate, Department of English Studies, FLLA, Ibn Tofail University, Kenitra, Morocco

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, Department of English Studies, FLLA, Ibn Tofail University, Kenitra, Morocco

<sup>3</sup>PhD candidate, Department of English Studies, FLLA, Ibn Tofail University, Kenitra, Morocco

Corresponding Author: Ouafaa Belouiza, E-mail: [Ouafaa.belouiza@uit.ac.ma](mailto:Ouafaa.belouiza@uit.ac.ma)

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**Abstract**— *Prior knowledge plays a crucial role in students' performance when it comes to utilizing effective reading strategies. When students possess prior knowledge related to the topic they are reading about, they can make connections, draw upon their existing understanding, and engage in more meaningful comprehension. Having prior knowledge allows students to activate their schema, which refers to the mental framework of information and experiences they have already acquired. This schema acts as a foundation for new learning and helps students make sense of new information. For example, if a student has prior knowledge about the solar system, they can easily comprehend and retain new information about planets or space exploration. Moreover, prior knowledge enables students to predict and anticipate what they might encounter while reading. By activating their prior knowledge, students can generate hypotheses about the content of the text, which enhances their engagement and motivation.*



**Keywords**— *Prior Knowledge, Students' Performance, Schemata, Reading Strategies, Comprehension*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Connectionist approaches to foreign language instruction and learning assert that a learner's past knowledge is important. They contend that a learner uses the information in his previously existing stores to comprehend the inputs he will encounter in new learning settings. These methods acknowledge the significance of the reader's past knowledge when viewing reading as a learning process (Labiod, 2017).

Activating prior knowledge involves implementing activities and strategies to highlight students' existing knowledge about a topic. This process is crucial for reading comprehension, as it allows readers to draw inferences and recall previously stored information. Textual clues in writing activate schema, facilitating the understanding of new information. Additionally activating prior knowledge before reading, helps students to be prepared and ready to interact with the reading material through a set of reading

strategies that facilitate the task for students. each strategy best suits a given text type.

### 1.1. Schemata Activation and Teachers' Role

Schemata is defined as “the mechanism by which the readers access what they know and match it to the information in a text” (Rumelhart, 1982, as cited in Vacca, 2002, p. 20). Thus, schemata activation assists students in both decoding information and recalling the information. It refers to “the activities and strategies that are used to bring out what students already know about a topic” (Al-Faki & Siddiek, 2013, p. 44). We should activate our learners' background knowledge and schema in relation to the target text to build confidence and security within them. This can be achieved by describing photos, producing words relevant to the topic, writing words on the board and having students use them to make up a story, or showing students pictures linked to the text and having them narrate the story. These types of exercises familiarize students with the reading

exercise's topic and prepare them for the task (reading). They also assist pupils in setting expectations and arouse their interest in the topic of the written material. Harmer (1991) feels that we won't be able to persuade kids to appropriately interact with spoken and written content until their desire to read or listen has been stimulated. He believes that it is our obligation to pique students' attention and urge them to approach the material with enthusiasm, even when the subject matter is not instantly appealing to them.

Abraham (2002) states that teaching reading “demands that the teachers activate the students’ schema during the pre-reading phase by helping students recognize the knowledge that they already have about the topic of a text” (Abraham, 2002, p. 6). Floyd Carrell and (1987) also suggest that teachers must provide their pupils with the schemata that they need, as well as assist them in building bridges between existing knowledge and new knowledge. Similarly, Al-Issa (2006) states that reading teachers must consider the fact that any written material requires prior knowledge. As a result, reading teachers should assist students in activating prior information through problem-solving, creative, interpretative strategies that allow them to use whatever knowledge or resources they have. Teachers assist students in becoming competent readers by training them to activate and utilize their existing knowledge (Al-Jahwari & Al-Humaidi, 2015). According to (Siddiek & Alfaki, 2013), part of the teacher's role in observing instruction as an instructor is to see if students' prior knowledge has been activated. In other words, looking for instructional techniques, classroom management procedures, grade-level content, and the development of background knowledge isn't enough. To put it all together, you'll need to pay close attention to how background knowledge is used during a lesson. A close look at spreading activation should be paid to comprehend how background knowledge activation works.

The importance of prior knowledge, then, has three major implications for the teacher: first, the teacher must consider the knowledge that any written text is based on. Second, a significant part of the reading process is missed if a reader does not actively use his or her prior knowledge. Third, teachers' primary goal should be to help students develop problem-solving, creative, and interpretive strategies that allow them to use whatever knowledge or resources they have. As a result, teachers can assist students in becoming better readers by teaching them how to activate and use their prior knowledge.

## **1.2. The Role of Schemata Operate in Reading Comprehension**

In the process of reading, “comprehension of a message entails drawing information from both the text and the

internal schemata until sets are reconciled as a single schema or message”(Anderson et al. as cited in Hudson, 1982, p.187). In fact, this appears to emphasize one of the fundamental assumptions behind the concept of schema theory. When we are presented with new information, schemata that are relevant to that information come into play (or are activated) right away to help this information and make sense of it. As a result, what is commonly referred to as comprehension refers to the cognitive act of reconstructing the meaning of the text through the process of slots-instantiation (schema) employing concepts from both the reading text at hand as well as ideas previously present in our cognitive structure until complete comprehension is achieved. In fact, one cannot speak of comprehending a text until all of the information in the section has been pieced together as one whole message that corresponds to the component elements of the readers' schematic knowledge and completely matches the author's intended message.

Several reading researchers and specialists have attempted to demonstrate the significant relationship between comprehension and schemata through actual evidence. A set of experiments conducted by Carrel and Eisterhold (1988) serve as an example. They provided their subjects with a reading passage "story of a policeman" who put his hand up and stopped the car. The pupils were invited to read the story and see what they could come up with.

Following their findings, this story has been observed to have been assigned two fundamentally different interpretations depending on which schemata the readers activated. The first interpretation, which is also the most likely, depicts a traffic official waving the car driver to come to a halt. As a result, the importance of schemata, in this case, is clear, as the meaning is hinted by the writer and inferred by the subjects rather than expressed explicitly in the story. The second interpretation is based on Superman's paradigm of “held up his hand and stopped the car without a driver”. This second interpretation, however, was described as highly unlikely, despite its credibility. Not only does the first interpretation appear to be far more logical, credible, and, most all, quite familiar, but the second appears to be a little far-fetched. The reason that the second interpretation is considered fanciful while the first is considered very familiar can be explained by the fact that we contribute more to the reading texts than we receive from them. Or as Clarke and Silberstein point out:

More information is contributed by the reader than the print on the page. That is,

readers understand what they read because they are able to take the stimulus beyond

its graphic representation and assign it membership at the level appropriate group of

concept already stored in their memories (schemata)...The reader brings to the task

aformidable amount of information and ideas, attitudes and beliefs. This knowledge

coupled with the ability to make linguistic predictions, determine the expectations the

reader will develop as he/she reads. (Clarke & Silberstein, 1977, pp.136-137)

Thus, reading comprehension is governed by "...the principle that every input is mapped against some existing schema and that all aspects of that schema must be compatible with the input information" (Anderson et al., 1977, p.369) before a complete comprehension can be achieved.

## II. STRATEGIES TO ACTIVATE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE IN READING

There are several teaching techniques that help readers use their past information, which improves understanding. The pre-reading phase's main instructional techniques are these. They are various but have a lot of the same significance. To put it another way, no technique is better than the others in terms of how much it encourages the reader to become activated before reading. Some are most effective in triggering readers' prior reading experience with literary literature. Others are generally helpful with ones that provide information. These methods play a key role in determining how prepared students are to tackle a material by drawing on their existing knowledge.

### 2.1 Activating Prior Knowledge through Answering Questions

By posing questions that readers must respond to, the teacher aids in improving reading comprehension. Prior to the beginning of the reading, these queries are presented. The readers will be using their prior knowledge to help them in their quest for solutions. The readers encounter some knowledge that has already been engaged once they are inside the text. As the reader becomes aware of how much he already knows about the text, he has the confidence to focus on what he perceives as being novel. This should speed up reading and help the reader concentrate so that the content is thoroughly processed. These questions' primary purpose is to prompt the reader to make educated guesses regarding the text's structure, substance, beginning, and conclusion. These queries can be used to direct the reader while they are reading as well (Labiod, 2017).

### 2.2 Activating Background Knowledge through KWL Strategy

Ogle developed the KWL method in 1987. A three-step learning process is used. According to Ogle, OMalley, and Chamot (1990: 170), this method is applied. Three columns make up the chart that is presented to the learner. The learner includes what he already knows about the subject in the first column. In other words, he is activating his existing knowledge in this first phase. The learner asks questions about items he wants to know in the second column. The learner and after are listed in the third column. Interacting with new input indicates what he has captured as new knowledge to be built on what he had previously stored. This strategy is viewed as a collection of strategies. The first involves the activation of pre-existing knowledge frames. The student utilizes the second approach to focus his attention on what he is trying to learn. In the final stage, the learner employs a third technique, which is a form of summary, to determine what he has gained as new knowledge (Labiod, 2017).

### 2.3 Activating Prior Knowledge through Prediction

Prediction and anticipation, which are used interchangeably, are effective strategies for activating readers' prior knowledge before and during reading; DeLeew and Many (1965: 118) state that: "*anticipation means that the readers' mind is ahead of his reading, preparing the way.*" In other words, the reader puts hypotheses or states guesses before and while reading in an attempt to prepare himself for confirmations of these hypotheses as he begins and continues reading.

Readers' predictions are based on existing knowledge. When the reader makes assumptions about what he will find in the text, he is activating and bringing to the surface previously held knowledge. This knowledge is proven or disproved in the form of alternatives, and is then either expanded and saved, or replaced and changed. If the reader has little knowledge of the subject matter of the book, prediction is unlikely to occur (Labiod, 2017).

This strategy ensures that the reader will actively participate in the reading. He never just depends on the text; he also draws from his own memory and creates connections to increase understanding. The reader will be best motivated to read the text using this strategy. According to (Dutta, 1994), reading instructors should encourage students to have good reactions to the texts they would be reading because this will make them more motivated to do so. This assistance consists of giving them engaging tasks designed to foster an open state of mind.

One crucial component that helps with prediction and thus activates prior knowledge is the title. Typically, it



provides a summary of the text's main points. The key is typically what unlocks the text door. According to (Dutta, 1994), the title aids the reader in setting expectations on the theme or subject of the piece. He recognizes that a teacher who gives his students a work's title but no actual text is offering them a helpful exercise to activate their existing knowledge in order to get ready to read.

The reader's prior knowledge storage, intelligence, and creativity all play a role in how successfully he or she uses the title as a tactic to activate knowledge and make predictions. It's challenging for readers of implicitly stated titles to languages spoken in other countries. They specifically request cultural competency which they have relatively mastered (Labiod, 2017).

The usage of key words is another technique employed in prediction to draw on readers' past knowledge. It's conceivable that some elements of the text will be reflected in the author's choice of terminology or lexis. Key words are terms that are important in a text. To put it another way, they aid in foreshadowing the text's main idea Labiod (2017). According to (Dutta, 1994), the key words can be used by the teacher to assist students anticipate what will be in the book since they give a sense of the world that the work is set in. He might offer a list of the text's major words and ask readers to indicate what those words' primary meanings are. This is perhaps a useful practice that helps the activation of prior information.

#### **2.4 Activating Prior Knowledge through Debate and Discussion**

Debate and discussion are two strategies for triggering readers' preexisting knowledge. Before entering the text's universe, readers participate in a class or group debate about its theme. This is a very helpful tactic that enables readers to share their knowledge (Labiod, 2017). According to Effective Reading Instruction (2006), a reader who is unfamiliar with the subject of the book will likely benefit from debate and be better equipped to read it. Each reader will therefore be focused on enlarging his schema while also learning from the experiences of other readers. The majority of the group will read with their past knowledge active, and a large percentage will succeed with the content.

As stated by Nuttall (1982, p.138), "debating is a good way of involving the student with the topic and exposing him to different points of view." debate continues to play a crucial part in education. The reader is likely to read with an internal will to continue that after being awakened. Debating engages the reader, replicates him, and piques his innate interest, in other words. In this way, you can prepare for an efficient reading experience.

#### **2.5 Activating Prior Knowledge through Semantic Mapping**

Semantic mapping is described by Dubin and Bycina (1991) as a word association activity. This technique begins with readers pouring out all of their thoughts on the subject of the book. On the board, these concepts are written down. The third phase involves organizing the information that has been written on the board into a map, a visual organizer, or a graphic organizer with the intention of connecting concepts to one another and describing the types of connections that exist between them. This strategy works well for improving reading comprehension and activating preexisting information.

The strategy's initial stage is essentially a task to activate prior knowledge. Readers try to infer everything related to the text's content from their already-existing stores. The creation of visual organizers then enables readers to consider prior knowledge and classify it according to preexisting schema (Labiod, 2017). What is more is that semantic mapping helps readers organize their ideas first on the board before moving on to that in their thoughts. As Zaid (1995) argues, "Students who use semantic mapping manifest considerable improvement in reading comprehension, written expression, and vocabulary development" (p.6). this is likely to enhance students in information processing and in accelerating their language learning. The reader is introduced to new language through the semantic map, most likely encountered in the text. In addition, thoughts and concepts are brought forward and connected. The process of understanding the material will therefore probably be simpler.

#### **2.6 Activating Prior knowledge through Advance Organizers**

Advance organizers support the activation of prior knowledge to improve reading comprehension. According to Anderson and Pearson (1988), an advance organizer is recommended when texts are implicit and readers have comprehension issues. A non-explicit text will probably get the reader into trouble. He won't know which of his prior knowledge relates to the text's theme, which makes it difficult or impossible for him to understand. An advance organizer is provided to the reader before they begin reading to aid in their comprehension of the material. The reader may see which parts of his preexisting stores are triggered to make the implicit information easier to understand by looking at this statement, which is probably beneficial. The key that unlocks the door to understanding and learning from the material is, therefore, an advance organizer (Labiod, 2017).

## 2.7 Activating Prior Knowledge through Previewing

Pre-reading activities that help to activate prior knowledge include previewing. The text's title, organization, and images are crucial components of this pre-reading exercise. It is expected of the reader to scan them rapidly and hazard educated assumptions regarding the text's subject matter. They act as a form of stimulation, encouraging the readers' pertinent prior knowledge to surface and be used to help them digest the text (Labiod, 2017).

With literary texts, previewing is typically done as a pre-reading practice. If the teacher gives the students a previewing exercise, it will help the readers' comprehension the most. Before reading a piece, the reader can improve his comprehension by reading the author's biography. Themes and writing style are reflections of the author's life. Thus, biographical information aids in readers' anticipation of the text's setting (Labiod, 2017). In addition, pre-readings regarding the text's setting can also help in placing the text in its proper context. When reading a work of black fiction, the reader will likely benefit from historical studies on slavery in the United States, racism and segregation of whites and blacks, and a broad understanding of the country's geography (Labiod, 2017).

## 2.8 Activating Prior Knowledge through Brainstorming

Another technique that may be useful in triggering preexisting knowledge is brainstorming. In most pre-reading prior knowledge activation methodologies, it serves as the starting point. With the aid of this technique, the reader is likely to bring anything that is now floating around in his head that he may believe is relevant to the text's subject. The practice of triggering the readers' preexisting schemas is essentially at the heart of this strategy (Labiod, 2017).

The term "brainstorming" has, according to Isaksen (1998), a number of different interpretations. It's viewed as a gathering when individuals engage in discussion with one another in an effort to contribute ideas. For some people, coming up with ideas is the same as brainstorming. So, once fresh thoughts are required, it is advised to hold a brainstorming session. The practice of triggering the readers' preexisting schemas is essentially at the heart of this strategy ; additionally, this activity allows you to express your creativity in any area you choose. Additionally, it offers a technique to solve issues in any field. That is to say, a group that is having trouble managing their work is likely to find a solution by setting up a brainstorming session (Labiod, 2017).

What is vital in brainstorming is to bring as many ideas as possible. In other words, readers must encourage so many ideas from their previously existing stores, with no regard for their quality but only for their quantity. When too many ideas are brought to the surface, the benefits of brainstorming are maximized. That is, as long as we have a large amount of brainstorming material, our chances of coming up with useful ideas are higher (Labiod, 2017). Feather (2004) stated that "brainstorming provides plenty of materials for making prediction" (p.82).

By using this strategy, the reader is more likely to be aware of what he understands about the topic of a given book before continuing to read it. According to Feather (2004), what is recorded in front of readers' eyes as thoughts or vocabulary items helps them remember what was said, build on it, correct or alter it themselves. Furthermore, brainstorming serves to activate the reader's schema globally in the sense that they will be aware in advance of the concepts, vocabulary, culture, grammatical elements, and genre structures that will most likely be encountered in the text to be read (Labiod, 2017).

Brainstorming also helps to ensure reader engagement. It stimulates readers by inviting incentive. The reason for this is that people can express themselves openly without fear of being blocked, as Bligh (2000) argues "it aims to unblock repressed thoughts"(p.220). To put it differently, the readers are given the confidence to say what they are afraid to say. Furthermore, this technique is built on group involvement, which ensures contact between members. This connection produces an eager atmosphere, which aids in bringing or boosting readers' interest in reading. Furthermore, brainstorming states a reason for reading. According to Feathers (2004), after recording the brainstormed ideas in a list, readers begin reading and verifying if what was brainstormed is correct or incorrect. As a result, kids will be reading with a goal in mind. The latter primarily assists in focusing attention, speeding up reading, and improving reading comprehension.

## III. CONCLUSION

Prior knowledge activation is a crucial aspect of effective learning and comprehension. When individuals engage in reading, they use their existing knowledge and experiences to make sense of the new information presented in the text. However, not all readers possess the necessary strategies to activate their prior knowledge effectively.

The use of effective reading strategies plays a significant role in facilitating prior knowledge activation. These strategies help readers connect new information with what they already know, enhancing their understanding and retention of the material. By employing various techniques

such as previewing, questioning, summarizing, and making connections, readers can actively engage with the text and activate relevant prior knowledge.

It becomes clear that Prior knowledge activation is critical since it provides the foundation for learning new information. When we engage our prior knowledge, we are simply recovering relevant information and experiences from our memory that are related to the current topic. This retrieval process not only helps us connect what we already know with what we are learning, but it also enhances comprehension and retention of new knowledge.

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# Exploring Identity Dynamics in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko* through different Paradigms: Marginality, Liminality, Alterity, Cultural Syncretism, Exilic Consciousness, and the Myth of Going Home

Rym Lina Mohammed-Azizi

PhD Candidate at the Doctoral School of Literary and Cultural Studies at Pécs University, Hungary

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**Abstract**— This article researches the complex experiences of Koreans residing in Japan as depicted in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*. The analysis is divided into three parts each of which consisting of different paradigms: marginalization, liminality and alterity, cultural syncretism and exilic consciousness, and the myth of returning home. It shows how they remain marginalized despite the passage of time which indicates that their existence is liminal as they negotiate a dense cultural identity oscillating between Korean heritage and Japanese societal norms. The idea of alterity captures this constant estrangement from Japan. Further, this study delves into how characters in this novel adopt a hybrid culture mixing both Korean and Japanese traditions. Lastly, it explores the myth of coming back to Korea that affirms emotional attachment to an idealized homeland that is barely attainable. *Pachinko* is also unique because it uses generations for its story line thereby revealing the transforming face of Zainichi experience marked out by resilience, cultural negotiations and long-term effects caused by displacement.



**Keywords**— Marginality, Liminality, Alterity, Cultural Syncretism, Exilic Consciousness

## I. INTRODUCTION

This paper provides a detailed summary and analysis of the novel *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee, which examines the lives of Koreans living in Japan, Zainichi. The paper highlights three main patterns underpinning the novel: constant marginalization, liminality and alterity faced by the Zainichi; cultural syncretism and exilic consciousness; and idealizing coming back home. In so doing, it strives to contribute to comprehending intricate narratives of displacement, identity, and resilience among Koreans living abroad in Japan during Korea's colonial era. The study of this novel gives an insight into how displacement continues to affect identities among Zainichi over time. Based on this framework, Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko* is evaluated through its paradigms such as marginality, liminality and alterity; cultural syncretism/exile consciousness; and returning home myth

making readers aware of how Zainichi Korean live in Japan. Throughout the story one clearly notices that Koreans are constantly faced with numerous hardships that come about due to systemic discrimination as well as social exclusion within their society.

## II. MIN JIN LEE'S *PACHINKO*: SUMMARY

Min Jin Lee, has garnered significant attention for its exploration of the experiences of the Zainichi, Korean individuals residing in Japan during and after the Japanese colonialism of Korea. The novel's examination of the Zainichi's complex identity and marginalization within Japanese society provides valuable insights into the lasting effects of Japan's colonization of Korea and the enduring impact on the Korean diaspora. The New York Times best seller *Pachinko* (2017) by Min Jin Lee is a historical novel



revolving around a Zainichi saga family spanning the years 1910-1989 in the times of colonized Korea, World War II and post-war era. As they try to navigate their lives in Japan. Divided into three parts, the novel is set in "Gohyang/Homeland 1910-1933", "Motherland 1939-1962", and "*Pachinko* 1962-1989" highlighting three generations. *Pachinko* opens in Yeongdo, Busan, Korea in 1910, with the 27-year-old Hoonie who comes from a well-off family and who suffers from physical deformities. Hoonie marries Yangjin who comes from a destitute family to help them survive in a time of scarcity and hardships. After Sunja, their fourth child and only girl, turns 13, Hoonie dies from Tuberculosis.

As Korea faces the challenges of The Great Depression in the 1930s, Yangjin takes on the responsibility of running a boarding house to make ends meet. Into their lives, comes Baek Isak, a Protestant minister from Pyongyang who stays at their boarding house on his way to Japan. Despite falling ill with tuberculosis, having been inspired by the prophet's marriage in the book of Hosea, Isak believes in sacrifices to God and offers to marry Sunja when he learns she is pregnant with the child of a wealthy fish broker, Koh Hansu. They eventually move to Osaka to live with Isak's brother, Yoseb and his wife, Kyunghee, in Ikaino, a Korean ghetto where immigrants face discrimination and poor living conditions and where no renting is allowed for Koreans.

In Osaka, Sunja gives birth to Noah and Mozasu, Isak's son. To alleviate financial struggles, Sunja begins selling kimchi in the market before securing a more stable job at Chungbo's restaurant, providing her with increased financial security. As a Protestant Christian, Isak refuses to show loyalty to the emperor after the colonial government enforced a mandate for Christians to bow at Shrines daily in Korea and weekly in Japan. Considered rebels by the Japanese, Isak is imprisoned, tortured, and eventually released to die at home. Noah becomes Sunja's pillar of strength and pride, excelling in school and becoming fluent in Japanese. Despite this, Noah yearns to assimilate as a Japanese person, adopting the name Nobuo Boku instead of Noa Baek, "Like all children, Noa kept secrets, but his were not ordinary ones. At school, he went by his Japanese name, Nobuo Boku, rather than Noa Baek; and though everyone in his class knew he was Korean from his Japanized surname, if he met anyone who didn't know this fact, Noa wasn't forthcoming about this detail" (Lee, 164).

In 1944, Koh Hansu reemerges in Sunja's life, warning her of impending war dangers and urging her to leave the city. Yoseb, however, remains skeptical of Hansu's advice and relocates to Nagasaki for a job opportunity. Sunja, Kyunghee, Yangjin, Chungbo, and the

children move to Tamagushi's farm, where the children begin learning Korean in preparation for a potential return to Korea post-war. Sadly, Yoseb, who has been located by Hansu and brought to the farm as well, succumbs to the severe burns he sustained in the bombing despite Kyunghee's unwavering efforts to take care of him. Hansu cautions everyone against the idea of returning to Korea due to the harsh conditions and political instability. Instead, he advises Sunja to prioritize personal interests, business, and safety over national identity.

Sunja settles in a new home in Ikaino, navigating challenges as Koreans in Japan who no longer hold citizenship and who are at risk of deportation in trouble cases. Sunja, Kyunghee, and Yangjin establish a confectionery stall, while Chungbo departs for Pyongyang to aid in the reconstruction of Korea. Noah enrolls in college at Waseda, with Hansu sponsoring his education, and Mozasu begins working at Goro's *Pachinko* parlor.

In 1965, Sunja relocates to Osaka to care for Solomon, the son of Mozasu, following the passing of his mother. Meanwhile, Noah discovers that his true father is not Isak, who raised him, but rather the Yakuza member Koh Hansu. In response, he abandons his studies at Waseda and moves to Nagano, assuming a new identity in a *Pachinko* establishment to repay Hansu, while cutting ties with his family and concealing his Korean origins. After Hansu tracks him down, Noah's mother pleads for his return, only for him to tragically take his own life after she leaves.

Solomon pursues higher education in Manhattan and secures employment at Travis Brothers. However, he is exploited by Kazu, a Japanese individual who used him to get the old woman, Sonoko Matsuda, into selling her home before dismissing Solomon. Feeling disillusioned, Solomon decides to follow in his father's footsteps and work in a *Pachinko* establishment.

As the book nears its conclusion, Sunja pays a visit to Isak's grave and learns from the caretaker that Noah had frequently visited as well. Delighted by this news, she places a photo of Noah on Isak's grave. The story concludes with Sunja reflecting on her life and all that she has experienced.

### III. SYNTHESIZING THE RELEVANT LITERATURE REVIEW: THE ZAINICHI'S SENSE OF DISLOCATION, IDENTITY CRISIS, OTHERING, INEQUALITY, MARGINALIZATION AND TRAUMA IN LEE'S *PACHINKO*

Lee's *Pachinko* explores the complex intersections of Korean identity, colonialism, and the immigrant experience in Japan for the Zainichi Korean community. The research paper titled "Immigrant's Sense of Dislocation and Identity Crisis" delves into the complex experiences of Korean immigrants navigating their displacement and search for identity in Japan, as portrayed in Min Jin Lee's novel *Pachinko*. The paper employs a multi-layered theoretical framework, drawing upon Salman Rushdie's concepts of belonging and memory, Stuart Hall's cultural identity theory, Homi K Bhabha's notions of mimicry, ambivalence, and hybridity, and Ashcroft, Griffith, and Tiffin's perspective on hybridity.

The paper highlights the profound sense of alienation and dislocation experienced by Korean immigrants in Japan, exemplified through the struggles of the novel's protagonist, Sunja. Her "authentic identity" is disregarded as she encounters prejudice and discrimination from the dominant Japanese society. This marginalization, rooted in ethnic prejudice, leads to a profound identity crisis among Korean immigrants. The research further explores the multifaceted nature of identity crisis through the character of Noa, who grapples with issues of class, culture, ethnicity, and prejudice. Despite assimilating into Japanese society, Noa's sense of belonging is shattered when he is confronted with his "otherness," ultimately leading to his tragic suicide.

The article additionally emphasizes that the Korean immigrant experience in "*Pachinko*" is not merely one of physical displacement but also a constant negotiation between their Korean heritage and the demands of their adopted Japanese culture. This struggle for belonging is further contextualized within the broader framework of diaspora studies, drawing upon Salman Rushdie's insights into the immigrant experience of loss, the longing for the past, and the challenges of reclaiming a lost homeland.

The study concludes by highlighting the persistent and evolving nature of identity formation for diasporic communities. It underscores how cultural and social norms of the adopted land, in this case, Japan's, significantly influence the shaping and reshaping of Korean identities. The use of multiple names by Koreans in Japan, as depicted in the novel, serves as a poignant symbol of this constant adaptation and negotiation of identity.

In a further article on the matter titled "The Saga of Unceasing Suffering: The 'Zainichi' and Cultural Precarity in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*", Arya argues that the Zainichi are an example of a marginal migrant community subjected to the processes of Othering, inequality, and marginalization represented in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*. The history of Zainichi is cheek by jowl with discrimination as it was launched by Japan's colonialism to Korea, and inappropriate Japanese immigration policies. Despite being permanent residents, they continue to face marginalization, violence, and suffering.

The author draws on the notions of precarity, uncertainty and instability of the Zainichi in Japan, that confronts many migrant populations, and which includes economic insecurity and the risk of various forms of violence. Meanwhile, Judith Butler's alternative reading foregrounds the instability and precariousness of precarity itself as coextensive with the precariousness and migrancy of migrants. Known as 'denizens,' migrants are seen to belong less than citizens, consequently being privy to limited benefits, which leads to social and cultural estrangement.

Min Jin Lee delves into the history of the Zainichi Koreans in her book *Pachinko*, highlighting the challenges the Baeks family faced from prejudice and other types of cultural disavowal. The book, which covers several generations, illuminates the difficulties Zainichi people encounter in Japanese society, from questions of acceptability to concerns about identity and belonging.

In order to comprehend the injustices and marginalization that marginalized groups experience, the author finds it essential to grasp the idea of othering. Processes known as "othering" generate marginality and enduring inequality based on a variety of group identities, including sex, race, ethnicity, and religion. This can result in xenophobia and prejudice, which can lead to violence and abuse of migrants.

In *Pachinko*, the oppression of the Zainichi in Japan is well captured. The Zainichi characters face discrimination and violence in Osaka; Isaak from the Baeks family is taken in wrongfully, arrested and jailed. The aspect of Isaak deteriorating through prison is brought further into reality by showing that the police force was oppressive and sadistic to accentuate Othering's ramifications on individuals and communities. Isaak is unfortunately beyond recognition when he is released: he looks old and sick. His family has to suffer badly, too-his children, Noah and Mozasu, are ridiculed and persecuted due to their so-called Zainichi identities. The case of that suicide incident even shows the mistreatment of Zainichi youth and other problems that the poor minority has to face.

The generation of the Zainichi is ill-fitted; Mozasu thus shifts to the *pachinko* business, detested by their colonizers, while Noah attempts to become adapted but gets horrifically rejected. Their struggles are symbolic of the intricacy and unsundered fight of immigrants trying to survive in an environment hostile to them.

Baeks family's trauma and estrangement serve as a constant metaphor for the migrants' broader experiences of race and culture. They have to make a home in Japan where they have to live as permanent outsiders who suffer from trauma, suffering, and violence each and every day. Such generations-long oppression and misery are used to underline ordinary experiences common to migrants. As such, through the case example of Zainichi Koreans in Japan, Othering, inequality, and marginalization come to light expressing a critical reflection on the treatment of the marginalized communities within the society.

#### IV. NAVIGATING IDENTITY: A MULTI-FACETED ANALYSIS OF LEE'S *PACHINKO* THROUGH MARGINALIZATION, LIMINALITY, ALTERITY, CULTURAL SYNCRETISM, EXILIC CONSCIOUSNESS, AND THE MYTH OF RETURNING HOME

The saga of the Korean diaspora in Japan, as depicted in Lee's novel *Pachinko*, provides a captivating exploration of the complex and multifaceted experiences of the Zainichi residing in Japan. At the heart of this narrative lies the intergenerational journey of identity formation, a process marked by both resilience and profound challenges. The novel delves into the intricate interplay of marginalization, liminality, and alterity that permeates the lives of the Zainichi, a Korean minority who find themselves occupying a liminal space, neither fully accepted by the dominant Japanese society nor entirely rooted in their ancestral homeland. Central to this Odyssey is the characters' negotiation of cultural syncretism, a constant and delicate balancing act as they strive to reconcile their Korean heritage with the realities of their Japanese surroundings. This uneasy coexistence of identities, coupled with the myth of an idealized "homecoming," underscores the exilic consciousness that pervades the lives of the Zainichi. The multigenerational narrative in *Pachinko* bears witness to the evolving nature of this diasporic experience, as each generation grapples with the challenges and opportunities presented by their liminal position.

#### Marginalization, Liminality and Alterity in Lee's *Pachinko*

##### Marginalization

Following their marriage, Sunja and Isak relocate from Yeongdo, Korea to Osaka, Japan in 1933, during the Japanese colonial period. Their migration is motivated by the aspiration for a better life and the prospect of improving their financial situation, with the ultimate goal of eventually returning to Korea. However, upon their arrival in Japan, the couple confronts the stark realities of discrimination and social marginalization. In Osaka, they join Isak's brother, Yoseb, and his wife, Kyunghee, in the Ikaino ghetto, a predominantly Korean neighborhood characterized by substandard housing conditions. The compulsory residence in the Ikaino ghetto is a manifestation of the discriminatory laws imposed on the Zainichi Korean community, which restricted their access to adequate housing and perpetuated their liminal status within Japanese society. In addition, the colonial government obliged Christians to bow at Shinto Shrines each morning in Korea, and once or twice a week in Japan. These are places of worship in the Shinto religion, which is indigenous to Japan and involves the veneration of kami. To the Japanese, this act is portrayed as patriotic and civic duty rather than a religious one, it is considered as a sign of loyalty to the emperor who was seen as a divine figure and deity in the Shinto belief. Despite the Japanese claims that the practice is purely patriotic and non-religious, the religious undertones of the Shrine rituals, led to resistance among Korean Christians, some of whom refused to comply and acknowledge loyalty to the emperor, including Isak, Yoo and Hu. This gesture made them seen as rebels by the Japanese authorities leading to their persecution and punishment. After Isak's imprisonment, Sunja did her best to work and provide for her family, only to meet Isak back home in a critical condition left to die. This further exemplifies the aftermath of the Korean immigrants who refuse to abide by the Japanese colonial rules and to submit to their dominance, and are consequently subjected to severe repressive measures. This systemic marginalization is compounded by the liminal positioning of the Zainichi, who occupy a precarious space between their Korean heritage and the Japanese social fabric.

##### Liminality

Representing a key term in performance studies, liminality was coined by Arnold van Gennep in (1908) and popularized by Victor Turner (1964) as part of anthropological studies, "the term may be said to designate a transitory and precarious phase between stable states...In liminality, participants have lost their former symbolic status, but they have not yet attained their new significance. Liminality, then, is an in-between of potent but dangerous formlessness" (Skjoldager-Nielsen and Edelman, 1, 2014). Sunja's first son, Noah, in *Pachinko*, exemplifies this liminality as he struggles to reconcile his Korean roots with

the Japanese context in which he was born and raised. Having already a Japanese name, to further veil his Korean origins, though born in Japan, Noah spoke perfect Japanese, did well at school, didn't believe in the existence of god and wanted to be identified as a Japanese, completely disregarding and masking his Korean heritage. However, this forced assimilation into Japanese society came at a cost, as Noah felt perpetually caught between two cultures, unable to fully embrace neither his Korean ethnicity nor his Japanese upbringing. After learning that his biological father is in fact Hansu and not Isak, he cuts ties with his family, moves to Nagano, gets married and doesn't reveal his Korean identity to his wife. However, once Hansu learns about his whereabouts and sends Sunja to visit him, he tragically took his own life, "Sunja hadn't gone to Noah's funeral. He hadn't wanted his wife and children to know about her, and she had done enough already. If she hadn't visited him the way she had, maybe he might still be alive" (Lee, 430). This profound sense of liminality and rootlessness experienced by Noah reflects the broader plight of the Zainichi, whose lives are marked by a constant negotiation between competing demands of their Korean and Japanese identities.

### Alterity

as a term used in different contexts; philosophical, literary and cultural, psychological, social, political and so on, it is used to refer to the state of being fundamentally different or "other" from the dominant social identity. In *Pachinko*, alterity is represented through the theme of otherness or the state of being different for the Zainichi. They are often seen as outsiders or "other" within Japanese society. Sunja and her family (Isak, Yoseb, Kyunghee), throughout the novel, and as being part of the Zainichi, try to navigate the challenges of assimilation and acceptance in a society that views them as different. Their alterity shapes their experiences, exclusion and hardship. For instance, Noah and Mozasu have different attitudes to deal with the discrimination they face, while Noah tries his best to assimilate with the Japanese identity and outperform his classmates, Mozasu's, on the other hand has a different attitude of handling the situation. He didn't hesitate to stand up for himself whenever he faced discrimination, as "Every day, before school began and after school ended, the bigger boys told Mozasu, 'Go back to Korea'" (Lee, 222). Mozasu's rebellious nature was a reaction to the marginalization and othering he experienced as a Zainichi, while Noah's more passive approach reflects the struggle to be accepted and the desire to shed his ethnic identity.

Even the third-generation Korean-Japanese characters, such as Mozasu's son Solomon, could not escape the profound sense of being an outsider and 'other' within

Japanese society, highlighting the enduring legacy of alterity experienced by the Zainichi. Despite being born in Japan and having parents born there as well, the fact that Solomon, and every third-generation Korean-Japanese, is still obliged to carry a Korean passport means they are viewed as the 'other' in Japanese society.

To some the term designates being the "other" in every case possible, and in both countries; Japan and Korea. For Yumi, "being Korean was just another horrible encumbrance, much like being poor or having a shameful family you could not cast off. Why would she ever live there? But she could not imagine clinging to Japan, which was like a beloved stepmother who refused to love you, so Yumi dreamed of Los Angeles" (Lee, 268). She wanted to go with Mozasu to America "to make another life where they wouldn't be despised or ignored. She could not imagine raising a child here" (Lee 268). Home in this sense is nowhere, other is always other with respect to the dominant society, and alterity cannot be unlearned or remedied. Much like Yumi, Noah views his Korean origins as a source of shame, "All my life, I have had Japanese telling me that my blood is Korean—that Koreans are angry, violent, cunning, and deceitful criminals. All my life, I had to endure this. I tried to be as honest and humble as Baek Isak was; I never raised my voice. But this blood, my blood is Korean" (Lee, 282). This ambivalence towards their ethnic identity is a common thread among the Zainichi characters in *Pachinko*, reflecting the profound psychic toll of being cast as perpetual outsiders.

The notions of alterity and liminality are further exemplified when Solomon, the third-generation Korean-Japanese character, goes back to Korea. Still viewed as the other, Solomon and his wife Phoebe, who speaks Korean, are regarded as Korean immigrants of some kind and have a reputation of being "bad Koreans." Feeling that neither Japan nor Korea is truly home for them, they simply play along as Japanese tourists. Solomon's boss, Kazu, tells him that Koreans and Chinese are not treated fairly in Japan, even if they were born there. They do not have equal job opportunities and are unable to rent properties easily. That is mainly due to the deeply entrenched societal biases and discrimination against their foreign heritage which prevents them from ever feeling a true sense of belonging no matter how long they have lived in the country.

### The Characters' Cultural Syncretism and Exilic Consciousness

The saga in *Pachinko* further delves into the theme of cultural syncretism and exilic consciousness that permeates the lives of the Zainichi. The narrative captures the intricate interweaving of Korean and Japanese cultural influences, as the characters grapple between their



hybridized identities, caught between the allure of their ancestral legacies and the realities they confront in Japan. According to Cambridge dictionary, syncretism refers to “the combination of different religions, cultures and ideas”. The term “cultural syncretism” was first used by scholars to describe the blending of beliefs and the identification of the most authentic and original expressions, in contrast to different or similar forms of religious and cultural expression (Nel, 2, 2017). Currently being used in different contexts, the term originates in Greek culture, “The earliest use of the concept is found in Greek culture to designate assimilation of diverse groups as a united cluster, and soon it became the notion of the unity or reconciliation of differing schools of thought, cultures and religions” (Nel, 2, 2017). Sunja, the matriarch of the family, embodies this cultural syncretism, blending her Korean roots with the Japanese context she navigates. This blending of beliefs and cultural expressions is also evident in the various members of the family, whether they fully embrace or struggle with their hybridity. For instance, during the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, Hansu and Sunja insisted that their children Noah and Mozasu, who were born and raised in Japan, speaking Japanese and immersed in Japanese culture, still must learn Korean, as there was always the possibility of returning to their ancestral homeland.

Other characters, like Hansu, Noah's father who is a well-off Yakuza, has his own viewpoints and priorities on dealing with this cultural syncretism rather than focus on his cultural liminal situation. He believes and advises Sunja and Kim that personal interest must be prioritized over politics, “The war will end soon, but not the way they think. The wealthy Japanese have already sent their families to the country. They've already converted their cash into gold. The rich do not care about politics; they will say anything to save their skin. You're not rich, but you're smart, and I'm telling you that you have to leave today.” (Lee, 184). To Kim, who works for him, he adds that business should also be over nation:

whenever you go to these meetings, I want you to think for yourself, and I want you to think about promoting your own interests no matter what. All these people—both the Japanese and the Koreans—are fucked because they keep thinking about the group. But here's the truth: There's no such thing as a benevolent leader. I protect you because you work for me... You lived with that farmer Tamaguchi who sold sweet potatoes for obscene prices to starving Japanese during a time of war. He violated wartime regulations, and I helped him, because he wanted money and I do, too. He probably thinks he's a decent, respectable Japanese, or some kind of proud nationalist—don't

they all? He's a terrible Japanese, but a smart businessman. I'm not a good Korean, and I'm not a Japanese. I'm very good at making money. This country would fall apart if everyone believed in some samurai crap. The Emperor does not give a fuck about anyone, either. So I'm not going to tell you not to go to any meetings or not to join any group. But know this: Those communists don't care about you. They don't care about anybody. You're crazy if you think they care about Korea...For people like us, home doesn't exist. (Lee, 210).

His viewpoints of prioritizing his interest over the nation can be further exemplified in the following quote, “Patriotism is just an idea, so is capitalism or communism. But ideas can make men forget their own interests. And the guys in charge will exploit men who believe in ideas too much. You can't fix Korea. Not even a hundred of you or a hundred of me can fix Korea” (Lee, 211).

Exilic consciousness, a further theme in *Pachinko*, is considered a byproduct of cultural syncretism. The narrative in *Pachinko* delves into the interplay between the characters' hybridized identities, caught between the allure of their ancestral legacies and the realities they confront in the Japanese context resulting in a state of constant exile. This state of perpetual liminality and the struggle to reconcile their Korean heritage with the Japanese environment in which they were born and raised, gives rise to a profound sense of exilic consciousness among the Zainichi characters. The characters in the novel grapple with a sense of displacement and disconnection from their homeland, as well as a longing for a place they may never truly belong. This feeling of being in exile is particularly poignant for the Zainichi, who are caught between their Korean heritage and their lives in Japan. Sunja, for example, longs to return to Korea but knows that her life and family are rooted in Japan.

The concept of exilic consciousness is further highlighted through the experiences of characters like Sunja's sons, Noah and Mozasu, and their struggles with identity. They grapple with their Korean heritage and the expectations placed on them by both Korean and Japanese societies, feeling like they do not truly belong in either.

Hansu's perspective on prioritizing personal interests over national identity can be seen as a further reflection of this exilic consciousness. His belief that ideas like patriotism and capitalism are just ideas, and that one must prioritize their own interests above all else, speaks to a sense of detachment from any sense of national identity or belonging.

Overall, the theme of exilic consciousness in *Pachinko* adds another layer of complexity to the characters' struggles with cultural syncretism and their search for a sense of place and belonging in a world where they may always feel like outsiders.

### The myth of Going Home

The characters in *Pachinko* often grapple with the idea of returning to their ancestral homeland, Korea, which represents a sense of belonging and identity. The concept of the "myth of return" holds great importance in classical diaspora literature, as it is thought to be ingrained in the consciousness of immigrants from the moment they arrive (Cakmak, 1).

The "myth of return" (Anwar, 1) refers to more than a mere demographic movement. In sociological and anthropological literature, while there are nuances, almost all immigrant communities are depicted as people motivated by the idea of returning to their homeland, while simultaneously struggling to maintain links with their place of origin. The myth of return represents a powerful emotional tie that diasporic communities maintain with their homeland, which serves as a cohesive force for consolidating the kinship boundaries of the community and renegotiating their identity. This concept, as highlighted by Dahya, is central to the experiences of immigrant communities, who are often motivated by the idea of returning to their place of origin while simultaneously struggling to maintain connections with it.

In *Pachinko*, the myth of return is a recurring theme that shapes the lives and decisions of the characters. For Hansu, the idea of return and the notion of 'home Korea' is dismissed as he thinks that they are "living for a dream of a home that no longer exists" (Lee, 203). While Yoseb believes that Korea is still considered home because his parents are there, Hansu tells him that they are not and that

They were shot. All landowners who were foolish enough to stick around were shot. Communists see people only in simple categories

Yoseb wept and covered his eyes.

The lie had to be told, and Hansu did not mind telling it. If the parents weren't dead already, Yoseb's and Kyunghee's parents would starve to death or die of old age inevitably. They could have very well been shot. The conditions in the communist-occupied North were awful. There were numerous landowners who'd been rounded up, killed, and shoved into mass graves. No, he didn't know for certain if Yoseb's parents were alive or not, and yes, he could have learned the

truth if he didn't mind risking some of his men to find them, but he didn't see the point of it. He didn't see how their lives could be useful for his purposes. (Lee, 203)

While it was indeed economically tough for Koreans to survive in South Korea, the communist-occupied north wasn't necessarily any better, as many landowners were killed for owning lands. This left the Zainichi with few to no ties to their homeland and a frail sense of returning, complicating the myth of return with the realities of a homeland torn apart by colonial and post-colonial legacies.

## V. CONCLUSION

The Korean experience in Japan is understood well through a number of thematic lenses such as marginalization, liminality, alterity, cultural syncretism and the myth of returning home. The novel powerfully portrays the ongoing problems that these Zainichi face including institutionalized racism and social alienation. Their life as "in-betweeners" who are both Korean and Japanese accentuates cultural negotiations' intricacy as they live with an alienating sense of otherness. On another hand, the blending of Korean and Japanese cultures is analyzed through cultural syncretism and exilic consciousness. Although there is a glimmer of hope for returning home in the future, this is not possible for most characters since they are part of Zainichi's past political realities. Generational changes in Zainichi experience can be observed through intergenerational *Pachinko* narrative which will also examine their identity formations and ongoing search for belonging amidst adversity. A more profound comprehension of the Koreans in Japan may be achieved if we see how underlining ideas like displacement or identity formation are represented within this text.

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# Decoding Desires: The Subconscious Motivations of Fan Fiction Authors

Shruti Singh<sup>1</sup>, Anam Khurshid<sup>2</sup>, Manvi<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of English, Patna Women's College, Patna, Bihar, India  
Email: shruti.k.singh27@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Department of English, Patna Women's College, Patna, Bihar, India  
Email: anamkhurshid870@gmail.com

<sup>3</sup>Department of English, Patna Women's College, Patna, Bihar, India  
Email: Manvi18022003choudhary@gmail.com

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**Abstract**— *Fan-Fiction, originating from early science fiction, has become a popular culture, fuelled by the digital age and online communities. Fan-fiction is a creative technique in which fans actively connect with current media texts by creating their own stories, frequently reinventing and building on the established worlds and characters of their favourite source material. From a psychoanalytical perspective, it offers a secure environment in which young people may project their unconscious desires and thoughts onto the characters and settings they love. They can virtually experience events that could be controversial, banned, or otherwise deviate from society standards by inventing alternate narratives. Despite its easy accessibility, it can also be a source of objectification, inappropriate content, fluctuating writing quality and stereotypes, which could morbidly influence the psyche of young authors and readers. This study investigates fan-fiction from a psychoanalytic standpoint, concentrating on its diverse themes and attractiveness to the Fan-fiction community, aiming to understand its effect on its prosumers.*



**Keywords**— *Fan-fiction, Psychoanalysis, violence, sex, audience base*

## I. INTRODUCTION

### Explication of the title

Fan-fiction is a participatory and transformative creative practice where fans actively engage with and reinterpret existing media texts. This unique form of creative expression involves fans of a particular media franchise crafting their own narratives, often reimagining and expanding upon the established worlds and characters of their beloved source material.

Fan-fiction “refers to stories produced by fans based on plot lines and characters from either a single source text or else a “canon” of works; these fan-created narratives often take the pre-existing story world in a new, sometimes bizarre, direction” (Bronwen Thomas, 2011, p.1).

While fan fiction has been present in various forms for decades, linked to early science fiction periodicals in the 1920s and 1930s, the digital age has propelled it to new heights, fostering vibrant online communities and sparking academic interest in the cultural implications of fan-created content.

The term ‘fan-fiction’ itself originated in 1939 within the science fiction community, initially used derogatorily to distinguish between amateur sci-fi fiction and professional ‘profiction.’ It resurfaced in a 1944 fandom handbook called *Fancyclopedia*, edited by John Bristol Speer, who is widely recognized as the first prominent fan historian. Bristol, in his first edition of *Fancyclopedia* describes fan fiction as “ordinary fantasy published in a fan magazine. Properly, the term means fiction about fane, or sometimes



about pros, and occasionally bringing in some famous characters from stf stories.”(Speer, 1944, p-31).

### Enduring Popularity of Fan Fiction

Fan fiction, traditionally confined to the outskirts of literary discourse, has emerged as a dynamic and developing phenomenon, drawing scholarly interest across disciplines. The Daily Star Magazine describes “...ascent of digital and physical platforms and social media has played a pivotal role in fostering fan-fiction's popularity as an engaging "third space" for storytelling.”

(Zaman, K. R. A. N. A. T., 2023).

In the contemporary epoch, fan-fiction is continually thriving with a number of websites publishing stories curated by anonymous authors under peculiar pen names. Apart from easy accessibility through the means of Internet, there are several other factors that attributed to the growing popularity of Fan-Fictions. Some of them are:

### Participatory Culture and Literary Agency

In the curation of a “fan fiction”, authors craft their own stories within existing fictional universes. Fanatics actively engage in and modify the storylines of their preferred media, demonstrating their agency in co-creating the stories they cherish. This interactive element heightens the audience's roles in the narrative process, while also encouraging a closer bond with the original content. "Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture" by Henry Jenkins, explores the nature of fan culture, as a form of creative expression within a broader participatory framework. He argues “Fans are not passive consumers of mass-produced commodities but active social agents who resist the meanings inscribed in texts and who produce their own meanings in defiance of the intentions of the producers.” (Jenkins, 2012).

### Diverse Interactions

Fan fiction is not constrained to any one genre or format. Fans are able to go deeper into and add to their preferred storylines because of this diversity. Pierre Lévy's *Cyberculture* documents the rise of interconnectedness resulting from the Internet. A core feature of cyber-culture, Levy argues, is the development of virtual communities "constructed from related interests and knowledge, shared projects, a process of cooperation and exchange, independent of geographic proximity or institutional affiliations."(Lévy, 2001).

The fandom thus, is a type of online community. Communities devoted to fan fiction are enhanced through involvement and conversation. Social media, forums, and comments are common ways for authors and readers to interact, fostering a feeling of community around shared interests and artistic expressions.

### Identity and Representation

Fan-fiction, subsequently, gives readers and consumers a platform to express their creativity beyond what is presented in the official canon while interacting with, influencing, and developing a connection with the characters and plots of the fictitious universes that interests them. Fan fiction compensates in the representational gaps in mainstream media by facilitating more inclusive and varied narrative as fans frequently utilize fan fiction as a forum to delve further into stories and characters that were either undeveloped or ignored in the original source material. Fan-fiction becomes a space for fans to negotiate identity and representation, challenging traditional norms present in mainstream media. In *Geek Hierarchies, Boundary Policing, and the Gendering of the Good Fan*, Kristina Busse discusses how fandom serves as a dynamic site of negotiation, “a place where many fans work on and at odds with their identities.” (Busse, 2013).

### Namelessness

Fan fiction writing is heavily reliant on anonymity, which is sometimes cited as a distinguishing feature of the genre. Pseudonyms or online aliases are frequently used by fan fiction authors in place of their true names. Online communities like FanFiction.net, Archive of Our Own (AO3), and others are where fan fiction is mostly exchanged and debated. Since user privacy is frequently given top priority on these sites, authors can register and post work without disclosing personal information. When authors want to portray a range of sexual identities or explore their own sexual desires, an oasis of protection is created through the use of pseudonyms or anonymity. Liberation from social conventions and expectations allows investigation of sexuality to the audience.

### Audience Base

A key component of the fan fiction phenomena is its active and varied readership. The audience demographics of fan fiction defy conventional assumptions by highlighting inclusion and embracing a diverse range of readers. However, with the advent of easily accessible internet facilities, the Fan-fiction has become has gained popularity in the newer generation of young adults. The young audience's involvement in fan fiction forums has become a notable facet of the genre's success. Research by Henry Jenkins (2004) highlights the prevalence of teenagers and young adults actively participating in fan fiction communities. Additionally, the anonymity of the internet makes defining the demographics of Fan-fiction prosumers difficult. A survey reaching over 10,000 Archive of our Own (AO3) users conducted by Centrumlumina in 2013 found that about 90% of respondents identified as female

and 4% as male, with a mean age of 25.1. (Centrumlumina, 2013).

### Probing the world of Fan Fiction

Fan-fiction's rising popularity can be attributed to its therapeutic value as a tool for self-examination. It allows the reader to explore aspects of them via the perspective of a different character and gives them the freedom to exaggerate their feelings or distance themselves from reality as they see fit.

Because they are produced just for enjoyment, the stories collected within this spectrum often benefit from not having to follow the formulaic, marketing paradigm, which makes them simple to connect with.

Young authors and readers may address difficult subjects like relationships, identity, and society expectations in a fictitious setting, via a customized perspective, including graphic, sexual content as well as delicately penned love interactions. According to Penley's (1992) research, fan fiction is distinguished by a wide range of sexual representations, such as LGBTQ+ themes and various relationship dynamics. He observes, "Fan fiction serves as a canvas for diverse sexual representations, fostering inclusivity and addressing gaps in mainstream media's portrayal of relationships and identities." (Penley, 1992).

However, the darker sides of erotic Fan-fiction include objectification of characters, inappropriate or dangerous content, and explicit material released without permission. Fan-fiction frequently uses stories about sexual violence or the several BDSM practices (dominance and submission, bondage and discipline, and/or sadism and masochism) to spotlight undiscovered erotic writing. It can occasionally attract young people, blur the boundaries between fact and fantasy, and propagate unfavorable stereotypes.

Generally speaking, a work is limited through disclaimers, passwords, or age restrictions, if it contains explicit content, such as details about genitalia or sexual acts, and it is graded as such. But because ratings are assigned by the writers or specific Fan-fiction pieces, there are huge variations in the quantity and quality of sexually explicit content within this classification. Additionally, due the prevalence of anonymity and lack of content authorization, "... fan-fiction represents an arena where teenagers and other prosumers are given the ability to explore sexuality in a myriad of forms without supervision." (Barth, 2018).

Fan-fiction's potential benefits or drawbacks for teens may not be easily determined, thus, this study attempts to investigate this question using a psychoanalytic framework.

### Conceptual Framework

Psychoanalytic reading of Fan-Fiction

Psychoanalysis explores how unconscious processes influence one's ideas and behaviors, concentrating on how desire and imagination function in human psychology. Fan fiction may reveal suppressed or unconscious urges, anxieties, and conflicts as authors and readers wrestle with the concepts and plots, they create or read. Fan fiction artists and readers in this imaginative and interactive fan culture can have their motives, wants, and psychological components exposed through a psychoanalytic analysis of their works.

### Freudian Analysis

Developed in the late 19th century by the Austrian neurologist and psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, Freudian psychoanalysis is a revolutionary theory that introduced new perspectives on the human mind, emphasizing the role of the unconscious and the complex interplay between conscious and unconscious processes. It includes an array of interconnected ideas and therapeutic approaches meant to explore the subtleties of human behavior and the unconscious mind, as well as to comprehend and cure mental illnesses. "Freudian psychoanalysis of literature unveils the subconscious layers of narrative, transforming characters and plotlines into intricate expressions of repressed desires and unresolved conflicts." (Smith, 2019) The present analysis will employ Freudian psychoanalytic ideas to dissect the layers of fan fiction, exploring the ways in which authors and readers interact with and modify established tales to fulfil subconscious urges and resolve personal issues.

### The tripartite structure of the mind

Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory is based largely on his notion of the id, ego, and superego. This tripartite mental structure is collectively referred to as the 'structural model' or 'structural theory' of psychoanalysis. According to this idea, there are three interconnected parts that make up the human mind, and each one has a unique purpose and role in determining behavior and personality.

The 'Id' is the mind's primal, instinctive portion, which follows the pleasure principle and seeks for instant satisfaction for its most fundamental needs and desires. It is impetuous and disregards social conventions and repercussions.

The logical, grounded portion of the mind is called the Ego. It emerges as a result of the limitations and expectations of the outside world. Operating under the reality principle, the ego seeks to fulfil the id's goals in a realistic and socially acceptable way.

The internalized moral norms and ideals of society are symbolized by the Superego. It incorporates cultural influences, parental expectations, and society conventions

to serve as a moral compass. When someone deviates from moral or ethical norms, the superego, which aspires for perfection, imposes a sensation of guilt or shame.

Three agencies of the mind vie for dominance, as suggested by Freud in "The Ego and the Id": the superego's crushing, even authoritarian demands for submission to its dictates, and the id's ferocious passions and demands for satisfaction, on the one hand, make this an ongoing and frequently futile task for the ego to master. Psychoanalysis's goal was "to strengthen the ego," or, as Freud famously stated ten years later, "where the id was, there the ego shall be." (Freud, 2018).

At its foundation, fan fiction is an expression of desire. As expressed in his idea of the id, Freud's theory of desire postulates that our unconscious brains are motivated by unmet desires and innate urges. Fan fiction authors frequently work with characters and their relationships, creating stories and settings that would not have been possible in the original work. Through this technique, fans can realize unfulfilled thoughts and wants and find a creative outlet for their inner longings.

### **Freud's Oedipal complex**

Freud established this idea of the Oedipal complex, based on the Greek mythical character Oedipus, who unintentionally carries out a prophecy by killing his father and marrying his mother, as a metaphor to explain a critical period in early infancy psychosexual development. The Oedipal complex is seen as a component of Freud's larger psychosexual theory, which holds that there are discrete phases in human development, each distinguished by the predominance of particular erogenous zones. Particularly during the phallic period, or about between the ages of 3 and 6, the Oedipal complex takes place. Unconscious cravings for the opposite-sex parent, as described in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* "...With regular frequency, the primary inclination is the child's sexual stirring toward the parents, which is mostly already differentiated owing to the attraction of the opposite sex" (Freud, 1905) and rivalry with the same-sex parent are at the core of this condition. This involves competition with the father and attraction to the mother for boys. In contrast, females feel competition with their mothers and desire to their fathers. For psychological growth to be healthy, the Oedipal complex must be resolved. This involves internalizing social standards and identifying with the same-sex parent. According to Freud, a successful resolution results in the superego's creation, which shapes moral and ethical behavior.

Fan fiction authors often explore sexual and familial dynamics between characters by delving into the character interactions themselves. They show characters' connections

with their parents or other parental figures, adding aspects of competition, desire, and the emergence of unconscious conflicts to explore the intricacies of Oedipal themes.

### **Sublimations**

Reading *The Harz Journey* by 'Heinrich Heine', inspired Sigmund Freud to develop the concept of sublimation. The narrative told the tale of Johann Friedrich Dieffenbach, a boyhood dog observer who became a surgeon by amputating the tails of dogs he saw. Although Freud identified 'sublimation' as one of the developed defensive mechanisms, Anna Freud expanded on this concept in her book *The Ego and the Mechanisms of the Defense*. Sublimation is a psychological defense mechanism wherein idealized or socially inappropriate impulses are unintentionally changed into behaviors or activities that are acceptable in society. The original, frequently troublesome urge may undergo a long-term conversion as a result of this change. Freud describes this notion as "...diversion of sexual driving forces from sexual aims, and their direction to new ones" (Freud, 1905).

By utilizing artistic expression to channel their dreams, feelings, or wants, fan fiction writers frequently partake in sublimation. Fan fiction reworking, or reinterpreting, previous storylines can reflect other outcomes, pairings, or denouements that are consistent with personal creative vision.

**Hypothesis:** Depiction of morbidly explicit themes in the works of fan fiction is restricting the development of a healthy psyche amongst the young adults and teenagers.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The objectives of the research project are:

- to scrutinize, from a psychoanalytic vantage point, the varied explicit tropes of Fan-fiction and its appeal in the Fan-fiction community.
- To analyze, investigate and bring out whether consummation of explicit content is related to one's psychic development, or not.

This research report proposes to present an analysis of examining a few popular works from this field from a psychological lens.

### **Methodology**

The procedure acquired to carry forward the research is through the close reading of the reference texts by keeping in mind the employment of language, theme of repressed desires, psychoanalytical theories, the style of the text, and the background, the narratives were written in. For this extensive analysis, the study of the phenomenon of the

online Fan-fiction community and psychoanalytical theories will be taken as the secondary reference material.

To study and analyse, the interactions within the fan fiction community, the research will feature a survey on a group of more than 100 individuals, belonging to various demographic ranges. This will study people's interactions with and contributions to fan-created content, and the influence of factors such as their age, preferences, fandom background, and social disposition.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### ***Love, Sex, and Feminism: A Critique of Fifty Shades of Grey***

Katherine E. Argo's presentation provides a nuanced viewpoint on the contentious trilogy. She objects to the widespread perception that *Fifty Shades* is just 'housewife pornography' and stresses the significance of comprehending the work's cultural influence.

Argo acknowledges the compelling storyline of the trilogy while urging readers to look past the graphic material. Examining the linguistics, sentence structure, and imagery of the trilogy, the talk explores its literary elements. She draws attention to the prose's simplicity, which could be demeaning to mature readers despite being understandable to a wide readership. Although she concedes that visuals can effectively transport readers, she objects to its exploitation of erotic desires.

The article discusses feminist perspectives on *Fifty Shades of Grey* and the impact of the book on societal views. It emphasizes the need for open discussions and encourages women to maintain their beliefs. The article also explores the relationship between biblical teachings and love and sex, comparing characters' actions to 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a's Christian concept. It praises Ana's unconditional love and criticizes Christian actions. The article also addresses explicit sex, warning against glorifying punishing or non-consensual activities and highlighting the difference between consenting and immoral content.

**Chelsea J. Murdock's book, *Making Fanfic: The (Academic) Tensions of Fan Fiction as Self-Publication*** explores the tension between academic norms and the self-publication of fan fiction. With nearly 750,000 words of fan fiction, Murdock addresses scepticism from peers and the challenges she faces as a researcher and fan writer. The study examines the challenges of incorporating Fan-fiction into academic talks and resumes, given common negative perceptions in academia.

The article advocates for a reassessment of fan fiction in academic discourse, challenging biases and promoting a more inclusive understanding of scholarly production. By

introducing the concept of 'making fanfic' through a cultural rhetoric lens, she positions fan writing as a valuable, rhetorical, and community-driven practice. She argues that fanfic is not merely an artefact but an active, meaningful act of meaning-making within a community context.

The piece of content talks about fan fiction, which is a type of creative writing in which readers rewrite and enhance preexisting media, such books or TV series. It highlights the historical origins of fan fiction, tracing it back to oral traditions and pointing out that the science fiction series *Star Trek* was responsible for its contemporary growth in the 1960s.

Contextualization, extended timelines, focalization, moral realignment, genre shifting, crossovers, character dislocation, personalization, emotional intensification, eroticization, and slash—a particular style of fan fiction featuring homoerotic relationships—are just a few of the many forms of fan fiction that the author explores.

It addresses the reasons people write fan fiction, emphasizing the importance of imagination, creative speculating, and the book also recognizes the difficulties and disputes surrounding fan fiction, such as arguments over its validity and sporadic run-ins with copyright holders.

***"The Writing and Reading of Fan Fiction and Transformation Theory"*** delves into the immersive world of readers of fan-fiction. Dedicated and full of energy, fans write about their favourite shows and engage in other activities. Fan fiction centred around 'House, M.D.' characters is the study's main focus, especially the romantic relationship between House and Cameron. It presents an argument against the use of the metaphor 'poaching' and presents the idea of 'transformed universes' to characterize worlds found in fan-fiction.

The essay explores the idea of immersion by referencing transportation theory, which takes into account engagement in the imagination, emotions, and cognitive domains. In order to highlight how compelling fan fiction may be, the study links this intense emotive experience to the condition of flow, stressing that the best reading experiences can result from reading compelling fan fiction.

Examples from fan fiction texts illustrate how readers are transported into the story-world, constructing mental images and engaging with the characters' perspectives. It also connects immersive reading to the concept of flow, suggesting that fan fiction provides a challenging yet rewarding reading experience for fans.

The article explores how readers become engrossed in the altered worlds created by fan writers, highlighting the



immersive quality of fan fiction. The author emphasizes how crucial fan communities and their interpreting traditions are to producing a well-rounded and engrossing experience. The work offers a thorough examination of the elements that influence fan fiction immersion overall.

**Roundtable: *The Past, Present and Future of Fan Fiction* by Lincoln Geraghty, Bertha Chin.**

In this thoughtful roundtable debate, academics Kristina, Francesca, Khursten, and Louisa offer a variety of viewpoints on the changing nature of fan fiction and its value to academia. Literary scholar Kristina highlights a significant research gap that considers fan fiction as a unique literary form and literary scholar Francesca sees a convergence between standard literary criticism and fan fiction, pointing out that fan studies ideas are aligned with the application of affect theory and network theory to literary analysis.

As a scholar studying Asian fan cultures, Khursten adds her expertise and emphasizes the valuable role that fan literacies play in questioning traditional gender norms. In her analysis of fan fiction in 2022, media studies expert Louisa takes into account a variety of digital venues and promotes dialogue about new trends and subgenres. The academics explore the difficulties brought about by the quick changes in how different generations view fiction as well as the significance of recognizing the variety of fan fiction forms that exist within micro communities.

Moreover, the researchers explore how evolving platforms and user interfaces impact fan fiction developments. They emphasize how limitations imposed by various platforms—such as character restrictions on USENET and the significance of metadata and tags on platforms like AO3—have a creative influence. From a literary, cultural, and technological standpoint, the roundtable offers a thorough examination of fan fiction's aspects.

Within the ever-changing fan fiction community, conversations on sites such as Live Journal, AO3, Tumblr, Twitter, and TikTok take on many shapes. Francesca observes how fan fiction has spread to visual platforms such as TikTok, where it has given rise to embodied performances. Khursten emphasizes the impact of the economy on international fan communities. In the future, they envision a varied and welcoming environment for fan fiction research that embraces the dynamic inventiveness seen in fan groups.

**Hellekson, K. (2009). *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet*. In K. Hellekson & K. Busse (Eds.), *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet* (pp. 3-28). McFarland.**

Hellekson and Busse provides insights into the impact of the internet on fan fiction communities, exploring how online platforms have influenced the creation and dissemination of fan-created content. They discuss about the changing landscape of fan fiction and communities with the advent of the internet. It provides a foundation for understanding the role of online spaces in shaping fan fiction practices.

**Baym, N. (1999). *Tune In, Log On: Soaps, Fandom, and Online Community*. Sage Publications.**

This paper explores the intersection of soap opera fandom and online communities. While not

exclusively focused on fan fiction, it provides insights into how the internet has facilitated fan interaction and creative expression within specific media fandoms.

**Jenkins, H. (2004). *The Cultural Logic of Media Convergence*. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 7(1), 33-43.**

While not exclusively focused on fan fiction, this paper by Henry Jenkins discusses the broader concept of media convergence, providing insights into how the internet has facilitated the convergence of different media forms and influenced fan practices.

***Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture* by Henry Jenkins** is a seminal work that explores the participatory nature of fan culture, specifically focusing on television fans and their engagement with media texts. The book, published in 1992, delves into the practices of fans, emphasizing their active role in appropriating and transforming media content.

***Participatory Culture and Appropriation*:** Jenkins argues that fans are not passive consumers but active participants in the creation of meaning. He introduces the concept of "poaching" to describe how fans appropriate elements of media texts, including characters, narratives, and symbols, and transform them according to their own interpretations. "Fans are not passive consumers of mass-produced commodities but active social agents who resist the meanings inscribed in texts and who produce their own meanings in defiance of the intentions of the producers. The book explores the sense of community among fans, emphasizing the formation of subcultures with their own norms, values, and practices.

***Fan Fiction as a Form of Resistance*:** Jenkins discusses fan fiction as a central aspect of fan culture, representing a form of resistance to mainstream media narratives. Fans engage in writing their own stories, exploring alternative plots, character relationships, and worlds, challenging the authority of the original creators. "Fan fiction writers reject

the notion of authorship as proprietary and instead engage in a series of complex negotiations over the ownership and control of narrative."

**Identity Construction:** The book explores how fan culture contributes to the construction of individual and collective identities. Fans often find empowerment and a sense of belonging through their engagement with media texts, shaping their identities in the process. "Fans draw on popular cultural materials to construct both individual and group identities and to articulate resistant social and cultural positions."

**Media Fandom as Participatory Democracy:** Jenkins suggests that media fandom can be seen as a form of participatory democracy, where fans actively engage with media content, negotiate meanings, and create their own cultural productions. This participatory aspect challenges traditional hierarchical models of media consumption. "Media fandom can be viewed as a form of participatory democracy, as a mode of subcultural resistance, and as a vehicle for the acquisition of new literacies." (Jenkins, 1992).

In summary, "Textual Poachers" by Henry Jenkins provides a foundational exploration of fan culture, emphasizing the participatory and transformative nature of fan practices. Jenkins' insights continue to shape the academic study of fan fiction and participatory culture.

### Research Plan

The paper probes the history and select works of this genre. In the select works, prospective authors and artists are furnished with an opportunity to demonstrate their inventiveness inside a pre-existing framework, experimenting with various plots, character arcs, and situations. Fan-fictions act as a medium, to talk about crucial subjects like mental health and the representation of LGBTQ+ spectrum, as well as an effective form of fleeting escape from the pressures and difficulties encountered in everyday life.

The target audience of his writing style is formed by young adults and teenagers, who interact with well-known plotlines, using fan fiction as a platform to develop their reading comprehension, language skills, and writing skills. However, Fan fiction is typically written by amateurs, hence its caliber and consistency can vary greatly. In fact, the texts examined in this paper are notorious for centralizing sexually explicit content, toxic masculinity, unhealthy lifestyle and unattainable parasocial relationships in their plotlines because there is no provision of authorization or censorship. And as a young or inexperienced reader, this leads them to believe that this is usual and accurate when it isn't.

The texts studied in the paper highlight the preoccupation of counter-productive and objectionable themes, perpetuated through fan fictions and puts, the psychic developments and the subconscious motivations of fan-fiction community, under extensive perusal. This paper features application of psychoanalytical postulations to debate the reverberations of such themes on the young readers.

### Synopsis of the Select Fan fiction texts

#### Fifty shades Trilogy by E.L. James

##### ▪ About the author: E.L. James

E.L. James, born Erika Leonard James, gained global recognition for her *Fifty Shades* trilogy, starting her career in television production before transitioning to writing. Initially crafting fan fiction online, James transformed her work into a trilogy comprising *Fifty Shades of Grey*, *Fifty Shades Darker*, and *Fifty Shades Freed*. The series, exploring the provocative relationship between Anastasia Steele and Christian Grey, became a cultural sensation despite polarized critical reception due to its explicit content and themes of BDSM. The books achieved immense commercial success, becoming bestsellers worldwide and sparking film adaptations.

##### ▪ Summary: Fifty Shades – Trilogy

The trilogy by E.L. James follows the passionate and tumultuous relationship between Anastasia Steele, an inexperienced college graduate, and Christian Grey, a wealthy and enigmatic entrepreneur.

*Fifty Shades of Grey* follows the evolving relationship between Anastasia and Christian. The novel begins when Anastasia reluctantly agrees to interview Christian on behalf of her roommate for their college newspaper. Their encounter marks the beginning of an unconventional and intense romantic journey. But Anastasia soon discovers his inclination toward control and dominance in intimate relationships. As their relationship progresses, Anastasia grapples with Christian's complex desires, particularly his interest in BDSM (Bondage, Discipline, Dominance, Submission, Sadism, and Masochism). Despite her initial hesitance and apprehension, Anastasia becomes entangled in a passionate and sexually charged affair with Christian.

The narrative ends with Anastasia confronting Christian about his need for control and the intense emotional impact it has on her. Their relationship reaches a crossroads, setting the stage for further exploration and development in the subsequent novels of the trilogy.

In *Fifty Shades Darker*, the second book of the trilogy, Anastasia Steele navigates her complex relationship with Christian Grey after their separation at the end of the first novel. As the story unfolds, Anastasia begins a new job at a publishing house while Christian struggles with his feelings of loss and his desire to win her back.

Anastasia and Christian reunite, cautiously rekindling their romance under different terms. Christian is determined to change and be more open in their relationship, while Anastasia demands more equality and transparency.

As they attempt to move forward, both protagonists are haunted by their pasts. Anastasia grapples with Christian's past relationships, meanwhile, Christian is haunted by memories of his traumatic childhood and struggles to let go of control, which affects their intimacy and communication.

Throughout the story, Anastasia learns more about Christian's troubled upbringing, his emotional scars, his possessive tendencies, and tries to understand his complex personality. The book ends on a cliff-hanger, setting the stage for the final instalment, "Fifty Shades Freed," as Anastasia and Christian grapple with unresolved issues and the looming threats to their relationship.

In *Fifty Shades Freed*, the third and final book of the trilogy, Anastasia Steele and Christian Grey navigate the complexities of their married life while facing external threats and personal challenges.

The story begins with Anastasia and Christian's grand wedding, celebrating their union. As they embark on their honeymoon and settle into their married life, Anastasia embraces her role as Mrs. Grey while Christian tries to balance his controlling tendencies with being a supportive husband.

Their blissful honeymoon is short-lived as Jack Hyde, Anastasia's former boss who had an obsession with her, resurfaces seeking revenge. His actions pose a threat to their safety and happiness, leading to heightened tension and suspense.

Amidst the external threats, Anastasia discovers that she is pregnant, which brings both joy and anxiety to their lives. Their impending parenthood adds new layers of complexity to their relationship as they navigate their roles as expectant parents while dealing with the dangers posed by Jack Hyde.

The novel delves into the challenges faced by Anastasia and Christian as they attempt to protect their love and family from external forces.

Throughout the story, Anastasia and Christian confront their past traumas and insecurities, seeking to forge a future together while overcoming obstacles. The narrative

interweaves moments of intimacy, passion, and emotional turmoil as the couple strives to strengthen their bond and build a secure future. The book culminates in a climactic showdown with Jack Hyde, resolving the immediate threats to their lives. Anastasia and Christian emerge stronger, reaffirming their commitment to each other and their determination to face life's challenges as a united couple, marking a hopeful conclusion to their tumultuous yet passionate journey.

#### **"After" series by Anna Todd**

##### **▪ About the author: Anna Todd**

The *After* Series is a collection of fan fiction novels written by New York Times bestselling author Anna Todd, which was inspired by the One Direction band. Todd, who has always been a voracious reader, started creating tales on Wattpad under the pseudonym 'imaginator1D' when one of her most popular series, with over two billion reads, was published. Tessa, the main protagonist, is based on Anna Todd, Hardin, the male lead, is based on Harry Styles. In 2014, Simon & Schuster released Todd's adaptation of this Wattpad story and more than 12 million copies of the book have been sold worldwide, and in certain nations it is the top bestseller.

##### **▪ Summary: *After* – series**

*After*: Eager to meet new people, Tessa begins hanging out with Steph, her flat mate, and Hardin's group of friends. At a party, she surprises herself by kissing Hardin, which starts a pattern between them. Tessa eventually ends her connection with Hardin after he tells her he "needs" her (Todd, 2014, px.) even if she is still seeing Noah. Hardin's behavior changes as he becomes more willing to spend time with his father, Tessa, due to their growing relationship. However, their dating relationship only perpetuates arguments and sexual activity. Tessa kisses Zed in front of Hardin and agrees to go on a date with him. but later Hardin and Tessa confess their love, and Tessa loses her virginity to Hardin. Soon after they move in together, Hardin stays out all night without telling Tessa where he is, and shows up drunk the next day after a fight. They eventually make up, but Hardin still refuses to tell Tessa why he was in a fight. Tessa discovers that Hardin and Zed had a wager about who could steal her virginity first. By the end of the book, Tessa is sad, furious, and bewildered, asking Zed to tell her everything.

*After we collided*: When Tessa hears about Hardin's wager with the group, she feels deceived, saddened, and furious. When she visits Landon, he tries to apologize and explain his love to her. Once more shattering her heart, Tessa kisses an unidentified man in a pub after getting wasted. When Hardin comes to Landon for assistance, he tells her that he loved her and never intended for anything to happen

between them. After believing Hardin was leaving for London to see his mother, Tessa welcomes him back to her flat. After spotting Hardin with his mother Trish, she decides to put up with his misbehaviour. After finding out that her father has been hunting for her, Tessa makes the decision to never speak to her mother again.

Tessa makes an effort to make things right with Hardin, but they end up fighting once more and Hardin walks out on Tessa. Zed becomes close to Tessa, but she still has feelings for Hardin. Knowing this, Hardin fights Zed and gets taken into custody. Zed agrees when Tessa visits him in the hospital and begs him not to file charges. Tessa and Hardin make up, but on their walk together, she spots her father standing on the side of the road.

**After We Fell:** Richard was dumped by Carol due to his drunkenness, but Tessa and her boyfriend Hardin take him in to their flat. While Hardin mistrusts Richard and offers him money to leave, Tessa wants to let him stay so they may get to know one another. Tessa and Hardin talk about how Tessa moved to Seattle to be nearer to Vance Publishing, her place of employment.

For a few days, Tessa and Hardin don't talk after she relocates to Seattle. When Hardin sees her journal, she apologizes for hurting her and talks about the anguish their relationship has brought her. Hardin offers him a watch as payment for the debt when he discovers Richard severely battered in his flat.

Tessa goes with Hardin to his mother's wedding in London. The night before the wedding, they find Trish and Vance having sex, which causes them to argue. The following day, Trish marries her fiancé, and Tessa tells Kimberley about Vance's adultery. After talking about what happened, Hardin and Tessa learn that Vance is actually Hardin's father, much to the infuriation of Hardin, who storms out of the bar.

**After Ever Happy:** After learning about a mystery surrounding his mother's wedding, a furious Hardin breaks up with Tessa. He burns Trish's house on fire after breaking in, but Vance manages to get him out. Tessa informs Hardin that Vance assumed responsibility for him. After leaving the hotel, Hardin is discovered at a party high and intoxicated. When Tessa gets back to the US, she learns that her father passed away from a heroin overdose. After Richard's burial, Tessa and Hardin go to a farewell dinner for Landon, who is leaving for school in New York City. Tessa makes the decision to leave Vance Publishing and move to New York with Landon. The information hurts Hardin, but Landon reassures him of his friendship with Tessa. Tessa moved in with Landon and goes to work with Nora at a restaurant. Hardin enrolls in college and completes his studies.

Landon offers to host Hardin while he is in New York City for business. Tessa meets Hardin in her restaurant even though she works double shifts to avoid him. Tessa and Hardin reconcile and talk about their love. Tessa discovers "After," a book about their relationship, in his suitcase and confronts Hardin about it. He informs her that the book is the subject of a bidding war and that he is powerless to stop it from being released. Feeling slandered, Tessa declares their breakup, but to a surprise, Hardin's book becomes a New York Times Best Seller. Tessa sneaks into Hardin's book signing that night in order to listen in. As Tessa turns to go, Hardin catches her misinterpretation of a glance that was exchanged with a woman.

The epilogue of the book is marked after Tessa's graduation from NYU. Couple of years later, Hardin and Tessa meet again, at Landon's wedding. Having overcome their traumas and problematic past, they reunite and are shown committing to an engagement with each other. The last chapter of the series, showcases middle aged Tessa and Hardin sending off their kids to college.

### Summary: Short stories

#### Writers with Pseudonyms

Anonymity is a common factor in arena of fan-fiction. Fan fiction anonymity allows authors to freely express their views without worrying about criticism or repercussions. It provides a safety net against any legal or personal repercussions while encouraging experimentation with a variety of subjects and approaches. The detachment from individual identification promotes equality throughout groups, reduces outside pressure, and provides for solitude.

#### Fall For Mafia

##### Author's Pseudonym (@SouthDesi)

This Wattpad short story centers on the Y/N (your name) subgenre, with Kim Taehyung and Jeon Jungkook as fictionalized main characters. The narrative primarily centers on an imagined world in which the reader—a South Korean pop singer named Jungkook—is the male protagonist and the reader herself is the female protagonist. After developing a romantic relationship, the two protagonists get married. With the advent of the Alternate universe—a setting for a fan fiction work that deviates from canon and is transformed into the fictional reality that the fan work is placed in—the novel tackles themes of love, trust and mistrust, jealousy.

#### In the Bleak Midwinter

##### Author's Pseudonym (@manhattansunset)

The characters from the British television series *Peaky Blinders* are shown in an alternate universe in this short fiction. It tells the tale from a different angle; the main



ensemble of characters remains unchanged, but Kaia, a fictional female protagonist, is introduced. She relies on thievery and prostitution to support herself. Bonnie, Kaia's brother, is an affiliate of the Peaky Blinders criminal organization. After some time, Kaia joins this organization and becomes romantically involved with Thomas Shelby, the gang leader. The narrative explores themes of power, love, loyalty, retaliation, and family dynamics while hinting at sensual and sexually explicit content.

### ***Severus Snape's Daughter***

#### ***Author's Pseudonym (@LilithlilaK)***

The plot explores the romantic relationship between the daughter of Severus Snape, a fictional character from the Harry Potter series, and the famous Harry Potter. The plot uses the subgenres of Y/N and alternate universes. The characters are almost the same as in the original series, yet the plot, the circumstances, and the actions are different. The story presents the point of view of Y/N, i.e., the reader itself. The romantic unfolding of love, the hide and seek from the world and its problems. The story ends with the marriage of Severus Snape's daughter to Harry Potter and ends on a merry note.

## **III. FINDINGS**

### **Objectives**

The following chapter sets out with the objective of mainly base the analysis of the select novels and fan-fiction publications on the grounds of Freudian analysis featuring theories of Id, oedipal complex, sublimation, etc.

### **Psychoanalytic reading of fan-fiction**

Writing and an author are frequently intertwined like a complex tapestry, with the author's experiences, feelings, and psychological subtleties interwoven throughout. Psychoanalysis views fan fiction as an expression of its creators' unconscious imaginations and aspirations.

Fan fiction characters frequently experience changes or create unusual connections, providing a platform for authors to explore their own aspirations, anxieties, and unresolved concerns. An analysis of the motivations and actions of characters, through various Freudian concepts, can provide psychological insights into the fan-fiction prosumer.

### **Fifty Shades - trilogy**

The *Fifty shades* trilogy features multiple psychological problem areas. The novel takes up oedipal complex and connects it to BDSM lifestyle, and Christian Grey's character.

"He takes a deep breath and swallows. "I'm a sadist, Ana. I like to whip little brown-haired girls like you because you all look like the crack whore—my birth mother. I'm sure you can guess why.'" (James, E L 233-234)

The novel delves on the past of Christian and his troubled childhood, which reveals that his mother was a prostitute. His major sexual trauma emerges from being assaulted, tortured and abused by the pimp of his prostitute-mother. Christian's birthmother couldn't protect him from that violence and even abandoned him as she committed suicide. A three-year old Christian was found severely starved and anorexic, next to his birth mother's corpse, when the police came. He was later adopted by the Grey family and developed physically, but his emotional trauma never healed. He wanted to perpetuate the same violence, on other brunette women, which he had to experience because of his mother.

At the Submission scene in *Fifty Shades Darker*, the protagonist Christian Grey admits that he is suffering from an Oedipal complex, as his birth-mother shadows all his partners. Anastasia, a young brunette, whom he chose to marry, is the greatest representation of the mother figure he genuinely aspires to have.

The trilogy exposes the protagonists' unconscious motivations and conflicts in their actions. Christian Grey's BDSM behaviours might represent his efforts to regain control over his traumatic background. The power and repression ideas of Freud are reflected in the dominant-submissive relationship. Anastasia Steele's submission might be seen as an underlying need for security via giving up control. Interpretations of the story that highlight the interaction between conscious and unconscious drives in the interactions between the characters might be seen as a manifestation of Freudian themes.

### **After – Series**

Anna Todd, a New York Times bestselling author, created the *After* Series, a fan fiction series, inspired by the band One Direction, follows Tessa Young, a college freshman, as she meets Hardin Scott, a moody and rebellious young man with a dark past. Todd began writing stories on Wattpad under the pseudonym 'imaginator1D' after, while she was very unsatisfied with the state of her life. She discusses in an interview with Cosmopolitan.com, "I was so sad, and I was like, 'What am I doing with my life? I'm such a loser.'" (Amy Odell, 2014)

In 2014, Simon & Schuster released Todd's adaptation of his Wattpad story, *After*, which has now sold over 12 million copies globally. The 'After' series by Anna Todd features four books, namely, *After*, *After We Collided*, *After We Fell*, and *After Ever Happy*, which chronicles Hardin and Tessa's difficult love, distinguished by passion,

anguish, and personal growth. As their love story progresses, the series dives into themes of toxicity, redemption, and self-discovery.

Fans frequently project their own personalities into characters, forming profound bonds that reveal buried desires and unsolved issues inside their own psyche. The act of creating or reading fan fiction becomes a continuous process of sublimation, which is as described by Freud, "...diversion of sexual driving forces from sexual aims, and their direction to new ones" (Freud, 2017).

Examining Todd's interpretation of relationships and human nature in the *After* series, it could be pointed out that the *After* series serves as a vehicle for her own wants, struggles, and emotional experiences. Anna Todd had met her husband Jordan when she was in high school, and they married one month after she graduated. Jordan soon joined the army, and Anna was forced to go to Texas with her husband. Anna had indulged herself into the world of one direction fandom base as a means of recreation which soon became an outlet from unconscious identification for her. Upon being alleged for showcasing and romanticizing an emotionally manipulative and tumultuous relationship between the Hardin and Tessa, Todd explains that She just wanted to depict a connection between two young people who are discovering who they are and what an adult relationship entails.

"It was just sort of a reflection of me. [Tessa] doesn't know who she is," Todd said. "She's learning not to be like her mom. So, she gets much stronger throughout the book, but she doesn't know who she is. She's 18.....I'm writing about people like me, who maybe had a rough childhood." (Amy Odell, 2014).

Three agencies of the mind vie for dominance, as suggested by Freud in *The Ego and the Id* when the Id's fierce passions and demands for fulfillment and the Superego's crushing, even authoritarian demands for submission to its dictates make this an ongoing and often fruitless task for the Ego to master.

With a psychic analysis, it is revealed that Hardin's character, is the manifestation of Id in the narrative, as his passionate and often destructive activities in relationships are mirrored by the id's need for rapid fulfillment without regard for repercussions. Tessa Young, the heroine who personifies the ego, navigates between her impulsive impulses and cultural conventions, demonstrating the truth principle of balancing personal desires with societal expectations.

The superego, which represents morals and society conventions, impacts individuals such as Carol Young, Tessa's mother, who exhibits societal expectations. The conflict between the superego's moral compass and the

protagonists' id-driven aspirations adds to the narrative of her character.

Tessa Young and Hardin Scott's relationship in the novel is intense and volatile, and has the potential to be manipulative or violent, and perpetuates the glamorization of an emotionally abusive relationship

### Short Stories

Short stories on Wattpad, often delineated from the examination of subconscious themes and the workings of the human brain, can be connected to Freudian theory. Characters struggle with suppressed wants or conflicts and express them in a more acceptable literary setting, which may be a manifestation of Freud's idea of sublimation—the channelling of repressed desires into forms that are acceptable in society. The Freudian idea of sublimation appears as a sophisticated literary strategy in Wattpad short stories, allowing writers to channel and change their socially undesirable urges or desires into narratives that conform to social norms.

"The water was running down his body. yn's jaw dropped" and "oh lord! Mr. Jean Jungkook, were you so hot? I want to touch his abs." (*Fall for Mafia*, Wattpad)

A venue for writers to explore delicate matters via the prism of fiction, these short tales frequently delve into forbidden subjects by incorporating their own wishes into the experiences of fictitious characters.

Sublimation is a technique used by writers to subtly explore complicated emotional landscapes inside a controlled narrative setting by incorporating their own wishes into the experiences of fictitious characters. It can be seen through character development, creation of alternate realities, exploration of dark themes, conflict resolution.

Given that the behaviours of the characters mirror the interaction between the id, ego, and superego, they may be seen as representations of Freud's structural model of the mind. In keeping with Freud's views on the intricacy of human awareness, the storyline may represent how people grow psychologically as they resolve internal problems and battles. In the short story, *Fall For Mafia*, the author intelligibly shows these underlying problems where the male and female protagonists, overcome their problematic traits through proper resolution of their psychic traumas.

The anonymity on fan fiction platforms such as Wattpad, Fan fiction.net, Ao3 etc. provide writers a canvas on which to sublimate their own imaginations and wants while avoiding direct personal recognition by creating imaginary settings.

### Perpetuation of Toxicity

#### Fifty Shades – trilogy

Concerns concerning Christian Grey and Anastasia Steele's relationship's depiction of dominance and control have been voiced by critics of the *Fifty Shades* book series. In addition to emotional abuse and manipulation, Christian's demand for power extends outside of the bedroom.

When he follows Anastasia's phone and places severe restrictions on her social life, his possessive behaviour frequently veers towards emotional abuse and manipulation.

The way that Anastasia is portrayed as a subservient character raises questions about the agency and autonomy of women. Despite the narrative's best efforts to present Anastasia as a free agent, the power dynamics within the partnership frequently erode the concept of willing and informed consent—a crucial component of wholesome partnerships.

Nevertheless, remarks on toxicity are a criticism of the narrative's hazy boundaries between permission and control, not an assault on consenting BDSM behaviours.

#### After – Series

The novel *After* by Anna Todd has attracted notice for its in-depth examination of difficult subjects in the setting of an intense romance. The depiction of a passionate and turbulent romantic connection between the main characters, Tessa Young and Hardin Scott, is one of the main issues in the *After* series. In actual relationships, these behaviours may be viewed as emotionally manipulative or even abusive, but the story romanticizes by comparing the couple to Catherine and Heathcliff from *Wuthering Heights*. “The only two things *After* and *Wuthering Heights* have in common are passion and toxic relationships.” (Grizila, 2023)

The characters in *After* occasionally fit into negative clichés that may encourage stereotypes. For instance, Tessa's ‘good girl’ archetype and Hardin's ‘bad boy’ image might reinforce constricting and false expectations for uniqueness and personal development. These depictions have the potential to oversimplify the intricacies of individual personalities and reinforce a limited comprehension of identity.

The narrative arc of the book might convey harmful ideas to its readers since it frequently exalts the concept of staying in unhealthy relationships for the sake of love, persuading viewers to accept or even romanticize bad behaviours.

#### Short Stories

The process of exploration of unconventional ideas cannot be viewed as entirely positive because stories on fan fiction platforms often idealize controlling, aggressive, or possessive relationships as displays of charm or power.

These representations glamorize harmful actions connected to toxic romantic standards to the readers.

Male characters on Wattpad may adhere to conventional norms of power, toughness, and emotional repression. This encourages toxic masculinity by reinforcing the notion that males must follow strict gender rules.

Men may find it difficult to convey feelings of vulnerability, melancholy, or dread in Wattpad tales. This restriction feeds the toxic masculinity narrative by reinforcing the social norm that men should repress specific feelings. In the short story, *Fall for Mafia* then male main character portrayed in a similar light where there are instances of internalized anger. “he held the phone until it cracked.” (*Fall for Mafia*, Wattpad)

The belief that characteristics connected to femininity are inferior may be reinforced by certain stories that minimize or marginalize feminine attributes. This reinforces the harmful notion that males ought to stay away from anything deemed “feminine” or “weak.”

The idea that assertiveness and dominance are crucial components of masculinity, even when exhibited in negative ways, is perpetuated by Wattpad short stories that feature male protagonists that use aggressiveness or dominance in conversation. “you can get out of my house or otherwise I’ll throw you out.” (*Fall for Mafia*, Wattpad)

The limited and conventional perspective of Wattpad tales may result in perpetuation of morbid and abusive personal standards for an individual and disrupt the healthy psychic development of young readers.

#### Discussions

##### Objectives

The following chapter sets out with the objective of bringing out the ideas that Fan fictions perpetuate through the wide audience base that it has, and what it sets out to achieve. This also makes it clear as to how it impacts the readers, especially teenagers and young adults.

##### Analyzing the audience

Surveying the demographic spectrum of fan fiction consumers becomes crucial for researching and analyzing the interactions within the fan fiction community, as Fan fiction is a type of interactive storytelling. People's interactions with and contributions to fan-created content are greatly influenced by their age, preferences, fandom background, and social disposition.

Since, the study of fan fictions is a relatively newer subject in the field of research, there hasn't been any prominent surveying of the reader base of fan fictions. Therefore, in this research project, we conducted a survey on a group of 113 individuals, to disentangle the range of demographic

variables, revealing patterns and trends that contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of fan fiction culture.

As per the data we collected in our survey, 61.6 percent of the reader base of fan fiction is comprised of teens and young adults, belonging to the age demographic of 11-20 years. A broad and committed community of writers and readers has been enthralled with this emerging movement, which is changing the storytelling landscape and upending conventional ideas of authorship and creativity. The reason for its popularity among this can be easily connected to Freud theory of the unconscious mind. Psychoanalytically speaking, Fan-fiction offers a secure environment in which young people may project their unconscious desires and thoughts onto the characters and settings they love.

### Fan-Fiction as a Consuming Trend

As fan fiction has developed into a dynamic and broad domain where fans become writers and rewrite the stories of their favourite fictional universes, this creative zeal has to be examined because it is beginning to take on the characteristics of an obsessive tendency. According to our survey, which was conducted on over a hundred people, 30.4 percent of them have admitted to be reading it on a regular basis, and 35.7 percent admitted on having read it sometimes.

In the realm of fascination with fan fiction, the distinction between fact and fiction becomes increasingly hazy. Fans give their time, energy, and emotions to fictitious characters and stories, resulting in an emotional connection that goes beyond the usual fervour of a fan-base. As revealed in analysing the data collected in the survey, 56.2 percent of the audience believes that reading fan fictions has affected their social interactions.

Fan fiction involvement levels are frequently so high that they cause a phenomenon called identity fusion, in which fans believe they are inextricably linked to the fandom. An increased emotional engagement results from the fan's self-concept becoming entwined with the stories and characters they like. When followers recognise aspects of themselves in the fictitious worlds they like, this fusion may lead to an obsessive tendency.

This aspect is often manifested through the creation of 'Y/N' in fan fictions, functions as a literary figure that stands in for 'Your Name' and invites the reader to put themselves in the shoes of the main character. The select texts like, E.L. James' *Fifty Shades of Grey*, formerly a Twilight fan fiction series called 'Master of the Universe', the *After* series by Anna Todd and the short stories from Wattpad showcase the manifestation of a prosumer's unconscious and suppresses desires which are cultivated as the protagonists in established fictional settings.

Fan fiction is a prevalent and very popular literary form, especially among teens. Its influence spans several genres, but in the romance genre, it plays a big role in influencing and establishing standards for romantic ideals among this generation. In line with the data collected in the survey, it is seen that 42.4 % percent of the audience indulges into the reading of romantic genres and 23.6% of the readership is culminated through literary pornographic genres such as Smut, Dark fiction, Fluff etc.

Teens' perceptions of what makes a good relationship are shaped by the idealised situations that are offered. Teenagers actively participate in establishing the standards for romantic stories that are developed by fan fiction communities. Teenagers' romantic preferences and beliefs are frequently ingrained in their psyches as a result of narratives exploring identity, particularly romantic identity. This becomes a concerning notion because during their adolescent years, teenagers frequently look to the media for guidance on what makes a good romantic and intimate relationship.

In fan-fiction publications such as the "Fifty Shades" trilogy, power-asymmetrical relationships can be shown in narratives, particularly when examining dominant and submissive dynamics. In the course of developing a healthy relationship understanding, teenagers may misinterpret these power dynamics as desirable or acceptable, which might result in unhealthy expectations in relationships outside of their teen years.

For the sake of drama or intensity, toxic behaviours like manipulation, jealousy, and possessiveness may be normalised in fan fiction novels such as the "After" series. As they navigate the complexity of relationship standards, teenagers may interpret some behaviours as appropriate or even romantic, as the origin of those characters root from their beloved fictional universe or celebrity figure, impacting their conception of what makes a good relationship.

Fan fictions such as "In the Bleak Midwinter" and "Severus Snape's Daughter", lets readers lose themselves in imaginary worlds and is frequently used as an escape. But this escape from reality can cause a detachment from reality, making it difficult to distinguish between expectations from real life and fiction. It might be difficult for teenagers to discern real relationships from fictitious or overly dramatic depictions.

Oftentimes at the expense of emotional or intellectual compatibility, several fan fiction stories such as "Fall for Mafia" overemphasise sexual desire and relationships. Teenagers, especially those going through their first romantic encounters, often absorb the notion that sex and



physical attractiveness are the main factors in a successful relationship and overlook other important factors.

Although fan fiction gives fans a creative way to express their desires and sentiments, it also unintentionally shapes romantic ideals that may be unrealistic, idealised, or even harmful to the healthy development of young brains.

### Comparison to Authorized/Standard Literature

Fan fiction and authorized literature are two distinct creative expressions in narratives. Fan fiction is passion-driven, unauthorized narrative extension, while authorized literature is legally produced with original creators' permission.

Fan-fiction captures the emotional bond readers have with their beloved novels. It includes adored characters, places, or themes from previous works and lets fans explore uncharted territory inside well-established realms. Fan fiction, however, is in a legal grey area when it comes to copyright law issues since it uses intellectual property without formal permission.

On the other hand, Authorized literature is narrative that has been well written and has the express consent of copyright holders. It goes through a rigorous editing process that produces a polished, refined work that satisfies publishers' and consumers' expectations while still being in line with the creator's vision. Authors of authorized literature have the unique right to reproduce and disseminate their works; this is in contrast to fan fiction, which is not covered by the law.

The contrast also exists in terms of creative freedom, as fan fiction flourishes when it is allowed to explore storylines, romantic relationships, and locations that deviate from the canonical parameters established by its original authors. Authors of fan fiction take great pleasure in their capacity to challenge or reframe accepted conventions, creating a wide and vibrant array of stories. This freedom to try new things and be creative encourages fan fiction writers to use a broad range of techniques and backgrounds, which results in fan fiction of varying quality.

Authors of authorized fiction, on the other hand, are constrained by their own vision, the expectations of publishers, and, in the case of franchise writing, the predetermined boundaries of the current world. Although there is creative flexibility, it usually stays within the parameters established by the original work, and any modifications could need permission.

The two domains are further distinguished by the quality control methods. Because fan fiction is an amateurish endeavour, it lacks the polished quality that comes from a rigorous editing procedure. Within a single community, differences in writing styles and abilities might produce

both highly polished and less polished works. Authorized literature, on the other hand, is subjected to stringent editing in order to comply with industry standards, guaranteeing a uniform degree of quality.

Another difference between fan fiction and approved literature is distribution and accessibility. Genre fans freely exchange fan fiction on specialized sites, where it flourishes in virtual communities. Anybody with an interest in the particular fandom is welcome to access it democratically. On the other hand, official distribution channels—such as libraries, bookshops, and internet platforms—are used for authorized literature. Even though they could be subject to copyright limitations, approved works are typically offered for sale or subscription.

Originally published as fan fiction based on *Twilight*, *Fifty Shades Trilogy* deviates from official literature in order to address legal issues. It stands apart conceptually due to its direct depiction of BDSM, and conversations over erotica's popular acceptance were spurred by its financial success. The novel's path from online fan community to worldwide sensation determines its own course, unlike authorized literature works written with the express approval of the original writers. Although both works of literature make significant contributions to the field, *Fifty Shades of Grey* is distinguished by its non-traditional beginnings, contentious nature, and influence on popular culture and conversations about explicit themes in mainstream writers.

The *After* series deviates from standard literature by its origin as One Direction fan fiction on Wattpad, emphasizing an interactive writing process within a dedicated online community. This departure from traditional literary creation allowed for iterative storytelling based on reader input. As the series transitioned from self-publishing to commercial success and film adaptations, it underscored the transformative influence of digital platforms and fan engagement on literary success. Unlike works born independently of fan communities, *After* exemplifies a dynamic shift in storytelling dynamics, where the line between creator and audience blurs, showcasing the evolving landscape of literature influenced by digital connectivity and fandom participation.

Wattpad short stories are participatory, setting them apart from traditional reading. Direct communication between authors and readers allows them to get immediate feedback on their stories and make necessary adjustments. Serialized publication enables continuous development, allowing tales to be shaped by the reactions of the audience. Because of Wattpad's worldwide accessibility, budding writers may freely share a wide range of genres and ideas in their writing. Although one can get notoriety on Wattpad, other means are usually used for profit. Whereas full narratives of

traditional short tales adhere to recognized literary rules and seek recognition and recompense through conventional means, they follow a more formalized publication procedure.

Finally, it should be noted that fan fiction and official/standard literature appeal to distinct creative impulses and audience expectations. Fan fiction explores unexplored territory inside well-established universes while staying within a legal grey area, embodying the passion and inventiveness of fandom. Copyright holders approve authorized literature that goes through a professional procedure that complies with industry norms and regulatory requirements. Each adds a distinct viewpoint to the infinite

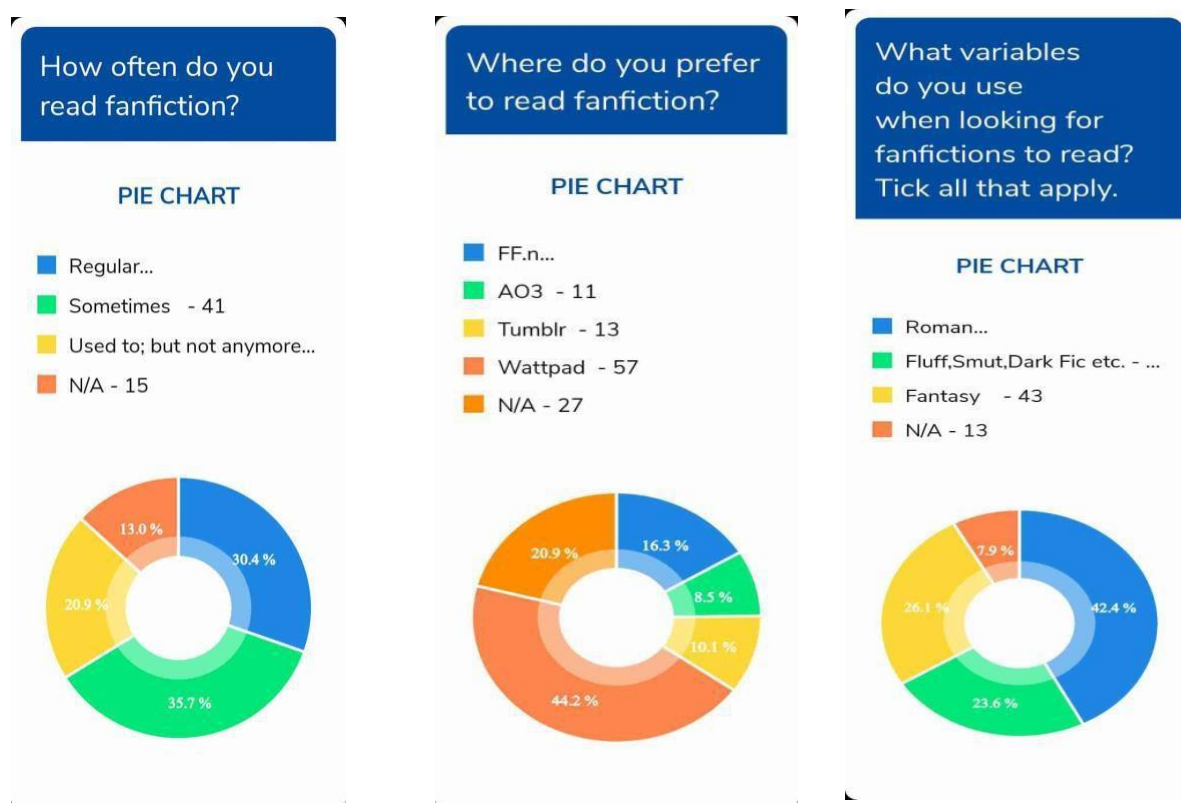
realm of imagination, adding to the rich fabric of storytelling.

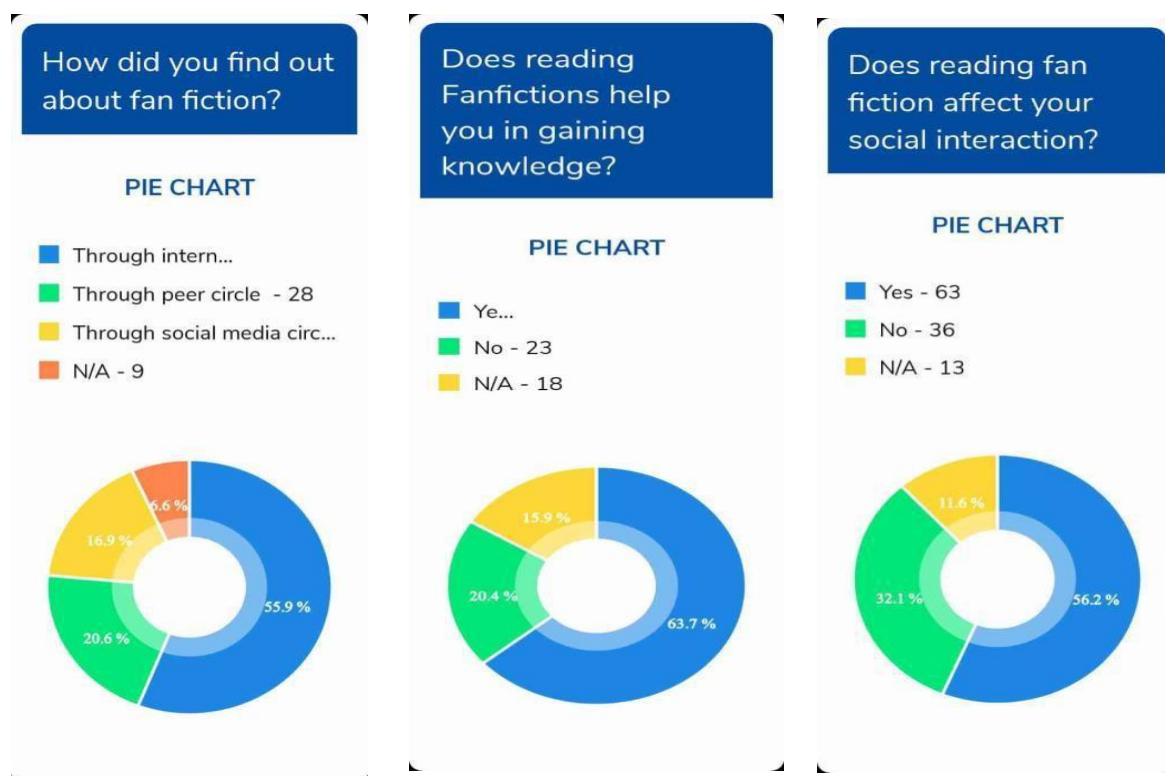
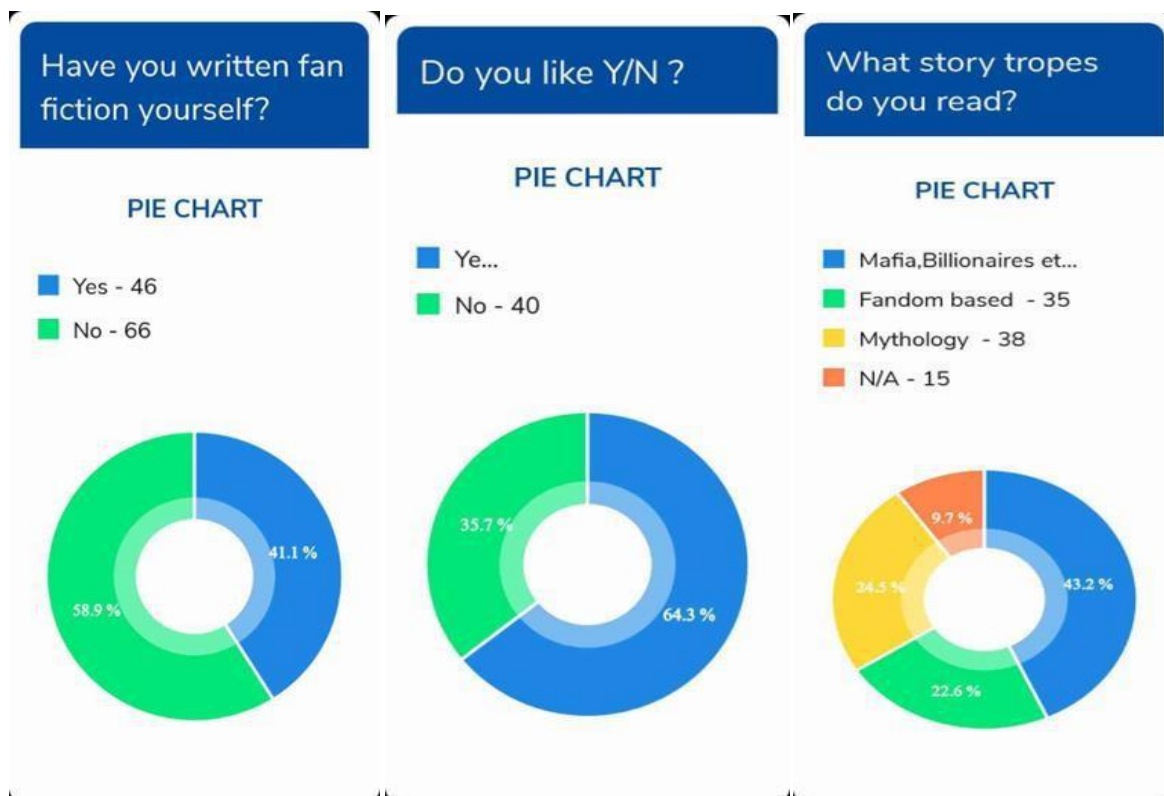
#### IV. SURVEY DATA

Objective: The aim of this chapter is to showcase the results of the quantitative survey conducted, for the purpose of analyzing the audience base of fan-fiction prosumer community.

##### Survey Data Results

This chapter contains the results of the survey conducted on a group of 113 individuals, in the form of pie-chart presentations.





## V. CONCLUSION

Based on a thorough reading and analysis of the primary and secondary sources, we can conclude by negating our research statement that "Depiction of morbidly explicit

themes in the works of fanfictions is restricting the development of a healthy psyche amongst the young adults and teenagers." because, Fan-fiction may have both beneficial and harmful effects on the imaginations of young teenagers.

It can result in low quality and erroneous portrayal, the normalization of harmful relationships or behaviours, and the exposure of youngsters to mature subjects. However, fan fiction cannot be termed outrightly damaging, because it provides creative avenues for aspiring authors and fans to connect in healthy and inventive ways with their favourite universes.

Therefore, it can be concluded, that through ethical consumption and a critical approach, fan fiction can develop as a popular means of personal and creative exploration.

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# Rumi and the Paradox of Character in *The Forty Rules of Love* by Elif Shafak

Abel Johnson Thundil

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**Abstract**— This paper aims to study the characters in Elif Shafak's *The Forty Rules of Love* in the context of Sufism. It primarily examines what Aziz and Ella represent beyond the text. Parallels are drawn between the eponymous characters, Rumi, and other mystics of the time. Sufi philosophy is studied through symbolic significance of the elements fire and water. The Christian wisdom present is also observed. Allusions to the *Masnavi*, Rumi's magnum opus, is inferred to be present in the novel. Ella and Aziz grow and change. This growth is examined through the four stages of Sufism.

**Keywords**— Characters; Philosophy; Rumi; Sufism; *The Forty Rules of Love*



## I. INTRODUCTION

Ernest Hemingway asserts that, "When writing a novel a writer should create living people; people not characters. A character is a caricature" (*Death in the Afternoon* 173). In *The Forty Rules of Love*, Elif Shafak modifies Hemingway's suggestion. Her characters do not stand for living people, but instead resurrect the dead. They allude to history and re-speak and re-act a beautiful Sufi past into existence. The characters have their principles. These principles lead to philosophies; In this case, to a Sufi philosophy which divulges on its own past.

*The Forty Rules of Love* is a 2009 novel by Elif Shafak. It follows two intertwined narratives. Firstly, the book tells the story of Ella Rubinstein, a woman nearing the age of forty, who has settled into complacency after marriage. She is the mother of three children, but exists without passion or love. Moreover, her husband cheats on her. Ella's life changes when she becomes a reader for a literary agent. She is assigned a book titled *Sweet Blasphemy*, written on the Persian Sufi poet Rumi and his guide Shams of Tabriz. The author is one Aziz Zahara who is a Sufi himself. Ella is drawn closer to Aziz through the emails they exchange. She realizes the lack of love in her life, and seeks it in Aziz.

The second narrative divulges on the fraternal love between the wandering Sufi Dervish Shams of Tabriz, and the Islamic scholar Rumi. We are exposed to the story of

Shams and Rumi Through a book titled *Sweet Blasphemy* written by Aziz, which Ella reviews. Reading this book makes her aware of the lack of love in her life.

This study attempts to respond to the below queries:

- Do characters in the novel and their circumstances have historical parallels in Sufism?
- To what extent does the novel succeed in depicting Sufi symbolism, philosophy, and way of life.

The importance of this research is that it places the novel in its rightful philosophical context. Once placed in context, all other analysis becomes easier. Although a few papers have been written with other kinds of analysis, they could be further improved using the information in this paper.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"Postmodernity in Elif Shafak's *The Forty Rules of Love*" is a paper by Akbar, Nabila et al published in 31 December, 2020. In it, the researchers assert that Ella, Aziz and David all live in a postmodern society. But the paper also attempts to postmodernize the historical. Rumi and Shams do not live in a postmodern environment. Yet, the paper draws out such elements from them. This postmodern lens prevents history from speaking. It has to utilize this mouthpiece that censor history to fit the postmodern. Hence, it draws one's

attention away from the history and philosophy. History is postmodernised, while the postmodern society of Ella and Aziz is not viewed through the lens of history and Sufi culture.

“The ‘Rumi Phenomenon’ Between Orientalism and Cosmopolitanism: The Case of Elif Shafak’s *The Forty Rules of Love*” is a paper by Elena Furlanetto published in 15 August, 2013. It has emphasis on history. The reasons for Rumi’s popularity in the west, and how Rumi has been Americanised through Ella in the novel are explored. Aziz takes the place of Shams. But the paper fails to expand the characters beyond this linear allusion. Moreover, this comparison which lasts only a single paragraph, bases its assumption on broad similarities rather than specific details. There is an attempt to give the relationship of Aziz and Ella a historical dimension. But this is limited to comparing their relationship to that between Shams and Rumi. This comparison is based on the broad similarity of both relationships being that of a master-student dynamic, without considering specific historical details.

Another paper “Representing Eastern Spirituality in Elif Shafak’s Novel *Forty Rules of Love: A Critical Discourse Analysis*” divulges on Sufi spirituality in the novel. The paper is on Shafak’s views on Sufism. The author’s views on Sufism fail to incorporate important historical details. Hence, there is a gap to be filled with such details.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative research. The characters of the novel *The Forty Rules of Love* are analyzed through qualitative information from various books, articles, and websites. Connections are made through analyzing historical and cultural details available through various sources.

### IV. ANALYSIS

#### 4.1) Blasphemy

Rumi was a thirteenth century poet and Islamic scholar. Aziz on the other hand, is the author of *Sweet Blasphemy*, the first book Ella is assigned to read for her new job as an assistant to a literary agent. *Sweet Blasphemy* tells the tale of Rumi and his encounter with Shams of Tabriz. The title *Sweet Blasphemy* points to a certain nature of Rumi and Shams. Shams was accused of blasphemy. He was a basket weaver by profession (Lewis 147). Rumi on the other hand was an Islamic scholar. Despite this, many accuse him of uttering blasphemy through his poems. For example:

“I have lost myself in God, and now God is mine.

Don't look for Him in every direction, for He is in my soul.

I am the Sultan. I would be lying.

If I said that there is someone who is my sultan” (Shiva).

“This is you, making me drunk in a monastery.

Turning me into an idol worshiper while I am seated at Kaaba.

I have no control in this game of good and bad” (Shiva).

In the novel, Ella utters blasphemy. In the email she sends on June 5, 2008, she admits that she is unable to remember the last time she prayed. Then she remembers the last prayer she made and admits that it was “more like complaining to a higher self” (Shafak 96) than actual prayer. And like Rumi, she has the attitude that she is her own sultan. This is apparent when she tells Aziz that she is a very strict mom who employs the “strategy of a guerilla” (Shafak 96).

Shams and Aziz occupy the role of master. Rumi and Ella are followers captivated by their master’s wisdom. Just as Shams changed Rumi’s perception of the world, so does Aziz that of Ella’s. Moreover, master Sameed had told Aziz that he resembles Shams of Tabriz (Shafak 152). Does this mean Aziz and Ella stand for Shams and Rumi respectively?

#### 4.2) What do Aziz and Ella stand for?

In many instances, Aziz seems to resemble Rumi more than Shams. The death and burial of Aziz is similar to that of Rumi. Aziz is made aware that he has only sixteen months to live. Hence, Aziz is aware of when he will die. Rumi was aware of his death too. In December 1273, Rumi fell ill; he predicted his own death and composed a ghazal, which begins:

“How doest thou know what sort of king I have within me as companion?

Do not cast thy glance upon my golden face, for I have iron legs” (Hossein 120)

Aziz’s funeral is a grand event. In fact, an old Muslim man says that it is the craziest funeral Konya has ever witnessed, except for the funeral of Mawlana centuries ago.

“They celebrated his death, as they knew he would have wanted. Children played happily and unattended. A Mexican poet distributed pan de los muertos, and an old Scottish friend of Aziz’s sprinkled rose petals on everyone, raining over them like confetti, each and every one a colorful testimony that death was not something to be afraid of” (Shafak 223).

This is similar to what Rumi would have wanted. His sarcophagus is inscribed with the beginning lines of one of his poems, which reads:

On the day I die  
 As they bear aloft my bier  
 Do not suppose  
 I'm consumed by cares of this world.  
 Don't cry for me and do not lament (Lewis 225)

Aziz is buried in a cemetery, under a magnolia tree. The section of the book that talks about this is dated September 7, 2009. We are also told that he is buried in Konya, where Rumi was buried (Lewis 450). Konya is a major city in Turkey. The season in Turkey during the month of September is autumn. Hence, the magnolia tree that Aziz is buried under would most likely be leafless. This alludes to the Green dome that encompasses Rumi's grave. Just as the magnolia is devoid of leaves when Aziz is buried, Rumi's grave was initially devoid of the green dome. But the leaves would return on the spring of the following year, just as the dome would be completed the following year after Rumi's death. Rumi was buried on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1273. The dome on the other hand was completed only in 1274.

The magnolia is common in Europe and present day USA. It does not have much significance in Turkish culture, and isn't the national flower. It was brought to Turkey in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by European slaves under the Ottoman empire. Similarly, the Green dome was constructed by European slaves as well. Despite the slaves being foreign, the dome was built in a traditional Persian architectural style. However, the same cannot be said about the magnolia. There is nothing intrinsically Persian about it. Yet, it has sneaked into the land. And it has done so with such subtlety, that few in Turkey even wonder about the origin of the plant. It has become a part of the average Turkish park, despite not even being Turkish.

This magnoliation however isn't limited to Ottoman times. It exists in its modern form in a metaphysical sense. Elena Furlanetto's paper "The 'Rumi Phenomenon' Between Orientalism and Cosmopolitanism: The Case of Elif Shafak's *The Forty Rules of Love*" sheds light on this. Broadly speaking, the paper discusses the Americanism of Rumi and his work, and most importantly, how one is blind to it. The Americanism has sneaked in without realization on part of the reader. Hence, it is a case of metaphysical magnoliation.

In the sixth email Aziz sends, he says he is 54 years old. Rumi was the same age when he wrote what is considered his magnum opus: the *Masnavi*. Rumi was prompted by his last prominent student Hasan al Chalabi (Lewis 215). He also edited the work. Ella has a similar role. She initiates the back and forth of emails between herself and Aziz. She is the last person Aziz gets close to. Hence,

she fills Hasan's role. If Ella stands for Hasan, and Aziz for Rumi, then the emails exchanged between them could be thought of as standing for the *Masnavi* itself. But the role of Ella goes beyond that of Hasan. Instead, she replaces every scribe who has edited the *Masnavi*.

"Scribes usually interpolated verses to make transitions in the narrative less abrupt, to explain incidents more fully, or to amplify the themes which Rumi treats only briefly" (Lewis 305). Ella fulfills this. For example, she commences one of her emails to Aziz as such:

"In one of your earlier e-mails, you said the idea that we could control the course of our lives through rational choices was as absurd as a fish trying to control the ocean in which it swam." (Shafak 96)

This image of the fish is not uttered in any of the emails Aziz sends. Just like the scribes, it is something Ella adds to give the emails continuation. There is lack of connection between the emails. It is as if the entire conversation isn't available. This incompleteness is visible in the *Masnavi*. Nicholson's version is the first critical edition. On its creation, he left out content he thought to be written by scribes. Nicholson's text has 25,577 lines, while previous versions have around 27,700 (Lewis 306). Hence, the *Masnavi* as we read it isn't complete, just as we aren't allowed to read the entire conversation between Aziz and Ella.

#### 4.3) Sufi and Christian Philosophy

"The idea of a Knowing Self has generated not only false expectations but also disappointments in places where life does not match our expectations" (Shafak 96). What Aziz conveys here could be analyzed through a Sufi lens.

All practices in Sufism are aimed at letting go of one's ego, which is considered the biggest hurdle to the realization of God. Simply put, this letting go of the ego is the art of living in the present moment. The Sufis had meditations and dances that kept them in the present moment. 'Tamal', the Arabic word for meditation, means 'to watch over.' Irrelevant thoughts are considered harmful, and one must keep a watch on one's mind to make sure they don't surface at random. Sama was another practice for achieving fana'a (annihilation of the ego). The Whirling Dervishes of Rumi's Mevlevi order are probably the best-known practitioners. Participants dance in a circle, with each individual spinning on their toes. (Mevlevi Order of America)

Ella desires this state of fana'a. In the end, she goes to Amsterdam without concrete plans. She follows her



heart, which could be seen as wanting to achieve fana'a, as opposed to having a "life (that) does not match our (Her) expectations" (Shafak 96). This message could be seen throughout the novel. One such instance is not initially clear. It is the instance where Aziz wakes up from a coma, and hears the morning prayer. He says:

"...it wakes us up from dreams, and we don't like that. We prefer to keep sleeping. That's why there is a line in the morning call that doesn't exist in the others. It says, 'Prayer is better than sleep'" (Shafak 222)

This is a motif in orthodox Islam and Christianity. Dreams are seen with suspicion because they take one out of fana'a. Prophet Muhammad says:

"There are three types of dreams: a righteous dream which is glad tidings from Allah, the dream which causes sadness is from Shaitan and a dream from the ramblings of the mind" (Sahih Muslim, Book 29, Hadith 5610).

The first kind is acceptable. But it does not make up the majority of dreams. Hence, dreams are often seen with suspicion.

"... and cause me, uncondemned now, to sleep a dreamless sleep, and keep Thy servant untroubled by thoughts, and drive away from me all satanic deeds" (*Prayer Book* 47).

These are prayers from the Russian orthodox Christian belief. To the Christian orthodox as well, the sleep should be "dreamless". Having a dream means that one was able access one's unconscious. This is against fana'a, which is created by losing oneself in external reality. Aziz lives by immersion, not dreaming. Like Rumi, he has travelled a lot. Rumi's father had to gather his family and travel about 2500 miles, going to Mecca along the way. Aziz too gets the opportunity to go to Mecca as a photographer. But he stays with the Sufis instead. Both Rumi and Aziz are hence immersed in life rather than dreaming about it like Ella.

Another Christian element is apparent in the only physical letter Ella writes.

"I decided to write you a letter this time. You know, the old-fashioned way, with ink, a perfumed paper, a matching envelope, and a stamp." (Shafak 170).

Let's compare it with 2 John 1:12 from the *Holy Bible* (New International Version)

"I have much to write to you, but I do not want to use paper and ink. Instead, I hope to visit you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete." (2 John 1:12)

Both statements have similarities. 2 John is addressed to "the elect lady and her children." This lady is a mystery. But it is speculated that she is a symbol for the church as a whole (Wilder 450). Similarly, Ella sees Aziz as a symbol for Sufism as a whole, since he is the only Sufi she knows.

#### 4.4) Allusions to the *Masnavi*

The *Masnavi* is a series of poetry books with around 25,000 verses or 50,000 lines, depending on how the counting is done. The emails by Aziz could be seen as an allegory to this great work. But Aziz writes eight emails, while the *Masnavi* has only six books. This complicates things.

Although Aziz writes eight emails, we'll consider them as seven books. This reduction to seven books is attained by reducing the following two emails into one book:

"Dear Ella,

Shams is the person who was responsible for the transformation of Rumi from a local cleric to a world-famous poet and mystic. Master Sameed used to say to me, "Even if there might be a Shams equivalent in some people, what matters is, where are the Rumis to see it?"

Warm regards,

Aziz" (Shafak 125)

And

"Beloved Ella,

It's a long story. Do you really want to know?

Warmly,

Aziz" (Shafak 125)

They both appear under one of the parts titled 'Ella'. This is unlike his other emails, which exist only one per part. They belong to the same part in the novel. Hence, each part of the novel titled 'Ella', where Aziz writes to Ella could be seen as standing for individual books of the *Masnavi*.

The *Masnavi* comprises of only six books. But it should be noted that;

"At some point, relatively late in the manuscript tradition, a forged seventh book of slightly over a hundred pages was added to Rumi's *Masnavi*" (Lewis 304)

The legitimacy of this seventh book is disputed (Lewis 305). But it was nonetheless included in the *Masnavi* canon for a period of time. Comparing each book with the emails is beyond the scope of this paper. But a thematic analysis is feasible. The *Masnavi* undergoes a thematic shift from the first book to the last. The initial books begin by preaching the dangers of earthly pleasures (nafs), and the

need to control them (Williams 22). The books grow spiritual in theme, until the final books encourage giving up earthly pleasures all together (Williams 24). The emails of Aziz have a similar transition of theme. He is initially lost in life, and indulges in sensual pleasures. But gradually, he is acquainted with the Sufis and finds his place in the universe.

Ella has her own spiritual journey. Connections between Ella and Hasan al Chelabi, the scribe have already been established. Hasan was part of the Akhi brotherhood of Sufism. The Akhis were focused on down-to-earth matters. The Mevlevi order of Rumi was antithetical to this. After accepting Rumi's discipleship, he continued to remain a part of his own brotherhood, all the while learning from Rumi. Ella is more down to earth than Aziz.

"They have incredibly cute little flats there, overlooking the canals. I can rent one of those. I'll need to improve my biking. I don't know.... I'm not going to make plans, honey. I'm going to try living one day at a time. I'll see what my heart says. It is one of the rules, isn't it?" (Shafak 223).

She tells her daughter, after Aziz dies. She desires the stability of a place to stay, but is also carried away by her heart. Like Hasan who acted as a bridge between the Akhis and the Mevlevis, Ella exists in liminality with the earthly and the spiritual.

#### 4.5) Fire and water

In the first of the parts titled 'Rumi', we see Rumi talk about a recurring dream he has. He sees a dervish with fire arising from each of his fingers, helping him read the *Qur'an* (Shafak 65).

The dervish disappears and Rumi looks for him, only to find him dead in a well. The dervish he sees is Shams. Rumi wonders whether he is responsible for this death.

The last rule of love in the book ends thus:

"Love is the water of life. And a lover is a soul of fire!

"The universe turns differently when fire loves water" (Shafak 223)

Here, the lover is fire, and the love he seeks is the water. The lover seeks love, just as Shams, whose fingers Rumi sees alighted in flame, seeks Rumi. Shams loves Rumi. But they are opposite in character, like fire and water. The fire (Shams) knows the water (Rumi) will extinguish him. In the end, Shams lies dead in the well with his flame extinguished by the water. Rumi realizes this, and blames

himself for Shams' death. Hence, Shams loved Rumi, and his love killed him.

#### 4.6) Allusions to Rabi'a al Basri

The symbols of fire and water could be applied to Ella as well. Apart from the scribe previously described, Ella could be viewed as an allusion to Rabi'a al Basri, an 8<sup>th</sup> century Sufi woman.

It is said that one day, Rabia was running through the streets of Basra carrying a pot of fire in one hand and a bucket of water in the other. When asked what she was doing, she said, "I want to put out the fires of hell, and burn down the rewards of paradise. They block the way to Allah. I do not want to worship from fear of punishment or for the promise of reward, but simply for the love of Allah" (Attar 109). When Ella reads the final rule that talks of fire loving water, she could be alluding to Rabi'a.

This "love of Allah" is not as straight forward as it sounds. Rabi'a was the first to talk about love being the central aspect of the relationship between human beings and God. This would later become a central aspect of Sufism. Rabi'a was approached by many men in her life, all of whom she rejected. She considered herself to be married to God himself. In many of her sayings, she expresses a romantic view of God, referring to him as her 'beloved' several times. (Just as Ella calls Aziz towards her final emails). (J and Hoffman-Ladd 82).

It seems as if Ella's love for Aziz is spiritual. But it nonetheless has a romantic element to it.

"Ella held Aziz's hand, kissed his lips."

Shafak Says.

Moreover, it is important to observe how the opening of each email Ella writes gets more romantic in tone. She starts by addressing him as "Dear Aziz Z. Zahara" (Shafak 34), which later changes to "Dear Aziz (If I may)" (55), to "Dear Aziz" (75), and finally to "Beloved Aziz" (96). Ella refers to Aziz as 'beloved' just as Rabi'a refers to God. She gradually grows closer to Aziz just as how Rabi'a grows closer to god. In both cases however, their union isn't complete. We are never told about an intimate consummation in Shafak's book. Rabi'a, despite her romantic affection with God, claimed to never have achieved total union with him.

Ella and David separate after he discovers the presence of Aziz in Ella's life. Similarly, Rabi'a was a slave girl who was freed by her master after he discovered the presence of God in her life. Both women were born as simple earthly beings. But both of them, as Rabi'a says about herself, "Attempt to simulate the state of those who are truly afflicted with Divine Love, that I may be deemed no less than they". Rabi'a did not consider herself to be

divine, and constantly attempted to imitate Sufi men. Ella isn't divine as well. But she constantly attempts to understand Sufism, so she could grow closer to Aziz. Here, Aziz becomes symbolic of God, and Ella becomes symbolic of Rabi'a.

#### 4.7) Four stages of Sufism

In his three final emails, Aziz portrays his Sufi journey. In the first, he talks of his life; his birth, his love, his loss etc. There is only a trivial mention to the Sufis. But he says, "This stage of my life I call my encounter with the letter S in the word "Sufi."" But why is this stage so significant? To understand, one must understand the four stages of Sufism. The first stage is the Shariat. Shariat is known as Islamic religious law. But literally, the word simply means 'the path to be followed'. It refers to basic earthly rules to follow. This is a reflection of this first stage of Sufism in Aziz's life.

The second of these emails, where he encounters the letter U in the word "Sufi", stands for the second stage called Tariqat. This stage is an introduction to a Sufi brotherhood. This is literally what happens to Aziz in this email. The last of these emails, where he encounters the letter F, stands for the third stage called Haquiqat. This is where one grows closer to God. We see Aziz grow closer to the brotherhood. He gives up drugs, and finds peace with god.

The last stage is Marifat. This is spiritual knowledge through experience. Aziz doesn't claim to attain the last letter I of the word "Sufi". But he completes Marifat through his experience of meeting Ella. Aziz doesn't write another email. Rather, he completes the fourth stage of Sufism through experience.

Ella also goes through these stages. In pages 130 and 131, we see her list of resolutions. All of the earthly and bodily desires written in it have been accomplished. But she doesn't manage to complete the abstract goals such as evaluating her values and beliefs, or eliminating meat from her diet. On first glance, it is unclear why eliminating meat should be considered spiritual. Islam and Sufism both do not condemn eating the flesh, unless it is considered haram by the Quran. But nonetheless, both Rumi and Rabi'a were vegetarians.

Ella has successfully completed the Shariat stage of Sufism. The resolutions had been completed even before she grew close to Aziz. Tariqat is attained when she gets to know Aziz. Haquiqat is attained when she realizes the lack of love in her life. She learns more about Aziz and grows closer to him. Marifat is attained through her direct spiritual experiences with Aziz. Hence, she completes the stages of Sufism when she fulfills her tenth resolution by opening her heart to love.

## V. CONCLUSION

The characters in the novel and their circumstances have historical parallels in Sufism. This is concluded by finding historical equivalents for the characters of Ella and Aziz. Aziz takes on the role of both Rumi and Shams. Similarly, Ella represents both Rumi, and the Islamic holy woman Rabi'a Al Basri. The novel also depicts Sufi symbolism, philosophy, and way of life. This is concluded by observing Sufi philosophies hidden in the words of Aziz and Ella, and also by asserting the presence of the four stages of Sufism in growth of the same characters throughout the novel. Christian elements are present as well. Fire and water are interpreted as symbols of Sufism. Moreover, the emails Aziz writes have thematic similarities to Rumi's *Masnavi*. Both Rumi and Ella show blasphemous tendencies; Rumi in his poetry, and Ella in her emails.

These findings are not exhaustive. Further examination could be conducted on each book of the *Masnavi*. Sufism is beyond Rumi. Shafak's novel is set in the twenty first century, and its presence asserts that Sufism is as contemporary as it is historical. The analysis done on the novel thus far is limited to the past. Further possibilities may lie in the analysis of this novel through Sufism as it exists in the time of its making.

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# The Hidden Truth Behind Christina Rossetti's Goblin Market and Speaking Likenesses: The Poetess' Own Words as Key to Understanding her Troubled Mental Health

Simona Pannacci

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**Abstract**— In 1845 Christina Rossetti's mental health deteriorated raising questions that caught scholars' attention for decades. This paper aims to pursue a preliminary analysis aiming at answering what may have been the cause behind the alleged sudden decline of the poetess's psychological and physical well-being. The most popular hypotheses are two: the first sees Rossetti suffering from a mental breakdown, and the second and most recent one states that the poetess may have been the victim of a sexual assault. The proposed research follows a qualitative approach by analysing two poems by Rossetti (*Goblin Market* and *Speaking Likenesses*) and contextualising her lines to recent studies on the poetess's life. A definitive answer as regards of what was the true reason behind Christina Rossetti's mental health troubles is yet to be found. However, both poems highlight the depressive state of Rossetti and how this may have been determined by a strong sense of guilt and distress suffered by the poetess. Rossetti highly criticised the strict mindset she was raised in her work. Her state could have been either determined by reaching puberty with the consequent changes in her body or as a consequence of sexual awareness and temptation.

**Keywords**— English Literature, Victorian Age, Christina Rossetti, Mental Health, *Goblin Market*, *Speaking Likenesses*.



## I. INTRODUCTION

It was the year 1845 when the mental health of 15-year-old Christina Rossetti took a turn for the worse. Many questions concerning the cause behind her condition were raised during the following years. Thanks to Jan Marsh, her notorious biographer, we are now provided with plenty of information concerning Rossetti's early years. Born in a strongly religious middle-class family, during her childhood the poetess was known to be a very 'quick-tempered but very affectionate girl, full of whim and fancies' (Marsh 2012, ch.4) and the deterioration of her mental health came unexpectedly. A similar remark was made by one of her older brothers, William Rossetti, who remembered how she was 'vivacious and open to pleasurable impressions'. (ch.4).

During her youth Rossetti was more than conscious of what was expected from her as a daughter, woman and Christian at the time. This paper aims to pursue a preliminary analysis aiming at answering what may be the cause behind the alleged sudden deterioration of Christina Rossetti's psychological and physical well-being, serving as a starting point for further developments on the matter.

## II. METHOD

The analysis will be pursued following a qualitative method. Information will be retrieved by analysing the lines of two of Rossetti's most famous poems: *Goblin Market* and *Speaking Likeness*. The two poems' analysis will be compared and contextualised with Jan Marsh's studies and information retrieved from

existing literature on the poetess's life and work. Particular emphasis will be given to data and lines regarding female characters, female condition, feelings of guilt, distress and temptation, the characters' social status, and Rossetti's life.

### III. DISCUSSION

Among the hypotheses which were made, Marsh's one caught lots of attention, as she supposed that such a personality switch could have occurred due to a severe nervous breakdown. Further evidence of that is given by Dr Antony Harrison, who wrote how the psychological consequences suffered by Rossetti were many and easily attributed to a depressive state. She was particularly subjected to severe mood swings and frequent nightmares. Those symptoms weren't the only ones, it's known that:

psychological symptoms were accompanied by physical ones: shortness of breath, constriction of the chest and a feeling of suffocation, heart palpitations, and a cough [...] a stifling or fainting tendency from time to time, compelling her to desist from any occupation and lie down. (Harrison 2007, 417)

A second hypothesis gained popularity within the current decade. As she wrote in her blog in late December 2020, recalling her first Cristina Rossetti biography in the 90s, Jan Marsh stated how the writer's condition may also be the consequence of sexual abuse. The conclusion was made after she consulted professionals in teenage mental health; Marsh also claimed that the abuse may have occurred within the poet's family context, which seemed likely to have happened since at the time Rossetti was spending most of her time alone at home taking care of her ill father. (Marsh 2012) In the same post, she also corrected the first breakdown hypothesis by accounting for some notes written by one of the doctors who looked after Rossetti, Charles Hare, one of the most acclaimed doctors of Victorian London. Hare recalled the young girl's tendency on wanting to touch hot bars to burn her fingers and claimed that such an episode occurred more than once. Self-harm-related episodes were nothing new for Rossetti. It was William himself again who shared about a bad-cutting episode with scissors when she scored her arm (Marsh 2020). However, regarding the discovery of the hot bars' episodes, Marsh wrote as follows:

All these symptoms, but most especially the impulse to touch fire-hot bars, which allies with the 'cutting' incident recalled by her brother [...] record the kind of self-harm

often associated with severe teenage anguish - now termed an 'acute mental health crisis' rather than a nervous breakdown. (Marsh 2020)

Furthermore, the recent progress in modern medicine concerning mental health provides us with evidence of how similar symptoms and possible causes characterise both conditions (Becker n.d.). Despite it is now possible to assume the nature of Rossetti's condition, a secure answer confirming its causes is yet to be found.

Christina Rossetti's works contain plenty of violent and disturbing elements, for those aware of her troubled mental health, it is logical to wonder if those elements are somehow related to her psychological condition, and whether their analysis can provide us with plausible answers about what's behind it. Among Rossetti's works, two poems *Goblin Market* (1865) and the children's book *Speaking Likenesses* (1874) are remarkable ones containing highly explicit dark situations and words to analyse.

*Goblin Market* tells us the story of sisters Laura and Lizzie, both tempted by the evil Goblins of a market to buy and taste the so-called "fruit forbidden". Marsh defines the poem as a story of 'temptation, resistance and redemption' (Marsh 2012, ch.17), three elements providing us with a good starting point to analyse the text. Lizzie resists the temptation warning Laura that '[t]heir offers should not charm us; [t]heir evil gifts would harm us.' (Rossetti 1865, 4) Laura succumbs and consequently falls ill. She will be heroically saved by her sister who will taste the same fruit, making Laura regain her life and her old innocent laugh.

Concerning *Speaking Likenesses*, we are introduced to the stories of three little girls Flora, Edith and Maggie. In this case, three major elements must catch readers' attention: the social status of the girls, how they react to what occurs to them, and how they end up in those situations. Flora and Edith are from middle-class families like Christina Rossetti, while Maggie is from a working-class family. Within their stories, the girls will find themselves alone facing situations which can be scary, disturbing, or lead to uncomfortable feelings. Flora and Maggie deal with monstrous child-like creatures, proposing they play abusive games such as *Hunt the Pincushion*, whose goal is to take advantage of one's weakness; something different is what occurs to Edith, who will deal with the fact that she is unable to assist and help with the preparation of the party that her loving mother had planned as a treat for the whole family, this is cause of high frustration for Edith who will start questioning the role she has within this life. Contrarily to

the two middle-class girls who will face distress, Maggie's story ends with the little girl feeling safe thanks to her bravery. Despite being defined as a 'peculiarly revolting text for children' at the time of its publication (Marsh 2012, ch.31), probably due to the plenty of violent content, it's the work which provides us with numerous interesting elements to analyse to discover what Rossetti wanted to share with her readers.

Despite being born in a social condition which could be considered privileged at the time, the writer's approach to womanhood was not lacking hardship while she had to deal with the girls' standards of the Victorian Age. The years that saw Rossetti's mental health deteriorate, coincided with the start of her puberty, which is strongly related to mood swings itself already. However, Puberty-related mood swings are not enough to explain such a damaged psychological state. Puberty for girls also means body changes, which along with women's sexuality were considered as taboos at the time. (Harrison 1991, 422) Issues such as breakdowns were 'not uncommon among Victorian girls, as they struggle to tailor their nature to fit the prescribed mould' (Marsh 2012, ch.5). It was sexuality which tended to be mostly repressed, especially among high-class families who must preserve a certain pure reputation, making it became something to fear for girls. The relevance of such an ideal increased if growing up in a family with a strong religious background like the Rossetti. Due to this reason, we recall another claim made by Doctor Charles Hare, who linked Rossetti's condition to

some religious mania, which further studies hypotheses that may have conducted her to a form of hysteria. Indeed, regarding the possible causes behind the hysteria, medicine states that 'chastity or enforced celibacy could give rise to hysterical symptoms [...] by the suppression of natural sexual instincts' (Harrison 1991, 423).

#### IV. RESULTS

As a consequence of what was previously mentioned, plenty are references regarding religion, sin and sexuality which can be found within *Goblin Market's* lines. The goblin's insistence on asking the girls to 'come buy' can be the metaphor of an actual sexual temptation which led Laura to fall sick due to the sin of experiencing such a thing that '[s]he never tasted such before' (Rossetti 1865, 8), here represented by the fruit forbidden. The goblin fruits also recall the apples of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil which God prohibited Adam and Eve from eating. A forbidden experience

Laura was tempted and succumbed to just like Eve, new to her it probably was such an impulse for the 15-year-old Christina Rossetti. This particular theme is not new to Rossetti, as Harrison again explains how:

[t]he fear and sublimation of female sexual desire and insistence upon the dangerous, if not fatal, effects of its indulgence emerge often- metaphorically, if not literally- in much of Rossetti's poetry [...] often trooped as an illness or represented as an addiction that produces malaise, disease, or death for narrators and characters in her poetry. (416)

Times before Laura, it was a girl named Jeanie who succumbed to the goblins' temptations, meeting her death. Laura would have met the same fate if it wasn't for Lizzie, who previously reminded Laura about the late Jeanie, to warn her of the risks that tasting such a fruit brings. These lines recall those that can be read in the book of Genesis when God warns Adam and Eve that: '[o]f the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.' (Gen 2:17 ESV) A good definition of the poem is given by Mary Wilson Carpenter, who suggests it to "be read as a cautionary tale for girls and young women wishing to lead a Christian life amidst the temptations of the "world" (Carpenter 1991, 424).

As years went by, and she started to be more aware of the context she was raised in, Rossetti's works began to show some reaction towards what she and many other women at that time went through, starting from the ideals they had been somehow forced to follow from their childhood. A perfect example can be seen within the lines of *Speaking Likenesses*, which explains the plenty of violence contained among its lines. Professor Anna Despotopoulou believes that a social aspect emerges from the book stories which "utilises fantasy temporary social issues faced by women in the same time, satirising the mixed and often contradictory concerning childhood - female childhood, in particular" (Despotopoulou 2010, 416).

During the 1860s, years before writing *Speaking Likenesses*, Rossetti started to volunteer at St. Mary Magdalene Home, a community for the so-called fallen women, or prostitutes. Women's sexuality during the Victorian age was strongly associated with prostitution (Carpenter 1991, 417), which Victorians referred to claiming that '[o]f all the maladies with humanity is afflicted, prostitution is, we believe, the worst [...] destroying the lives of a large proportion the adult male population' (Despotopoulou 2010, 421). What is crucial to analyse here, is the impact such a situation had on the

image and perception of the different social statuses of the time. A widespread belief that emerged following the proclamation of the Contagious Act of 1866, regarding the prostitution problem in England was the following:

While middle-class families could afford to keep their children throughout childhood, offering them financial and emotional stability, 'working-class families afford the luxury of extended dependence', leading children, and girls to find ways of earning their wages on their own. Faced with the posed by the flaunting of female sexuality through unashamed prostitution, [...] as the pathological result of unwanted 'independence', of the absence of authority figures to control the excesses of the 'independent' young girls' unpredictable bodies (423).

Thanks to her work with prostitutes, Rossetti probably realised how the reality was quite different, as they came from many other social statuses. She intended to bring awareness to how the middle-class family's educational system was not as safe as it wanted to be perceived. Here comes the important aspect of speaking likenesses, which somehow 'discloses a paradox in the Victorian mentality' (424). As the three stories show us, the working-class girl, Maggie, is the only one who seems ready to face the aggressive world outside the safety of her home. On the other side, the middle-class girls, Flora and Edith, will find themselves unprepared to face what life has reserved for young girls once they are left alone, as they prove to be unable to deal with what the family of their social status tried to protect and stay away from. Maggie can do everything Christina Rossetti could not in her life, and in the end can deal with the darkness surrounding her through the journey inside a dangerous wood. As Marsh suggested, Rossetti may have used the book to blame the environment she grew up in instead of herself for what she had to go through starting from her adolescence (Marsh 2012, ch.31).

## V. CONCLUSION

A definitive answer as regards of what was the true reason behind Christina Rossetti's mental health troubles is yet to be found. However, the two works here examined can be helpful as leads: *Goblin Market* exposing her struggles and reasons more likely to be behind her depressive state, such as the fear of facing her sexuality; and *Speaking Likenesses*, which may be interpreted as a hint of how those struggles may have emerged due to the pressure felt due to the Victorian

middle-class social mindset in which she grew up. No element highlights that Rossetti might have suffered from a mental breakdown or that she was the victim of sexual assault. However, her lines indicate her state of distress and guilt. The poetess is highly critical of the social mindset she was raised in. Two preliminary hypotheses can be made regarding her condition that can serve as a starting point for future developments on her case. The first one is determined by Rossetti reaching puberty and her inability to deal with the rapid changes in her body. The second one is strictly connected to the first one and it indicates how the changes in her body could have led the young poetess to discover her sexuality (which she might have perceived as a sin) and be the cause of the strong severe sense of guilt she suffered as an adolescent and young adult. This could have either been determined by self-awareness or by external temptation as it was for Laura on the lines of *Goblin Market* that were previously analysed.

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# Surviving the Sense of the Arab Family in the West: The Arab Moroccan Immigrant Family in Laila Lalami's *The Other Americans* as a Case Study

Hassan Ait Nasseur

Doctoral Student at Ibn Tofail University, Department of English, Kenitra  
[hassan.aitnasseur@uit.ac.ma](mailto:hassan.aitnasseur@uit.ac.ma)

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**Abstract**— *The sense of the Arab family as a social and cultural construct in Western societies is doomed to fluctuation and ongoing metamorphosis due to the new circumstances dictated and crafted by Western culture. The latter's fierce pressure exerted on Arab immigrant families subverts these families' identity and culture from within. One manifestation, among others, of such subversion is the chasm that often happens between, on the one hand, first-generation Arab immigrants, and second and third-generation immigrants, on the other. This paper explores this often-overwhelming relationship between these immigrants. Also, it showcases the types of pressure that Western hegemony (through its culture and civilization) employs to culturally 'tame' the Arab family. This paper follows textual and discourse analysis methods to critically read Laila Lalami's novel, *The Other Americans* (2019), principally through the characters of Maryam Guerraoui and her daughters, Nora and Salma. Would – or would not— the Arab family 'go Western' is, thus, the pivotal concern of this paper. This paper shows that it is normal for Arab families to receive pressure from Western mainstream culture, yet it is abnormal not to resist such pressure to maintain the sense of the Arab family.*



**Keywords**— *Arab immigrant family, cultural identity, hegemony.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The alienation that immigrants receive from hegemonic mainstream culture in their adoptive countries is likely to exert excessive pressure on their cultural identity. Such pressure leads them to seek ways to stay resilient to the impact of repercussions of that pressure on their identity. One way to maintain such resiliency is establishing a sense of family among diasporic immigrants. This article mainly focuses on the sense of family Arab immigrants tend to construct as a shield against the tension coming from mainstream culture.

To embark on this exploration, this essay uses Laila Lalami's deftly written novel, *The Other Americans* (2019), as a springboard for a nuanced analysis of the sense of the Arab immigrant family in the West and the Moroccan immigrant family, particularly. The essay begins

with postcolonial conceptions of diaspora, migration and cultural identity regarding the concept of 'family.' It thus draws on the insights of several authors and scholars, aiming at a comprehensive understanding of how the sense of family would be maintained and, thus, operated to resist the hegemony of Western mainstream culture.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Maintaining a sense of family in diasporic communities is crucial to cultural identity preservation in immigrants' receiving countries. When immigrants relocate to new lands, whether by chance or by force, they become exposed to drastically different realities. The different geography and culture they encounter in their adoptive countries exert intensive pressure on the essence of their

identity, culture and religion. Laxmiprasad (2020) argues in the context of the hegemony the receiving culture has on immigrants that “[t]he diasporic communities might choose adoption, accommodation, acculturation, and assimilation. Identity crisis arises if one migrates from one territory to another place” (p. 99). Immigrants’ gatherings, therefore, would be an efficient strategy to respond to the identity crisis imposed by the cultural hegemony on the part of the receiving culture. One paramount form of these gatherings is the family.

Mähönen et al. (2013) mention that immigrants’ satisfaction – or dissatisfaction – in their adoptive countries is tightly related to whether or not their expectations are met in these new territories. They explain that the greater the congruence level between immigrants’ expectations before immigration and after, the better their well-being. However, that congruence level is rhizomatic and never predictable, given the shapeless and non-linear realities that these immigrants witness in their new lands. Within these tense circumstances, it is paramount for immigrants to achieve a sense of community/family to strengthen the cultural ‘front’ within. “Community denotes both a social/organizational formation and a feeling of cohesion” (Grossman, 2019, p. 8). It is this cohesion and strength *within* which would help immigrants resist the host culture’s hegemony and temptations. However, attaining that feeling of belonging and collective connection inside a diasporic community does not always succeed given that some communities are merely imagined (Grossman, 2019). Some diasporic immigrants may share a sense of community, yet through different political *imagined* tendencies. This community is *imagined* “because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (cited in Anderson, 2016, p. 6). Such communities, according to Grossman (2019) may take the form of “political lobbies and advocacy groups, religious associations, cultural and educational programmes, social clubs, self-defense organizations, hometown societies, fundraising bodies, and youth movements” (p. 8). Immigrants tend to function within these bodies based on their various inclinations. However, worth mentioning is that working within these organizational bodies does not always have ideal consequences due to the intra-structural problems they may carry. In this vein, Levitt contends that “such communities are not always that idyllic; they might also reproduce and perpetuate power hierarchies and inequalities imported from the homeland into the host country” (cited in Grossman, 2019, p. 8). Therefore, according to Grossman (2019), only minorities usually

work for the success of these organizational bodies of diasporic communities.

The position of the family in these communities is crucial. The diasporic family in general and the Arab immigrant family in particular have witnessed a dearth of research in cultural studies, sociology and ethnography. Unlike the diaspora situation, which has been amply researched (e.g. Brubaker, 2005; Butler, 2001; Chander, 2001; Hall, 2015; Klich & Lesser, 1998; Laxmiprasad, 2020; Tölölyan, 2012; etc.), the purpose of this paper is to explore the sense of family in the Arab diaspora situation. According to Nagel et al. (2004) “[t]he position of Arabness in American society has become all the more problematic in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington DC in September 2001” (p. 12). Cultural censorship on the part of Western receiving countries has exponentially increased to control Arab immigrants’ flow into these countries as well as their cultural resistance to fully assimilating into the host cultures. During the aftermath of these attacks, harsh criticism was addressed to American policies and laws of migration. Undoubtedly, these laws and policies have had a strong impact on Arab families in terms of their way of life in America as well as their encounter with its people’s mainstream culture. In this context, Mazumdar and Mazumdar (2009) argue that “[l]ife in diaspora poses many challenges and immigrants have to strategize, negotiate, adjust, and compromise in order to mitigate/minimize potential conflicts with secular time, work schedules, legal and other constraints” (p. 258). Several scholars agree that whatever the host countries do to control, ‘tame,’ marginalize, or disregard cultural minorities within, they will never succeed in effacing their identity altogether. Chander (2001), for instance, posits that “[t]he creation of identity is not a zero-sum game, with the addition of one culture requiring the deletion of another” (p. 1053). Diasporic immigrants cannot sever their new realities from their homelands’ culture, identity and religion once and for all. In this vein, Chander (2001) opines that “[t]he hallmarks of a globalized world are hybridity, intermingling, and multiple allegiances; but despite this intermingling, most people have not sloughed off their nationalist skin in favour of an evolved cosmopolitanism” (p. 1049). Therefore, in seeking to make a new ‘home’ in diasporic countries, strengthening the immigrant self is crucial to resisting the unequal cultural conflicts within the encounter zone with the Westerners. For Laxmiprasad (2020), empowering the self is paramount to respond to the tension received from mainstream culture. He states that the “[s]elf is constituted through the multiple pasts co-existing in the present” (p. 104). Such co-existence of the past manifested in the

present is undoubtedly open to cultural and hegemonic infiltrations on the part of mainstream culture. In the same context, Laxmiprasad (2020) elaborates that "[t]he 'self' develops after the act of dislocation and it relates to the new environment as it negotiates the past, the cultural inheritance, geographical and historical memories and challenges of present" (p. 104). Immigrants' families are, thus, a cultural construct, among others, in which immigrants take refuge to strengthen themselves.

This paper shows how Arab immigrants utilize the sense of family belonging to embolden their diasporic communities and preserve their cultural and religious identity. In what sense, thus, does religion, given its prominence in identity construction, help the Arab family in the diaspora to preserve its identity and resist the hegemony coming on the part of mainstream culture? Concurrently, Vasquez points out that "religion helps immigrants imagine their homelands in diaspora and inscribe their memories and worldviews into the physical landscape and built environment" (qtd. in Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2008, p. 256). How religion is being practiced in Arab immigrants' homelands, thus, overshadows their relationships with both Westerners and their lands. The character of Maryam in Laila Lalami's *The Other Americans* exemplifies how religion helps solidify the cultural identity ties with the immigrant's homeland.

### 1. Research Questions

The present paper aims to explore the following questions:

- 1- How does the sense of family belonging help strengthen Arab immigrants' identity in host countries?
- 2- How does the receiving countries' mainstream culture exert hegemony on this Arab sense of family belonging?

### 2. Method

To respond to this paper's research objectives, this paper used two qualitative methods: textual analysis and critical discourse analysis. Throughout the analysis, ideas supporting the claim of this paper were evidenced by Lalami's novel, *The Other Americans* (2019). Quotes carefully were chosen to critically expound the importance of the sense of Arab family in the diaspora to hold immigrants' cultural identity strong. Also, the power dynamics of the hegemonic West's discourse towards Arab and Muslim families were amply discussed to clarify the tension mainstream culture exerts on these families. The novel was approached through a postcolonial lens to account for the identity crisis immigrants forming family gatherings in the diaspora encounter in the diaspora.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For Lalami, the concept of 'family' is basic to the role of the diasporic intellectual in speaking for the diasporic subaltern Arab immigrants. In this vein, Alina (2013) contends that "[t]he role of the diasporic intellectual as a producer of authenticity and as the voice of subaltern consciousness (as Said expressed it) becomes thus a crucial element in exploring the politics of (post)colonial encounters" (p. 12). The Guerraoui family in Lalami's novel inhabits a postcolonial Anglophone space of encounter between a Moroccan family and the Western Other. Lalami's authentic representation of this family resides in recounting the fantasies, sufferings and adventures of this family's members while seeking to fit into the Californian society. 'Home' for immigrants is epitomized in the family. It represents the only haven where they belong and with which they identify. Lalami stresses in her novel that Arab migrants take refuge in the family as a shield against the cultural hegemony of Western communities. She believes that the family is irreplaceable for immigrants despite the identity fluctuations they might go through due to the identity crisis resulting from their relocation to alien lands and societies. In this context, Nora says that "[t]he desert was home, however much I had tried to run away from it. Home was wide open spaces, pristine light, silence that wasn't quite silence. Home, above all, was the family who loved me" (p. 301). In this novel, Lalami conveys that Arab immigrants remain, despite their continuous assimilation attempts, alien *immigrants* in the eyes of their adoptive communities. That is, for her, the geographical home is less important than the family itself as *home*. In this context, Laxmiprasad (2020) posits that "having home in an alien land becomes a means of suffering for them. Therefore, they see and feel the difference of living at home and abroad" (p. 99). The difference between living at home and abroad is experienced through their struggle to strike a balance between preserving the cultural identity they brought from their homelands and responding to the cultural demands of their adoptive countries. The family, hence, is the cultural and communal construct through which immigrants seek to attain this balance.

Mariam, contrary to her husband, Wajdy, and her daughters, Nora and Salma, may be considered an expatriate rather than an immigrant. Laxmiprasad (2020) makes a significant distinction between expatriates and immigrants: "[g]enerally immigrants assure themselves to be a part of their country of dwelling places whereas expatriates are temporarily located in the host country and most of the time plan to turn back to their native country,

so they never adopt the culture in the host country” (p. 100). Laxmiprasad (2020) adds that “[expatriate] means the strong feelings about the country of origin for the migrants of first generation. While for the second generation the ties and bonding with the homeland gradually gets [sic] replaced by the adopted alien country” (p. 103). Within her unstoppable struggle to keep her family together and protect it from the miscellaneous and intensive cultural infiltration of American society, she always imagines her original home country, Morocco. She never seeks to assimilate to the Californian society. “She had left her country with her family, but she still longed for everything else she hadn’t been able to bring with her” (Lalami, 2019, p. 52). Seemingly, Lalami herself is nostalgic about her home country and her family there. In this context, Driss states that “Eid fell in mid-December that year, and Maryam wanted the whole family to go to the mosque in Riverside for morning services” (Lalami, 2019, p. 57). Meanwhile, Kearney affirms that “[w]hat distinguishes diaspora people is their ongoing or re-awakened attachment and loyalty to their earlier culture and specifically to the homeland which they feel they have left” (cited in Shuval, 2000, p. 46). Beyond everything, Maryam and her husband, Driss, were forced to leave their country due to political upheavals. For Maryam, it is the family’s cultural identity which should hold the family together. This is why she always worries about her family not losing the cultural identity track. Story and Walker define cultural identity as “specific sets of characteristics, expressed in particular ways, to which both individuals and groups may subscribe in order to emphasize who they are and to distinguish themselves from others” (qtd. in Grossman, 2019). Therefore, it is through the cultural identity, which Maryam seeks to emphasize, that she stresses her difference from the Californian society. Indeed, one of the main cultural tasks of first-generation immigrants is to safeguard and bequeath the cultural identity to the next generations as pristine. Of course, given the cultural hegemony first-generation immigrants encounter in their adoptive countries, such a task would be daunting. Maryam’s guidance concerning establishing cultural ties with the homeland as well as not culturally melting in the host culture, is tilted towards Nora more than Salma. For Maryam, materialistically, Salma has a successful life. She has completed her medical studies and set up a medical practice with her husband, Tariq, who is also a doctor. She feels a special thrill whenever her mother favours her over her sister, Nora, in terms of her achievements: “[w]hy can’t you be more like Sama?” (Lalami, 2019, p. 196). She always does her best not to lose the approval of her mother. However, Maryam never interrogates Salma’s cultural conservativeness. Conversely,

Nora is culturally distant from her family. She ‘has gone Western.’ By dating Jeremy, she has become “nothing more than a body, or even a commodity” (Lalami, 2019, p. 263). Therefore, she is the one who needs continuous family guidance and cultural literacy.

Charusheela (2007) claims that diasporic families “[navigate] experience between two nations, two communities. This navigation may be tense, may invoke the need for choosing, or maybe comfortable” (p. 285). Drawing on the Guerraoui family, the response to the allure, temptations and hegemony of the American culture disproportionately varies from one member to another. Driss, for instance, is a modernist character. He supports Nora’s tendencies to pursue art and assimilate into the American culture. He is an atheist. When Nora is asked by Qassim, an eleven-year-old observant boy, to cover her legs before entering the mosque, Driss aggressively argues with him and asks him questions that normally should be addressed to older people. “Do you think,” Driss asks the boy, “that maybe your faith has other things to worry about than my daughter’s legs?” (Lalami, 2019, p. 59). Also, he argues with the imam of the mosque about *hijab*. He drinks alcohol in front of his family and his sole concern is to fit within the American culture.

Obviously, among the members of diasporic families are likely to change due to the tension imposed by the new reality within Western mainstream culture at all levels. Pitkin puts it in this context that “[t]he family is not a thing to be understood in its composition so much as it is a system of relationships that change over time. Family is not stasis but process” (qtd. in Wilson & Pahl, 1988, p. 261). These relationships, thus, are likely to gyrate between keeping ties with the homeland’s culture and assimilation to the host culture. In this vein, Chander (2001) proposes a third trajectory that immigrants may chase: the cosmopolitan model. Nora Guerraoui fits rather as a cosmopolitan character. She is more inclined to individuality. Most of the time, she likes to spend her time away from her family and what the family represents to her. She always quarrels with her mother because of her rebellious behaviour against the cultural standards established by her Arab and Muslim community/family. Nora believes her mother “[is] intolerable” (Lalami, 2019, p. 192). Her ultimate unit of value is her individual self. She therefore denies commitment either to her family or to her Arab and Muslim community. She rejects moulding into any prescribed versions, be them cultural, religious or geographical. When her father was killed, she was drinking champagne in a bistro in Oakland with her roommate, Margo, to celebrate the latter’s win of a grant from the Jerome Foundation. Whenever there is a quarrel between her parents, Maryam and Driss, she resorts to



seclusion: "I couldn't live in that home any longer; my parents' endless fighting made it impossible" (Lalami, 2019, p. 37). She always regards her mother's mindset as obsolete. Whenever she opens a discussion with her mother, she cannot wait to end it and escape. When her mother asked her to do the shopping with her merely to spend some time with her, she "couldn't wait to be alone again" (Lalami, 2019, p. 193). The cosmopolitan Nora, thus, "does not feel the loss or compromise of any essential identity" (Chander, 2001, p. 1043).

The members of Maryam's family constitute a varied social network. Though Driss has struggled to financially support his family by establishing a donut shop, at a later stage he was ready to abandon his wife with whom he has spent over thirty-seven years. Having continuous quarrels with his wife, Maryam, means that he does less to hold his family together than he does to financially succeed. Salma is materialistic, too. Though she has established a successful medical practice with her husband, Tariq, she continuously has fights over the sum of money her father, Driss, has left to Nora, who has no stable job. Nora is always disobedient to the rules of the family set by her mother, Maryam. Given the role that the mother plays in the Arab family in general and the Moroccan family in particular, she never gives up supervising her children morally, religiously and culturally. She never stops praying particularly for Nora's betterment of her life and generally for the entire family's well-being. Maryam says: "I murmured a prayer for her, as I had so many times in the past" (Lalami, 2019, p. 270). Maryam always struggles to keep her family together. Even when Maryam knows that Driss, her husband, has an affair with Beatrice Newland – whose very name connotes Driss's propensity to get rid of all the remnants of the past, including his wife, and embark on a new experience in the *new land* – she does not ask for a divorce, for she believes that the long marriage does not deserve to be thrown away. Also, she wants her younger daughter, Nora, to emulate Salma's successful life. Salma is "married, has two children, and lives a respectable life" (Lalami, 2019, p. 270). In contrast, she considers Nora to be always lost, strong-headed, introverted and a family outcast. Maryam never gives up attempting to get Nora back in the family's bosom. At the novel's end, Nora finally realizes that she has derailed from her family's cultural track. She recognizes that Her mother has "spent years trying to mould [her] into someone she could be proud of, but [Nora] had been so busy breaking of that mould that [she] hadn't noticed all the ways in which [she] was already like her [mother]" (p. 274). Indeed, Maryam represents the magnet of the sense of the Arab family in the West.

The situation of Nora exemplifies the intergenerational struggles there are between immigrant parents and their children. Nora feels she does not have a normal life she has always hankered after. She blames her mother for depriving her of living this life because she prompted her father to come to America: "[m]aybe I would've the ordinary life I had always wanted [...] I wouldn't have been taught, by textbooks, the newspapers, and the movies, to see myself once through my own eyes and another time through the eyes of others" (Lalami, 2019, p. 274). Being self-conscious about who and what an immigrant is and meanwhile seeing himself or herself through the lenses of the cultural Western Other is what W.E.B du Bois calls "double-consciousness" (qtd. in Chander, 2001, p. 250).

One crucial identity factor Maryam relies on in her unrelenting attempts to 'immunize' her family against intra-dispersion and American cultural hegemony is religion. Leviit argues, in this respect, that "religion plays a critical role in identity construction, meaning-making, and value formation. Migrants also use religion to create alternative allegiances and places of belonging" (qtd. in Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2008, p. 256). Maryam finds solace in religion whenever things get bad around her. At every skirmish with her husband, she resorts to the Qur'an in search of her inner peace, as Nora states: "[t]hey argued for days, and the more they argued, the more my mother turned to her Qur'an" (Lalami, 2019, p. 37). She gave more importance to reading the Qur'an after the 9/11 attacks. "She had found solace in it after the attacks, reading it to calm herself every morning after listening to the stream of tragedies on the news" (Lalami, 2019, p. 37). Without this spiritual side, Maryam would fail to face the tension resulting from her family's disequilibrium, on the one hand, and mainstream culture, on the other.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This paper has sought to shed light on the challenges Arab immigrant families witness in the diaspora. Previous research has clearly shown that the sense of the Arab family in the West has received almost no research attention. Thus, this article has shown that the family as a cultural constituent is crucial to strengthening the cultural identity of diasporic communities and resisting the cultural pressure of mainstream culture. Furthermore, it has clarified that religion is a paramount factor in strengthening the sense of family in the diaspora. Moreover, the paper has expounded that the mother, especially in the Arab culture, plays a pivotal role in holding the immigrant family together and empowering the sense of family and culture among the members.

However, as has been shown, the tension caused by mainstream culture waters down that sense of family belonging. Often, it culturally dissolves the family from within.

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# Influence of Teacher-Learners' Classroom Interactions' Strategies on Learners' Learning Performance in Lower Primary. *Case of Endoglossic Country, Rwanda*

Marie Yvonne Ingabire<sup>1</sup>, Assoc. Prof. Gabriel Nizeyimana<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Delphine Mukingambeho<sup>3</sup>, Dr. Michael Tusiime<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>PhD student, Department of Foundations, Management, and Curriculum Studies at College of Education / University of Rwanda. E-mail: [ingabiremarieyvonne@gmail.com](mailto:ingabiremarieyvonne@gmail.com). Orcid link: <https://orcid.org/0009000687127478>

<sup>2</sup>Lecturer, Department of Foundations, Management, and Curriculum Studies at College of Education / University of Rwanda E-mail: [nizeyimanagabriel11@gmail.com](mailto:nizeyimanagabriel11@gmail.com) @[gmail.com](mailto:gmail.com). ORCID link: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6559-1249>

<sup>3</sup>Lecturer, Department of Foundations, Management, and Curriculum Studies at College of Education / University of Rwanda. E-mail: [dmukingambeho@gmail.com](mailto:dmukingambeho@gmail.com). ORCID link: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0944-7362>

<sup>4</sup>Lecturer, Department of Foundations, Management, and Curriculum Studies at College of Education / University of Rwanda. E-mail: [krwibasira@yahoo.fr](mailto:krwibasira@yahoo.fr) ORCID link : <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8650-6533>

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**Abstract**— The study intended to analyze the influence of strategies employed in teacher-learners' classroom interactions through English on learners' learning performance in the lower primary of Musanze District. It followed a sequential exploratory research design. Six primary schools were purposively selected for qualitative data gathering, and ninety-one schools were sampled for quantitative data collection. Qualitative data were collected by semi-structured interviews conducted with 12 teachers and 6 school head teachers, while quantitative data were obtained from the written questionnaire administered to 84 teachers in lower primary. The thematic analysis was employed to analyze qualitative information while quantitative data were treated using inferential statistical analysis by T-test and ANOVA. Findings from the study revealed that some strategies employed in teacher-learners' classroom interactions do not provide room of improving English language used as Medium of Instruction. Therefore, barriers in Medium of Instruction lead to misunderstanding or wrong interpretation of questions or other required tasks during school exercises, tests or examinations, that provoke low learners' learning performance mostly in public and government-aided schools compared to their fellows in private schools, with satisfactory proficiency in English. Then, a statistically significant difference was detected between learners' learning performance of learners in private versus their counterparts in public and government-aided schools. The study concluded that the language barrier handicaps effective teacher- learners' classroom interactions and learners' learning performance. Then, it recommended teachers and learners to adopt measures that improve their English proficiency as well as their interactions, to refine learners' understanding of subjects taught in English to boost learners' learning performance.



**Keywords**— Classroom interactions; Learning performance; Endoglossic country, Rwanda.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Within this era of globalization, knowledge and skills in foreign languages are necessary and required to enable

people of different countries to communicate and exchange experiences, knowledge and goods (Dash & Gandhi, 2022). In this regard, various countries strive to promote the English language, because of its role in international

communication and cooperation (Reddy, et al., 2016). Along the same lines, Assan and Walker (2018) noted that the needs and requirements of having sufficient knowledge and skills in the English language in almost all sectors of life (education, business, communication, employment, tourism, entertainment etc.), dictated many countries to promote the use of English language in their population (Zahedpisheh, et al., 2017).

For the case of Rwanda, various strategies aiming at promoting that language have been set (Bagambe, et al., 2015). This was done within the views and ideology that do not consider Rwanda as an island, but prone to its international integration for better and sustainable development (Rizinde, et al., 2018). One of the strategies to reach this target was the improvement of English use at all levels of the education sector (Nshimiyimana & Bazimaziki, 2024). Therefore, the Rwandan government, and other stakeholders in education, invest in improving the teaching and learning of English, to enable Rwandans to cope effectively with life's requirements that demand sufficient knowledge of the English language (Kwibuka, 2013; Sibomana, 2014). In formal education, the English language was opted as the sole Medium of Instruction (MoI) in all levels of schooling in Rwanda since the 2009 school year. This decision was taken to nurture the knowledge and proficiency of teachers and learners in English and allow Rwandans to be competitive at English-speaking international communities (Karasenga & Nzanana, 2022). Moreover, as Ndabaga, et al. (2023) noted, teaching and learning through international language as MoI might cause challenges in endoglossic countries, if not well-planned and implemented. This is because, teachers and learners have to interact or communicate within a foreign language, not or rarely utilized in their daily life (Shamil, et al., 2022).

Teaching and learning through English as MoI is still a big challenge for Rwandan teachers and learners whose mother tongue is not English (Ndizeye&Tabaro,2023): Dushimumuremyi and Sibomana (2018) argued that even at higher educational institutions, English was required and employed to classrooms context or academic situations, while Kinyarwanda was mostly used in other ambiances of life. At the secondary level, Pearson (2014) affirmed that even teachers in both rural and urban secondary schools in Rwanda did not have sufficient competencies in teaching through English language. At the primary level, Ndizeye (2022) mentioned that 85% of primary teachers were at the beginner, elementary or pre-intermediate level of English. Then, if teachers of such low levels of proficiency in English were required to deliver the lessons in English, it would undoubtedly affect the quality of the lesson content delivered. This implies that the teaching-learning process,

specifically teacher-learners' interactions becomes very challenging when such teachers' low proficiency in MoI is coupled with learners grow in endoglossic ideology, and at early stages of schooling with less prior knowledge (Niyibizi, 2014). Therefore, some strategies like code-switching, memorization or cramming among others are adopted in the teaching-learning process to mitigate challenges related to language barriers (Ndabaga, et al., 2023). Meanwhile, as mentioned by, Demetriou, et al. (2019) the challenging self-representation of learnt content may result in the acquiring of insufficient knowledge, poor competencies, and low learning performance to learners.

Learners' learning performance is a complex issue that concerns all educational partakers including learners, teachers, parents, educational authorities and the whole society in general (Lamas,2015). Saeed and Mohamedali (2022) mentioned some of the factors that may constrain learners' learning performance, like challenged school working conditions, variables related to teachers' background (motivation, personality, qualification), learners' background, teaching-learning strategies, etc. In addition, Shahjahan, et al. (2021) identified gender, age, prior performance, socio-economic status of learners' families, learners' family supports in learning, etc among constituents influencing learners' performance. Furthermore, Husaini and Shukor(2022) argued that the living environment of learners (rural or urban, boarding or day schools), daily weather conditions and study hours, feeding and accommodation, cooperation and classroom interactions have a great influence on learners' learning performance. Finally, Ayuwanti and Siswoyo(2021) highlighted strategies employed during teacher-learners 'classroom interactions to have a great influence on learners' understanding of subject contents that condition learners 'learning performance.

Mwiseneza (2015) asserted that poor performance in MoI most possibly leads to poor performance in that language as well as other school subjects taught and learnt in it. Besides, Emmanuel, et al. (2020) affirmed that the level of teachers' and learners' skills in English used as MoI in Rwanda, influences learners' learning performance. Additionally, Kistner, et al (2015) asserted that employed teaching-learning strategies contributed to the nature of teaching-learning outcomes including learning performance. Then, Pals, et al. (2018) argued that rote memorization of learnt content, one of the strategies used by many Rwandan learners to mitigate challenges related to the MoI, may affect negatively their long-term memory and cause poor performance in further intellectual tests.

Based on the mentioned statements on teacher-learners 'classroom interactions and learning performance, the



researchers left the need to examine the influence of strategies utilized during teacher-learners' classroom interactions through English on learners' learning performance in the lower primary in Rwanda. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the influence strategies employed in teacher-learners' classroom interactions through English as MoI on learners' learning performance in lower primary schools of Rwanda. The study sought to answer the following research question: To what extent do teacher-learners' classroom interactions through English influence learners' learning performance at lower primary levels.

Moreover, regarding that learners' learning performance resulted from different factors; this study emphasized some strategies employed in teacher-learners' classroom interactions through English MoI and learners' learning performance in lower primary. This was very significant because Rwanda is an Endoglossic country where Kinyarwanda the mother tongue is mostly used. Then after shifting to English as MoI many teachers and learners adopted specific strategies to be able to interact. Those strategies are suspected to be among the key factors that determine the quality of teaching and learning outcomes. It was therefore expected that findings from this research could serve as a reference to future studies in this domain and guide decision-making aiming to improve the teaching and learning process in Rwanda.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Ntawiha, et al. (2020) noted that the quality of outputs in the educational system depends on the quality of inputs, and how effectively they are employed. Pritchett (2015) mentioned six elements namely knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation through which the quality of learning outcomes is manifested. According to Dong (2020), one of the techniques to evaluate teaching and learning outcomes is to test learners' learning performances. Therefore, to perform academically means gaining a minimum level of proficiency or having the intellectual capacity that leads to a satisfactory ability to accomplish successfully a given task (Okechukwu & Oboshi, 2021). For this purpose, Izci (2016), revealed that in formal education, there are internal and external factors, like curriculum content, school context, teacher and learner background, cultural and societal preference, parent qualifications and views as well as social economic variables that have directly or indirectly effect on learners' learning performance.

Silas (2023) mentioned that learners whose parents participated in school activities had relatively higher learning performance compared to those whose parents

were less attentive to home-based tasks of their children. On the other hand, Nzeyimana and Ndiokubwayo (2019) highlighted the teachers' role and learners' responsibilities in the teaching and learning process and the quality of learning outcomes. In these lines, Costa, et al. (2015) affirmed that effective classroom interactions enhance good performance and enhance positive impact on academic achievements. Therefore, Achor, et al. (2019) testified that the ways interactions between teachers and learners or among peers are conducted, determine how good or bad learners' learning performance is. In fact, not only do learners gain the importance of quality teacher-learners' classroom interactions, but also, because of those interactions, teachers may ameliorate their knowledge and way of teaching (teacher self-efficacy) to improve learners' learning performance (Velthuis, 2014). Then, when the teacher-learners' classroom interactions are well done, they orient teachers in their activities and also guide and lead learners toward positive achievements.

Balogun, et al (2020) highlighted the level of knowledge and skills in MoI among the components of performance levels for a learner. In addition, Owu-Ewie and Eshun (2015) testify that high learning performance may not take place when learners and teachers are uncomfortable or face limitations in MoI use. Within these situations, learners manifest unwillingness to listen, speak, or operate any other given task as they can't fully understand what is required to be done and the way to tackle it. In these regards, the situation in Rwanda is a good example, because, despite efforts made during more than two decades by the Rwandan Government and its stakeholders in education to enhance formal or informal acquisition of the English language used as MoI, till these days, English language is still hardly used in Rwandans' communications including classroom interactions (Sibomana, 2014). For this reason, Ndimurugero (2015) affirmed that barriers related to the MoI (English language) are among the key challenges met by non-English speaking background learners in Rwanda.

The 2008 shift from the use of Kinyarwanda and or French to English as the only MoI in Rwanda, targeted to help teachers and learners to acquire more and sufficient vocabulary that guarantees good communication skills through English for better integration in English-speaking communities (Schmitt, N. & Schmitt, D., 2014). Moreover, Mwiseneza (2015) revealed that in Rwanda, low proficiency in English for teachers and or learners, handicaps: discussions, debate, way of asking and answering questions, and limits the ability to ask for or provide clarifications, either for teachers or for learners, which negatively affect the learning performance. Meanwhile, it was expected that good teacher-learners or peer communication and collaboration lead to good

learners' learning performance in or outside the classroom tasks, as well as in national or international competitions (Zhou & Zhang, 2014). Therefore, 15 years after the shift from Kinyarwanda or French to English MoI, can be estimated as the due time to check if the above-mentioned expectations of reaching high learners' performance have been realized.

This study followed performance theory. Elger (2007, p 11) asserted that to perform is to take a complex series of actions that integrate skills and knowledge to produce a valuable result'. For this reason, to enhance good learners' learning performance, variables related to learners have to be accompanied by well-settled conducive learning environments by teachers and school managers (Johnson, 2017). Therefore, among six components (fixed factors, personal factors, context of performance, level of knowledge, level of skills, and level of identity) that determine the level of performance, four underpinned this study:

The measurement of the influence of strategies employed in teacher-learners' classroom interactions through English on learners' learning performance needs to consider variables related to the situation in which teacher-learners' classroom interactions are carried out (*context*). In this context, it is necessary to analyze the influence of classroom interactions through English (the foreign language within an endoglossic country, where Kinyarwanda, the mother tongue is mostly used) on learners' learning performance. Then, the importance of strategies employed to enable teacher-learners' interactions had to be considered (Costa, et al., 2015). Additionally, variables related to learning experience including the level of information acquired (*level of knowledge*) as well as competencies (*skills*) in the MoI of learners in the lower primary may influence teacher-learners' classroom interactions and ad-hoc outcomes. Thereafter, all those analyses have to be done based on school location and school status (*the uniqueness or identity of the school*). Other components like personal and fixed factors were not considered during this study.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### Research design

This study followed the pragmatic philosophical way of thinking that uses both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The sequential exploratory research design was employed. Qualitative data were collected and analyzed, and the results led the researcher to collect additional quantitative data, to be able to compare the influence of strategies employed during teacher-learners' classroom interactions through English on learners' learning performance at different categories of schools.

#### Research area and research population

This study was conducted in lower levels of primary schools in Musanze District. The research population was 56,691 persons, including 56,125 learners, 449 teachers in lower primary as well as 117 head teachers.

#### Sampling techniques

##### *Sampling techniques and sample size for qualitative data collection*

To select and determine the sample schools for qualitative data collection, a stratified sampling technique was used. Six, within 117 primary schools in Musanze district, were purposively selected, based on their location and status. Then based on their location two categories of schools (rural and urban) were formed. In addition, regarding school status, three categories of schools (public, government aided and private schools) were made. To determine the representative sample schools, both categories of schools were merged, and six sample schools were randomly selected as follows: Gashangiro II (urban public school), GS Muhoza (urban government aided school), 'Ecole Regina Pacis' (urban private school), GS Murora (rural public school), GS Kamisave (rural government aided school) and SPES NOVA Junior Academy (rural private school).

To determine the school subject to consider, the purposive technique was employed. The condition was the subject taught and learnt through English. Therefore, among four core subjects taught in English [Social and Religious Studies, Mathematics, Science and Elementary Technology (SET) and English] SET subjects have been chosen randomly to be focused on, in this study. Therefore, 18 respondents in the proportion of three persons per school (12 teachers and 6 school head teachers) were selected randomly as research participants during the collection of qualitative data.

##### *Sampling techniques and sample size for quantitative data collection*

To get the sample size of research participants to provide quantitative data, 117 primary schools in Musanze district were also split into two strata referring to their location (rural and urban schools) and three strata (public, government aided and private schools) based on their status. To determine the size of research participants, Yamane's formula (Chaokramthong & Sintao, 2021) was used as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$
 . Then, N represented population size, n: sample size, e: level of precision of 5/100. Therefore,  $n = 117 / 1 + [117 * (0.05)^2]$ . Then,  $n = 90.52224371$ . Therefore, the sample size (n) was 91 schools. From these 91 sampled schools, in each stratum, a number of sample schools was

determined using the method of proportional allocation under which, size of samples in different strata were remained proportional to the size of those strata (Kothari, 2004). Then,  $n_i = n * P_i / N$ . Where:  $n_i$  represented sample schools in each stratum,  $n$  represented all sample schools,  $P_i$  represented the proportion of schools included in stratum  $i$ , while  $N$  represented all schools in Musanze District.

The computation of sample schools in each stratum of schools has been made as the following:

#### Schools location

$-n_i$  rural schools  $= n * P_i / N$ . Then,  $n_i$  rural schools  $= 91 * 80 / 117 = 62.22$

$n_i$  rural schools = 62 schools

$-n_i$  urban schools  $= n * P_i / N$ . Then,  $n_i$  urban schools  $= 91 * 37 / 117 = 28.77$

$n_i$  urban schools = 29 schools

#### School Status

$-n_i$  Public schools  $= n * P_i / N$ . Then,  $n_i$  rural schools  $= 91 * 28 / 117 = 21.77$

$n_i$  Public schools = 22 schools

$-n_i$  Government aided schools  $= n * P_i / N$ . Then,  $n_i$  rural schools  $= 91 * 60 / 117 = 46.66$

$n_i$  Public Aided schools = 47 schools

$-n_i$  Private schools  $= n * P_i / N$ . Then,  $n_i$  rural schools  $= 91 * 29 / 117 = 22.55$

$n_i$  Private schools = 22 schools

Therefore, the combination of sample schools was summarized in table 1.

Table 1: Sample schools

Name of Sector	Number of Sampled schools	Location		Status		
		Rural	Urban	Government Aided	Public	Private
Busogo	6	4	2	2	2	2
Cyuve	12	6	6	3	3	6
Gacaca	6	5	1	4	1	1
Gashaki	4	4	0	3	1	0
Gataraga	6	6	0	2	4	0
Kimonyi	3	2	1	1	1	1
Kinigi	6	5	1	2	2	2
Muhoza	16	1	15	6	2	8
Muko	4	4	0	3	1	0
Musanze	8	5	3	5	1	2
Nkotsi	5	5	0	4	1	0
Nyange	4	4	0	4	0	0
Remera	3	3	0	2	1	0
Rwaza	5	5	0	4	1	0
Shingiro	3	3	0	2	1	0
<b>Total sample schools</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>

Source: Secondary data, 2024

From Table 1, it is shown that the sample size of this research was made of 91 schools: 62 schools located in rural areas and 29 urban schools. Referring to school status, 47 sample schools were government-aided, 22 public and 22 private schools.

#### Research instruments

Qualitative and quantitative data were collected separately. Qualitative data were gathered by semi-structured interviews with twelve (12) SET teachers and six (6) school head teachers. Participants were required to

provide their views on the influence of strategies employed in teacher-learners 'classroom interactions through English on learners' learning performance. For Quantitative data, a written questionnaire was administered to ninety-one (91) SET teachers. The information used within this study was obtained from 84 questionnaires returned.

#### Trustworthiness of data

To ensure the truthfulness and dependability of collected data, sessions of semi-structured interviews were carried out at sampled schools twice: during the first and second

terms of the academic year 2023-2024, specifically in December 2023 and March 2024. The second sessions were organized to complete and confirm data obtained from the first sessions. Teachers were asked the same questions in semi-structured interviews to check the consistency of the information provided. The questionnaire was set based on the research question of the study and validated by the authors of this paper before and after the pilot study. Data from it were trustworthy with Pearson product-moment correlation. Therefore, the questionnaire was found reliable, as reliability ( $r$ ) was found good ( $r \geq .84$ ). To ensure the credibility of the findings, during data analysis, information from the questionnaire was triangulated with information gained from semi-structured interviews for the confirmability of data.

#### **Ethical considerations**

When administering research instruments, the ethics for researching human beings were respected. All research participants were informed of the purpose of the study, the researcher's expectations of their contributions to the good accomplishment of the study, and guaranteed the confidentiality of the information provided. Therefore, before conducting semi-structured interviews, the due time was fixed by teachers and head teachers to provide them ample time to get ready for interview sessions. Participation in this study was voluntary and inclusive and research participants signed the consent form. To comply with anonymity, the information from semi-structured interviews was coded and the questionnaire was filled without mentioning the name of the respondent.

#### **Data analysis**

Collected data were analyzed and interpreted separately. Thematic analysis technique was used to analyze qualitative data, while quantitative data were analyzed using inferential statistics using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The T-test was used to compare learners' learning performance regarding schools' location while Analysis of Variance (one-way-ANOVA) was used to determine the variability of learners' learning performance depending on school status. The test of the level of significance was done based on 0.05 level. Findings were discussed and presented in the form of text, figures, and tables.

### **IV. RESULTS**

Findings from this study showed that the influence of strategies employed during teacher-learners' classroom interactions on learners' learning performance may be positive or negative depending on how the utilized strategies contribute to the acquisition of high or low levels

of proficiency in English for both teachers and learners, regarding school status and school location.

The extent to which strategies employed in teacher-learners' classroom interactions through English influence learners' learning performance.

#### ***Influence of strategies related to levels of MoI and learners' learning performance***

The four (4) interviewed teachers and two (2) head teachers in rural and urban public and government-aided schools classified challenges related to barriers in MoI among the first causes of poor learning performance of learners in lower primary. Limitations in MoI impose them to utilize some strategies to enable them to communicate but sometimes do not guarantee high learners' learning performance. One teacher mentioned the following:

*'In fact, learners in the lower primary are incapable of communication in English through listening and speaking and by reading and writing. They cannot therefore perform well in examinations prepared in English only. After detecting those challenges related to language skills that can inevitably cause poor performance of learners, we have decided to mix English and Kinyarwanda while teaching, to help learners to understand taught content and interpret or translated exams questions from English to Kinyarwanda. Nevertheless, learners are required to answer in English during examinations'.*

Interviewed teachers in urban government schools provided quite the same responses. They revealed that the most common challenges of learners leading to their failure in examinations are misunderstanding or wrong interpretation of asked questions because of the language barrier. One teacher in an urban government-aided school argued:

*'As the good comprehension of the question and self-representation of the task required to be done, is the half of its response', the misunderstanding or wrong interpretation of the questions in exams are the prior failures of our learners during examination prepared in English'.*

She witnessed that most of the time learners crammed and memorized some passages, phenomena, or formulas and failed to realize where to reproduce them during examination. She declared:



*'Our learners become confused and struggle in searching where located or mentioned the memorized words or sentences in the asked questions, and then reproduce all memorized elements without separating required and non-required elements' and thus examination score reduced.*

One of four (4) interviewed Head teachers in a public school reinforced the teachers' statements. He revealed that the low level of proficiency in English for teachers and learners could not allow them to interact through English only during the whole 40-minute lesson period. Then, most of the time they use Kinyarwanda while interacting so that learners cannot succeed in exercises, quizzes, or examinations prepared in English only without additional explanations or interpretation in Kinyarwanda. He remarked:

*'The code-switching techniques are used in the classroom when teaching and learning, and during examinations to help learners to understand taught and learned lesson' content or to comprehend questions during classroom exercises, quiz, and tests. Otherwise, learners could get little or can do almost nothing in examinations. Consequently, challenges in MoI are one of the key causes of poor performance of our learners, especially in exams from the District and National Examination and School Inspection Authority (NESA). Many of our learners cannot 'do anything if no one translates in Kinyarwanda the asked questions or tasks through English'.*

#### *Other teacher-learners' classroom interactions' strategies influencing learners' learning performance*

On the other hand, in private schools, different information was provided. Four (4) interviewed teachers told us that the teaching and learning process is conducted in English only unless during French and Kinyarwanda subjects. One interviewed teacher in rural private school argued that strategies like concretization, group discussions, and debates, try out various exercises through English helping learners to master the English language, and well understand lesson contents. Thus learners' learning performances during school, district, and NESA examinations are at a high level. She added:

*'Most of the time we are obliged to provide two types of examinations: (school examination and District or*

*NESA's examination) because, most of the time, District or NESA's examinations were at a low level compared to the level of our pupils'.*

Concerning the way of evaluating outcomes of the teaching-learning process, two head teachers mentioned that a few cases of learners' poor performance were not related to proficiency in MoI. They revealed other causes like the Intellectual Quotient (IQ) of the learners, the influence of peer groups' behaviors, learners' distraction inside or outside the classrooms, etc. Therefore, regarding the learners' performance in examinations, they noted that they prepared tough exercises and tests to help learners work hard and be competitive in inter-school or national examinations. One among them noted that they proceed as such, for early and progressive preparation of their learners for the national examination at the end of the cycle (P6). He said:

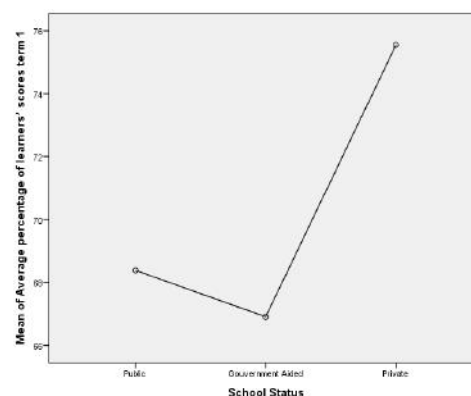
*'The mission here is the hard working in teaching and learning process to reach the school to 100% success in national examinations.'*

#### **Comparative analysis of learners' learning performance among schools**

Diagram 1 and 2 as well as Tables 2, 3 show the variability of learners' learning performance depending on school status and school locations.

#### ***Learners' learning performance based on school status***

Findings from the comparisons of percentage of class averages during SET examination set at school and district levels were presented by figures 1 and 2.



*Fig.1: Mean Plots of learners' learning performance in Term1*

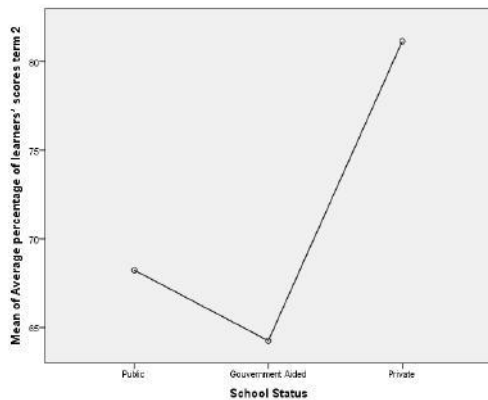


Fig.2: Mean Plots of learners' learning performance in Term2

Source: Primary data,2024

The figures 1 and 2 show high difference between the average of learners' scores in private, public and government aided schools. In fact, statistical results showed that during school examination (term 1); in public schools,  $M=68.38$ ;  $SD=8.925$ ; in government aided schools,  $M=66.91$ ;  $SD=11.854$ ; private schools,  $M=75.55$ ;  $SD=11.825$ . Then, a statistically significant difference was detected between private, public and government schools, as  $F(83)=4.284$ ;  $p=.042<.05$ . For District Examination (term 2); in public schools  $M=68.24$ ;  $SD=13.244$ ; government aided schools  $M=64.26$ ;  $SD=15.821$ ; private schools,  $M=81.15$ ;  $SD=7.666$ . Again, a statistically significant difference was detected between private, public and government schools as  $F(83)=12.234$ ;  $p=.001<.05$ .

**Learners' learning performance based on school locations**

Results from the comparison of percentage of class averages during SET examination prepared at school were visualised in table 2.

Table 2: Average percentages of learners' scores (term 1)

School Location		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Class average of learners' scores term 1	Rural	55	67.22	11.157	1.504
	Urban	29	73.34	11.592	2.153

Source: Primary data, 2024

From table 2 it is noticeable that in rural schools, the  $M=67.22$ ;  $SD=11,157$  while in urban schools the  $M=73.34$ ;  $SD=11.59$ .

For the second term, results from the comparison of percentages of class averages or learners percentage during SET examination prepared at District level were presented in table 3.

Table 3: Class average percentage of learners' scores term 2

School Location		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Class average of learners' scores term 2	Rural	55	66.40	14.631	1.973
	Urban	29	74.72	14.866	2.761

Source: Primary Data, 2024

The table 3 shows that in rural schools,  $M=66.40\%$ ;  $SD=14.63$ . For urban schools,  $M=74.40$ ;  $SD=14.72$ .

For both tables (2 and 3) it is shown that the mean averages of learners' scores in rural schools were at lower level compared to those in urban schools. Therefore, a statistically significant difference was found between learners 'learning performance in rural and urban schools, as during school examinations (in term 1)  $t(82) = -2.361$ ;  $p=.021<.05$ , while during district Examinations (term2),  $t(82) = -2.466$ ;  $p=.016<.05$ .

**V. DISCUSSIONS**

Results from this study revealed that strategies employed during teacher-learners' classroom interactions through English influence learners' learning performance in different ways, depending on school status and school location. Results revealed that barriers in English (the MoI) dictate teachers and learners to adopt strategies like code-switching by translation and rote memorization or cramming that handicap a full understanding of learnt content and questions of examination for learners in public and government-aided schools. Therefore, learners' learning performance in those schools was found lower compared to that of their counterparts in private schools who are more proficient in the English language, and employed strategies leading to a better understanding of learnt content. The low learning performance detected in public and government-aided schools could be related to Iwasaki, et al. (2019) mentioning that only 38% of teachers in the lower primary in Rwanda met the requirements for teaching subjects in English. This implies that the teachers' low proficiency in MoI mostly has

negative influences on teacher-learners' classroom interactions and learners' learning outcomes. This is because, as mentioned Gichuru and Ongus (2016), the teacher's background is likely to be the key influence on learners' learning performance. On the other side, the cramming strategy adopted by many learners in public and government-aided schools do not guarantee critical thinking and long-term memory mostly utilized during examinations.

Inversely, at private schools, learners have no problem with lessons taught and learnt through English and examinations prepared in English. In this concern, District and NESA examinations were qualifying to be at a low level compared to the level reached by learners in private schools. Consequently, most of the time those schools prepare additional examinations to be able to evaluate the level reached by their learners. In fact, to measure the outcomes of their work, before the end of the school year, the directors of studies are required to prepare additional examinations to that from NESA. Then, the comparative analysis of results from both examinations helps private schools to detect learners' learning performance at school and the national level, vis-a-vis the followed curriculum. In addition, these analyses help in measurement of schools' achievement regarding their missions and objectives, but also enlightens school staffs in decision making for way forward.

The significant difference between learners' learning performance found between rural and urban schools could be attributed to the fact that private schools are more concentrated in urban areas and teachers and learners in those schools are more proficient in English than those in public and government-aided schools. Therefore, the learners' learning performance of learners in schools of rural areas was found low compared to that in urban schools.

Empirically, findings from this study could have some implications on the Rwandan education sectors as it informed how strategies adopted depending on the level of proficiency in MoI, influence teacher-learners' classroom interactions and learners' learning performance. Specifically, the fact that some learners are incapable of applying memorized elements during examinations because of the language barrier resulted in poor learning performance that can demotivate both teachers and learners during the teaching-learning process. Therefore, there is a need to search for suitable practices for both teachers and learners to enhance learners' understanding of subject content and tasks to be done, and thus, improve learning performance.

### **Limitations of the study**

Normally, the analysis, measurement and evaluation as well as the judgement on learners' learning performance might require consideration, the comparison, the association and the contrast of various factors. Yet, this study only emphasized the influence of some pedagogical strategies employed during teacher-learners' classroom interactions through English on learners' learning performance. Therefore, to get a detailed picture of factors influencing learners' learning performance in the lower primary in Rwanda, additional studies specifically related to the influences of teaching-learning aids and peer learning would be necessary.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

The study intended to examine the influence of strategies employed during teacher-learners' classroom interactions through English on learners' learning performance in lower primary grades. Findings showed that the language barrier handicaps effective teacher-learners' classroom interactions. Then, some strategies utilized by many teachers and learners specifically in public and government-aided schools to enable teacher-learners' interactions lead to misunderstanding of subjects' content taught in English. In addition, the wrong interpretation or misunderstanding of required tasks during examination was mentioned as a prior cause of lower learning performance of many learners from those schools during examinations set in English. Moreover, in private schools, there was no problem related to proficiency in English used as MoI, and learners' learning performance was at a high level compared to that in public and government-aided schools. Moreover, other factors like learners' distractions and negative peer group behavior were mentioned to have negative influences on some learners' learning performance in private schools. The study recommended: (1) Teachers and learners to strive to improve their level of English proficiency and adopt strategies that can be more helpful to mitigate the problem of the language barrier, the main cause of poor learning performance in public and government-aided schools. (2) NESA have to increase school inspections to get the reality that could help to provide effective advice and prepare standardized examinations based on the balance between required and gained knowledge and skills for better learners' learning performance at lower primary school.

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# Personality Traits and Predispositions for Criminal Behavior: A Theoretical Legal and Psychological Approach

Haris Muminovic<sup>1</sup>, Fatime Ziberi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Law, University of Donja Gorica, Podgorica, Montenegro  
Email: haris.muminovic@udg.edu.me

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychological Counseling and Guidance, Faculty of Education, International Balkan University (IBU), Skopje, North Macedonia  
Email : f.ziberi@ibu.edu.mk

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**Abstract**— *The aim of this paper is through theoretical review to examine and explore the relationship between personality traits and criminal behavior through a multidisciplinary approach by answering the questions which personality traits can give us more indications and is more predisposed to criminal behavior? Another important point of view is the non-acceptance, misuse of these personality traits in front of justice. What is right and what is not in such cases? What crimes and cases are exempt from justice and what tendencies do we have to be misused? These kind of questions requires the skills and knowledge of many experts from both psychological and legal field. Where is the red line that should not be crossed by both sides? We should not forget that personality traits are not mental states or disorders for which we believe and assume that have a different treatment and nature, both before the law and mental health experts.*

**Keywords**— *crime, criminal behavior, legal approach, personality traits, psychological approach, mental health*



## I. INTRODUCTION

It is known fact that criminal behavior in most cases has the sources from personal experience and personality traits of individual. Psychological literature offers us a series of arguments and researches that find positive correlation between certain personality types and traits and tendencies for criminal behaviors. This correlation in most cases is expected and reasonable when we take in account the complex nature of the individual and sometimes the difficulty to understand why some criminal acts, as simply as they seem predictable, continue to be committed. In other side, the legal literature and practice, it mostly focuses on the nature of the crime and the punitive legal measures for the same.

Taylor (2016), offers a balanced perspective on crime, criminal behavior and criminality, emphasizing that answering the question of why and how certain individuals are drawn towards behaving in a way that contravenes the “Law of the Land” it’s not an easy task. (reported by American Psychological Association, 2016).

The relationship between personality traits and criminal behaviors has been from high interest from researches of many disciplines and mostly psychologists, sociologists and lawyers. Personality and its traits which determines the individuality and unique of each of us has been studied from early years starting from Jung (1875-1961), and his well-known theory of personality.

But before exploring this relation lets first take a look at the main aspects, we can’t understand personality traits

neither criminal behavior if we do not first understand what these concepts mean separately.

From many theoretical reviews and definitions, we may refer to Schultz & Schultz (2016), who defines personality as “*unique, relatively enduring internal and external aspects of a person’s character that influence behavior in different situations*” (2016: 6). While personality traits according to Novikova (2013), are defined as “*habitual patterns of behavior, thought, and emotion that are manifest in a wide range of situations*” (2013: 1).

On her book Crime and Criminality: A multidisciplinary approach, Taylor (2016), explores and explain crime from multidisciplinary aspect. Thus, on the intentions to define the concept of crime, she takes into consideration as first legal approach, social constructivism and psychological approach. As she states the definition of crime can be convinced using crime in legal terms such as being guilty acts *actus reus*; guilty mind *mens rea*; determined by laws *a mala in se*; and the human moral code *mala prohibita*. While for criminal behavior Taylor, states that is considered and defined in terms of its seriousness and the ways and means of punishing those who commit crime (Taylor, 2016).

As Tiwari (2020), reports “*Crime is an act of deviance from what a society has construed as against the social norms translated into a criminal code, an act involving intentions at its core, the intentions to deviate from socially accepted actions without any legal justification*” (2020: 439).

Bartol & Bartol (2017), gives a detailed review for crime and criminal behavior from psychological approach. As they states, psychological perspective and literature when it comes to crime and criminal behaviors many times refers to the definitions from legal perspectives emphasizing more the relationship of the behavior and the mental processes of the person who commits crime with intentions to understand and to answer to some fundamental questions such as how individual criminal behavior is acquired, evoked, maintained and modified but most important is to understand why it occurs and what to do about it.

Other important aspect among Forensic psychologists and in Psychological Criminology are both social and personality factors influences on criminal behavior along with mental processes that mediate that behavior (Bartol & Bartol, 2017).

### Which personality traits can give us more indications and are more predisposed to criminal behavior?

The relationship between personality traits and criminal behavior have been studied from many psychologist and

multidisciplinary researches with common point of interest; to try to answer to the already posted question.

Psychological literature offers us a series of arguments and researches that find positive correlation between certain personality types and traits and tendencies for criminal behaviors. Among researches as the theory that better explains this link is considered The big five personality traits theory by Lewis Goldberg (1981). As Santrock (2011), reports many personality researchers argue that they have identified the Big Five factors of personality, the “super traits” thought to describe personality’s main dimensions: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (emotional stability).

Each of the Big Five represents a broad set of related behavioral characteristics, as in follow description by Soto (2018):

- Extraversion represents individual differences in social engagement, assertiveness, and energy level. Highly extraverted individuals enjoy socializing with others, are comfortable expressing themselves in group situations, and frequently experience positive emotions such as enthusiasm and excitement; in contrast, introverted individuals tend to be socially and emotionally reserved.
- Agreeableness captures differences in compassion, respectfulness, and acceptance of others. Agreeable individuals experience emotional concern for others’ well-being, treat others with regard for their personal rights and preferences, and hold generally positive beliefs Avshalom about others; disagreeable individuals tend to have less regard for others, and for social norms of politeness.
- Conscientiousness represents differences in organization, productiveness, and responsibility. Highly conscientious individuals prefer order and structure, work persistently to pursue their goals, and are committed to fulfilling their duties and obligations, whereas unconscientious individuals are comfortable with disorder and less motivated to complete tasks.
- Neuroticism (sometimes referred to by its socially desirable pole, Emotional Stability) captures differences in the frequency and intensity of negative emotions. Highly neurotic individuals are prone to experiencing anxiety, sadness, and mood swings, whereas emotionally stable individuals tend to remain calm and resilient, even in difficult circumstances. Finally,

- Openness to Experience (sometimes referred to as Intellect) represents differences in intellectual curiosity, aesthetic sensitivity, and imagination. Highly open individuals enjoy thinking and learning, are sensitive to art and beauty, and generate original ideas, whereas close-minded individuals tend to have a narrow range of intellectual and creative interests (Soto, 2018: 240)

According to Ahmed (2019), many studies have shown significant relationship among big five personality traits

and criminal behaviors. On his study for big five personality traits and criminal recidivism among ex - prisoners he concluded the mediator effect of the traits on the relationship between prison experience and criminal recidivism. Since there are many studies for the relationship between personality traits and criminal behavior we will refer to Tharshini et al (2021) review to understand and see which personality traits are more predisposed to criminal behavior.

*Tab.1: Systematic review for the relationship between personality traits and criminal behavior*

Author(s)	Year	Sample	Measures	Findings
Beaver, K.M., Boutwell, B.B., Barnes, J.C., Vaughn, M.G., DeLisi, M.	2017	90,000 adolesc. National Longitudinal Study of Adolesc. Adult Health	Psychopathy, personality traits	Psychopathic personality traits increase the probability of being arrested, incarcerated, and sentenced for both male and female adolescents.
Brown, W.	2016	500 respondents	Low self -esteem, crime, punishment	Individual with low self-control tend to be less meticulous, prefer simple tasks that would require little commitment, short sighted, and lack of self-determination.
Bo, S., Pedersen, L., Christensen, K.B., Rasmussen, K.	2019	225 male forensic psychiatric patients and prisoners from three treatment institutions in eastern Denmark	Psychopathy Anti - social Behavior	Psychopathic traits increase the risk of violence, especially traits such as impulsivity, irresponsibility, and antisocial behavior (PCL scales factors 3 and 4)
Traynham, S., Kelley, A.M., Long, C.P., Britt, T.W.	2019	310 incarcerated male U.S. army soldiers and 310 non incarcerated male army soldiers from Fort Rucker, Alabama area	Psychopathy, suicidal ideation, PTSD, criminal behavior	PTSD symptoms had a direct effect on incarceration status, and significant indirect effects through suicidal ideation among incarcerated male army soldiers.
Jones, D.N., Hare, R.D	2016	150 respondent	Psychopathy, lifestyle, antisocial behavior	Individuals who score high for the psychopathy measure (usually > 30 on the PCL-R) are more likely of being short-tempered and unable to empathize.
Cunha, O., Braga, T., Goncalves, R.A.	2018	52 batterers from Portugal aged between 22 and	Psychopathy, criminal behavior, intimate partner	Psychopathy leads to intimate partner violence.



			70 years old	violence	
Gatner, D.T., Blanchard, A.J.E., Douglas, K.S., Lilienfeld, S.O.	2016	1742 African American, Caucasian, and Hispanic psychopathic offenders	Psychopathy, criminal behavior	Psychopathic personality traits show reasonable validity across African American, Caucasian, and Hispanic cultural groups.	
Nigel, S.M., Dudeck, M., Otte, S., Knauer, K., Klein, V., Böttcher, T., Maaß, C., Vasic, N., Streb, J.	2018	164 male and female forensic inpatients with substance-related disorders	Psychopathy, empathy, general personality traits, violent crimes of substance-abusing offenders	Substance-abusing violent offenders display a distinct pattern of personality characteristics (associated with high neuroticism, low agreeableness, and low conscientiousness).	
Tharshini, N.K., Ibrahim, F.	2020	73 meta-analyses	Psychopathy, low self-control, crime behavior	Psychopathy construct is associated with emotional and behavioral disturbance, criminal recidivism, sexual recidivism, and instrumental violence.	
Forrest, W., Hay, C., Widdowson, A.O., Rocque, M	2019	1979 youths between 10 and 30 years old (National Longitudinal Survey of Youth)	Low self-control, risk seeking, impulsivity	High level of risk-seeking and impulsivity contributes towards involvement in criminal activities among youths.	
Wendel, B.E., Rocque, M., Posick, C.	2020	1744 private college student	Self-control, impulsivity, risky behavior	Low self-control and high level of impulsivity is strongly related to socially undesirable behavior such as smoking and risky drinking among college students.	
Kamaluddin, M.R., Mohammad Shariff, N.S., Mohd Nasir, N.C., Abdul Hamid, A.S, Mat Saat, G.A., Rathakrishnan, B	2019	140 Male adults	Self-control aggression, low socioeconomic status	The result evidenced statistically significant correlation between self-control and aggression levels (r = 0.444, 95% CI: 0.30, 0.57; p < 0.001).	
Wolff, K.T., Baglivio, M.T., Klein, H.J., Piquero, A.R., DeLisi, M., Howell, J.C.	2020	104,267 juvenile offenders (mean age of 16, 76% male, 46% Black non-Hispanic, 15.7% Hispanic)	Adverse childhood experiences, gang involvement, temperament	ACEs effect towards gang involvement, substance abuse, and difficult temperament among juvenile offenders.	
Kamaluddin, M.R., Othman, A., Ismail, K., Mat Saat, G.A.	2017	71 male murderers incarcerated in 11 prisons within peninsular	Psychological traits, types of weapons used among the murderers	Aggression and self-serving cognitive distortion are common psychological traits among murderers who use single and multiple weapons	

Malaysia			to commit crime.
Verona, E., Vitale, J.	2018	274 meta-analyses	Psychopathic females have significant level of impulsivity—a trait often being associated with borderline personality disorder.

*Systematic review for the relationship between personality traits and criminal behavior by Tharshini et al (2021: 4,7)*

As seen from the table we may understand the positive correlation and link between personality traits which in many case psychopathy and low self - esteem with criminal behavior

Based on the systematic review above reported by Tharshini et al (2021), the finding of the study stipulates that there are three major personality traits which contribute towards criminal behavior, namely psychopathy; low self-control; and difficult temperament (2021: 4,7).

#### Misuse personality traits in front of justice- the red line between law and mental competence

As stated above, from a psychological point of view crime and criminal behavior goes beyond the act, and the main question is why and how personality factors influence criminal behavior and is there a chance to prevent the same considering the amount of studies proving that some specific personality traits can lead to criminal behavior. On the other hand, legal literature and practice mostly focuses on the nature of the crime and the legal measures to punish it.

On the question *What is the law for and the consequences of contravening it* Taylor (2016), answers using the 'Big 5' legal concepts such as retribution, punishment, deterrence (individual and general), public protection and rehabilitation. Accordingly, the balance between factors of Big 5 underlines implications for society's perceptions of crime and criminality. As she says as the law defines what is to be deviant and a law- breaker, we may say that the law drives criminality supporting a nurture account. Explaining about how the law developed Taylor enlists three main reasons for criminality as following:

1. Criminality occurs because of the way we define crime
2. Law arises out of morality
3. Socialization drives law abiding behavior but can also cause criminality (Taylor, 2016).

Maybe it is clearer in the law, but it is also clear from the DSM5, which clearly defines what counts as a personality

and mental disorder and how those cases are treated from the legal point of view. According to the new DSM-5 (Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition, American Psychiatric Association, 2013), the followings are Five Main Psychopathology Domains (corresponding to the Big Five Personality Traits):

1. Borderline which are characterized with emotional lability, separation insecurity, depressively, hostility and impulsivity.
2. Obsessive compulsive – persistent and rigid perfectionism
3. Avoidant- Anxiousness, withdrawal, intimacy avoidance and anhedonia (lack of enjoyment from life's experiences)
4. Schizotypal- restricted affectively, suspiciousness, cognitive/perceptual dysregulation, Unusual beliefs and experiences
5. Antisocial- manipulatives, deceitfulness, callousness (lack of concern for feelings or problems of others), hostility, irresponsibility, impulsivity, risk taking
6. Narcissistic – grandiosity, attention seeking
7. Personality Disorder Trait Specified- Any trait or combination of traits at a pathological level that does not fall into one of the above categories. Note: Paranoid, Schizoid, Histrionic, and Dependent personality disorders, all of which were categorized separately in the DSM-IV, now fall under 'Personality Disorder Trait Specified' in the DSM-5.

<http://www.psychologycharts.com/list-of-mental-disorders.html>)

The relationship between mental health and criminal offending is complex. A mental disorder may directly cause someone to offend, or play no significant part in their offending behavior. In cases of serious illness, patients experiencing delusions or hallucinations may perceive people as posing a serious threat to them, when in fact none exists. This can account for why a vulnerable or distressed person might attack others, believing it to be a form of self-defense (College of Policing, 2016,

<https://www.college.police.uk/app/mental-health/mental-health-and-criminal-justice-system>).

As Larsen (2023), states mental health and crime are complex issues that are often interconnected. One issue that arises is the potential for over diagnosis and misdiagnosis of mental health conditions in the criminal justice system. Referring to Morrison (2016), she clarifies both situations. Namely, over diagnosis occurs when a mental health condition is diagnosed when it may not be present or when the diagnosis is too broad and not specific enough and misdiagnosis occurs when a mental health condition is diagnosed incorrectly, leading to improper treatment or inappropriate consequences.

This confusion rises even more if we take in consideration how much personality traits are determinant on personality types which can easily lead to criminal behavior. To clarify the link between personality traits and personality disorders Zimmerman (2023), explaining first personality traits as represents of patterns of thinking, perceiving, reacting, and relating that are relatively stable over time, states that personality disorders exist when these traits become so pronounced, rigid, and maladaptive that they impair work and/or interpersonal functioning. This social maladaptation's can cause significant distress in people with personality disorders and in those around them. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th edition (DSM-5-TR) lists 10 types of personality disorders, although most patients who meet criteria for one type also meet criteria for one or more others. Some types (eg, antisocial, borderline) tend to lessen or resolve as people age; others (eg, obsessive-compulsive, schizotypal) are less likely to do so (Zimmerman, 2023).

There are cases where even people with mental health disorders diagnoses have been sued due to the crime they have committed. According to Ghiazi et al, (2023), referring to Steinert et al (2010), people with mental illness are arrested and sent to prison in disproportionate numbers, often due to a lack of awareness and resources in handling these individuals.

On the book A Handbook of Mental Health the IIIrd part Social Context, Theories and Systems, chapter 23 Mental Illness and the Criminal Justice System Hiday and Burns (2009), explore and explains the beliefs and the relationship of the mental illness and criminal justice system and the treatment that mental ill persons have in front of the justice system. According to them there are two prevailing beliefs held by the public (and many professionals) connect mental illness to the criminal justice system:

1. first, a belief that deinstitutionalization has led to criminalization of mental illness, and

2. second, a belief that mentally ill persons are dangerous and likely to commit crimes, especially violent crimes.

As they say, most studies of arrest of persons with mental illness have not controlled for comorbidities, despite existing research that shows that mentally ill persons with character disorders and substance abuse are much more likely to offend and have higher arrest rates than other mentally ill persons.

The public's concern about coddling criminals and the subsequent release of not guilty by reason of insanity (NGRI) offenders into the community seems to be unwarranted. Mental health and social welfare systems with severely inadequate resources try to ameliorate the effects of such deleterious social conditions (2012: 478-98 <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/abs/handbook-for-the-study-of-mental-health/mental-illness-and-the-criminal-justice> ).

Accordingly, what we said above very important and serious issue is when for criminal behavior we see tendencies for misuse and misdiagnosis of personality traits as mental disorders. Then the question naturally arises where is the red line where no side or field should tolerate abuses. So, the questions that arises are what is right and what is not in such cases? What crimes and cases are exempt from justice and what tendencies do we have to be misused? And why is the law than?

As clarified above we should not forget that we talk for personality traits and not mental disorders which we explore and saw how they are treated in front of the law and mental health professionals.

According to the Criminal Code of the North Republic of Macedonia for crime and criminal liability article 7

*"Crime shall be considered an unlawful act which is determined by law to be a crime, and whose characteristics are determined by law".*

When it comes to the measures and sanctions according to the article 4

*"Criminal sanctions shall be: punishments, alternative measures, safety measures and educational measures".*

Regarding to crime and mental competence article 12 on the first and second paragraph

*(1) A offender, shall not be considered mentally competent, if when committing the crime, he could not understand the significance of his act or could not control his actions due to permanent or temporary mental illness, temporary mental disorder or retarded mental development, or*

*other especially severe mental impediments (mental incompetence).*

*(2) The offender of a crime whose ability to understand the significance of his action and the ability to control his actions was significantly decreased as a result of the condition as referred to in paragraph 1, may be sentenced more leniently (significantly decreased mental competence).*

## II. CONCLUSION

On this theoretical perspective we tried to answer to some of the main and important questions for the relations between the personality traits and criminal behavior and the tendency of misusing and misdiagnosing them.

The criminal behavior of a person culminates with all previous life processes of a person, and the most important influence is the home environment. In accordance with the fact that we are aware that a person is built character-wise, intellectually and professionally throughout his life, the environment in which he lives, works and creates also has a great influence after home upbringing. Consequently, criminal behavior most often originates from a dysfunctional family, due to the lack of basic moral values, financial resources for life, the process of education, which is very important for a person, the process of socialization and many other important things.

As we discussed above there is positive correlation between some specific personality traits and criminal behavior, but again despite of the fact that is natural to expect such a correlation, we still haven't managed to understand why some criminal acts as simply as they seem predictable, continue to be committed. Even if we say that some personality traits related with personality types gives more indications and the law is clear about the sanctions against the act, again we failed to predict the same, perhaps is because of the complex nature of the human being behavior. The other issue is that we need to make clear clarification between personality lines that in most cases are misused and misdiagnosed in front of justice. Let's remind once more that personality traits and personality mental disorders are not the same and the law is clear about the crime and punishments accordingly.

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# Interrogating Ambivalence, Identity and Supplimentarity in Anurag Mathur's *The Inscrutable Americans*

Sangeetha Alwar

PhD Scholar, Department of Studies in English, Manasagangotri, University of Mysore, Mysuru, India  
Email: [sangeethaalwar@gmail.com](mailto:sangeethaalwar@gmail.com)

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**Abstract**— *The Inscrutable Americans* chronicles Gopal's misadventures in America. His journey for a better education puts him in the middle of the outrageous and the grotesque realities of America as he desperately tries to cling to the comfort of his Indian identity. He battles racism, feelings of insecurity, familial expectations and judgement all the while interrogating his cultural beliefs of morality and sexuality. Through Gopal, Mathur accomplishes what many postcolonial and diasporic writers fail to do: a sense of humour amidst cultural anxiety. Through the ideas of Ambivalence, Subalterity and Hybridity as proposed by Bhabha and Spivak, the paper attempts to examine the challenges faced by Gopal, his recognition of otherhood, his constant questioning of identity and the gradual acceptance of ambivalence in a foreign land.



**Keywords**— Ambivalence, Diaspora, Homi Bhabha, Hybridity, Identity, Spivak

*Gopal sat in the dark in his pyjamas in the moonlight, finally alone. He was actually and really here. The excitement made him shiver. It was all so alien, so wonderful, yet so scary. Would he adjust, would they like him, would they be friendly, would he do well in class, where would he get vegetarian food cooked by Brahmins?*

Written in the midst of the popularity of diaspora writing in English, Anurag Mathur's *The Inscrutable Americans* takes on the wonderful and bizarre land of America through the perspective of its wide-eyed, sometimes sexist and oftentimes racist protagonist Gopal.

The novel begins with Gopal's experience of the New York airport, where he meets an immigration officer who asks him, out of civility (one supposes), "How is it going?" to which Gopal responds in all earnestness with details of his entire journey: "I am telling him fully and frankly about all problems and hopes, even though you may feel that as American he may be too selfish to bother about decline in price of hair oil in Jajau town" (10). This

sets the tone of the entire novel; one of naive curiosity, surprising discoveries and daunting culture-shocks.

Mathur deftly employs humour to construct the character and experiences of Gopal. His first shock comes in the form of a billboard outside the airport and how silent the car his cousins drive seems to be. Gopal feels that his voice might be too loud as he is used to combating with mechanical sounds to make his voice heard. We see identities being constructed and refined in opposition to that of Gopal. The cousin responds to Gopal's silent amusement at New York by thinking to himself, "Well, he is a small town boy," mused Sushant. 'Bit of a hick actually.' He was himself a Bombay boy and quite used to big city lights" (15). Laughter acts as a tool of validation here, the cousins concretise their Americanness by finding Gopal funny.

Through the Bhabha's idea of the construction of colonial discourse as a "complex articulation of the tropes of fetishism – metaphor and metonymy – and the forms of narcissistic and aggressive identification" (110), the derision of Gopal's cousins is better understood. What we see here, as Bhabha posits is an aggressive desire to set

one's identity in opposition of what is considered as the Other. Though both Gopal and his cousins are racio-ethnically similar (if not same), through their eyes, he's the Other. It is seen that Gopal personifies several stereotypes of the "village hick" to his American-educated cousins, enough to relegate him to a lower position and simultaneously heighten their socio-political position. Expanding on his ideas on stereotype as suture, Bhabha states:

The role of fetishistic identification, in the construction of discriminatory knowledges that depend on the 'presence of difference', is to provide a process of splitting and multiple/contradictory belief at the point of enunciation and subjectification. (115)

It is this "presence of difference" that marks Gopal throughout his experience in America. In his journey to the city of Eversville, Gopal muses to himself of the many differences between India and the land he finds himself in. Many of these contrasts, presented to the reader through the eyes of the naive Gopal seem to be inundated in a fascination for all things American:

People going downstairs in India made a different sound, thought Gopal. It was a sort of scuffling rhythm, maybe because the steps are made of cement, while here each stair seemed a giant piano key that emitted a distinctive, woodenly musical tonking sound muffled in carpeting. (18)

Gopal is engaged in a continuous process of understanding the world around him by comparing it to the one he left behind. In most cases, this analysis is supplemented by a recognition of the superiority of the former:

They drove past trees and shrubs so green and clean that they nearly hurt the eye. Gopal's own hometown, on the other hand, wrapped itself in a blanket of dust and grime (19).

By employing a third-person narrative, Mathur succeeds in providing the reader with a better lens to view the world Gopal occupies and not just through his biases. Where Gopal sees all his dreams of New York city and Times Square being brought to life, the reader is also shown all the people who are confused by his presence:

There was a bounce in his step and he grinned at passersby who eyed him warily. He was walking with the most exciting people in the most exciting city in the world and even if they all rather quickly averted their eyes from him and hurried away, he was anxious to be accepted as nearly one of them. (21)

This anxiety of acceptance has been widely studied within the field of *dispora* studies. This anxiety is foregrounded in a recognition of one's otherness. It results in an ambivalent state of identity as Bhabha proposes, constantly switching between the comfortable and the new, hyper aware of the difference between the two. Bhabha contends that all cultural statements and systems are constructed in a space that he calls the 'Third Space of enunciation' (37). He states that cultural identity always emerges in this contradictory and ambivalent space. Thus, Gopal's continual amusement and shock can be understood as integral to his process of identity formation from an Indian man belonging to the village of Jajau to an Indian man in Eversville pursuing a degree in Chemical Engineering. Examples of such identity formations are very evident throughout the text:

Lot of advertisements, brother. Everywhere. Yeah - Mostly women in them - Yep. Mostly with no clothes, brother - Makes it more attractive - What do their fathers say? (22)

Bhabha talks of this ambivalence in constructing self-identity in a space of cultural dissimilarity:

Cultural identification is then poised on the brink of what Kristeva calls the 'loss of identity' or Fanon describes as a profound cultural 'undecidability'. The people as a form of address emerge from the abyss of enunciation where the subject splits, the signifier 'fades', the pedagogical and the performative are agonistically articulated. (220)

Gopal's learning curve and assimilation into the American culture occurs quite rapidly. As he meets the Dean of his University and discovers to his dismay the blandness of American coffee, he also is surprised to discover that he has already imbibed some of this country's attitudes towards possessions and their value:

It was amazing how rapidly if not instinctively Gopal had begun to equate an automobile's looks with its owner's virtues or their lack. A bad-looking car, he instantly felt, demonstrated a lawless personality. Oddly, he had never felt a similar sentiment in all his years in India. But in America, without anyone telling him so, he had accepted implicitly that the possession became the man. (47)

Gopal's letters to his younger brother in India give the reader a keen insight into the alienation he feels in America. In a letter wishing his parents well and informing them of having settled down at his university accommodations, he says: "Brother, in food matters I am having big botheration. Everyday I am eating cornflakes and boiled eggs for all meals...But what to do? I think Americans are hating vegetarians" (55).

In an essay titled *Sly Civility*, Bhabha discusses the nature of the doubleness of colonial discourse to state that it is not simply writing of and on violence but also “a mode of contradictory utterance that ambivalently reinscribes, across differential power relations, both colonizer and colonized” (139). While *The Inscrutable Americans* does not deal with the coloniser and the colonised in such objective and definite terms, the discourse is ever-present. Observed clearly through the speech of Randy, Gopal’s friend and guide at the university. On the surface, Randy is hospitable, kind and empathetic but his conversations with Gopal serve as examples of typical colonial behaviour – he refers to Gopal as a “half-nigger”, refers to Maharajahs and slave girls in kingdoms as if they still exist in India.

Oh, yeah,' flared Randy, 'well, let me tell you Mr Big Shot From India - hmm,' he acknowledged, accepting the feint. 'Not bad Kumar, not bad at all. Maybe we'll increase aid to India this year after all.' 'You are not,' blared Gopal, his voice rising, 'giving us much aid. It is mostly trade. (65)

Gopal’s quest to lose his virginity in the land of plenty goes awry in many surprising ways. While he admits to have some exposure to the act of intercourse and a general idea of the mechanics involved, he is taken by surprise while faced with real women who are actively looking for it. This shock turns embarrassing when he brings home Ann, is unable to finish the act and does not have the language to articulate his discomfort. Ann perceives this as something more sinister and resorts to racism as a response. She says, “I know there's a lot of difference between us, I mean we do things different here in America. I mean it might be okay in India with all your harems and stuff, but a girl's got to be really careful here of her reputation, know what I mean?” (84).

Gopal’s sense of alienation becomes pronounced in response to a particularly traumatising experience of being targetted by a group of pick-pockets who mistake him for an Iranian and hurl insults: “I jest don't like no Eye-ranians, boy...Comin in here, takin our jobs, takin our women. I jest don't like it, boy. Why don't you git back to your camel land while you can?” (87).

Gopal had never really thought of himself as being any particular colour while in India. Here it defined nearly every moment of his life. Often when he walked into a room he felt that his skin had burst into flames. He actually sensed the glow of fire. It was as though so many glances locking on to him sparked a kind of spontaneous combustion. (90)

Mathur provides the reader with a clear contrast of the kind of Indians one would find in a university in

America: people like Gopal who are new and wide-eyed, grappling with culture-shock and people like Anand (or Andy as he prefers being called) who have assimilated into the culture enough to adopt the mannerisms and accent to the point of taking pride in their apparent “whiteness”.

Gopal is unnerved by the hatred Anand seems to harbour for India and everything Indian, so much so that he comes close to defending his nation and culture despite knowing nothing about the subjects being spoken of. He admits to himself, “Lying in bed, he was astonished at the severity of his responses to Anand's views on India. In India itself he would have paid no attention to them. Here in America he felt himself personally liable for every one of India's policies and answerable for their failures” (111). This susceptibility of commingling oneself with the nation’s culture is the core characteristic of the hybrid identity. It forms one of the major discourses around nationalism and its perceived historicity where “the telling of the individual story and the individual experience cannot but ultimately involve the whole laborious telling of the collectivity itself” (Jameson 69); Gopal fails to understand that his individual identity need not be constructed with reference to his national identity and that the two need not always be inclusive of each other.

Bhabha borrows the notion of ‘the supplement’ from Derrida in stating that the identity of the subaltern always acts as a sort of supplement:

It is always ambiguous, or more accurately ‘undecidable’, whether the supplement adds itself and is a plenitude enriching another plenitude, the fullest measure of presence, or whether the supplement supplements... adds only to replace... represents and makes an image... its place is assigned in the structure by the mark of an emptiness (Derrida 144).

Considering the differing modalities in which Derrida’s supplement can present itself, Bhabha argues that in the case of the subaltern, it is always the latter. Gopal in *The Inscrutable Americans* occupies an ambivalent position throughout the text. His incessant harking back to his perceived greatness of Indian culture contrasted while being simultaneously drawn to the eccentric and apparently immoral lifestyle of America present to the reader the perfect image of a supplemental identity – suspended between the being and the not-being. Bhabha expands the idea further by classifying it under the term “Minority Discourse”:

Minority discourse acknowledges the status of national culture – and the people – as a contentious, performative space of the perplexity of the living in the midst of the pedagogical representations of the

fullness of life...The discourse of the minority reveals the insurmountable ambivalence that structures the equivocal movement of historical time. (212)

Gupta catalogues Mathur's work among the works of Tagore, Kipling, Markandaya and the lighter works of Narayan to plot the changing landscape of writing of the East-West trope in diaspora /Indian English literature. He states, "The playful element of the East-West encounter, is beautifully and hilariously brought out by Anurag Mathur" (305). Gopal's character does not undergo massive shifts through the novel nor does his idea of the West. It is only through such a character, so oblivious to his surroundings, that the reader is allowed more agency in the interpretation of the novel. Further study as to the language employed by Mathur, the racial, sexual and sexist stereotypes expressed by the characters could yield insights into the formation of the new kind of commercial novel in post-independent India and in the field of diaspora literature.

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# Ecofeminist Awareness and Its Relevance to Sustainable Development: A Study of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*

Israt Jahan<sup>1</sup>, Banani Biswas<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer, Department of English, Hamdard University, Bangladesh.

E-mail: [isratjahan@hamdarduniversity.edu.bd](mailto:isratjahan@hamdarduniversity.edu.bd)

<sup>2</sup>Professor, Department of English, Comilla University, Bangladesh

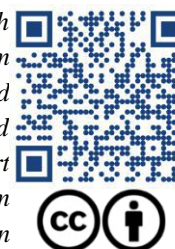
E-mail: [bb\\_31jueng@yahoo.com](mailto:bb_31jueng@yahoo.com) (Corresponding Author)

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**Abstract**— Gender imbalance and environment degradation are two major global concerns today which together form a huge barrier to the sustainability of the Earth's environment. This paper originates from the contemplation if literature could help raising or enhancing consciousness to prevent those social and artificial ills spread over the world more or less. It studies the synergy between women and ecology found in the prominent cultural postcolonialist Chinua Achebe's history re-writing novel, *Things Fall Apart* (1958). It is a widely studied novel focusing mainly on the process and consequence of British colonialism in Nigeria; however, it is indispensable to examine whether its focus on ethnic women and their relation with surrounding ecospheres could provide some in-depth insight into the above mentioned hindrances to sustainable world. Henceforth, the primary objective of this study is to explore how the indigenous beliefs, value system and practices of the Igbo community incorporates ecofeminist awareness, capable of providing some prominent gateways to sustainable development of Nigeria in particular and the world as a whole. The study is entirely qualitative and it employs textual analysis methods to closely examine the narrative and the contexts, i.e., historical, political, and socio-cultural, it is set in. Ecofeminism necessarily provides a comprehensive theoretical framework for the study. However, certain ecowomanist concepts, with particular reference to Alice Walker, are also drawn.



**Keywords**— Ecofeminist Awareness; Sustainable Development; Mother-Earth; Chinua Achebe; *Things Fall Apart*

## I. INTRODUCTION

If we attempt to trace some major global concerns of the twenty first century world, gender imbalance and environment degradation will perhaps host the list. On the one hand, the long rooted gender discrimination has devalued almost half of the human species and been an immense impediment to social and economic growth and wellbeing. On the other, the extreme dependency of civilisation upon machines has threatened our life support vis-a-vis environment. These apparently disparate threats, in fact, are intertwined and have unitedly formed a huge

back-wheelers to the Earth itself. Chu and Karr identify impoverishment of environment or living systems as humanity's greatest challenge for the 21st century (278). It is claimed that we are living in a time of most sophisticated scientific development and looking forward to furthering it while paying less attention to humanity and sustainable development. This paper, attempts comprehending if literature could raise or enhance some kind of visionary consciousness to prevent those social and artificial ills spread all over the world more or less. To examine the issue, it operates a study on the prominent

cultural postcolonialist Chinua Achebe's history re-writing novel, *Things Fall Apart* (1958) which draws on issues like women, earth and environment. It is a widely studied novel focusing mainly on the process and consequence of British colonialism in Nigeria; however, it is indispensable to examine whether its focus on *Igbo* (an ethnic community in Eastern Nigeria in around 1890s) women and their relation with surrounding ecospheres could provide some in-depth insight into the above mentioned hindrances to sustainable development.

There is an accumulating body of research showing the unique impacts that women face due to a wide range of environmental issues (Austin & Banashek 259). In their reading of *Things Fall Apart*, Jane and Emmanuel assert that the subjugation and oppression of women is linked to the exploitation of ecology (Nkechi and Asika 33-40). In fact, a substantial number of studies on the novel have examined the diverse and equal connections between environment and people that have been disrupted by colonial aggression and illustrated the strategies of African writers to portray a complementary homeostatic relationship between the environment and humans in order to achieving environmental justice even before the birth of ecocriticism (Bondunde 35-38; Priyanka and Kumaraswamy 118-124; Alam 1-13). Some studies are found to emphasise the strategy of ecological resilience and strategies for adapting to contemporary complex that the novel suggests (O'Brien 1-10). However, unless those ecocritical viewpoints are endorsed with feminist lens and related with the twenty first century global objective for a sustainable Earth, the novel's focus upon the synergy between women and nature will remain unexplored. This study intends to illustrate the novel's ability to express a contemporary crisis, whose devastation touches some places more than others, but whose scope is global.

Comprehending the necessity of sustainable development on the façade of ongoing urbanisation and industrialisation all over the world, in 1915 the United Nations set seventeen goals, including gender equity (SDG 5) and climate action (SDG 13), which highlight the three dimensions of sustainable development, i.e., the economy, the social development and the environment. According to United Nations General Assembly, sustainable development is the "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (43). It can also be defined as an approach to the economic development of a country without compromising with the quality of the environment for future generations (Dernbach J. C. 20). This paper asserts that the study of *Things Fall Apart* is indispensable for awareness building and championing the global objectives of promoting women empowerment and

discouraging deforestation and climate change. In the novel, Achebe appears to contemplate on the intricate connections between gender dynamics and environment. The novel clearly bears significant awareness in its portrayal of the relationship between the *Igbo* and nature. Most of the cultural, religious, and ethical practices of the *Igbo* revolve around nature and women. The interconnectedness of cultural, religious, and ethical practices with nature as well as the central role of women in maintaining this connection informs a deep ecofeminist awareness. The novel gives recognition to women and nature in relevant situations and underscores the parallel between the oppression of women and the exploitation of the environment. By weaving these elements into the narrative, Achebe seems to highlight the importance of ecofeminist consciousness in promoting environmental conservation and sustainable development in Nigeria and elsewhere. Moreover, the emphasis on the *Igbo*'s sincere maternal devotion to nature in the novel underscores the nurturing aspect of the relationship between women and the environment. In this way, Achebe not only portrays the cultural dynamics of the *Igbo* but also incorporates a nuanced ecofeminist lens, inviting readers to consider the profound implications of the interconnectedness between gender roles and environmental sustainability.

Henceforth, the primary objective of this study is to explore how the indigenous beliefs, value system and practices of the *Igbo* community in *Things Fall Apart* incorporates ecofeminist awareness, capable of providing some prominent formula to sustainable development of Nigeria in particular and the world as a whole. On its course, the paper will explore how Achebe connects women and ecology, consciously or unconsciously, by presenting women as epitome of uncanny power, productivity, sustenance, fertility, and continuity upon which the peace, prosperity, and survival of the community depends. It will also draw on the synergy between women and nature which constitutes the core of their cultural beliefs, reinforcing the transcendental dissolution of the western binary distinction between women (human) and nature. Correspondingly, the study will discover how the novel reflects an inextricable relationship between the oppression of the *Igbo* women and the exploitation of the environment. Women in the story often embody a harmonious relationship with nature, and their roles are intricately tied to the land. The disruption caused by colonialism disrupts this balance, illustrating a parallel between the subjugation of women and the exploitation of the environment. Finally, the research will study how the women characters with different powers carry subtle implications to the sacred beliefs or religion of the *Igbo*. The *Igbo*'s belief in women

as the embodiment of Mother-Earth and her nature-centered religious culture, replete with totems and tents, places women as sacred figures and religious personals.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### *Methods*

The study is entirely qualitative and it employs textual analysis methods to closely examine the narrative and the contexts, i.e., historical, political, and socio-cultural, it is set in. The primary source of the study is Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* while scholarly studies on it recount its secondary source. The study will identify significant ecofeminist contents from the novel and relates those to the global objective of sustainable development. Necessarily, it will draw on the interconnectedness of ecocriticism and feminism to analyse women's long-termed connection with nurture and nature. Ecowomanism, with particular reference to Alice Walker, will also be drawn at certain points. Therefore, ecofeminism and ecowomanism together provide a comprehensive theoretical framework for the study.

### *Theoretical Framework*

Ecofeminism is a movement that explores the intersections between environmentalism and feminism. It highlights the links between the oppression of women and the exploitation of the environment, often emphasising the parallels in the way both are treated as resources to be dominated and controlled. Ecofeminists advocate for social and ecological justice, seeking to address issues such as gender inequality, environmental degradation, and the interconnectedness of social and environmental issues. It was first used by French feminist Françoise d'Eaubonne and hailed from third wave feminism. The concept was further developed in 1976 by Ynestra King who focused primarily on the interconnections between ecology and peace, environmental justice and social justice. She asserts, "Ecofeminist 'peace' is understood as being connected to a new definition of national and planetary security which includes societies free from violence, with nature-friendly technologies and sustainable economics that are respectful of place and culture" (King 15). Though environmental justice and social justice are two different things with different concerns and goals, ecofeminists believe that they have common cause which is the Western binary or hierarchical thinking or framework. In Western thought, everything is set at two different binary poles. Men, white, and human are thought to be superior whereas women, non-white, and nature are considered to be inferior because of the inherent differences between them. Ecofeminists argue that these binary distinctions promote discriminatory perceptions of each animate and inanimate object and

create a form of value inequality. In other words, such hierarchical thinking also infects the way people see and think about the world.

According to Karren J. Warren, basic beliefs, values, attitudes, and assumptions about the Western world and its inhabitants are shaped by a patriarchal oppressive conceptual framework that aims to explain, justify, and maintain relations of dominance and subordination in general and men's in particular. Through this logic of dominance, hierarchical 'othering' occurs. Warren asserts that "Sexism and the exploitation of the environment are parallel forms of domination" (Warren 1). The ecofeminist viewpoint sheds light on the undeniable fact that environmental degradation has a profound impact on women, especially in the context of colonial invasions and conflicts between humans and nature. For example, the degradation of their ecology along with the colonial invasion has exacerbated the conflict of human-nature which has not only affected the local communities but also the women lived there. Ecofeminism, thus, offers an analytical framework for understanding the same situation in *Things Fall Apart*.

Ecofeminism also provides an alternative tool to interpret the power of women's and nature's interconnectedness for a sustainable Earth. Vandana asserts that "one of the tasks of ecofeminism is to retell how societies must look at yield and activity of both women and nature that have mistakenly been believed passive, allowing for them both to be ill-used" (Vennila 2087). She emphasises the undervalued connection between women and the environment, urging a reevaluation of societal perceptions towards the roles of women and nature, challenging the misconception of passivity and advocating for a more harmonious relationship. It is also related to the concept of 'animism' and *Gaia* (concepts also related to ecospirituality). *Gaia* envisages that the earth is a living organism and human beings and natural elements are part of it (animism). Organism interacts with their inorganic surroundings on Earth to form a synergist, self-regulatory, complex system. This complex system maintains the synergy of life on the planet, and human beings should not harm the living environment and the living earth. The *Gaia* concept and 'animism' are instrumental to analyse *Igbo* cultural, religious and ethical view of the cosmos where the nature is considered as living entity representing feminine attributes of nurturing and regenerating.

Alice Walker, earnestly an ecowomanist, recognises the inherent relationship between nature and gender, which came to be known as ecowomanism today. Walkers advocates for the resistance of the ecosystem for the well-being of women of caste and mankind. She suggests that deforestation, environmental contamination, and global

warming can be remedied by developing a true ecowomanist consciousness (Hasanthi 160). Her ecowomanist concept are particularly meaningful for interpreting the cases of women of colour and non-white (colonised) women regarding this study.

### III. DISCUSSION

*Things Fall Apart* is a novel which shows how a well-organised, culturally enriched, peace loving, and prosperous ethnic community in Nigeria disintegrates and loses everything of their own due to British colonial aggression on the land. Bringing out old beliefs and value system, ways of life, and rich cultural ethos on the one hand and colonial oppression on the other in the novel, Achebe offers a scope to compare between and comprehend constructive or spiritual indigenous culture and destructive or material colonial culture. The novel states a land called Umuofia which encapsulates a harmonised living system where the people used to live in close contact with nature before colonisation. The narrative is replete with ecofeminist awareness. Achebe connects women and ecology by presenting women as epitome of productivity, sustenance, fertility, and continuity upon which the peace, prosperity, and survival of communities depend. The changing seasons, agricultural cycles, and natural elements play significant roles, reinforcing the cultural and spiritual bonds with the land--power of which also goes to a goddess called Ani. The disruption caused by colonialism disrupts this balance, illustrating a parallel between the subjugation of women and the exploitation of the environment. It leads to the metaphorical unraveling of the traditional way of life, as symbolised by the title, *Things Fall Apart*. The novel portrays Mother Africa not only as a physical landscape but also as a source of cultural identity and resilience in the face of external forces. Ecofeminists are often critical of Western binary system of knowledge which promotes discriminatory perceptions of each animate and inanimate object and create a form of value inequality. In this respect, ecofeminist Ynestra King asserts although social and environmental injustices are apparently different, they have common cause of hierarchical thinking (King 15). Achebe also seems to be aware of this Western epistemological politics and mend up some conventional gender discriminations through women's power positions as well as cultural practices in the society. The community the novel portrays is undoubtedly patriarchal. The narrative emphasises how social structures present men in a position where they can dominate and rule women. Women also accept subjugation by accepting men's control over their lives. Okonkwo, the protagonist of the novel and representative of aggression and masculinity of patriarchy,

controls the entire family like other members of *Igbo* clan. It is mentioned in the novel, "Okonkwo ruled his household with a heavy hand. His wives, especially the youngest, lived in perpetual fear of his fiery temper, and so did his little children" (Achebe 12). However, despite his stern demeanor, there are instances where women posit in significant positions in the nature-based cultural and religious arenas of the society. For example, Chika and Chielo, the priestesses of Agbala (The Oracle of Hills and Caves) are addressed as sacred experts, eyes of God and 'religious authorities'. They can transform as a medium between supernatural spirits and earthly beings. They are powerful, dauntless, fearless personalities with social prowess. Okonkwo, the *Igbo* leader with name and fame, had to adhere to Agbala which demonstrates a nuanced perspective on gender dynamics in the novel. She exerts her voice on Okonkwo: "Beware Okonkwo!" she warned. "Beware of exchanging words with Agbala. Does a man speak when a god speaks? Beware!" (Achebe 89). Consolidating women's place as sacred figures and religious leaders, strong feminist characterisation of female characters in the novel legitimises women's changing position. Okonkwo's first wife is portrayed as a confident for *Igbo* that she was given the responsibility of Ikemefuna, a child the *Igbo* wins from the defeated clan as a sign of victory. Ekwefi, the second wife of Okonkwo, is an unconventional *Igbo* woman who rejects the traditional system of marriage by choosing the groom of her choice. She is the representative of strength, bravery, resilience, freedom: "Of his three wives Ekwefi was the only one who would have the audacity to bang on his door" (Achebe 67). She goes beyond religious and cultural dogma and embraces her freedom of action and decision making. Moreover, women, in *Igbo* society, share their status with male counterparts. Their role as educators has a great significance as children are introduced to basic knowledge about religion, customs, social norms, code of conduct by their mothers. They teach morals by telling fables of various animals and trees of the nature. Although women are relatively in a subordinate position in society, women's earth-based spiritual strength, maternal qualities, cultural religious values re-establish their esteem.

The position of women in *Things Fall Apart* is analogous to current feminist campaign of women's empowerment as well as United Nations' objectives, SDG-5, which advocates for gender equity. As it is stated earlier in the study, the goals United Nations sets for sustainable development accumulate the dimensions of economy, environment and social development (83). It could be perceived that keeping half of the people away from economy, education, and policy making, sustainable development can never be achieved. In the *Igbo* village of



Umuofia, women are presented as responsible, hardworking, productive, creative, resourceful and industrious. They are the symbol of economic prosperity. For example, the number of wives of a man is synonymous to the amount of land the person possesses. Okonkwo is glorified for having four wives since it implies that it requires that number of labour force to cultivate Okonkwo's land. Women's procreative power is also appreciated in that society. It is elucidated, "The birth of her children,... should be a woman's crowning glory" (Achebe 67). When the present world is threatened with women's sterility for a wide variety of reasons including nuclear war and environmental degradation, such glorification of 'motherhood' is, in fact, futuristic. It is true that recognising women's potentiality merely for farming and giving birth may devalue the women today in many societies; however, if we consider the time and place the narrative is set in, it will be different. The exemplary advancement and contribution of women to the mainstream economy of the *Igbo* could be championed today. Ecofeminist and activist Vandana Shiva writes that women have a special connection with the environment through their daily interactions but this connection is undervalued. "One crucial aspect that distinguishes the experience of Black women is their hard labor in field to grow vegetables and food crops" (Biswas 5). Shiva makes it clear that "ecofeminism is to retell how societies must look at yield and activity of both women and nature that have mistakenly been believed passive, allowing for them both to be ill-used" (Vennila and Gejeswari 2087). Urging a reevaluation of societal perceptions towards the roles of women and nature, Shiva challenges the misconception of passivity that stereotypes women. If the parallel advancement of men and women found in *Igbo* community would prevail everywhere, women's position could have been different today.

The ecofeminists express a strong assertion on the synergic relationship between women and nature. In her study, the ecofeminist Karren J Warren claims "Nature is a feminist issue" (1). The ecofeminist view of women's close contact with nature and advocacy for the conservation of both align with the goals of sustainable development the study focus on. From the reading of *Things Fall Apart*, it gets apparent that the *Igbo* religion is nature based where earth, particularly Africa, is often personified as a female spirit. The *Igbo* people attribute feminine qualities to nature of Africa, seeing them as nurturing and life-giving forces. This connection between Africa and femininity underscores the *Igbo* worldview, emphasising harmony and balance with the environment as essential aspects of their spiritual beliefs. This connection is evident in the depiction of female deities and spirits associated with

natural elements in *Igbo* cosmology. Achebe uses the character of Ani, the goddess of earth, to express the link between women and ecology in terms of productivity and fertility. Nkechi and Emmanuel examine, "Women in the novel were seen as the emblem of productivity, sustenance, fertility and continuity on whom the peace, prosperity and survival of the community heavily rest upon. Nature worked hand in hand to ensure the peace, stability and fertility of the whole community" (35). For the ecofeminists, "Peace' is understood as being connected to a new definition of national and planetary security which includes societies free from violence, with nature-friendly technologies and sustainable economics that are respectful of place and culture" (King 15). The *Igbo*'s dependency on nature for their agriculture and their indigenous knowledge of its cycle implies that Achebe, consciously or unconsciously, advocates for a more equitable and sustainable relationship with the environment.

*Things Fall Apart* clearly concedes that the concept of 'Mother Earth' is embedded in the *Igbo* religious and cultural beliefs. Instances of such *Igbo* beliefs found in the novel align with ecofeminism as well as United Nations' goals of sustainable development as it underscores the nexus between the feminine, nature, and the struggles faced by both women and the environment. The earth goddess, Ani, is a manifestation of 'Mother Earth' in the novel. This figure symbolises fertility, sustenance, bearing the ancestors by storing them in her womb, and the cyclical nature of life. The *Igbo* people's reverence for Ani reflects a deep ecofeminist consciousness, acknowledging the importance of nurturing and preserving the earth. Being an agrarian society, the *Igbo* community are dependent on the grace of the earth goddess for their survival in this world. Their earth goddess is a mother figure to them as she cares for them, guides them, nurtures them and when necessary punishes their misdeeds to maintain favour in *Igbo* society. She is committed to upholding justice and maintaining societal order by taking a firm stance against wrongdoing. This earth goddess governs all aspects of their lives, be it personal or social, and the *Igbos* are always loyal to her. The earth goddess blesses the land with nurture and nourishment which symbolises growth and rejuvenation which is important for environmental sustainability. Achebe states, "When the rain finally came, it was in large, solid drops of frozen water which the people called 'the nuts of the water of heaven! ... The earth quickly came to life and the birds in the forests filtered around and chipped merrily.... all were happily, refreshed and thankful" (Achebe 114). Ani nourishes and rejuvenates the environment by sending rain to the land. She is the spiritual incarnation of earth with the

values of life-affirming, procreative and nurturing which are the same as women's. Dealing with ecospirituality, this is how Achebe connects woman and nature. As mothers protect their children, so does Ani who protects her worldly offspring.

In fact, the entire life-style of the *Igbo*, i.e., their beliefs and practices, seems to be shaped by certain kinds of wisdom and knowledge which advocate for saving women and conserving nature. According to *Igbo* religious cultural belief, every crime can either be female or male. Any offence against mother earth is female crime. When Okonkwo accidentally killed Ezeudu's son, it was considered as female crime because every natural being is the responsibility of Ani. Since all Umuofians are beloved children of Mother Earth, killing some kindred is considered killing one of Ani's children. The consequences of this offence are considered very serious. Okonkwo, a model Umuofian, accepted seven years of exile in Ani's honour. Okonkwo, who loves his clan dearly, accepts such punishment without question. Then, in honour of the Earth Goddess, the *Igbo* people organise several ceremonies and observe them with deep respect and reverence. This reverence is reflected in rituals, ceremonies, and the everyday lives of the characters. One of the most significant rituals is the 'Week of Peace' dedicated to Ani. In those days any crime against women and nature would be unforgivable. Even, hitting the ground with a plow for cultivation would be an offensive activity. When Okonkwo, a great leader with several titles, broke the week's peace by beating his wife, Ojiugo, he had to bear heavy reparations as penance. The priest of Ani, Ezeani reprimanded Okonkwo by reminding him of the implications of this abominable crime. Beating wife in the 'Week of Peace' is such a violation of the Earth goddess that she may stop producing crops for the entire clan (Achebe 27). This analogy between women and Earth Mother calls for ecofeminism in its interpretation. The exploitations of women and nature stem from the same hierarchical framework of the western world which promotes polarising and "othering" the "others"--both animate and inanimate. According to Karren J. Warren, basic beliefs, values, attitudes, and assumptions about the Western world and its inhabitants are shaped by a patriarchal oppressive conceptual framework that aims to explain, justify, and maintain relations of dominance and subordination in general and men's in particular. Through this logic of dominance, hierarchical othering occurs. Warren asserts that "Sexism and the exploitation of the environment are parallel forms of domination" (Warren 1). She adds, "Ecological feminist claims that there are important connections between the unjustified domination of women, people of colour, children, and the poor and the

unjustified domination of nature" (Warren 1). While *Igbo* society exhibits a somewhat patriarchal approach to nature, the novel illustrates the interrelationship between ecology and women through characters like Ani.

The concept of 'Mother Earth' bridges environmental and social justice as King asserts in her study (15). One of the ideals of ecofeminism is to raise awareness of the protection and preservation of women's and environmental rights by connecting environmental injustice and social injustice, especially women's injustice. The graphic description of the *Igbo* devotion to the mother earth exemplifies *Igbo*'s ecofeminist perspective. *Igbo* ecofeminism values indigenous knowledge and practices related to the environment. By preserving and promoting these traditions, it resists the erasure of local knowledge systems that occurred during colonisation. object in nature is a physical and metaphysical embodiment of the divine 'Ani' herself is a female goddess who plays a role in establishing a strong bond between women and nature. The exploitation of women and the degradation of nature parallels the disobedience and disrespect of the mother earth. This parallelism creates an ecofeminist trend in the novel that promotes both the freedom of women and the freedom of nature by observing them through the ecofeministic lens. Human killing, animal killing (sacred python), abuse of women are all blasphemy and dishonour to the earth goddess which are severely punishable in *Igbo* society. Since the earth goddess represents the whole of nature, the degradation of nature is her degradation. Ani is, thus, an important influence on the ecofeminist concept of the novel. The concept of 'Mother Earth' reinforces the novel's ecofeminist spirit by highlighting the *Igbos'* predilection for women.

For gender equity, women's empowerment is strongly recommended not only by the feminists but also by many policy making institutions. Empowering somebody involves the capacity of that person to execute particular jobs. The concept of women's empowerment, therefore, acknowledges and asserts women's potentiality, a resemblance to which is found in an *Igbo* word, Nneka, which means "Mother is Supreme". This presentation of Mother along with the Mothers' association with the Earth in the figure of Ani stated above reflects a deep spiritual connection that underscores the importance of respecting and coexisting with the natural world, viewing it as a source of life and sustenance. This interplay between the mother figure and ecofeminist consciousness underscores the importance of recognising and respecting the symbiotic relationship between women and the environment. The character Nneka is not a specific character in the novel but rather a cultural concept that underscores the significance of mothers. The idea of Nneka is closely tied to the

broader themes of family, kinship, and the interconnectedness of the community. The supremacy of motherhood and maternal environment is evident in *Igbo* worldview. According to which the maternal environment and maternal home will not leave anyone in time of need. When Okonkwo is banished from his land for murdering a clansman, he takes refuge in his mother's land. This nurturing capacity as well as the supremacy of the Mother is illustrated by Ayuk-Etang as in two ways: "Firstly, in the love the woman shares with the children, and secondly through the symbol of the goddess. This brings in the concept of ecospirituality, which links the woman's spiritually to nature" (Ayuk-Etang 20). Alice Walker recognises the inherent relationship between nature and gender, which came to be known as ecowomanism. She suggests that deforestation, environmental contamination, and global warming can be remedied by developing a true eco-womanist consciousness (Hasanthi 160). She advocates this ecowomanist worldview that this consciousness alone can bring down patriarchal hierarchies, ensure ecological justice and woman justice, and preserve the interests of women and the environment. Achebe presents the same worldview and portrays the novel as a microcosm of ecofeminist consciousness which promotes women empowerment and sustenance of the Earth's environment.

The bond Achebe makes among women, nature and earth not merely shares certain goals of sustainable development. It encapsulates a broader philosophy of the entire cosmos, imbued with in-depth insight into the universe, creation and entire existence to which SDGs are just corporeal. According to *Igbo* cosmic philosophy, the universe appears as an organic whole or a living organogram where every human and non-human is highly valued because everything in the nature possesses a unique spiritual essence or soul. The instances of natural catastrophes in Umuofia one after another after the deforestation of the 'Evil Forest' on the façade of colonial usurpation and the death of the person who killed the Royal Python inform some uncanny incidences which is comprehensible if the universe is considered as a living thing and every elements as carrying the universal soul. Such a worldview embraces the ecofeminist idea of 'Gaia' and 'animism'. The concept of 'animism' believes spirit in every object of nature whereas 'Gaia' envisages that the earth is a living organism which interact with their inorganic surroundings on Earth to form a synergist, self-regulatory, complex system. This complex system maintains the nexus of life on the planet and human beings should not harm the living environment and the living earth. The holistic worldview reflecting from the *Igbo* way of life not only underscores the interconnectedness of

human and non-human elements but also debunks breaking the hierarchical universal order of Western metaphysics that imposes an ontological difference between man/woman, human/Nature, human/God, and God/Nature (Dieke n.p.). This deep interconnectedness between humans and the natural environment, reinforcing the transcendental dissolution of the binary distinction between nature and women. It aligns with the idea that both women and nature deserve equal rights and respect.

When the colonisers intrude into the land of the *Igbo*, its indigenous culture, religion and social system collapse and the entire community disintegrates. In a study, Banani Biswas, using Roland Barthes' concept of *proairetic code*, discusses how the Western hierarchical worldview operates in human unconscious to shape it in ways we know as 'universal' (210). One reason behind the disruption of the *Igbo* community was its failure in conserving own cultural elements due to the colonial strategies of cultivating Western ideologies onto the minds of the *Igbos*. Another one was the forceful aggression of the colonisers with arms to usurp their land and power. For, establishing schools, colleges, churches, markets, or in other words, for urbanising the indigenous villages living amidst woods in close contact with nature, they deforest the land which destroys natural harmony. Since the religious culture of the *Igbo* people was nature based, one of the chief goals of the European leaders was the decentralisation of ecospirituality of indigenous religious culture. The monotheistic Christian religiosity had a conflict with polytheistic religiosity of the indigenous people. To reinforce the sustainability of their epistemological ideologies, the colonialism tried to influence the religious value of the colonised territory. The tribal culture and societal structure were stridently shaped and controlled by the ecospirituality and pantheistic sensibility. To transfer indigenous' reliability from nature to their self-constructed epistemologies, the colonisers used the religiosity as a catalyst. As an agrarian society which socially and culturally nature-centric, the *Igbo* place their faith in gods and goddesses associated with the natural world. Their religious ideologies, beliefs and practices reinforce ecospirituality and ecofeminist consciousness. But colonial incursions into Umuofia brought self-constructed manipulating religious ideologies to influence tribal nature-religion. It seeks to re-establish the traditional grand Great Chain of Being that affirms the position of God, spirituality and man above nature. *Igbos'* religious ideology rejects anthropocentric epistemology and reshuffles the Great Chain of Being, aligning nature with spirituality. The colonial religiosity abdicates the polytheistic worldview of *Igbo* and navigates the ecospiritual sensibilities and ecofeminist consciousness.

Rejecting ecofeminism's relativism to ecospirituality, colonial religion abandons women and environmental ties and alienates women from nature in the name of urbanisation. They introduced machines, domestic tools, institutions to bridge the gap between ecology and nature. As Elisabeth assters, "This feminine prominence is gradually challenged with the infiltration of westernization (government, courts, judges, court messengers and more)" (Ayuk-Etang 17). Thus, many Umuofians, who had problems with the *Igbo* religion, comforted themselves converting to Christianity. The whites brought schools, courts, churches, trading stores to use as catalysts to exacerbate the pace of manipulation to convert the Umuofian clan to Christianity. Before the establishment of the school, nature was the traditional school of the *Igbos*, they were students of nature. It can be seen that the *Igbo* hierarchy of gods is partially similar to the ecclesiastical system of Christianity. Both them believe in a supreme God to whom all prayers ultimately go. But the main difference is the ecospiritual beliefs that the *Igbo* have but the Christians do not. Christians do not recognise the metaphysical presence of spiritual beings on earth. Colonial Christianity aims to detach people from an ecocentric worldview and force them into an anthropocentric sensibility. Achebe gives a strong message how the attack on nature and nature-centric religion culminates in the destruction of the entire community which, in other words, advocates for ecofeminist worldview for sustainable Earth.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The study examines how Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* engages with ecofeminist awareness, illustrating the profound connections between gender, society, and the natural world in the context of historical and cultural transformations when the present world is looking for a sustainable development after many scars on it. The intricate interplay between gender, culture, and nature in the novel provides a lens through which to explore the broader theme of environmental consciousness and gender equity. Achebe's portrayal of the *Igbo* society underscores the parallel struggles of women and the environment, emphasising the significance of ecofeminist awareness in fostering sustainable relationships with both.

Throughout the narratives, Achebe appears to weave a message for the current world which is in need of a sustainable development to survive artificial perils. Achebe presents the story of women, whether physical or spiritual. In the religious view of the *Igbo*, the earth is the quintessential embodiment of the nature-based female consciousness, imbued with a combination of feminine and

naturalistic attributes. Mother Earth's domain is a phenomenal aspect where women and nature interact. *Igbo* women live in close connection with nature because of their gender-specific roles. As an agrarian group, they spend most of their time with nature. Their values, morals, customs are inextricably linked with their surroundings. Women are also given the highest esteem in the society out of respect for the Mother-Earth.

While *Igbo* society exhibits a somewhat patriarchal approach to nature, the novel illustrates the interrelationship between ecology and women. The *Igbo* belief in women as the embodiment of the natural being gives rise to the sacred and religious consciousness towards women and nature. The novel also reflects a connection between the oppression of the *Igbo* women and the exploitation of the environment. Women in the story often embody a harmonious relationship with nature, and their roles are intricately tied to the land. The disruption caused by colonialism disrupts this balance, illustrating a parallel between the subjugation of women and the exploitation of the environment. Achebe subtly explores ecofeminist themes, suggesting a complex interplay between gender, culture, and the environment. Gender and environment, falling into the junction of ecofeminism, provides guidelines today for a sustainable Earth's environment. Like the United Nations, Achebe fictionally calls for sustainability of Earth through insightful means.

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# The Quest for Fluency: English Language Challenges for Non-Native Learners

M. Janardhana Rao

Assistant Professor of English, Aditya Institute of Technology and Management, Srikakulam, Andhra Pradesh, India

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**Abstract**— English language acquisition presents challenges for non-native speakers worldwide. Despite its global significance, many encounter difficulties in mastering it. The colonial legacy has entrenched English as an international language, leading to its widespread use across various domains. However, in nations with diverse linguistic landscapes, attempts to promote English learning face hurdles. In the Indian education system, for instance, reforms aiming to enhance English proficiency have yielded limited success due to multifaceted reasons, including societal attitudes and educational priorities. The prevailing mindset often prioritizes core subjects over language learning, hindering students' progress. Moreover, learners grapple with fear, lack of confidence, grammatical complexities, pronunciation issues, and native language interference. Environmental factors, peer pressure, and inadequate teaching further exacerbate these challenges. Overcoming these obstacles requires a shift in attitudes, with recognition of the value of language subjects and concerted efforts to provide supportive learning environments. Emphasizing foundational grammar concepts and fostering holistic language skills development through listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities are crucial. Addressing these issues can enhance the efficacy of English language education and empower non-native speakers to navigate the linguistic demands of the modern world effectively.



**Keywords**— English language acquisition, Colonial legacy, Societal attitudes, Language proficiency, Holistic language skills development

Non-native speakers of English face a myriad of challenges when acquiring and using the language. These challenges include:

## Fear and Lack of Confidence

Many non-native speakers encounter significant anxiety and self-doubt when communicating in English, especially in formal or unfamiliar contexts. This apprehension often stems from a fear of making mistakes, which can impede their ability to express themselves fluently and accurately. Such trepidation may manifest in avoidance of English-speaking situations or reluctance to engage in conversations. Overcoming this fear and building confidence requires supportive environments where individuals feel safe to practice without judgment. Encouragement, positive reinforcement, and opportunities for gradual exposure to various language situations can help

alleviate these anxieties, empowering non-native speakers to communicate more effectively in English.

## Grammatical Complexity

The intricate and nuanced nature of English grammar presents a formidable challenge for non-native speakers. The plethora of grammar rules, exceptions, and subtle nuances can overwhelm learners, leading to errors that impede comprehension and hinder effective communication. From tense usage to sentence structure and word order, mastering these intricacies requires time, practice, and patience. Moreover, the dynamic nature of language evolution adds another layer of complexity, as new idiomatic expressions and grammatical conventions continually emerge. To navigate this complexity, learners benefit from structured grammar instruction, ample practice opportunities, and feedback mechanisms to reinforce

understanding and application of grammar rules in diverse contexts.

### **Pronunciation Issues**

Pronunciation poses a significant hurdle for non-native English speakers due to the disparities between English phonetics and those of their native tongue. These differences often result in difficulties accurately reproducing English sounds, which can lead to misunderstandings and hinder fluency. Consonant clusters, vowel sounds, and stress patterns are particularly challenging areas where mispronunciations occur frequently. Overcoming these obstacles requires targeted practice, phonetic awareness training, and exposure to authentic English speech. Utilizing pronunciation guides, audio resources, and speech therapy techniques can help learners refine their pronunciation skills and enhance their ability to communicate clearly and confidently in English.

### **Interference from Native Language**

The influence of one's native language on English language acquisition is profound, impacting pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary usage. These linguistic patterns, deeply ingrained from childhood, often manifest in spoken English, leading to errors and inconsistencies. Phonological differences, syntactic structures, and lexical choices influenced by the native language can result in misunderstandings and impede effective communication. Overcoming this interference requires heightened awareness, targeted practice, and deliberate efforts to retrain the phonetic and grammatical systems. By recognizing and addressing these influences, learners can mitigate errors and enhance their proficiency in spoken English, achieving greater clarity and communicative effectiveness.

### **Limited Exposure and Practice**

Limited exposure to authentic English language contexts is a common challenge for non-native speakers, hindering language acquisition and fluency development. Without regular interaction with native speakers or immersion in English-speaking environments, opportunities for practice remain scarce. This lack of exposure can impede the development of listening comprehension, speaking proficiency, and cultural understanding. To overcome this obstacle, learners can seek out immersion experiences, engage with English-language media, participate in conversation groups or language exchange programs, and utilize online resources for virtual interaction. Maximizing exposure and practice opportunities is essential for fostering language proficiency and confidence in real-world communication situations.

### **Cultural Barriers**

Navigating cultural barriers requires more than just language proficiency; it demands a deep understanding of the nuances embedded in different cultures. Idiomatic expressions, gestures, and social norms vary widely, making effective communication a delicate dance. Misinterpretations can arise, leading to misunderstandings or even offense. For non-native speakers, mastering these subtleties is crucial for seamless interaction in diverse cultural environments. It's not merely about speaking the language but also about understanding the cultural context in which it operates, fostering mutual respect and fostering meaningful connections across cultures.

### **Educational and Societal Pressures**

The weight of societal and educational expectations can be particularly burdensome for non-native English speakers striving for proficiency. Whether driven by academic requirements or career aspirations, the pressure to excel in English can create a breeding ground for anxiety and self-doubt. This stress not only impedes language acquisition but also erodes confidence and motivation. Furthermore, the fear of falling short of societal standards may discourage individuals from taking risks or engaging in immersive language experiences. Addressing these pressures necessitates a supportive environment that celebrates progress over perfection, fostering resilience and a positive approach to language learning.

### **Inadequate Instruction**

Inadequate English language instruction presents a significant obstacle for non-native speakers striving for proficiency. Whether in formal educational settings, language programs, or self-study materials, subpar instruction fails to provide the necessary foundation for effective language acquisition. Without proper guidance, learners may struggle to grasp fundamental concepts, leading to persistent language difficulties and frustration. Moreover, ineffective teaching methods can reinforce misconceptions and impede progress, creating a cycle of underachievement. Addressing this challenge requires investment in high-quality instructional resources, teacher training, and curriculum development to ensure that non-native speakers receive the support they need to succeed in mastering English.

### **Lack of Supportive Learning Environments**

The absence of supportive learning environments poses a significant hurdle for non-native English speakers striving for fluency. Without access to spaces that foster language practice and experimentation, individuals may struggle to build confidence and refine their communication skills. Limited opportunities for immersion and interaction in

English-speaking settings further impede progress, leaving learners feeling isolated and disheartened. Moreover, the absence of supportive communities or mentors deprives non-native speakers of valuable guidance and encouragement on their language-learning journey. Creating inclusive and welcoming environments where individuals feel empowered to engage with the language is essential for fostering fluency and confidence in English.

Overcoming the challenges faced by non-native English speakers requires a combination of strategies and approaches tailored to individual needs and preferences. Here are some suggestions:

### **Build Confidence**

Building confidence in non-native speakers entails fostering an environment where mistakes are viewed as stepping stones to proficiency. Encourage them to embrace errors as valuable learning experiences, emphasizing that each misstep is an opportunity for growth. Offer consistent positive reinforcement, celebrating their progress and efforts along the way. Establish a supportive community where individuals feel safe to practice English without fear of judgment, whether through group discussions, language exchanges, or interactive activities. By instilling a sense of empowerment and creating a nurturing environment, non-native speakers can cultivate the confidence needed to navigate English language learning with enthusiasm and resilience.

### **Focus on Grammar**

Prioritize grammar in language learning by integrating structured exercises and activities into sessions. Offer clear, concise explanations of grammar rules, breaking down complex concepts into digestible segments. Ensure ample opportunities for practice through exercises, role-plays, and interactive tasks, reinforcing understanding through repetition and application. Incorporate diverse materials and contexts to illustrate grammar usage in real-world scenarios, enhancing comprehension and retention. Encourage active participation and provide constructive feedback to reinforce learning. By emphasizing grammar in a systematic and engaging manner, non-native speakers can develop a solid foundation essential for effective communication in English.

### **Improve Pronunciation**

Enhance pronunciation skills by incorporating various techniques into practice sessions. Utilize drills, tongue twisters, and repetition exercises to target specific sounds and improve articulation. Encourage active listening to native speakers, focusing on mimicry to refine accuracy and intonation. Consider enrolling in speech therapy or pronunciation classes for personalized guidance and

support. Provide ample opportunities for speaking practice in a supportive environment, offering constructive feedback to facilitate improvement. By combining diverse methods and resources, non-native speakers can gradually enhance their pronunciation skills and communicate more effectively in English, ultimately boosting their confidence and fluency.

### **Address Interference**

Mitigate language interference by fostering awareness of differences between English and the native language. Educate learners on common areas of interference, such as grammar structures or pronunciation patterns, and provide strategies to overcome them. Encourage conscious monitoring of language usage, prompting learners to identify instances of interference and make corrections accordingly. Offer guidance on effective language substitution techniques and encourage exposure to authentic English materials to reinforce learning. By promoting active awareness and providing practical strategies, non-native speakers can gradually reduce the impact of interference and improve their overall proficiency in English.

### **Increase Exposure and Practice**

Promote immersion in English by diversifying exposure and practice opportunities. Encourage watching English movies, TV shows, and videos to familiarize with natural speech patterns and colloquial expressions. Reading English books and articles expands vocabulary and comprehension skills. Actively engaging in conversations with native speakers or language partners enhances fluency and confidence. Encourage participation in English-speaking communities, online forums, or language exchange programs for consistent practice. By integrating these activities into daily routines, non-native speakers can increase exposure, refine language skills, and accelerate their journey toward fluency in English.

### **Cultural Awareness**

Integrate cultural awareness into language instruction to enrich learners' understanding of cultural nuances. Encourage exploration of cultural resources like literature, films, and music, fostering appreciation and empathy for diverse perspectives. Provide opportunities for discussions on cultural customs, traditions, and societal norms, allowing learners to connect language with cultural context. Incorporate activities that simulate real-life cultural interactions, such as role-plays or cultural exchange events, promoting intercultural communication skills. By intertwining language learning with cultural exploration, non-native speakers develop a deeper understanding of the cultural contexts in which the language operates, enhancing their ability to communicate effectively and respectfully in diverse settings.



### Manage Pressure

Support non-native speakers in managing pressure by assisting them in setting achievable goals and realistic expectations for their language learning journey. Offer guidance on breaking down larger language proficiency objectives into smaller, manageable tasks, fostering a sense of progress and accomplishment. Provide a supportive environment where learners feel encouraged to seek help and express concerns, alleviating anxiety associated with language learning. Offer constructive feedback and celebrate milestones, reinforcing motivation and self-confidence. By creating a nurturing atmosphere and promoting a positive mindset, non-native speakers can navigate language learning with resilience and optimism, ultimately achieving their language goals more effectively.

### Quality Instruction

Guarantee access to top-tier English language instruction by offering reputable language programs, staffed with qualified instructors, and equipped with effective learning materials. Foster an environment where learners feel comfortable providing feedback, ensuring that any areas of difficulty are promptly addressed. Encourage open communication between instructors and students, facilitating a collaborative learning experience. Regularly assess the effectiveness of instructional methods and materials, making necessary adjustments to optimize learning outcomes. By prioritizing quality instruction and fostering a supportive learning environment, non-native speakers can access the resources and guidance needed to excel in their English language journey.

### Create Supportive Environments

Cultivate a nurturing atmosphere where non-native speakers feel valued and empowered to take language risks. Encourage collaboration through group activities, fostering a sense of camaraderie and shared learning experiences. Facilitate peer support networks, where individuals can exchange insights, offer encouragement, and practice language skills together. Provide diverse opportunities for language practice, such as role-playing scenarios or interactive discussions, allowing learners to engage authentically with the language in a supportive setting. By creating an inclusive and encouraging environment, non-native speakers can build confidence, develop fluency, and thrive in their English language journey.

creating supportive learning environments are fundamental. Additionally, focusing on grammar, pronunciation, and addressing interference from the native language can enhance language proficiency. Increasing exposure to English language contexts and cultural immersion facilitates fluency and cultural understanding. Managing societal and educational pressures, while ensuring access to quality instruction, is crucial for sustained progress. By implementing these strategies systematically and tailoring support to individual needs, non-native speakers can navigate the complexities of English language acquisition with greater ease. Ultimately, embracing mistakes as opportunities for growth and fostering a mindset of continuous learning are key to overcoming challenges and achieving proficiency in English. With dedication, perseverance, and the right support systems in place, non-native English speakers can unlock their full potential and confidently communicate in diverse linguistic and cultural settings.

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### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, while non-native English speakers encounter various challenges in acquiring and using the language, there are effective strategies to overcome these obstacles. Building confidence through positive reinforcement and



# The Subaltern in "La Belle Dame sans Merci: A Ballad"

Samridhi

Department of English, MCM DAV College, Panjab University Chandigarh, India  
[bhardwajsamridhi10@gmail.com](mailto:bhardwajsamridhi10@gmail.com)

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**Abstract**— The poem "La Belle Dame sans Merci: A Ballad" is a 1819 ballad by second generation English Romantic poet, John Keats. The title was derived from the title of 15th-century poem by Alain Chartier called La Belle Deme sans mercy. considered as one of the classics, the poem beclouds the thin line between reality and imagination. The poem is denied as autobiographical by many critics and writers but the impact of his life incidents is undeniable. The poem Fennyencompasses around the themes like passion, obsession, and enchantment. There is Femme fetal iconography present in the poem. There is a great impact of Brawne and the success and criticism of his rival Lord Byron on the poetry and life of Keats.



**Keywords**— Brawne, Keats, la belle dame sans merci, Lord Byron, feminism, Subaltern, patriarchy

## I. INTRODUCTION

The poem "La Belle Dame sans Merci" is a tale of love in iambs in which we come across the dialogue between a medieval Knight and an anonymous speaker. The poem commences with the speaker questioning the Knight

"O what can ail thee knight-at-arms,  
alone and palely loitering?"

The above lines represent anguish and ail of the Medieval knight and the expression of deep mental and romantic suffering which compels him to loiter palely. The question of the speaker is answered by the chivalrous knight by the description of barren season where he says,

"The sedge has withered from the lake,  
and no bird sing."

The barren description depicts more his own heart than the season and his surrounding environment. The anguish of the poet is highlighted in first three quatrains where the lines 1 and 3 are in iambic tetrameter and line 2 and 4 are in iambic trimeter forming a rhyming scheme of ABCB.

The actual plot of the marks itself from the the fourth quatrain where we are introduced to the lady who is " Full beautiful-feary's child". Then the poet beautifies the poem with a caesura and praises her more, concentrating on her morphology. The knight has created a special corner in his

heart of the "feary's child" that he weaves a garland and a bracelet for enhancement of her features.

The lady was so full of beauty that the man could not take his eyes off her for hours enchanted in and enthralled by her "Full beautiful" spells. She was also loving to him as she lulled him a song which the recipient refers to as " A feary's song". This song arouses hopes in the mind of the knight whose feelings for the lady becomes more robust.

The lady hesitates not to express her "true" love to the chivalrous knight in his imagination after she feeds him to survival. The knight uses the word "manna-dew" and creates an allusion to the nutritious manna dropped by God from Heaven for the survival of the people. The help which the lady provides for the Knight's life compels the Knight to think that She in a "strange language" must have said

"I love thee true"

The Knight also leaves no chance to express his emotions and proves his love with "kisses four". The love making of the two was now near to its denouement when the knight is taken to an "elfin grot" where he is lulled to sleep by the "Feary child". The waking up for the Knight brought a tragic Heart ache, the recovery from which is just death. He was now the victim as the other "Pale Warriors" who cried

"La Belle Dame sans Merci

Thee hath in thrall !"

Now what was left in the side of Knight was just life long lamentation.

## II. THE SUBALTERN OR FEMINIST VOICE IN THE POEM

The ballad "La Belle Dame sans Merci" is written in form of dialogue between the Anonymous speaker and the chivalrous Knight in which we are introduced to an extremely beautiful lady whom we can never hear. The lady is referred to as "Full beautiful-feary's child" by the knight in love. Both the speakers of the poem are patriarchal and are speaking the male perspective whereas the voice of the female is entirely missing in the poem. The reader can find no traces of what the "Full beautiful" lady wants to say except when she expresses her love saying

"I love thee true"

Even this expression of love is pointing towards the silenced voice of the female as in the whole of the ballad the only words the female says are the ones desired by the Knight. The fact that the expression of love is mere an assumption by the lover Knight shows his desire to exercise his supremacy. The knight does not know the language "Feary child" speaks and calls it strange but he is sure that his desired words are said. The words assumed to be said by the lady point towards three of the serious issues:

**1) The creation of femme fetal image of the lady:** The Knight has very successfully created the Vamp image of the lady. According to the hegemonized view created by the knight the poem has a simple plot that there was a lady who first helped the Knight, expressed her love, and then left him to die. This creates a typical brutal lady figure in the minds of the reader and creates a view that the "feary child" cheated on the Knight and he is innocent and gullible.

**2) Suppressing the female perspective:** The Knight's assumption of the words

"I love thee true"

clearly suppresses the perspective of the female voice which remains unheard. This is the assumption which leads to the Femme fetal iconography of the lady in the poem. The language as accepted by the Knight was "strange" which clearly shows that it was out of the knowledge of his intellect. The act of assumption intended to hide the fact that the lady helped the man to survival (as the knight alludes to manna dew).

**3) Hiding the lady's help to man's survival:** The Knight very cleverly beclouded the lady's help in his survival. Even the presentation of the fact that the lady has provided the knight "manna dew" was an intentional act to show that the

female voice is not hidden but the deep study of the poem through the lens of feminism shows how the Goddess figure or the saviour figure is converted into femme fetal or vamp figures. All of the plot of the poem is therefore creating a hegemony of males and destroy the saviour figure of the lady.

## III. CONCLUSION

As the poem is written by a male, narrated by a male and, represents male hegemony or patriarchal view the reader on shallow reading might find an innocent Knight who is cheated by a "Full beautiful" lady whom he loved fondly. Whereas on reading deep one might come to know the labyrinth of male dominance which leads to the femme fetal image or the madwoman figure of the lady. The depiction of the relationship of the knight and the lady in some way shows his own relationship with Fanny Brawne whom he was deeply in love in and had to suffer rejection.

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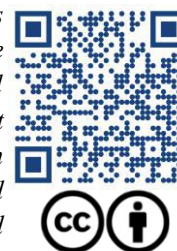
# Resisting Colonialism, Reclaiming Identity: The Role of Negritude and Pan-Africanism

Dr. Asit Panda

Associate Professor, Department of English, Belda College (Graded A+ by NAAC), Vidyasagar University, West Bengal, India  
E-mail: [asitpanda23@rediffmail.com](mailto:asitpanda23@rediffmail.com)

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©2024 The Author(s). Published by Infogain Publication. This is an open-access article under the CC BY license  
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**Abstract**— *This article explores Negritude and Pan-Africanism, two pivotal movements that emerged as responses to colonial oppression and the marginalization of African identity. Negritude, originating in the early 20th century, celebrated black culture and heritage as a form of resistance against colonial assimilation. Pan-Africanism, with its broader political scope, sought to unify people of African descent across the globe, advocating for collective self-reliance, cultural pride, and political independence. Through a comparative analysis, the article examines these movements' historical contexts, key figures, and philosophical underpinnings, highlighting their contributions to the assertion of African identity and resistance against imperialism. The enduring impact of Negritude and Pan-Africanism on contemporary African socio-political landscapes is also discussed, demonstrating their shortcomings and relevance in ongoing struggles for equality and empowerment. This study underscores the importance of these movements in shaping a cohesive narrative of resistance and self-assertion within the African diaspora.*



**Keywords**— *Negritude, Pan-Africanism, resistance, colonialism, identity.*

In his seminal work *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon writes, “the primary Manichaeism which governed colonial society is preserved intact during the period of decolonization; that is to say that the settler never ceases to be the enemy, the opponent, the foe that must be overthrown” (39). Animosity between the colonizer and the colonized continued even in the period of decolonization. Colonial domination triggered the emergence of anticolonial-consciousness and the movement of decolonization all across the Third World. Undoubtedly, resistance by the colonized assumed diverse shapes and was marked by one kind of heterogeneity. The movement of colonial subjects from an awareness of injustice to opposition occurred at both a political and intellectual level. Armed resistance was succeeded by ideological and cultural resistance to imperialism. Colonialism not only forcefully redesigned physical territories and social terrains, but it also altered human identities in the colonies. Hence, to pose a challenge to colonial oppressors, the construction of

powerful identities was considered highly crucial by the colonized. Recovering authentic precolonial culture and fiercely rejecting imperial culture were key strategies of identity formation among Africans. As movements of protest, rejection, racial recovery, and self-assertion by black people, Pan-Africanism and Negritude manifest some resemblances and disparities.

Pan-Africanism was initiated in the diaspora and had its origins in the New World. It sought to articulate the common cultural features shared by black people belonging to diverse national and regional entities. The inhabitants of Africa, from the middle of the nineteenth century up to the turn of the twentieth century, imbibed the ideas of Pan-Africanism from their studies, mainly in the United States and later in Britain. The emotional impetus of the movement flowed from the sense of loss of dignity, independence, and freedom of a widely dispersed people of African stock who felt themselves dispossessed of their homeland through colonialism, which brought persecution, inferiority,



discrimination, and dependency. The retrieval of dignity was the mainspring of all the actions of Pan-Africanists.

Langston Hughes, one of the prominent exponents of Pan-Africanism, was deeply colour-conscious, and his poems expressed the dominant theme in Pan-Africanism: the race-consciousness born of colour. Black writers associated with the movement extolled their own blackness instead of despising it. Negroes were inspired to be proud of their black skins in both the New World and in Africa. This challenging theme reached its apogee in the works of Aime Cesaire, the outstanding exponent of Negritude. Simultaneously, a demand for rediscovering the lost past of the Negro race became vehemently conspicuous in the writings of poets like Leon Damas, who advocated a distinctive African personality in his poems. Fears grew that uncritical adoption of Western ideas would, in time, perish an African's distinctive personality.

In the Pan-Africanism movement, emotions associated with blackness were intellectualized. As Colin Legum has pointed out, it was a race-conscious movement, not a racist one: "It is a positive statement in defense of one's race; but it does not seek to elevate that race above other races" (33). Yet there always remains the danger that this race consciousness might lead to racialism. Quite naturally, the literature of Pan-Africanism is full of instances of racialism, though the mainstream ideas of this movement were always undefiled by it. Another characteristic of Pan-Africanist feelings was the ambivalent attitude of the blacks towards the whites, which found expression in their love-hatred relationship with the whites, whom they could not reject wholeheartedly. However, the feeling of deep racial bitterness was matched by a remarkable quality of forgiveness once the dignity of independence and equality had been respected. The nationalist leadership's change of attitude in most of the newly liberated African states bears testimony to this fact. Interestingly, Pan-Africanism never inculcated the desire for vengeance against the white oppressors, and the vengeance sought by the intellectuals of this movement was not physical.

In the early 1930s, Paris became the literary center of the Pan-African movement, whereas London was its political center. Various changes accompanied the shift of Pan-Africanism's activities from its birthplace in the New World to Europe. The development of the movement in two different milieus caused a division between the English-speaking and French-speaking black worlds. The ideas of the Paris circle, which exercised a greater influence on the French-speaking African world than the ideas emanating from the London circle did, later gave way to the Negritude movement. While Negritude was basically represented by

the writings of French-speaking black intellectuals, Pan-Africanism was by and large a movement organized by the English-speaking black people living in Britain. "Both these movements articulated pan-national racial solidarity, demanded an end to white supremacy and imperialist domination and positively celebrated blackness, and especially African blackness, as a distinct racial-cultural way of being" (Loomba 176).

Negritude, often identified with the cultural journal *Presence Africaine*, had its earlier beginnings in *Legitime Defense*, a literary journal set up in the early 1930s by the Martiniquan poet Etienne Lero. In the early phase of Negritude, Marxism and surrealism were two distinctive early strands of the movement, and they weakened later on as Marxists were reduced to a minority group in the *Presence Africaine* and surrealism was considered irrelevant. Lero's heir, Aime Cesaire, a fellow Martiniquan who arrived in Paris as a student in 1931, initially expressed happiness at his assimilation but eventually developed discontent. Cesaire's visit to the Dalmatian coast on the request of a Yugoslav student occasioned the origin of his long poem *Cahier dun Retour au Pays Natale* (1939), which enunciated the beginning of a new literary movement based on his own concept of Negritude. Cesaire spoke about his return to his native home and, of course, himself. He declared his acceptance of his own squalid home town with its squalid populace, his own origins, and his own true being – from all of which he had always tried to escape. In a sense, Cesaire's poem embodied the universal theme of the achievement of personal integrity and wholeness. The blackness of Negro skin, for which he has so far always been despised by the rest of the world, now becomes a center of his pride in Cesaire's hands through strong affirmation.

Jean-Paul Sartre, in his introductory essay to the *Presence Africaine*, has written a long essay on Negritude, which might be defined as the essence and manifestation of the black soul, present in the writing and outlook of people of Negro origin in the West Indies, the Americas, and Africa. Negritude, as its very name suggests, is not identical with Pan-Africanism and excludes the Arab and non-Negro races, and it is less manifest in West Africa. Negritude lays stress on an apartness, a consciousness of being a Negro. Negritude characterizes the Negro-African poet's attempt to recover for his race a normal sense of self-pride and a lost confidence in himself. He sought to discover the roots and significance of the forgotten values in order to forge a new identity for himself that was distinct from the identity bestowed upon him by the colonizer's culture. They awakened Africans to an awareness of their might and potential. "Emotion is Negro," they declared, "as reason is Greek."

Negritude poetry was indebted for its origin to American Negro poetry, especially the poetry of the writers of the Harlem Renaissance such as Langston Hughes, Claude McKay, Countee Cullen, etcetera. Both the Francophone émigrés and the Americans, unlike the British-ruled colonials, were citizens, although alienated, second-class citizens of European nations, and this sociological reality was responsible for creating a sense of brotherhood between them. On the African continent, there was a distinct division among its inhabitants: the statutory French citizenry, who were born in the colonies' capital cities and adjoining provinces, and the rest. The educated Francophone moved sooner or later into citizen status, as happened in the case of Leopold Sedar Senghor. But it did not happen in the case of the British subjects, both in Africa and the West Indies. While their Anglophone counterparts, despite their subjugation, faced no crisis of alienated citizenship, the American or Francophone Negroes found themselves trapped in their socio-political bind. The French considered their colonial subjects, most of whom received their childhood education in France, as French citizens, treating the colonies as overseas departments of France itself. In French colonies, secondary education curricula were similar to those in metropolitan France. The French subjects were constrained to imbibe the ideas of a shared ancestry. Conversely, the British made no attempt to establish British citizenship within the colonies.

One kind of literary cross-pollination occurred between the Francophone Caribbean and black Africa on the one hand and Francophone Africa on the other. However, there was no such dimension between the Anglophone Caribbean and black America on the one hand and Anglophone Africa on the other. And the black writers of the United States, though the country was an English-speaking one, moved to develop a deeper creative and intellectual intimacy—via the French Caribbean and Paris—with French Africa than they did with the British. Black Americans found Paris' cosmopolitan flavor extremely congenial.

The political and cultural policies towards the subjects adopted by the French and British colonial powers were responsible for the generation of contradictory attitudes among their subjects towards them. While for the intellectual elite of the French colonial empire, the real home was Paris, the educated British subjects did not consider London their home. The colonial departments of France elected black representatives like Senghor, Césaire, Damas, etc. to the French assembly. However, the British Parliament's colonial policies kept its subjects at a distance. As a result, British subjects were primarily concerned with the end of colonialism; they were concerned not with cultural emancipation but with political liberation. The

Anglophone intellectuals responded to the racial assaults through protests and rejection of nationalist politics, whereas the Francophone intellectuals preferred the creative field for their responses. As Wole Soyinka has put it, "The British colonial was not like the French intellectual rebels, concerned with liberation from another culture, for the simple reason that, in the main, he had no experience of a cultural loss or alienation" (*The Burden* 161–62). As a result, the French intellectuals in the colonies underwent deracination, assimilation into French cosmopolitan culture, and transformation into French men and women. The rebellion against this tendency of the colonial ruler was initiated much later in the safe battleground of culture and artistic creativity, as it was difficult to express it in political action against the ruthless French colonizers. The intellectuals' inspiration for this battle came from their interactions with American writers and intellectuals, as well as the harsh racial discrimination they witnessed in the United States.

The Negritude movement's Negro intellectuals held varying views on the West. Their divided race prevented them from fully participating in Western society, and despite being part of the 'black world', they felt alienated from the lives and cultures of the majority of ordinary people. The editor of *Presence Africaine*, Mr. Alioune Diop, termed this dilemma a crisis of conscience. In his opening address in the First Congress of Negro writers and artists, Diop proclaimed, "However much we may admire and love Western civilization, we do not think any the less about what distinguishes us both from the Europeans and from the (African) populations, which have remained attached to the soil and to their own traditions. . ." (qtd. in Legum 99). Richard Wright was aware of his dual existence in two different worlds and expressed his feelings of love-hatred when he said, "My position is a split one. I'm black. I'm a man of the West. . . I see and understand the West, but I also see and understand the non-or anti-Western point of view. . . Yet, I'm not non-Western. I'm no enemy of the west. Neither I'm a Westerner". Jacques Rabemananjara, the exile poet-politician from Madagascar, also shared a similar feeling of hatred and love.

Two conflicting groups, assimilationists and rejectionists, occupied the domain of literary creativity and culture, which the exponents of Negritude appropriated to express their reaction against colonial culture and assert a distinct identity. Senghor was accommodating, but the non-negotiable sector of Negritude entered the cultural and intellectual battleground with a war cry of identity and adopted increasingly belligerent postures. Intellectuals such as Etienne Lero, René Despestre, Jacques Roumain, and others represented the uncompromising sector of Negritude. Lero's Legitimate Defense denounced the French Parnassian

tradition of poetry and urged its readers to seek their models of inspiration from the literature of the American Negro Renaissance and surrealism. Leon Damas also belonged to this aggressive group and called for the recovery of the authentic Senegal's national and cultural life from France's colonial clutches. Neither did he look for cultural inspiration from France, nor did he seek the help of any Christian God. He vented his hatred without hesitation. In his poetry, Maunick, one of the leading figures among the second generation of Negritude poets, identified his own humiliation with distant racial assaults. But the most belligerent of all such responses to racial assaults was that of René Depestre, who made use of the Voodoo Gods of his Haitian island as a structure of revenge in his *Epiphanies of the Voodoo Gods*, who make a visitation to an imaginary Alabama family and avenge the humiliation of the black race.

Aime Césaire, another prominent proponent of Negritude, advocated for borrowing from Western culture, while opposing the notion that such borrowing could result in assimilation. Césaire<sup>2</sup> envisioned a new culture for the Africans, which will accommodate both modern elements from Western culture and traditional old elements of African culture:

For our part, and as regards our particular societies, we believe that in the African culture yet to be born, or in the Para-African culture yet to be born, these will be many new elements, modern elements, elements, let us face it borrowed from Europe. But we also believe that many traditional elements will persist in these cultures . . . I refuse to believe that the future African culture can totally and brutally reject the former African culture. In the culture yet to be born, these will be without any doubt both old and new. Which new elements? Which old? Here alone our ignorance begins.

Negro intellectuals were deeply concerned about the significant challenge of selectively adopting elements from both cultures, and they recognized the urgent need to support their fellow countrymen in this endeavor, as they served as the bridge between the Western world and their own cultures. Leopold Senghor was such a bridge person who backed Césaire on the issue of assimilation, insisting that there must be freedom of choice in matters of assimilation and acknowledging the existence of the newly emerging problem of right choice. For him, Negritude was “the sum of civilized values of the black world; not past values but the values of true culture.” Senghor probably

swung between assimilation and rejection. Senghor's poems, though written in French, idolize Africa and express his nostalgia and feelings for an imaginary Africa. In matters of language, Senghor chose the language of the colonizer to express his tenets of Negritude in poetry. According to Wole Soyinka, Senghor had his own weakness for the real France, “that expresses the right way so well” and it is the France that has made “these daytime slaves into men of liberty, equality, fraternity” (*The Burden* 97–98). Senghor's pan-humanistic vision, which emphasizes love and forgiveness for adversaries, explains why he struggled to express his vehement hatred towards the French. Senghor's dual identities as a poet of vengeance and a priest of remission triggered his psychic oscillation.

Both in America and Africa, the Negroes used negativity as a weapon in their struggle for self-assertion; it assisted them in understanding their roots, defining themselves, and overcoming the inferiority complex resulting from long centuries of rejection and humiliation by white Europeans. It was fuelled by the Negro's anxieties about submergence and obliteration in a world dominated by Western values, as well as his subsequent protest as a means of asserting his own individuality. Blacks in the United States struggled to integrate into the American way of life, which kept them distinct without sacrificing their individuality. The militant sector of Negritude in Africa advocated for the revival and aggressive assertion of black virtues, rejecting all Western influences, in response to the racial assaults perpetrated by white people. It was actually preaching a reverse type of racism, similar to the racism already practiced by Western colonialism. Negritudinists proposed a totally distinctive African notion of metaphysics, ethics, and aesthetics in opposition to European concepts. But the underlying danger of such a proposition was that its structure was derivative and replicatory, and it asserted, rather than proposing any difference, its dependence on the categories and features of the colonizing culture. Negritude poetry romanticized and portrayed Africa as a symbol of innocence, purity, and artless primitiveness, and the black race as the people of intuition, rhythm, and ancestral strength. However, this was merely a distortion of reality and a false pretense, as the proponents of Negritude only presented a partial picture of Africa, resulting in substandard poetry. Literature should reflect the whole man, and not merely the things that are meant to flatter the negro's ego in order to produce a lasting work of art. The Negritude poets, on the other hand, remained complacent, only glorifying their ancestors and the purity and innocence of the black race. It was one kind of self-enslavement or auto-colonization. James Booth has rightly observed that “confronted with the scientific and technological mastery of with civilization Negritude fell

back on the most ‘opposite’ qualities and labeled them ‘Negro’” (9). In their endeavor to celebrate black men’s qualities, the Negritude poets sometimes fell into traps and emphasized black men’s intellectual inferiority and irrationality in opposition to white men’s intellectual superiority and rationality, which was nothing but a travesty of black men’s qualities and history. Aime Césaire was also subjected to criticism when he wrote, “And for those who never invented anything / who never explored anything / who never conquered anything.”

Anglophone writers and intellectuals in Africa were not as concerned as their Francophone counterparts with the ideology of Negritude. Due to their rulers’ reluctance to significantly damage their culture, a unique aspect of British colonial policy, they retained the essence of their negroness. However, the British disapproved of colonial people who revealed their true exotic nature, imitated their speech and behavior, and assimilated their culture. Besides, the new generation of Anglophone writers was quick to identify the shortcomings and self-contained trap of Negritude, which they believed might lead to self-enslavement or auto-colonisation of Africa. They realized that Negritude, in its militant form, could only lead to a dead end. According to Sembene Ousmane, Negritude had “nothing solid about it.” The general reaction of the first generation of Anglophone writers in the 1960s to the older tradition of French Negritude is summed up in Chinua Achebe’s comment: “You have all heard of the African personality; of African democracy, of the African way of socialism, of Negritude, and so on. They are all props we have fashioned at different times to help us get on our feet again. Once we are up we shan’t need any of them anymore” (qtd. in Booth 11). Among other Nigerian writers, Wole Soyinka was bitter in his criticism of Negritude, as he realized the inherent racial approach of Negritude in its attempt for self-assertion and in its search for African identity, although he himself insisted on the existence of a distinctively African worldview and subsequently acknowledged the pioneering achievement of this movement. However, the validity of Soyinka’s objection against Negritude cannot be denied: “It extolled the apparent. Its reference points took too much colouring from European ideas, even while its Messiahs pronounced themselves fanatically African. It not only accepted the dialectical structure of European ideological confrontations but borrowed from the very components of its racist syllogism” (*Myth* 127). Negritude acted in a dialectical progression as the antithesis of the thesis of white man’s supremacy. Instead of challenging the pre-supposed thesis of white man’s supremacy, negritudists endorsed the theory that Africans lack development and are incapable of analytical thinking and construction. But they failed to

realize that the acceptance of such a proposition is absolutely a travesty of truth and contains an inherent insult, as they remain appeased by glorifying the intuitive power of Africans. In the words of Wole Soyinka,

It accepted one of the most commonplace blasphemies of racism, that the black man has nothing between his ears, and proceeded to subvert the power of poetry to glorify this fabricated justification of European cultural domination. Suddenly, we were exhorted to give a cheer for those who never invented anything, a cheer for those who never explored the oceans. The truth, however, is that there isn’t any such creature. (*Myth* 129)

Most of the prime exponents of Negritude were political leaders, and they belonged to the elite class of society. Therefore, this minority group primarily sought a racial identity in urban areas, while the majority of Africans residing in Africa’s interior remained unaffected and uninterested in the movement’s waves, as they never felt the necessity to declare their African identity. Intellectuals like Soyinka realized that the Negroes need not boast of their negroness, just as a tiger does not proclaim its tigritude because it is natural to him. Unfortunately, philosophies of “African Soul,” “African Personality,” “Negritude,” etc. were all political ploys employed successfully by the nation’s governing elite, who stepped into the roles of their colonial masters with independence “to divert attention from their failure to introduce any radical changes in the colonial structure” (Booth 14). According to Ghanaian, Ayi Kwei Armah, Senghor’s Negritude and Nkrumah’s “African Personality” are “‘sloganeering gimmicks’ designed to persuade the people that the substitution of black oppressors for white is real liberation” (24).

Despite their shortcomings, Pan-Africanism and the Negritude movement were significant steps in the construction of modern black consciousness. As nativist enterprises, they were the first bold assertions of black cultures in defiance of colonial cultural hegemony and suppression. Their significance lies not only in their political effectiveness, but also in their ability to break the long silence colonialism imposed on the natives. Writings produced by these movements result in the subversion of the authority of colonial culture as well as colonial discourses, which celebrate the superiority of the colonizers and despise the inferior indigenous culture. These movements offered ideological resistance to imperialism and aimed to reconstitute a shattered community through the introduction of reverse discourses. They aimed for the retrieval of self-confidence and the rehabilitation of cultural identity,



preoccupied with a frantic search for authenticity, national origin, and a new set of myths, religions, heroes, and heroines to celebrate. Critics like Benita Parry have come forward to vigorously defend reverse discourses and anti-colonialist writings that manifest nativism. Parry, who emphasizes the value of anticolonial movements like Negritude in providing resistance to colonialism, advocates for "two cheers for nativism." Affirming the significance of such reverse discourses, Parry argues that "anti-colonialist writings did challenge, subvert, and undermine the ruling ideologies, and nowhere more so than in overthrowing the hierarchy of colonizer/colonized, the speech and stance of the colonized refusing a position of subjugation and dispensing with the terms of the colonizer's definitions (40).

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> This assertion appeared in "Tradition and Industrialization", *Presence Africaine*, Nos 8, 9, 10, (1956).

<sup>2</sup> The quoted statement appeared in "Culture and Colonisation", *Presence Africaine*, Nos 8, 9, 10, (1956).

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# Asserting Agency in Negotiating Trauma: A Critical Analysis of Githa Hariharan's "The Remains of the Feast"

Meenakshi R<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Mridula R Kindo<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of English, School of Humanities, Indira Gandhi National Open University, India  
Email: [tmeenahyd@gmail.com](mailto:tmeenahyd@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, Department of English, School of Humanities, Indira Gandhi National Open University, India  
Email: [mridularkindo@yahoo.in](mailto:mridularkindo@yahoo.in)

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**Abstract** – The emergence of trauma as an alarming global issue has demanded attention and concern worldwide. The term 'trauma' comes from the Greek *τραῦμα* meaning 'wound'. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English defines trauma as "an unpleasant and upsetting experience that affects you for a long time". Trauma as a theory in literature escalated in the 1990s, accelerated by the pioneering works of scholars such as Cathy Caruth, Geoffrey H. Hartman, and Shoshana Felman. In contemporary Indian English fiction, the genre of short stories has consistently represented an essential component of the literary landscape. The potency innate in short stories equates to that of novels in their efficacy to provide radical insights into social, cultural, historical, and psychological arenas. "The Art of Dying" (1993), authored by the esteemed contemporary postmodern postcolonial writer Githa Hariharan is a cluster of short stories that reflect on women's lives within the modern Indian setting. "The Remains of the Feast", a short story from this collection, unfolds the traumatic events in the life of Rukmini and her response to them as recounted by Ratna, her great-granddaughter. The purpose of the study is to inquire into the reactions of Rukmini and Ratna to the events that unwind especially during Rukmini's final phase of life. This paper employs a feminist lens to examine the responses of these two central characters and brings to light the assertion of agency in the process of negotiating with physical and psychological trauma, shedding light on their respective positions within the patriarchal framework.



**Keywords**— Agency, Patriarchal, Postmodern, Trauma

## I. INTRODUCTION

The etymology of the term "trauma" can be located in the Greek word "titrōskein" which means "wound." Initially, the denotation was limited to referring to physical wounds. However, in due course of time, it transcended the limits of the corporal realm, and today 'trauma' also denotes a psychic wound inflicted upon the individual. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, DSM 5 of the American Psychiatric Association has included trauma under a new category called stress-related disorders. In the beginning, the idea of trauma was delimited within the scope of psychology. Later the notion gradually pervaded the expansive field of literature, resulting in a specific area of academic discipline known as 'Trauma Studies'. This

multidisciplinary field attempts to explore the resonance of trauma within the literary domain and comprehend its complex interplay within the bounds of individual cultural and sociological milieu. Trauma theory gained significance in literature during the 1990s prompted by the groundbreaking works of distinguished scholars such as Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman, and Geoffrey H. Hartman. The basic underpinnings of contemporary cognition regarding traumatic experience and memory are established in the seminal works of Sigmund Freud. Psychoanalytic theories on the origin and effects of trauma trace their inception to the nineteenth-century inquiries into shock and hysteria, conducted by eminent scholars including Jean-

Martin Charcot, Josef Breuer, Morton Prince, Hermann Oppenheim, Pierre Janet, and Abram Kardiner.

Freud’s seminal work, “Studies on Hysteria” (1895), co-authored with Josef Breuer, and his later conceptual assimilation outlined in “Beyond the Pleasure Principle” (1920), bear a profound influence over the theory and application of trauma within current literary discourse. These foundational tenets constitute a cynosure for literary trauma critics, shaping their analytical frame and interpretive purview. As an academic field, trauma studies fathom the unintelligible implications of trauma within societal and literary contexts. It employs an intense empirical approach that includes rhetorical, cultural, and psychological dimensions. The chief nexus to the pedagogical discourse is an inquiry into the formal innovations implicit in textual expressions ranging from traditional print media to contemporary digital platforms.

“*The Remains of the Feast*” is a somberly impressive tale of Rukmini, a senile widow. The narrator is Ratna, Rukmini’s great-granddaughter. The duo shared a warm bond despite the huge generation gap. Rukmini, already a widow also lost her only son and daughter-in-law and outlived them by ten years. To add to her woes, she suffered from a chronic goiter which culminated in cancer. Rukmini’s unusual and unconventional demands during her final days expose the essence of agency and subversion. The story reaches the climax with Rukmini’s death and its aftermath. Rukmini’s life, fraught with traumatic events, prompts reflections on the assertion of agency in the process of negotiating physical and psychological trauma and the ways to combat and cope with grief and haunting memories.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Susie Tharu, in her essay titled “The Impossible Subject: Caste and the Gendered Body” (1996) reads ‘*The Remains of the Feast*’ in comparison with another short story ‘*Mother*’ by Baburao Bagul. In her discussion on “The Remains of the Feast”, Susie Tharu through a feminist reading of the story, directed our attention to the feminist body in the figure of Rukmini, the old Brahmin widow. She quotes “The narrative does not present widowhood and the paraphernalia of ritual and taboo that attends it, as gender oppression. The enemy here is not patriarchy, but a social world that fails to sustain the spirit. The victim is fleshly nature itself, not women.” (1312)

Roopashree, in her article “Self-revival through Food in Geetha Hariharan’s “Remains of the Feast” argued that food becomes a metaphor for craving forbidden desires and wielding power, challenging the patriarchal norms imposed on women. She concluded that the two women established

a new identity for themselves through their use of food, thereby transcending social norms.

Amirtha Devarajan’s article “Disease, Death, and Desire in Githa Hariharan’s “The Remains of the Feast” analyzed Rukmini’s stance through an intersectional approach and also illustrated how disease/death can incite the repressed self of the individual and society while challenging the deep-seated oppressive social customs.

Shri. Laxman G. Jathar, in his article Githa Hariharan’s “*The Remains of the Feast: Deconstruction of Subaltern Voice*”, concluded that while a woman may strive to control her desires and passions, there comes a time when she can no longer suppress them. The author inferred that Githa Hariharan argued for the necessity of elevating the subaltern voices of women and opposed the establishment of separate traditions for them.

The article “A Study of Githa Hariharan’s “*The Remains of the Feast* from the Feminist Perspective” by Nira Konar dwelled upon how Feminism is often a construct of Patriarchy and offers a critique of social, economic, and cultural norms that restrict the freedom of women. He asserted that Rukmini’s character was particularly significant as she represented elderly, marginalized women whom society denied control over their bodies. Her rebellion served as a means of resistance against the politics that strip individuals of their bodily autonomy and identity.

## III. TRIPLE TRAGEDY IN RUKMINI’S LIFE

Rukmini met with the tragedy of losing her husband at an early phase of her marital life. Her son was barely in his teens when she was widowed. Fate denied her marital bliss and she was left to survive the test of time for years to come. In the patriarchal setup of Indian society, a conspicuous disparity prevails in the recipience of a man and a woman when death occurs to one of the spouses. A widower earns sympathy and support from the community whereas a widow invites despair and despondence. Society often perceives her as inauspicious and deems her unfit to partake in celebratory occasions and religious rituals. The plight of a widow is further worsened as she meets the challenges while coping with her loss. She becomes vulnerable to blame which may go to the extreme of making her accountable for her husband’s demise.

Rukmini is a Tamil Brahmin, a community known for its strict orthodoxy. In the cultural environment of this class, the proceedings that follow widowhood indicate the deep-rooted biases subjected to women. The widow is tonsured and hitherto clothed in a plain cotton saree. Her movements are restricted and she is confined to a secluded space usually in the backyard or on a roofed terrace. Rukmini was no

exception. However, she did not encounter dire situations. She shared a room "one corner of the old ancestral house". Nonetheless, she lived a life as befits a widow that was pre-structured by patriarchy.

The next tragedy struck Rukmini when her son and daughter-in-law succumbed to old age. She had to bear the trauma all along her life and now it has been almost a decade since she outlived them. She lost them at a time when she, who was at a ripe age needed their care and attention the most. In the Indian historical convention, a woman is considered to be 'dependent' on a man throughout her life. As a daughter, she depends on her father; upon marriage, on her husband, and during her later years, she is dependent on her sons. This patriarchal dogma safeguards the power of men and subordinates the agency and autonomy of women. Rukmini, now a childless widow is dependent on her grandson and granddaughter-in-law.

The third tragedy showed itself as a health hazard. Rukmini endured a chronic presence of a goiter which later manifested into cancer. The narrator recalls her childhood memories thus, "The goitred lump, the familiar swelling I had seen on her neck all my life, that I stroked and teasingly pinched as a child, was now a cancer that spread like a fire down the old body, licking clean everything in its way." (p.9)

Thus, Rukmini's life was tragically marked by the capricious hand of fate. Not only did she endure the psychological anguish resulting from the loss of her husband and son, but she also underwent the physical torment of a chronic illness, for which she adamantly refused any form of medication. Henceforth, she bore the burden of enduring the anguish and sorrow stemming from a triple tragedy, deprived of the felicities of marital happiness, the gratification of motherhood, and a life of sound health.

#### IV. NEGOTIATING TRAUMA

Despite the grave circumstances posed by destiny, Rukmini exhibited tolerance and grit in the face of all odds. This in no way implies that she remained unaffected by the tragedies; indeed, they were still vivid in her memory. Cathy Caruth, in her ground-breaking work *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narratives, and History* (1996), defines trauma as "In its most general definition, trauma describes an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, and uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomenon" (11).

This becomes evident when the narrator states "She would sit in her corner, her round plump face reddening, giggling like a little girl. But some uninitiated friend would be unable to resist and would go up to my great-grandmother and ask her why she was laughing. This, I knew, would send her into uncontrollable peals. The tears would flow down her cheeks, and finally, catching her breath, still weak with laughter, she would confess." (pp.9-10)

It is often postulated that two opposed emotional or psychological states yield similar outcomes. Laughter may manifest both in moments of profound joy and in instances of intense distress. Likewise, tears may accompany both laughter and sorrow. In the context provided, Rukmini's uncontrollable laughter, swiftly followed by tears, serves as an indication of the underlying trauma she grapples with, perhaps employing laughter as a coping mechanism to navigate her distress.

Sigmund Freud, in 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' discusses the most powerful single obstacle to recovery. He mentions "What is involved here is a 'moral factor', so to speak: a guilt-feeling that finds its gratification in illness and refuses to forgo the punishment that suffering represents". (p.170)

Rukmini endured the presence of a goitrous lump on her neck for an extended duration. Despite recommendations for surgical intervention during her son's lifetime, she declined the procedure. Her reluctance stemmed not from fear of death but from the want of dying. Enduring the agony serves as an expression of a death instinct within her psyche. At the same time, she did not want to die an unnatural death. Her conviction rests upon the precepts delineated within Hindu scriptures, which posit that abrupt deaths are associated with profound soul anguish. Relatives contributed to her apprehensions by recounting tales of untimely demise, instilling in her a profound dread.

Over the years, the malignant swelling developed into cancer. However, she declined to get treated. Morally, she experiences a sense of guilt for outliving both her husband and her son. Eventually, she views her loss as a little hilarious. As stated by Ratna, she wonders that "She, an ignorant village-bred woman, who signed the papers my father brought her with a thumb-print, should survive; while they city-bred, ambitious, should collapse of weak hearts and arthritic knees at the first sign of old age". (p.9)

Simone de Beauvoir, in chapter ten titled 'Women's Situation and Character' of her seminal book "The Second Sex," writes: "Women are made to suffer," they say. "That's life; nothing can be done about it." This resignation engenders the patience often admired in women. They withstand physical suffering much better than men;



they are capable of stoic courage when circumstances demand it: without the aggressive daring of the male, many women are distinguished by the calm tenacity of their passive resistance; they deal with crisis, misery, and misfortune more energetically than their husbands respectful of duration that no haste can conquer, they do not measure time; when they apply their calm stubbornness to any undertaking, they are sometimes brilliantly successful." .... "In a generous woman, resignation looks like indulgence: she accepts everything; she condemns no one because she thinks that neither people nor things can be different from what they are." (p.790)

Rukmini acquiesced with resignation and moved on with life. Unlike the maladjusted relations that most mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law share, she had a harmonious relationship with her grandson and granddaughter-in-law. Ratna, her great-granddaughter, refers to Rukmini as '*my sweet great-grandmother*'. Rukmini was uncomplaining: "*She would chuckle, when I kept the lights on all night and paced up and down the room, reading to myself.*" Rukmini was '*cheerful and never sick*'. Her display of what Beauvoir terms '*calm, stubbornness*' is seen when she refuses medication to cure herself.

In her work "Trauma Studies," Michelle Balaev conceptualizes a "Pluralistic Trauma Theory," which posits that a traumatic event fundamentally alters an individual's perception and identity, paving the way for new understandings of the world. She regards memory as a dynamic process capable of constructing and reconstructing the traumatic past during moments of recollection. She mentions thus "The emphasis on the possibility for both indirect and direct knowledge of the traumatic past suggests that trauma has particular effects in certain instances of its occurrence. This approach often relies more heavily on the external stressor to show that trauma occurs in specific bodies, time periods, cultures, and places, each informing the meaning." (366).

Rukmini approaches life with a philosophical perspective. At a certain point, she begins to respond to the trauma of losing her loved ones with a sense of humor, which is characterized by a unique and quirky nature. Known for her distinctive sense of humor, she often giggles to herself, expressing a sense of placidity that can be interpreted as a new understanding of life that transcends conventional worldviews.

## V. THE FINAL ENACTMENT

Rukmini was now at the terminal stage of life. Bedridden for almost two months, she finally consents to see a doctor. The young doctor who examined her reported a bleak prospect for recovery and advised care in the comfort of

home. At this juncture, Rukmini's conduct takes an unforeseen turn. Born in a conservative Tamil Brahmin family where eating anything from outside is strictly prohibited, she suddenly craves non-traditional, commercially prepared food items typically classified as "junk food."

Uma Chakravarti in "Gendering Caste through a feminist lens" quotes Leela Dube regarding the role of women of upper castes in maintaining caste boundaries and its purity through the preparation of food, as follows, "The bodily purity of upper castes is believed to be linked to what is ingested- so what is eaten, how it is prepared, and how it is served ..." Rukmini, who has adhered to the customary behaviors expected of a woman belonging to the upper caste Brahmin community throughout her life, now exhibits a stark departure from established traditions concerning dietary practices as reflected in the conversation between them:

"Those small cakes you got from the Christian shop that day. Do they have eggs in them?"

"Do they?" she persisted. 'Will you,' and her eyes narrowed with cunning, 'will you get one for me?'

And does it really have egg in it?"

'Lots and lots of eggs,' I would say, wanting her to hurry up and put it in her mouth. 'And the bakery is owned

by a Christian. I think he hires Muslim cooks too.' (pp. 12-13)

The portrayal of Rukmini's peculiar conduct, characterized by her persistent desire for cakes and Cola, may initially appear as a mere inclination towards experiencing such culinary delights, possibly influenced by observing Ratna's consumption of these items. However, a deeper analysis reveals that Rukmini's cravings transcend mere gustatory curiosity. She shows an insatiable appetite, indifferent to the whereabouts of the source or the vendors of these eateries. Rukmini derives pleasure from flavors hitherto unexplored, oblivion to familial perceptions and societal norms. With each passing day, her demands diversify unabatedly, indicating a profound departure from conventional expectations as Ratna says, "She had tasted, by now, lemon tarts, garlic, three types of aerated drinks, fruit cake laced with brandy, bhel-puri from the fly-infested bazaar nearby." (p.14)

In the seminal work "Studies on Hysteria" authored by Josef Breuer and Sigmund Freud, a key reference is made to the notion of terminal delirium as represented within the framework established by Jean-Martin Charcot. Charcot, a pioneering figure in the domain of neurology and psychiatry, proposed a schematic depiction of the 'major' hysterical attack, comprised of four distinct phases. Among

these phases, terminal delirium assumes significance as a critical juncture within the broader phenomenology of hysterical manifestations. This phase, characterized by a culmination of heightened emotional turmoil and cognitive disarray, represents a focal point in the clinical understanding and conceptualization of hysterical phenomena. Within the context of Breuer and Freud's inquiry into hysteria, the acknowledgment and analysis of the terminal delirium phase contribute substantially to the elucidation of the complex interplay between psychological distress and somatic expression in afflicted individuals. Ratna describes "It burns, it burns," she would yell then, but she pursed her lips tightly together when my mother spooned a thin gruel into her mouth. 'No, no,' she screamed deliriously. 'Get me something from the bazaar. Raw onions. Fried bread. Chickens and goats. Then we knew she was lost to us. She was dying." (p.14)

This kind of random demand for tabooed things superficially seems to be a repressed desire that has surfaced now. Years of living a tongue-tied and forbidden physical life have taken a toll on her physically and mentally. But it is not as simple as that. Rukmini is in a state of terminal delirium. Here, the repressed desire is not the desire for food but a desire to die. This outlandish wish list was not limited to food alone. Rukmini demands, "Bring me a red sari," she screamed. 'A red one with a big wide border of gold. And, 'her voice cracked, 'bring me peanuts with chilli powder from the corner shop. Onion and green chilli bondas deep-fried in oil." (p.15)

Rukmini meets her end after a brief state of insanity. As set up by the patriarchy, a woman's life is made purposeless in the absence of a male counterpart. Rukmini has been enduring a pointless life devoid of close relations with her husband and her son. Yet she succeeds in moving along with life without taking any drastic steps. Moreover, she awaits a 'natural' death thus resisting the process of getting operated for her illness. This prolonged wait for her end becomes her death drive and she indulges in consuming unhealthy food in a state of delirium.

## VI. VI RATNA AFTER RUKMINI'S DEATH

The death of her great-grandmother deeply affects Ratna and she is visibly depressed. She suffers from situational depression (also called reactive depression) a term coined by the German psychiatrist Kurt Schneider in 1920. It is a short-term, stress-related depressive disorder that is endogenous. Ratna is loaded with many unanswered questions. Though a prospective medical student, she is still an amateur. She is in the process of studying the external anatomy and has not yet explored the internal emotional storehouse of the brain. She is left clueless about the pain

that coagulated into cancer of which her great-grandmother told her nothing. Ratna is obsessed with the memories of her late comrade and is filled with vengeance.

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, the American-Swiss psychiatrist, formulated a seminal model delineating five distinct stages of grief viz. Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance. These phases serve as a framework for understanding the psychological processes individuals undergo when confronted with the profound loss or demise of a dear one. Ratna's experiences can be readily correlated with these stages, reflecting the universality and applicability of Kübler-Ross's model in elucidating the complex dynamics of grief and mourning.

In the first phase, Ratna persists in denial, steadfast in her quest to locate her beloved great-grandmother. She reveals, "For a while I haunt the dirtiest bakeries and tea-stalls I can find. I search for her, my sweet great-grandmother, in plate after plate of stale confections, in needle-sharp green chillies, deep-fried in rancid oil."

In an act symbolizing her journey through the phase of anger, Ratna orchestrates her retribution through self-inflicted suffering as a manifestation of her inner turmoil and punitive measures against herself. She admits, "I plot her revenge for her, I give myself diarrhea for a week."

During this phase, Ratna navigates the bargaining stage, wherein she strives to reconcile with the distressing event and its implications. She says, "Then I open all the windows and her cupboard and air the rooms. I tear her dirty, grey saris to shreds."

Subsequently, Ratna attains a state of acceptance, wherein she endeavors to manage and adapt to the profound loss she has experienced. She asserts, "I line the shelves of her empty cupboard with my thick, newly-bought, glossy-jacketed texts, one next to the other."

## VII. CONCLUSION

Throughout her life, Rukmini exhibited a steadfast assertion of her agency despite her illiteracy, notably wielding financial authority by affixing her thumbprint to pertinent documents. She actively participated in decisions concerning her medical treatment, thereby retaining autonomy over her well-being. Furthermore, she commanded reverence from her granddaughter-in-law, who attended to her needs with deference and esteem.

In the present story, both Rukmini and Ratna display subversive behavior. The term "subversion" denotes a systematic process wherein the values and principles upheld by an established system are contradicted or overturned, often intended to undermine the prevailing social order and its normative structures. As the narrative reaches its

crescendo during her final days, Rukmini boldly defies societal norms by openly expressing her unconventional desires, including a penchant for consuming impure food and employing cosmetic implements to enhance her appearance. In doing so, she subverts the rigid constraints imposed upon Brahmin widows, unequivocally asserting her agency without reservation. Contrastingly, Ratna has already transgressed Brahminic dietary regulations, introducing Rukmini to the delights of cakes and aerated beverages. Furthermore, Ratna demonstrates a remarkable endeavor in overcoming the trauma precipitated by the loss of her great-grandmother.

Thus, the two women demonstrate undaunted behaviors that diverge from societal expectations, challenging and potentially reshaping prevailing norms. Their actions disrupt traditional hierarchies and foster a more egalitarian societal paradigm.

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# Impacts of Tourism on the Socio-Cultural Aspect of the Dumagat Along Dupinga

Xenneath Andrea E. Adriano, Allaiza A. Aldeza, Will Smith C. Caspillan, Edilyn C. Menoncia, Ma. Cecilia P. Reyes, Francis Matthew L. Santos, Adriane Emanuelle A. Tumibay, Mark Alvin H. Abad

Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology

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**Abstract**— This research paper examines the impacts of tourism on the socio-cultural aspects of the Dumagat community in Dupinga, Gabaldon Nueva Ecija, emphasizing the importance of indigenous perspectives. It combines scholarly knowledge and firsthand insights to assess these impacts comprehensively, advocating for sustainable tourism policies that preserve the cultural integrity of the community. Findings suggest a mixed impact of tourism, with positive economic effects but concerns about the erosion of local traditions. The paper recommends a multifaceted approach, including cultural sensitivity, community involvement, and education, to mitigate negative impacts and empower indigenous communities.



**Keywords**— Dumagat, Eco-tourism, Socio-cultural Impacts, Indigenous Tourism, Indigenous Community, Sustainable Development.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the current global landscape, tourism has evolved into a potent force, driving economic growth and fostering cultural exchange. However, the impact of tourism on indigenous lands/ancestral domains has raised crucial concerns related to the preservation of cultural heritage, traditional practices, and the overall well-being of indigenous peoples/indigenous cultural communities (IPs/ICCs). This research focuses on the specific case of Dupinga, Gabaldon, to comprehensively assess the impact of tourism on the socio-cultural aspect of Dumagat.

Indigenous tourism involves indigenous peoples directly in tourism activities, either through cultural attractions or by managing the activities themselves. It's seen as a delicate form of niche tourism, and in areas where economic opportunities are scarce, it can provide a vital means for Indigenous communities to sustain their livelihoods.

The rapid increase in tourism along the Dupinga River in Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija, among indigenous peoples and cultural communities, sparks concern about its diverse

impact on their socio-cultural fabric. With global travel on the rise, there's an urgent need to examine the intricate dynamics and consequences of tourism on indigenous societies, particularly focusing on potential cultural erosion, economic dependencies, environmental implications, and the effectiveness of current strategies in minimizing negative effects.

In 2004, the residents of Dupinga, specifically the Dumagat, built nipa huts along the river, raising awareness and turning the area into a beloved destination for Novo Ecijanos. This initiative also became a significant income source for the indigenous Dumagat people. Acknowledging its appeal to tourists, the local government now manages tourism activities, sharing profits with the Dumagat community and prioritizing the preservation of the river's cleanliness.

This study highlights the crucial role of indigenous voices in shaping discussions on tourism impacts. It emphasizes the need to pay attention to the effects of tourism on Dupinga's indigenous population. By engaging with and valuing these voices, valuable insights into their



challenges, as well as potential benefits and opportunities from tourism, can be uncovered. Through a thorough synthesis of scholarly knowledge and direct perspectives from the Dupinga community, the research aims to offer a comprehensive assessment of tourism's socio-cultural impacts on Dumagat.

The research aims to understand and address the various impacts of tourism on Dumagat in Dupinga, Gabaldon. Additionally, it advocates for preserving indigenous heritage by identifying areas needing attention and protection. The ultimate goal is to contribute to the development of sustainable tourism policies that honor and protect the cultural integrity of the Dumagat community.

## II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study examines the impacts of tourism on the socio-cultural aspects of the Dumagat in Dupinga, Gabaldon Nueva Ecija. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. How may the respondents be described in terms of:
  - 1.1 Age;
  - 1.2 Sex;
  - 1.3 Religion;
  - 1.4 Civil Status;
  - 1.6 Dumagat Blood Quantum Degree;
  - 1.7 Monthly Income;
  - 1.8 Highest Educational Attainment?
2. What various tourism opportunities do the Dumagat provide for visitors exploring the Dupinga River?
3. How may the positive socio-cultural impacts of tourism to the Dumagat be described in terms of;
  - 3.1 Cultural Exchange;
  - 3.2 Economic Opportunities;
  - 3.3 Cultural Revitalization; and
  - 3.4 Increased Awareness?
4. How may the positive socio-cultural impacts of tourism to Dumagat be described in terms of;
  - 4.1 Cultural Erosion;

- 4.2 Economic Dependency;
- 4.3 Cultural Deterioration; and
- 4.4 Decreased Awareness?

5. Is there a significant relationship between tourism opportunities and its impact on the livelihood of the Dumagat?

## III. METHODOLOGY

The researcher used quantitative research method in order to meet the objectives of the study. The 42 respondents chosen through purposive sampling technique that represented 75% of the total population of the households in Dumagat in Dupinga, Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija. The instrument used to gather data is survey questionnaire. The instruments were developed and validated prior to data gathering through content validity, construct validity, and pilot testing.

The data analysis employed several statistical techniques, including Frequency Distribution, Weighted Mean, and Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient. Range of scores and its verbal interpretation is shown below:

Scale	Weights	Verbal Interpretation
3.50 – 4.00	4	Strongly Agree
2.50 – 3.49	3	Agree
1.50 – 2.49	2	Somewhat Disagree
1.00– 1.49	1	Disagree

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This encompasses an exploration of the demographic profile of the respondents, an evaluation of the tourism opportunities provided by Dumagat to its visitors, an analysis of the impact of tourism on the socio-cultural aspect of Dumagat, and an investigation into the relationship between tourism opportunities and the socio-cultural aspect of Dumagat.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Variables	fn = 42	%
<b>Age:</b>		
16 – 23 years old	8	19.05%
24 – 31 years old	10	23.81%
32 – 39 years old	8	19.05%
40 – 49 years old	4	9.52%

<i>50 years old and above</i>	12	28.57%
<b>Sex:</b>		
<i>Male</i>	21	50%
<i>Female</i>	21	50%
<b>Civil Status:</b>		
<i>Single</i>	17	40.48%
<i>Married</i>	25	59.52%
<b>Religion:</b>		
<i>Roman Catholic</i>	6	14.29%
<i>Methodist</i>	4	9.52%
<i>Born Again</i>	28	66.67%
<i>No Religion</i>	1	2.38%
<i>Others</i>	3	7.14%
<b>Blood Quantum Degree:</b>		
<i>76 – 100% Dumagat</i>	27	64.29%
<i>51 – 75 % Dumagat</i>	11	26.19%
<i>26 – 50 % Dumagat</i>	4	9.52%
<b>Monthly Income:</b>		
<i>20,000 and above</i>	2	4.76%
<i>10,000 – 19,999</i>	13	30.95%
<i>5,000 – 9,999</i>	14	33.33%
<i>1,000 – 4,999</i>	6	14.29%
<i>1,000 and below</i>	7	16.67%
<b>Highest Educational Attainment:</b>		
<i>Elementary</i>	36	85.71%
<i>Secondary</i>	3	7.14%
<i>Did not attend school</i>	3	7.14%

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of respondents reveals a diverse distribution across age groups. Notably, 19.05% fall within the 16 to 23 age bracket, and aged 32 to 39, 23.81% are aged 24 to 31. Additionally, 9.52% are between 40 to 49 years old, while 28.57% are 50 years old and above. Gender of the respondents are fairly distributed, with 50% male and 50% female respondents. The majority of respondents are married (59.52%), while 40.48% are single. "Born Again" dominates religious affiliation (66.67%), followed by Roman Catholics (14.29%) and Methodists (9.52%). Most respondents identify with

high Dumagat ancestry, with 64.29% reporting 76-100% Dumagat blood quantum.

Respondents' incomes varied widely. The largest group earned 5,000 to 9,999 pesos (33.33%), with fewer earning higher amounts. Only 4.76% earned 20,000 pesos or more. Additionally, 30.95% fell into the 10,000 to 19,999 peso bracket, 14.29% earned 1,000 to 4,999 pesos, and 16.67% earned below 1,000 pesos. Regarding education, 85.71% have attained elementary education, 7.14% have reached secondary education, and 7.14% have no formal education.

Table 2. Tourism Opportunities

Variables	fn = 42	%
<b>Do you provide tourism opportunities to visitors?</b>		
<i>Yes</i>	13	30.95%
<i>No</i>	29	69.05%
<b>If yes, specify:</b>		
<i>Floaters rental</i>	1	2.38%
<i>Cottage rental</i>	12	28.57%
<i>Selling food like (fish, crab and others.)</i>	1	2.38%
<i>Videoke rental</i>	1	2.38%
<i>Others, please specify:</i> <i>Honeybee</i>	1	2.38%

Table 2 presents the tourism opportunities provided by 42 respondents. Among them, 13 (30.95%) offer tourism opportunities, while 29 (69.04%) do not. Notable services among those offering opportunities

include renting floaters (2.38%), cottages (28.57%), selling local delicacies (2.38%), renting videoke (2.38%), and other miscellaneous services like selling honey (2.38%).

Table 3. Cultural Exchange

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
The increase in tourists brings positive effects to our culture and traditions.	3.05	Agree
Tourism deepens our culture through acceptance and appreciation of it.	3.17	Agree
Our cultural heritage fades because it is increasingly being influenced by modern culture due to our interactions with tourists.	2.14	Somewhat Disagree

Table 3 suggests that the increase in tourists has a mixed impact on the local culture and traditions:

The majority agree (3.05) that the influx of tourists has a positive effect on the culture and traditions, indicating that tourism contributes positively to the preservation and enrichment of local customs.

Similarly, there is agreement (3.17) that tourism deepens the understanding and appreciation of the local culture through acceptance and value appreciation.

However, there is also slight disagreement (2.14) that the knowledge of the local culture diminishes due to the influence of modern cultures brought by interactions with tourists.

Overall, while tourism is seen as beneficial in some aspects, there are concerns about its potential negative effects on the preservation of traditional knowledge and practices.

Table 4. Economic Opportunities

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Tourism helps us earn additional income.	3.83	Strongly agree
Tourism creates equal opportunities for our livelihood.	2.67	agree
Tourism helps alleviate poverty in our community.	3.29	agree

Table 4 suggests a mixed perception regarding the impact of tourism on the local community's economic situation:

With a strong agreement mean of 3.83, the majority believe that tourism helps provide additional income, indicating a positive perception of tourism's economic benefits.

An agreement score of 2.67 suggests a moderate level of consensus on the notion that tourism offers equal opportunities for livelihoods within the local population. This indicates that while there might not be unanimous agreement, there is recognition that tourism has the potential to distribute economic benefits fairly among community members.

Nonetheless, there is general agreement 3.29 that tourism contributes to reducing poverty in the area, indicating a positive perception of its potential to alleviate socioeconomic challenges.

Overall, the data indicates a generally positive perception of tourism's economic impact on the local community. Most believe it provides additional income, with moderate consensus on equal opportunities. There's also agreement that tourism helps reduce poverty. Overall, while some nuances exist, the view leans towards tourism being beneficial for the local economy and socioeconomic challenges.

Table 5. Cultural Revitalization

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Tourism fosters the enhancement of our cultural heritage.	2.74	agree
The influence of tourism brings about changes in our culture.	2.60	agree
Tourism helps disseminate knowledge about our culture.	4	Strongly agree

Table 5 suggests that respondents generally agree that tourism positively contributes to cultural revitalization within the community.

The first statement received a relatively agreement mean (2.74), indicating that most respondents believe tourism significantly enhances or enriches their culture. However, the slightly lower mean score (2.60) for the second statement suggests that some respondents harbor reservations or concerns about the nature of these changes. This implies that while tourism does induce cultural transformations, some perceive these changes as potentially negative or disruptive to traditional cultural practices.

The last statement garnered a relatively high agreement mean (4), signifying that respondents believe tourism plays a crucial role in disseminating knowledge about their culture. They likely view tourism as a platform for educating others about their traditions, history, and values, thereby fostering cultural understanding and appreciation among visitors.

Overall, while respondents generally perceive tourism as having a positive impact on their culture, including enrichment and knowledge dissemination, there are nuanced concerns about the nature of cultural changes brought about by tourism.

Table 6. Increased Awareness

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Our culture becomes more recognized because of tourism.	3.05	agree

Table 6 presents the that with a mean score of 3.05, respondents agree that tourism contributes to a better

understanding of their culture. This indicates a consensus among the majority of respondents.

Table 7 Spearman's Rank Correlation

Spearman's rho Correlation		Income
Cultural Exchange	<i>r - value</i>	.008
	<i>p - value</i>	.960
Economic Opportunities	<i>r - value</i>	-.120
	<i>p - value</i>	.450
Cultural Revitalization	<i>r - value</i>	-.437**



	<i>p - value</i>	.004
<b>Increased Awareness</b>	<i>r - value</i>	-.270
	<i>p - value</i>	.084

Table 7. In a study examining the relationship between different aspects of cultural exchange and income, Spearman's rho correlations were calculated. Results indicate a statistically significant negative correlation between cultural revitalization and income ( $\rho = -.437$ ,  $p = .004$ ), suggesting that higher levels of cultural revitalization are associated with lower incomes. However, no significant correlations were found between income and cultural exchange ( $\rho = .008$ ,  $p = .960$ ), economic factors ( $\rho = -.120$ ,  $p = .450$ ), or awareness ( $\rho = -.270$ ,  $p = .084$ ).

The statistically significant negative correlation between cultural revitalization and income ( $\rho = -.437$ ,  $p = .004$ ) suggests that communities or regions with higher levels of cultural revitalization tend to have lower incomes. This finding may indicate that areas focusing more on cultural preservation and revitalization might prioritize cultural activities over economic development, potentially leading to lower overall income levels.

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

Through meticulous analysis and interpretation of the gathered data, the following conclusions are drawn;

1. Dumagat community emerges as a complex tapestry of diversity. They have different profiles and also opinions about the impact of tourism to them. Educational attainment in the community is primarily at the elementary level, indicating potential barriers to higher education.
2. Approximately 30.95% of residents engage in offering tourism opportunities.
3. Concerns about cultural erosion, economic dependency, and cultural deterioration highlight the need for sustainable tourism practices and cultural preservation strategies.
4. Preserving Dumagat's cultural heritage is important, especially in the face of challenges like cultural deterioration and modern influences.
5. There's a negative correlation between cultural revitalization and income.

### Recommendations

This research provides a series of targeted recommendations to address pressing issues in Dumagat.

Based on the conclusions above, we recommend the following actions:

1. Dumagat primarily attained elementary education, it is imperative to advocate for and actively encourage residents to take significant steps towards pursuing education. There's a pressing need for the Local Government to implement initiatives that would provide free education to the young generations of Dumagat.
2. Invest in educational initiatives, including comprehensive training programs covering hospitality management and craft-making. By nurturing creativity and empowering communities to develop their own tourism offerings, we can promote economic sustainability and preserve Dumagat's rich cultural heritage.
3. Dumagat mostly rely in tourism, it is recommend to diversify the economy by investing in other industries such as agriculture and hospitality. Provide training and program to increase their knowledge and skills so they can access higher-skilled jobs.
4. Promote sustainable tourism by practicing cultural sensitivity, involving the community, and educating tourists. Foster cultural exchanges through traditional activities, provide alternative livelihoods to reduce tourism dependency, and implement cultural preservation initiatives to educate about Dumagat's heritage.
5. While there is revitalization of culture, they tend to have lower income levels. It's better to have sustainable development while preserving cultural heritage. Understanding the relationship between tourism and livelihood outcomes will contribute to more informed decision-making regarding economic development strategies.

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# Milk Revolution: Stories of Indian Women from the Mountains of Garhwal

Dr Deepak Rana<sup>1</sup>, Dr Chetana Pokhriyal<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor of English, Rajkiya Mahavidyalaya Kamand, Sri Dev Suman Uttarakhand University, Uttarakhand, India

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor of English, Doon University, Dehradun, India

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**Abstract**— *Stories gathered around the milk created the milk stories for women in India. White Revolution served as a means of financial independence and women created niche of their own. While the stories of women have always been an inspiration for the world, however, the main motivation remained the women of the rural background who have poor economic conditions and uncertain means of livelihood. In Uttarakhand, a hilly state of India, especially in Uttarkashi and Tehri Garhwal, there are numerous stories worth telling of the survival of women and the common factor among all of them has been the 'milk' and there is enough data which proves that how milk had been a boon for the downtrodden society of India since the great revolution started which was named: "Operation Milk."*



**Keywords**— *White Revolution, Milk, Rural Women, Uttarkashi, Tehri Garhwal, Uttarakhand, Films, Oral Literature, Stories*

Literature has always been primarily folk, and folk existed in rural masses. And then 'Milk' in the name of revolution created a hysteria giving work to even extremely poor and thus several stories have been created until now, though not have become great literature, giving life to each of them and their houses lighted up again—with mirth and laughter. Milk has become a phenomenon and mass production through one of the greatest movement in India has been successful ever since—It was named *Operation Flood*.

White Revolution, "milk production by the masses," was launched by the name *Operation Flood* by the Government of India in 1970 which ultimately transformed India from a milk-deficient nation into a world's largest milk producer ("Operation Flood") changing the rural landscape of India. The objectives of the whole program were: "Increase in milk production, augmented rural incomes, fair prices for consumers, and increased income and reduced poverty among participating farmers while ensuring a steady supply of milk in return" ("Operation Flood"). And the participation of rural women in the whole scenario created a different parallel movement that helped

the nation of which half the population has always been female. "To stand on her own feet": This motto came alive again, after independence. "*Manthan*, a Hindi movie directed by Shyam Benegal in 1976 was inspired by the same pioneering milk cooperative movement, 'white revolution of India,' of Verghese Kurien" ("*Manthan*"). Art and Literature created a canvas to be understood by millions of people who were unaware of such a great revolution. "*Manthan* was India's first crowdfunded film financed entirely by the dairy farmers of Gujarat" ("*The Better India*"). *Manthan*, the movie, starring Girish Karnad, Smita Patil, Amrish Puri, and Naseeruddin Shah, revolves around milk production and the price paid for it:

Amrish Puri is a milk usurper in the movie whose position comes to danger when a govt. officer arrives and offers the villagers the dream of a cooperative society where everything will be a fair deal and no caste will come anyone's way. This brings confidence to the faces of lower caste citizens of the village and infuriates the higher class people. But



after many trials and tribulations, eventually the govt. officer was transferred from the village, as the higher class interfered, and the whole higher caste citizens rejoiced at his departure, but eventually, the Harijans took the matter into their own hands and formed a free society. (“Manthan”)

This movie focuses on the role of cooperative societies in the economic development of India, protecting them from market exploitation and the pain of personal selling. A cooperative society aims at eliminating the unnecessary gains of middlemen in the whole process. Being voluntary in association and having equal voting rights, this type of format has become a major winner among the downtrodden and economically backward classes. In today’s rural India also, it is as prominent as it was yesterday. Uttarakhand is the northern state, situated in the foothills of the Shivalik range in the Himalayas, though is not culturally diversified but is geographically challenging with a population of almost ten million people. The state, with an indigenous population with distinct communities, is divided into districts which are further divided into spoken dialects, customs, and traditions. The lives of rural women need change especially when we talk

about a developing country like India, with dismal nutritive conditions for women especially those who fend for fuel, fodder, and water. However, for making changes, women have been mobilised for political participation by ensuring their participation as Gram Pradhans. But in retrospect, the political involvement of women has faded dismally over the years either because they lack time and commitment to realising their political commitments or because other commitments like family and fields take precedence over other fulfilments of roles and duties. Hence, it has not been self-sustaining development.

A more sustainable model of change can be ensured by structuring the government policies around the economic development of women and subsequently ensuring their political participation in the overall development of the state. The policymakers should take an exhaustive, on-the-spot cognizance of rural women, living their lives in diverse time frames than their counterparts in urban setups. Women from remote districts of Uttarkashi and Tehri Garhwal in Uttarakhand enthusiastically mobilising their economic demands led to the conclusion that the women in distinct, remote rural areas are still dependent on milk production for economic survival in their villages. Many women in these areas became the significant part of these *milk stories*:

S.No.	Name of Female	Name of Area (Rural /Semi-urban)	Number of Cows/Bufferaloes	Milk Production on Daily Basis (in Litres)	Current Price of Milk (in Rs. per Litre)	Time since joined the Revolution
1.	Vimla	Dakhyat Gaon, Barkot, Uttarkashi	1 Cow (replaces every 5-7 years)	10 litres (sells 8 litres; 2 litre is used for personal consumption)	50 rupees per litre/kg	20 years
2.	Pavitra	Dakhyat Gaon, Barkot, Uttarkashi	1 Cow (replaces every 5-7 years)	10 litres (sells 8 litres; 2 litre is used for personal consumption)	50 rupees per litre/kg	10 years
3.	Sarita	Barkot Town, Uttarkashi	1 Cow (replaces every 5-7 years)	12 litres (sells 10 litres; 2 litre is used for personal consumption)	55 rupees per litre/kg	20 years
4.	Anupama	Barkot Town, Uttarkashi	5-6 Cows (replaces every 5-7 years)	50 litres (sells 45 litres; 5 litre is used for personal consumption)	50 rupees per litre/kg	20 years
5.	?	Ponti Gaon, Barkot, Uttarkashi	1 Buffalo (replaces every 5-7 years)	10 litres (sells 9 litres; 1 litre is used for personal consumption)	60 rupees per litre/kg	15 years

6.	Shobha	Kamand Gaon, Tehri Garhwal	1 cow (sold recently due to financial and time constraints)	7 litres (sold 5 litres; 2 litre is used for personal consumption)	55 rupees per litre/kg	3 years
7.	Aunty Ji	Kamand Gaon, Tehri Garhwal	1-3 cows (replaces every 5-7 years)	30 litres (sold 25 litres; 5 litre is used for personal consumption)	60 rupees per litre/kg	10 years
8.	Dudhwali Mami	Fold Gaon, Uttarkashi	1 cow and 1 buffalo (replaces every 5-7 years)	15 litres	40 rupees per litre/kg	30 years
9.	Meena Rawat	Barkot Gaon, Uttarkashi	1 cow and 1 buffalo (replaces every 5-7 years)	15 litres	50 rupees per litre/kg	25 years
10.	Bhajan Dei	Barkot Gaon, Uttarkashi	1 cow and 2 buffalo (replaces every 5-7 years)	15 litres	50 rupees per litre/kg	30 years
11.	Sumitra Rana	Bagsari Gaon, Dhanari, Uttarkashi	6 cows (replaces every 5-7 years)	35 litres	50 rupees per litre/kg	25 years
12.	Rajkumari	Bagsari Gaon, Dhanari, Uttarkashi	1 cow and 1 buffalo (replaces every 5-7 years)	15 litres	50 rupees per litre/kg	20 years
13.	Cheta Rana	Bagsari Gaon, Dhanari, Uttarkashi	2 cow (replaces every 5-7 years)	12 litres	50 rupees per litre/kg	30 years
14.	Nagdei	Gyansu Gaon, Uttarkashi	2 cow (replaces every 5-7 years)	12 litres	50 rupees per litre/kg	40 years
15.	Mateswari Devi	Gyansu Gaon, Uttarkashi	2 cow (replaces every 5-7 years)	12 litres	50 rupees per litre/kg	40 years
16.	Reshma	Gyansu Gaon, Uttarkashi	2 cow (replaces every 5-7 years)	15 litres	50 rupees per litre/kg	15 years

Fig.1: Data of women producing cattle milk in several areas of Uttarkashi and Tehri

District for the economic upliftment of her family

**Note 1:** People measure milk in Kgs (instead of litres) in hilly regions of Uttarkashi and Tehri Garhwal District

**Note 2:** “?” indicates that the milkwoman does not want to reveal her name.

The above data proved that a lot of rural women depend on milk production for economic prosperity. In their book, Singh and Shrivastava, in simple terms, have explained the milk industry in detail, and done a “SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threats) analysis, focussing on the needs, objectives, and significance of the White Revolution. The detailed index aligns everything in tandem from start to the end in the book which makes it

easier to go to the description detailing the effectiveness of the milk production in India” (v-xi). It was a book that, with an Indian perspective, was a great start to understanding the milk revolution in India. Under SWOT analysis, the main strength of Amul, the largest milk co-operative, is being the production of milk, market share and larger consumer base apart being the quality of the milk; the weakness lies in further expansion and legal issues; the opportunity for Amul

was international expansion and expanding product portfolio; and lastly the threats are increasing competition and growing veganism trend all over the world. “In 2008, the World Bank hailed the program’s success and on similar levels promoted schemes in Africa” (Scholten). The White Revolution of India became imperative in understanding the whole scheme, level by level, leading to success and creating a new future using its context in motion.

In the article on *mocomi.com*, the website shortened everything for kids for understanding:

The White Revolution helped increase milk productivity and milk was now sold at competitive market prices. This program increased the demand for the development and production of healthy animals, the use of modern technology in the milk production sector, and networking between various small and large-scale dairy industries. The first of the three phases of the Milk Revolution started in July 1970 intending to set up dairy cooperatives in 18 milk sheds in 10 states. They were to be linked with the four best metropolitan markets. By the end of this phase in 1981, there were 13,000 village dairy cooperatives covering 15,000 farmers. Phase 2 aimed at building on the designs of phase 1 and the assisted Dairy development programs in Karnataka, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh. By the end of this phase in 1985, there were 136 milk sheds, 34,500 village dairy cooperatives, and over 36 lakh members. The last Phase, 3 emphasized consolidating the gains of the earlier two phases by improving the productivity and efficiency of the dairy sectors for long-term sustainability. It ended in 1996 and by that time there were 73,300 dairy cooperatives and over 9.4 million farmer members.

The Milk Revolution created many stories which started locally in every part of India. Every woman who took part, and is still involved in the revolution, has the story of not getting enough due to fewer means but slowly and gradually everything changed. They became self-reliant and helped their children and families to a better life, through a little investment and a lot of hard work. Every story was a fact and fictionalised movies like ‘Manthan’ are solely based on the truth of the Milk Revolution. Books have been

written and millions and millions of stories proved that the White Revolution has been a success.

Then there are stories of women in Tehri and Uttarkashi of Uttarakhand who got a new lease of life through the milk of their own, and how the Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) came to their rescue. One such project is “Women Dairy Development Project under Scheme of Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) in District Tehri Garhwal of Uttarakhand (Hifeed)” This project helped a lot of women in dairy related subsidiary incomes. The main objective of this Hifeed programme was:

- To provide training to women beneficiaries in dairy development programmes, at family level and cluster levels.
- To organise women in the form of cooperative societies and making facilities economically viable through training, infrastructure and access to credit.
- To enable women groups in dairy development programmes for enhancing income and employment generation opportunities.
- To provide technical back up packages to women beneficiaries in animal husbandry practices and dairy development programmes.
- To enable active participation of women from economically weaker sections, SC, ST, OBC and BPL families in their own village economy.
- To empower women to be able to move in the positions of decision making power.
- To develop grass root level leadership.

This programme facilitated lives of women at the grassroot level because of the clear objectives: “providing training and skills needed for the dairy programmes, giving literature and course material to the trainees, giving technical assistance and infrastructure, health facilities, marginal money to purchase cattle by women beneficiaries,

marketing support to the milk cooperatives and milk producers” (Hifeed).

In Uttarkashi, “Uttarakhand Co-operative Dairy Federation Ltd. (UCDF Ltd.), the apex federation of district milk cooperative unions in the state of Uttarakhand, established Uttarkashi Dugdh Utpadak Sahakari Sangh Ltd. in 1989 which has helped numerous women since then by creating alternate employment avenues for women” (UCDF). For the same goal, “Tehri Dugdh Utpadak Sahakari Sangh was established in August 1999 in New Tehri” (UCDF). An article on the betterindia website states: Patma, a resident of one of the village in Uttarkashi took loan in January 2011 and bought a cow. She narrated her short successful short story:

“We are happy today. Earlier, when we worked at cutting grass, we were unable to make any money,” remarks Patma. “Now, with my cows producing milk for at least ten months of the year, I make a profit of between Rs 5,000-6,000 a month. Moreover, my children are getting good nourishment and we even utilise the dung from the cows as fertiliser,” she discloses with a smile. (Dairy Diaries)

There are thousands and thousands of stories in the mountains where lives of a family have been changed by the touch of the milk. These stories are no less than folklores, fables and short stories or novels in their own perspective, though they are all told mostly in one gasp–oral literature of the mountains. Every woman has a story to tell, and every story has all the elements of a story. It has a plot, the characters, theme, the settings, the narrative point of view and each woman has a style of her own, especially the innocent one. No one can tell the mystery behind the smile in spite of such hardships in the hills, but everyone survived and with a happy tone in times of adversity. No literature can ever be complete without telling the story of these women who stood tall and created a story of their own.

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# Mapping the Story of Manga: Graphic Novels and the Cultural Boom in Japan and World

Pragati Swami<sup>1</sup>, Devendra Kumar Sharma<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of English & Modern European Languages, Banasthali Vidyapith, Rajasthan, India

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of English & Modern European Languages, Banasthali Vidyapith, Rajasthan, India

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**Abstract**—Manga are circulated in graphic novel format as printed Japanese comic books. They are famous Japanese graphic novels or comic books. A popular form of literature, read by people of different age groups. They certainly provide visual as well as linguistic examples of Japanese culture. They deal with a number of genres like fantasy, romance, supernatural, erotica, action, psychological, science fiction and many more to include. This paper deals with manga-culture, its evolution and, cultural and global aspects attached to it. It highlights the educational element associated with manga. It further discusses about the prospects of manga being a form of cross-cultural literature and, how influential it is not only in Japan but also worldwide.



**Keywords**—Manga, Japan, Culture, Graphic novels, Comic books, Cross-culture.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Manga literally means ‘humorous picture’, originally started as a simple caricature. Manga has a long history of development from simple caricature or good versus evil story to a story with a plot depicting deeper and complicated aspects faced by characters. These plots are based on multiple themes like politics, social, religious, historical, and cultural issues and further much more to explore. As Kato Etsuro in his *Techniques for a New Manga* (1942) explicates that, “manga is an art that should warn of or actively attack all things in the world that are unjust, irrational, unnatural, or incongruous with the will of the nation”. (07)

Japanese society is remarkably capable of modifying the traditions, and integrating them with contemporary popular culture. The establishment of the Japanese cultural industry is the outcome of this same ability of amalgamating traditions with the constantly changing modern culture in this globalized world. As Benjamin Wai-Ming Ng in his “The Adaptation of Chinese History into Japanese Popular Culture” (2013) enunciates that, “The Japanese have demonstrated a remarkable talent

for both preserving and transforming cultural traditions. Their interest in preserving tradition is exemplified by the continuity of traditional artistic and cultural forms, such as *chanyoyu* (the tea ceremony), *ikebana* (flower arrangement) and *kabuki* drama that continue to be popular in contemporary Japan” (243). Manga certainly provides visual as well as linguistic examples of Japanese culture. Japanese young people have shown a keen interest in manga since the beginning. The main reason behind the popularity of manga is that, it provides a medium to young generation to express their desires and thoughts by depicting their own stories through these original manga. Manga can be considered as a bridge connecting young people with their peers. It acts as a medium to connect and communicate and be vulnerable through the characters drawn in manga. Manga can be considered significant in terms of communication among Japanese people. They consist of greatly contextual indications. They join auditory and perceptible techniques such as tonal voices and facial expressions. Linguistic tools like homonyms and onomatopoeia are thoroughly used in storytelling. It adds to the psychological indulgence in the story.

There are three possible theories of manga origin:

1) According to F.L. Schodt, Japanese narrative comic art is perhaps as old as civilization itself, given the first notable caricatures were discovered in the *Horyuji* Buddhist Temple in the 7th century.

2) *Choju-yu-Jibutsu-Giga* (ink painting image scrolls) from 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> century in which narrative is overshadowed by visual pictures. The panel arrangement was right to left, which still remains the manga structure today.

3) K. Misaka in “The First Japanese Manga Magazine in the United States” (2004) built the history of modern manga, by bringing it under the umbrella term of the artistic movement started by European political cartoonists living in Japan. Since, Japanese manga artists drew the notion of comic books after their birth in the United Kingdom and the United States. Contemporary and postmodern manga has a history of less than 100 years, a journey of east meeting the west. Sharon Kinsella asserts that as a result of political opposition and societal liberalization, postmodern manga's growth intensified after the 1960s.

There is also a belief that manga should be included as a subject of cultural studies and teaching tools. Though manga certainly possess the qualities as a tool for cultural knowledge at a global platform, but like any other cross cultural text, manga's capability to serve as an example of Japanese culture depends heavily on its translation. Manga requires analytical and critical understanding to connect and comprehend the underlying plot. Every element that makes a manga has a role to play; to describe the story in a particular way that the author wants it to be. The function of these elements is transcendental in nature, to conjoin space and mind, and create the story of given characters in a relatable or perceptible way. The images telling the story build the tension and complications faced by the characters in the plot. With the popularity of manga among the young generation in Japan, The Ministry of Education in Japan decided to adapt the benefit of the pop-culture to the national art educational curriculum for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades in compulsory education in 1998. The universal appeal of manga and penetration of local culture globally is the example of storytelling taken seriously by manga artists.

## II. HISTORY AND EVOLUTION

Grace Shum in “The Evolution of Comic Panel in Manga” (2017) espouses:

In 1902, Kitazawa created the first serialized Japanese comic strip called *Tagosaku to Mokubi no Tokyo kembutsu*. Thus, Rakuten, influenced by western comics, became the first in Japan to design comic strips with six panels. Rakuten began to call his comics, ‘manga’, perhaps the first use of its

modern meaning. Inspired by the western culture, the French journal *Rire*, and the American Magazine, *Puck*, Rakuten published his own review, *The Tokyo Puck*, in 1905, the year in which the manga magazine publishing boom started. (63)

During the 1920s and 1930s manga depicting post-industrialist westernization of Japanese society were published. After the 1950s, a considerable portion of Japan's populace began reading manga and discussing it. *Shounen manga* (boys' manga) and *shoujo manga* (girls' manga) are two types of manga. The broadening of the age range of manga readers is linked to the development of increasingly complicated storylines. During the 1960s, a new manga generation arose, one that continued to read manga as adults. As the new generation of manga fans grew older, they began to have great expectations from the storyline. The plot of manga evolved to portray more human drama than a caricature or a simple comic strip in response to the expectations of the viewers.

Manga was also popular at the time for satirizing and mocking current political conditions, as well as addressing social issues that were not shown by the media. With the growth of Japan's economy in the 1970s and 1980s, the manga market exploded, and manga became a popular culture in the country. Plots which had a political back-story became commercial mass entertainment for people of all ages very soon. Publishers decided to export manga to Western and Southeast Asian audiences in the 1990s. Since then, the response has been phenomenal. Due to the rapid rise of digital manga sales as well as increased print sales, the value of the Japanese manga market has reached \$4.9 billion in 2020. Hence, registering the public appreciation, manga industry enjoys.

One pivotal aspect of manga popularity that must be considered is the advent of U.S. Commodore Mathew Perry in 1853. He was the face of western and American political coercion for Japan to allow its ports to trade with the west (Brenner 2007). As a result, Japan saw an escalation in amount of foreigners who eventually introduced Japanese to the European and American style comics; which later influenced manga. Second factor that contributed to this art form was World War II. In that era of extreme idealistic nationalism and militarism, the voices of manga artists were subjugated. After World War II, war became a major theme of manga. This further contributed to the revolution in the field of manga production.

To further add to this discussion, it is only pertinent to talk about the role played by Osamu Tezuka (1928-1989), also referred as God of Manga (*manga no kamisama*) or grandfather of Japanese comics in the journey of manga which we know today. He is considered as one of

the most influential *mangaka* (manga artist) in manga industry ever. Schodt in *Manga! Manga! The world of Japanese comics* (1983) claimed that Tezuka impacted every manga creator that came after him. Some were following his footsteps and some were opposed his style, but he single handily determined many major characteristics of modern manga. The development of so called story manga (*sutorii manga*) is associated with his name. He explored new form of storytelling, by digging into the Japanese tradition of word-picture combinations and, at the same time he brought in new pictorial element from U.S. and European cinema.

Popular culture scholar, Mitsutoshi Ishigami, describes his ambiguous feeling as a boy while reading Tezuka's works. He further tells that he used to feel a sense of strangeness (*iwaken*) and curiosity when looking at their cityscapes filled with their skyscrapers and foreign letters on the road signs because English was language of the enemy. Tezuka had an exceptional aptitude as an innovative borrower and as an artist who could effortlessly translate western plots into Japanese tales. Later on he experimented with theme of metamorphosis. Manga with this theme were about the shift that takes place when a character transposes from his ordinary, apparently innocuous self to reveal his dark, evil side. Thereafter he transitioned his narratives by including specific details about social, cultural and political context of given time. There is no single 'Hero' whose characters run the show. These stories include several characters with subplots and interesting sides. These plots ran for thousands of pages, showing the fragility of all social and political systems. The concept of change and transitory nature of time was quite evident in these manga. His characters were now taller and more angular with recognizable modern figures. Some of his notable works are *Astro Boy*, *Black Jack*, *Buddha*, *Phoenix*, *Kimba the White Lion*, *Princess Knight*, *Dororo Animerama*. The manga-anime connection is also forged by Tezuka, through his own anime production company, Mushi Productions (1962-1973), and now are part of wider media alliance, including computer games, films, and video/DVDs. Tezuka in his career has produced 150,000 pages of manga, 400 paperback titles, 60 animated works for television and 17 theatrical animated movies.

The graphic as well as creative aspects of manga are quite unique which make them loved worldwide in today's scenario. Manga merge the connections between frame, picture and word at the core of American comics and Japanese famous art to produce a 'cinematic' story telling. By shifting from motion to motion and point to point in sequential frames, the *mangaka* can give a structured narrative to cover virtually any theme across both genders and all age groups. Manga provide its audience, stories with

intricate plots and interesting twists. These plots generally deal with universal themes like friendship, romance, jealousy, growth etc. Erika Fujiwara in "An Analysis of Contemporary Manga Culture in Japan and Sweden" (2010) stated that the manga scholar Fusanosuke Natsume, rejected the facet of nationalism of manga in its expanding cultural history. Natsume agrees with the special characteristics in manga, which painted Japanese culture to a certain magnitude. It is true that Japan has provided specific surroundings and conditions for the growth of the manga market. But Manga itself is highly universal and mixed as a result of intermingling of other cultures, especially American culture, after the Second World War. Manga covers more than 30 genres and numerous sub genres determined by their content and unique artistic element. In simple terms, manga genres can be brought under 5 main categories as mentioned in "Understanding the Manga Hype: Uncovering the Multimodality of Comic-Book Literacies" (2006) by Adam Schwartz and Eliane Rubinstein-Ávila:

- 1) *Senin manga* (Adult/ Men's manga)
- 2) *Shounen manga* (Boys' manga)
- 3) *Shoujo manga* (Girls' manga)
- 4) *Rediisu Komiku* (Ladies' manga)
- 5) Overlapping category including sports, erotica etc.

Another important element in manga culture is the rise of Amateur movement from the late 1980s. Amateur manga conventions in Tokyo were attended by thousands of young people by 1992. With the booming expansion of the Amateur manga movement; it provided an outlet of expression and spontaneous mannerism to the contemporary youth of Japan. It is one of the largest subcultures in contemporary Japan. It may be invisible, but it enjoys immense following. Another remarkable attribute of this movement is that it had been arranged and executed almost exclusively by and for teenagers and adults in their early twenties. This movement also gave rise to individualism in Japanese youth. Individualism, known as *Kojinshugi* in Japanese, has been dismissed as a formal political ideal in Japan. Conventional democracy, not resisting individualism, has always been considered as a communal issue or modern disease thoroughly in the post war period. Youth culture called *Wakamono bunko*, which has thrived since the 1960s, has always been connected with post war Japanese individualism. Contemporary manga has been concluded as a route of escapism and immaturity by the older generation. Manga-culture becoming a predominant aspect of youth culture has been frowned upon by the leading intellectuals of Japanese society. During the 1960s, university students stopped reading classics and

turned towards children's manga. It became the pivotal reason behind the extensive expansion of manga from minor children medium to major mass entertainment. Its immense admiration gradually made manga a travel companion to Japanese folks, which can be read in compact spaces and gives a sense of relief in their daily commute. Manga provides an escape route to adults from a strict society driven by hardcore principles of hard work and excessive pressurizing work culture. Average Japanese spends 89 minutes a day traveling in busy subways. Reading manga in a crowded subway makes traveling a little less exhausting. Since this period, attributes of immaturity, resistance, escapism, introspection have been aligned with youth manga and youth culture in general. During the 1970s, affordable and portable offset printing and photocopying equipment were introduced in the market. Any kind of literature, including amateur manga, could be easily reprinted and distributed cheaply without any obligation. It gave the opportunity to masses for huge participation which was not registered and remained uncatalogued with mass access. Contemporary printed amateur manga are known as *Doujinshi*. Manga artists and fans print and distribute editions of their own amateur manga. *Doujinshi* began to increase, slowly in the 1970s and exponentially during the 1980s. In 1975, an institution was founded, called Comic Market, in order to encourage the phenomenon of unpublished amateur manga. A public convention was organized several times a year, where amateur manga could be sold and sought. Amateur manga, whether parody or original work, is widely judged to be low quality culture; because it lacks direct references to social and political life. *Doujinshi* and Cosplay are celebrated and speculated globally. Cosplay, in which fans dress up as their favorite characters' avatar, is quite famous and lauded.

Comic rental shops, comic Internet cafes, comic conventions, global book clubs, and manga libraries are various forms of manga culture. Comic conventions attract thousands of manga enthusiasts from all over the world to Japan. *Doujinshi* manga, cosplayers, fans presenting their fan fictions attend these conventions and contribute to cultural expansion of Japan. Japanese communication is certainly reflected in manga. They consist of facial expressions, tone of voice and grunts, integrating visual and auditory model values. The incorporated storytelling fashion of manga steadily includes homonyms and onomatopoeia. It gives dynamics to the plot.

One manga genre that should be specifically focused upon is educational manga. Adding visual and verbal text with story, manga are capable of making hard concepts easy to comprehend. F. L. Schdot in his *Dreamland Japan: Writings on modern manga* (1996) depict "Japanese manga are a visualized narrative with a

few words tossed in for effect" (09). Further, Osama Tezuka, the Godfather of manga, asserted that manga expresses meaning through hyperbole, abbreviation, and deformation. Manga can act as a great medium to teach the concepts of literary devices like metaphor, symbolism, personification, etc. Such manga are essentially more educational media than mere entertainment. These manga works are generated after thorough and detailed research work. Such types of manga are capable of providing high literacy value, and reading satisfaction after the rich accumulation of knowledge by the reader. For example, '*Haikyuu*' is a sports manga about high school volleyball. It depicts the journey of a high school volleyball team. It deals with the various aspects of volleyball and related knowledge in great detail. In fact, sports manga are considered to be a big push for high school students to pursue careers in sports.

Walter Benjamin talks about how massive reproduction of art leads to liberation from ritual. Manga owes its popularity and productivity to the mechanical propagation similar to the film industry. The traditional art values are losing their importance under postmodernism. The originality is compromised due to consumption of art by infinite audience. The greater level of consumption of art hegemonies the liberal aspect of production of art. Artists have to create according to the demand of consumers instead of creating for the sake of art.

Capitalism is the reason behind the tarnishing of the traditional fabric of art production. Similarly, manga artists also give into these public demands and add elements which spur the interest of masses. They are obliged to meet the demand of direct emotional visual satisfaction of consumers. Availability is the fundamental reason behind the popularity and success of the Japanese manga market. Another important role is played by excellent cooperation between publishers and manga artists. Since, themes discussed in manga are simple like love, anger, coming of age, etcetera; it attaches a universal element of understanding. The world created by manga shares the common feelings of readers universally. Japanese manga industry initially focused on children with clever marketing techniques, simple storylines with cute characters; with related merchandise products. Later, they shifted toward adults with plots providing realistic and complex reading experience.

### III. MANGA IN GLOBAL WORLD

Manga's success in the west is considered Japan's economic marvel, which saw a progressive shift to the soft power of manga as a gradual asset. Roman Rosenbaum in



*Manga and the Representation of Japanese History* (2015) enunciates:

Following the gentrification of manga into fine art via the graphic novel, Hollywood has created a successful franchise of popular graphic material through fraternizing with for, example, Dark Horse Comics, the largest independent American comic book and manga publisher in United States. This new partnership successfully linked the comics and movie industries and led to production of a variety of graphic novel adaptations, beginning in 1994 with *The Mask* (05).

Originally dominated by American-style comics, West saw the rise of manga in its local market in or around 1990s. It's related to the emergence of multi-channel satellite broadcasting in Europe during 1980s. As broadcasting stations were having shortage of visual media content, they opted to broadcast cheap Japanese anime in huge quantity that were not protected by copyright agreements. Around 1990s, the general situation changed immensely, as the audience which consumed Japanese anime in 1980s became the buyers of Japanese manga. Coincidentally, a substantial quantity of manga was being exported to west at the same time as they were being exported to East-Asia.

During mid-1990s, as domestic market for manga started shrinking, publishers started looking for new manga market. Eventually Japanese publishers decide and made licensing a part of their business with Asian partners in the late 1980s. Initially, Manga were introduced in Hong-Kong, Taiwan, Korea and other Southeast Asian countries through thriving black markets selling pirated copies; leading to a history of technology transfer for creating local manga also consisting of imitations. In 1991 Star TV, satellite broadcasting for Asian countries, started programming services which led to an anime boom and eventually to a manga boom in East Asian countries. As Fusanosuke Natsume explains in "East Asia and Manga Culture: Examining Manga-Comic Culture in East Asia" (2004) that, "Factors commonly seen throughout East Asia such as traditional sense of values, the importance of parent-child relationship, family relations, and poverty have helped to facilitate accessibility to Japanese works, leading to a lower barrier for translation efforts" (96). He further illuminates, "The quality of Japanese-style manga in East Asia has been relatively high, supported by the fact that local artists have been oriented towards Japanese-style manga in their work. In addition, Japanese publishers have encouraged the promotion of local works, and there are increasingly more opportunities for Korean and Taiwanese works to be published in Japan" (96-97).

As Kenichi Ishii in "Chapter VIII International Distribution of Culture and Information" in *Popular Japanese Culture in East Asia* (2001) has enunciated, "Generally, a flow of information and culture is prone to follow a one-way direction from an economically advanced country to a less-advanced nation...The most basic element is the size of the domestic market...In a developed market, high costs can be spent in content production, the costs can be recovered in the domestic market; therefore products are competitive; and incentive toward creative works becomes great" (63). In the same sense the flow of Japanese Manga to East Asia is bordering on to the rift in economic statues and power relations among the East Asian and Southeast Asian countries. Even though there might be some topical and territorial differences with respect to religion, national order, government policies etc. But cultural background and human resources are the prime prerequisite for the fabrication of cultural content.

Merging the narrative dialogue and graphics, the considerable Japanese story manga and its western counterpart, the graphic novel, demonstrate the trans-cultural soft power of a global media that has the potential to exhibit history in previously unexpected ways. It was during mid-1980s, that manga translated in English language were introduced in the market. In 1987, First manga, Koike Kazuo's *Kozure Okami* (1970), (*Lone Wolf and Cub*) was released in North America and it was the major breakthrough manga. Frank Miller designed the covers and this translation became one of the most eminent Japanese manga in United States. Manga are now localized in the European and American market. The first independent manga corner was displayed at one of the oldest and largest international book fair in the world in Frankfurt, Germany in 2002. Japanese manga have reached to Spain, Italy, France and Middle East.

The breakthrough of manga into other countries is linked to various complex brewing of several distribution systems, economic and cultural backgrounds, social and political systems, content and quality of work which overlap with human resources. Hence, the manga boom in other countries cannot be discussed on the basis of content's attributes or cultural tradition alone.

With manga being a global hit, one also needs to contemplate the connection between manga and anime. Most of the anime are inspired by manga. These cultural products including manga and anime were created for domestic consumption. These products jumped borders and became transnational sensation. Peter J. Rimmer articulates in "Manga World: Globalization Theory Revisited" (2004) that, "...these Japanese cultural consumer products are now in the process of being popularized in a way that underlines

globalization is not merely a western preserve but incorporates Japan (lo-globalization). As Japan has become part of this decentred globalization, it is, in turn exporting cultural products to Asia (glocalization)” (07).

In *Japanese Visual Culture*, Mark W. MacWilliams (2008) clarifies, “Manga and anime are not fine arts on display in museum; they are popular art forms created by an industrialized, corporate, capitalistic culture found on television, in the movie theatre, at the local book store or in the manga cafés...Manga and anime attract fans, both Japanese and western, not because of any eastern mystical sense of harmony with nature, but because of what Jean Marie Bouissou has called their “aesthetic of excess, conflict, imbalance, and over sensuality”” (05).

As the trajectory of manga in global world takes a pellucid path, now one need to understand what is driving it on the same road in the contemporary world. As globalization is ever changing phenomenon and world is constantly changing. Manga being a cultural product has to maintain relevance. Iwabuchi (2002) in his work “From Western Gaze to Global Gaze: Japanese Cultural Presence in Asia” argues that, Japanese popular culture is a blend of many different cultures, resulting in the disappearance of any perceptible Japaneseness. He calls this *mukokuseki* culture, which literally means ‘statelessness’ that is without nationality and coined the term “culturally odourless” (256). And hence in early stages of manga boom and anime boom also, transitions were made according to the country in which it was being imported in like changing the name of characters or changing dialogues to make it culturally relevant to the audience.

As people around the globe became more aware about Manga as well as anime, and realized their origin, they demanded to consume these media form in true authentic self without any transition in original content. Fans wanted to consume manga and anime that incorporated evident signs of japaneseness. This shows the passion fans share around the globe for these cultural products. According to Harumi Befu cultural globalization occurs through two routes. One is ‘Sojourner route’, in which emigrants who leave their homeland for different countries in search of better prospects, take their culture with them. Other is ‘Non-Sojourner route’ through which cultural products spread abroad without native carries; and in today’s case it is possible through the medium of internet. Internet played a vital role in spreading the manga and anime among global community. Fans demanded original or authentic Japanese translations. Hence there come individual passionate fans in the picture, who translate original manga with its authenticity or try to do so. Manga that are translated from Japanese to respective languages by

dedicated fans are called ‘scanlations’. Similarly, in case of anime, fans try to provide authentic subtitles called ‘fansubs’. Though these ‘scanlations’ and ‘fansubs’ are illegal and cause a lot damage to manga and anime production companies. But at same time they act as free promoters of these media forms in world. Hence these fan activities on online platforms act as a double edged sword for these production houses. As Shiraishe Sae mentions in her article “Manga Innovation and the Model of its Global Diffuse” (2011), instead of countries, individual players or groups of people have become connected and communicate for their motives beyond the regular constraints of space and time. (168). She stresses the distinction between actors in globalization and internationalization. Internationalization is assisted by nations for international politics and individual economies. The players of globalization, however, are individual citizens.

The popularity of manga and other cultural media has been promoted by ‘media mix’ which is “the phenomenon of transmedia communication, specifically, the development of a particular media franchise across multiple media types, over a particular period of time” (Steinberg 135). A further pattern of media mix is converting manga to anime, anime to live action movies, movies to any kind of character goods, in order to provide manga and anime fans and children with their favorite character. The impact of interconnecting media mix is further extended via the subsidiary economic effect of licensing, which allows leading manga characters to be used in advertising and replicated as figurines. Iwabuchi (2012) highlights that role of Japanese government in the development of content business and in the promotion of cultural diplomacy. (142).

Since 2000, the Japanese government has been aiding these content businesses. In 2010, the government launched the ‘Cool Japan Campaign’ irrespective of the fact that popular culture has never been perceived as authentic culture until manga and anime became a global phenomenon. The aspect of using popular culture as ‘soft-power’, combines the prospect of globalization and nationalism.

Susan Napier (2007) insists “Japanese media has allowed them to explore a side of themselves in a way that they feel would be impossible in American cultural products” (144). Manga and other related cultural products provide an attractive fantasy gateway to its audience from the real world, in other words an escape from real world. Fan indulging in activities such cosplay, creating *Doujinshi* (derivative works), and sharing information on online platform among virtual fan community. Fans are consuming their favorite characters rather than the content of the story.

#### IV. MANGA IN CROSS-CULTURAL CONTEXT

As discussed earlier, Manga in particular, offers visual as well as linguistic examples of Japanese culture, and hence harbors prospective chances to be an exceptional source of cultural knowledge. For example, America has become just as much of a recipient of cultural influence as it is an influencer, with the consumption of manga and other Japanese popular culture products. Beside with this ascending popularity, consumers also have an increased awareness of Japanese origins of manga and anime. This dual stance of awareness and popularity of Japanese culture has led to consumers using the cultural products like manga as a derivation of Japanese cultural information. It could be contended that manga might prove to be better at transferring cultural information, since manga possess, as manga is largely telling the story through visual narrative which eventually enables the audience to discern certain mannerisms and body language, including scenery and common settings such as streets, schools etc. Manga is not catered to foreign audience, it is initially produced for Japanese audience and therefore it is full of culturally specific references and circumstances. Consequently, considering the visual nature of the manga narrative, these particular cultural references and situations become hard to dismiss or disregard in the process of translation. In spite of the fact that manga possess the potential to facilitate cross-cultural learning, manga production is on the basis of entertainment and hence, with a very few exceptions, manga has not been considered as cross-cultural literature by most of the scholarly circles. The prospect of alteration of manga during the process of translation has been discussed earlier in the paper and how with the spread of internet, awareness about manga origins and demand to consume to these cultural products in their authentic form has increased, this situation, consequently have lessened the aspect of alteration. But it has not stopped completely and partial altering of cultural material still persists. This partial alteration makes the situation more complicated compared to complete re-write that shifts everything according to western norms.

Eventually, altered cultural information, added with evident or apparent Japanese origins and setting, leads to mingling of western culture with Japanese culture, portraying an amalgamated picture which is not true to either of culture. This leads to a misguided image that makes the reader to believe, that the altered cultural product is an actual representation of Japanese culture. This continued misrepresentation of Japanese culture then gives the inaccurate presumption that all cultures operate along the same reasoning and proposition that of western culture. This kind of ethnocentric assumption by west (especially

America), can no longer be supported in the contemporary era of global interaction.

American comics are full of colour and narration, and they do share immense popularity, but historically rooted distinctness from manga, in everything from available stories to production of those stories and marketing strategies resulted in incomparable products even after being quite influential. American comics have its journey since their first inception in the 1930s. Initially, “newspaper comic strips...featured long, melodramatic stories and were read by millions of people. In 1934, comic books were invented...and for years they enjoyed incredible popularity, with the genres such as crime, westerns, superheroes, romance, humour, and science fiction” (Thompson 15). But during 1950s, rise in juvenile delinquency was associated with crime and horror depicted in comic books; terrified public protested and pressurized comic publishers, which eventually led to imposition of strict censorship. Comic artists were stuck with superhero genres or so called safe genres and hence consequently, limiting the comic and cartoon industry to children only. On the contrary, Japan never faced the foundation of censorship. Manga and anime derived from them, enjoyed the liberty of experimentation and exploration of covering wide range of genres and themes. The range of subjects offered by manga industry is immense, and caters something to people of every age and gender and for nearly every taste. Schodt (1996) expounds “there are manga that rival best in the literature. There are soft-core and hard-core porn tales for both men and women. There are stories about the problems of hierarchical relationships in boring office jobs or about the spiritual rewards of selling discount cameras in Tokyo’s Shinjuku district... It seems like the most popular comics of normal people doing normal things (28). Even today, manga are story driven depending on the imagination of artist, while mainstream American comics prefer franchise over creativity.

Cross-cultural literature is characterized by its capacity to immerse readers in the culture depicted within the text, allowing them to envision and vicariously experience the cultural context it originates from, the primary focus is to encourage greater comprehension and awareness of the given culture. Manga serves as a cross-cultural medium, despite comic books being typically considered as mere source of entertainment, as it compliments learning and builds curiosity about Japanese culture. While reading cross-cultural literature may not substitute real-life experiences, but it may provide an exposure that can contribute to enhancing both understanding and tolerance towards other culture. Same is relevant in the case of manga and anime industry. By engaging with diverse literary works, individuals can

develop a broader perspective and a more open-minded approach to cultural differences.

Thus, these synchronic and diachronic realities of Manga can be considered as a converging point where the progressive orientation of conventional Japanese academia meets with the country's indispensable entertainment culture. Scholars of cultural and comic studies are positive that Japan can be considered as another centre of globalization due to current worldwide inclination toward manga and anime. Further, the study divulges the fact that Manga are continuous carriers of Japanese culture in this global world. The alien part of foreign culture, coming with a relatability factor in the plot can be considered as one of the many reasons behind its success internationally. Globalization comes with capitalism; making manga a success economically for Japan. Another thing that should be put under consideration is that multimodal literacies are encouraged by graphic novels and make students engage in studies more coherently. The cultural aspect of literary study, though not fully utilized, has been explored in different contexts, and the results have shown a significant level of success. Participants in these studies demonstrated both increased understanding and a heightened interest in other cultures after being exposed to cross-cultural literature. Chevalier and Houser conducted the study "Pre-service Teachers' Multicultural Self Development Through Adolescent Fiction" in 1997, tested the use of "adolescent fiction to encourage multicultural self-development among primarily European American pre-service teacher" (426); this study proved to be an overall success. These positive outcomes indicate that literature can serve as a powerful tool for fostering cultural awareness and promoting intercultural curiosity among readers. Textbooks may provide facts but cross-cultural literature gives insight about the people and how they feel, it attaches events to emotions and facts to people. Translation and alteration of manga is an area that requires constant improvement and guidance, so people may understand the culture deeply, instead of relating it to theirs' superficially.

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# The Head and Its Other Parts: The Abject and the Uncanny in Bora Chung's 'The Head'

Pratikshya Mishra

Independent Scholar, Odisha, India

M. A. in English and Cultural Studies, Christ University

Email: [pratikshyamishra0810@gmail.com](mailto:pratikshyamishra0810@gmail.com)

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**Abstract**— This paper seeks to understand the concept of Julia Kristeva's Abject Theory and Sigmund Freud's 'The Uncanny' through a short fictional work of speculative fiction titled 'The Head' by Bora Chung. The uncanny and the Abject have been used multiple times in combination to analyze literary works, however, the relationship between these two has not been properly defined. In this work, I attempt to discern this relationship through the primary text and understand the position of the subject, the object and the Abject.

**Keywords**— Abject, Uncanny, Julia Kristeva, Sigmund Freud, Psychoanalytic Theory



## I. INTRODUCTION

Bora Chung's collection of short stories titled 'Cursed Bunny', which is named after one of the pieces in the collection, solicits scholarly attention thanks to its unique marriage of various motifs coming together against a supernormal backdrop. The book is a collection of ten short stories which cannot be categorized into strict generic distinctions, however, in an interview, Chung classifies her work as belonging to the speculative fiction genre, as opposed to the more narrow labeling of her work as a combination of science fiction and fantasy (KBS WORLD Radio, 2021). A precise interpretation of these stories uncovers the symbolic richness of the seemingly mystical and eerie elements. It invites a psychoanalytical reading that is attentive to the abstraction of the non-linear path that is taken by identity formation and the role that is played by the non-subject (the object and the abject). The first story, titled 'The Head', which also happens to be the first in order of chronology, has motifs emblematic of the key events and concepts of subjecthood. In this paper, I will be analyzing this story using the concept of the Abject, a psychoanalytic theory given by Julia Kristeva and the concept of 'The Uncanny' (Heimlich/unheimlich) which was developed by Sigmund Freud in the early 1900s, which proves its pertinence time and again in the field of aesthetics and

literature. I have chosen this story as the concept of the self, other and the enigmatic Abject closely fit the skeletal framework and tropes that this piece is pregnant with. Additionally, the story merits the application of the Freudian concept of the uncanny owing to the stylistic of the fiction. It is also crucial to note here that Chung subtly repudiates her work's affiliation with fantasy and instead links it to the Uncanny (KBS WORLD Radio, 2021). The theory of Abject, also, combines effortlessly with the idea of the Uncanny (as will be demonstrated later in the paper) and helps provide a well-rounded analysis. Here, I will be attempting to situate the narrative technique, plotline and critical storytelling instruments used by Chung in this story on a psychical topography and utilize them to see through the abstruse insignia of psychoanalytic underpinnings, with a focus on abjection and the uncanny. I will begin this exploration by elaborating upon the conceptions of the Abject and the uncanny as a means of constructing a proper setting for my study. After that, I will give a brief review of related literature to lay out the different perspectives and justify the relevance of the critical frameworks to literature. Then, I will move towards trying to present the link between these critical theories and the primary material of my study by illuminating the examples presented throughout the stories.

## II. THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

In Julia Kristeva's 'Powers of Horror', the pertinence of corporeality, or, the physical body, in the construction of one's identity and the demarcation of the border that separates oneself from the external, or, the 'Other', is accentuated. The development of this theory does not come from the relegation of the tangible body as the predecessors did not fail to perform their due diligence concerning the role played by the body. Two of the most prominent psychoanalysts- Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan- have underlined the contributions that the physical entity of a person makes from a very early stage of an individual life. Later, Kristeva, in this book-length essay, ruptures through the strict binary of the boundary separating the internal and the external and theorizes how matters found in between this division- the abject- lurk on the margins and have the power to destabilize and sabotage the border. The abject has the power to remove from concealment the origins of these presumably constitutional lines of separation and reveal them as constructed, human-made. The Abject is "Not me. Not that. But not nothing, either. A "something" that I do not recognize as a thing"(Kristeva, 1982, p. 2). The abject, when confronted, unsettles boundaries, thereby unsettling identity. The abject, though harbors the potential for the destruction of the border, is also a tool through which identity is formed. The abject is found in the position of liminality, of ambiguity, a place of incomprehensibility. The abject is thrust aside (Kristeva 1982) continuously in an attempt to push it beyond the boundary of subjectivity, but it never assimilates into a binary- which is the characteristic feature of the abject. Kristeva uses the term 'uncanny', an idea popularized by Freud, to explain the Abject. Despite Kristeva pointing out how the abject differs from the uncanny, the abject and the uncanny are in many ways complementary, something which I will come to later in this section. Elizabeth Gross, while discussing corporeality, invokes abjection and links it to the symbolic order's establishment to alleviate the overbearing omnipresence of the semiotic (Gross, 2012). The abjection, here, is the affect that is adrenalized upon coming in contact with the Abject. She says, "If the object is an externalized correlate of the subject, then the Abject is with the fading, emersion, or disappearance of the subject and its imaginary hold over the object. The abject is that part of the subject (which cannot be categorized as an object) which it attempts to expel" (Gross, 2012). Gross, derived from the reading of Kristeva's 'Powers of Horror', categorizes abject into three types and defines the relationship the abject has with the symbolic order. The abject is nothing but the part of the symbolic that is hidden. It threatens the symbolic order despite being in the symbolic order. It is required for it to be kept at bay from the individual's consciousness for the latter to be anchored

to the symbolic order. If not for the visceral reaction and disgust that marks one's encounter with the abject, the prohibitions put in place by the symbolic collapses and the distinctions required to navigate the symbolic world blurs, leaving the subject without a safe distance from the Real. However, this does not mean that the Abject resides in the realm of the Real. This point is reiterated by the critics who expounded upon the abject theory, pointing out this limitation in Kristeva's analysis. As pointed out by Jela Krecic and Slavoj Zizek, Kristeva's theory does not give an adequate explanation of the link between the symbolic order and the abject, leading to an erroneous assumption that the abject resides in the Real (Krecic, Zizek, 2016). It marks the origin of the symbolic order, coming from a pre-objectal time and phase. The significance of literature in decoding the Abject has been stressed by many notable scholars who have dealt with the subject. Literature and art do not just help one grasp the Abject, but it is also a way of managing one's reaction to the confrontation with the Abject. It is a form of sublimation, a way of dealing with the abject (Krecic and Zizek, 2016).

While traversing through the works and contemplations on the Abject, one cannot help but notice the uncanny resemblance it bears to the Uncanny, at least at first, while one is dabbling in the topic. Both concepts are mostly used in the same disciplinary field and indeed, the seminal text on the theory of abject, 'Powers of Horror', written in a semi-poetic manner with animosity transuding from between the lines, mentions uncanniness using the word. Therefore, while it is instrumental in psychoanalytic theory to know how one is inspired by the other, we must grasp the points where these two concepts diverge. "Essentially different from "uncanniness," more violent, too, abjection is elaborated through a failure to recognize its kin; nothing is familiar, not even the shadow of a memory" (Kristeva, 1982, p. 5). As suggested by Adam Kotsko, uncanny, in the Freudian sense, is what we call 'creepy' now (Kotsko, 2015). Linking this to the point made by Krecic and Zizek, uncanny is one of the forms of abjection that people experience. Uncanniness, therefore, is a type of response to the Abject. Everything uncanny is abject, but the reverse is not true. However, if the relationship between the uncanny and the abject were to be explained by a Venn diagram, a portion of the uncanny does lie outside of the abject. While the idea of the Abject is, on most occasions, associated with tangible things, a category of the experience of uncanniness is purely personal and subjective. As explained in the short essay titled 'The Uncanny' that introduces 'uncanny' to the sphere of psychoanalysis, involuntary repetition can develop a sense of sinisterness, making something uncanny that would otherwise be unremarkable (Freud, 1919). The uncanny, in simple words, is the object that results in the

arousal of a certain type of fear. This fear unsettles, so it's a more intense form of just 'fear' where the affect can be explained. Uncanny, as can be explained by an etymological study of the original German term, is the fear of the familiar that has become unfamiliar. In Freudian psychoanalysis, it is said to be an object of infantile familiarity, something that the child may even have wished for, that gets repressed with the formation of the ego. The feeling of uncanniness is experienced when this repression comes up to the surface, as it is a thing that should have remained closeted in the dark chambers of the unconscious (Freud, 1919). The uncanny is not just a theory through the lens through which literature or any form of art can be analyzed, it is also a tool that art uses. I argue that the sublimation of the Abject through literature can use the implementation of the uncanny as an artistic tool to convey a sense of the Abject. The Abject, as it travels from the artist to the art and then to the consumer of the art, has the potential to translate into uncanny. Therefore, we must look at the literature (in the case of this paper) and examine what manifestations of the abject generate a feeling of uncanniness.

### III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Fredrik Svenaeus' 'Freud's Philosophy of the Uncanny' gives a critical review and sort of a phenomenological reading of Freud's short work and performs the important task of situating it in the context of his psychoanalytic career and the works that come after this essay which helps in giving a sense of completeness to it. As rightly pointed out by Svenaeus, his essay 'The Uncanny' does not reach its potential in terms of conceptual clarity if not read alongside his other seminal works. It is a dense piece of work in progress. (Svenaeus, 1999). In this paper, the author opines on Freud's dismissal of Jentsch's research to give an analysis of the Sand-Man story in an Oedipal direction. The paper delves into the concept of trauma and anxiety concerning the uncanny anxiousness and in doing so, it refers to the other works by Freud and discussions surrounding it. Svenaeus, as we approach the conclusion of this paper, discusses the fragmentary nature of the concept that Freud tried to develop in his essay and mentions that he endeavored to join the missing links in his work by borrowing from his other works to provide structure to Freud's conception of the uncanny.

While trying to grasp the concept of the uncanny given by Freud, it is important to acknowledge the precursor of this idea given by E. Jentsch, which is also mentioned in Freud's essay, albeit for refutation. As agreed upon by critics like Svenaeus, Jentsch's ideas on the topic are defensible, even in the face of Freud's insertion of castration fear. In his short essay titled 'On the Psychology of the Uncanny', Jentsch

starts with a short etymology of the German word *unheimlich* and attempts to define it not in terms of what it is, but in terms of the "...how the affective excitement of the uncanny arises in psychological terms, how the psychical conditions must be constituted so that the "uncanny" sensation emerges" (Jentsch, 1997). Later, then, with examples from everyday psychology, he establishes a correlation between the new and unfamiliar, and the traditional and primitive in terms of how it can generate the same feelings of uncertainty in different people. It is in the second part of the essay that Jentsch talks about the aspect of doubt concerning animate objects and the source and reason for their movement. Jentsch also discusses the importance of this anxiety in the world of art and how artists exploit this knowing the audience lets their guard down and submits to the plan of the artist. Towards the end, Jentsch concludes his essay by reiterating the importance of the desire of humans to gain intellectual mastery of their organic surroundings and how it has provided a starting point for many scientific advancements (Jentsch, 1997).

'Writing the Body: From Abject to Subject' by Allison Kimmich is an important paper that examines the intersectionality of abjection by paying close attention to two autobiographical writings. The paper starts by addressing the gap in scholarly literature concerning the discourse surrounding feminist autobiographical writings. Later the paper uses the theory of abjection to view the journey of Audre Lorde and Paul Monette as detailed in their autobiographical works namely 'The Cancer Journals' and 'Becoming a Man' respectively. Kimmich analyzes how, despite being pushed to the margins by degrees of abjection operating at different levels, this abjection was utilized by them to gain a sense of subjecthood. This work is relevant as it builds a bridge between subjecthood and Abjection through dis-identification (Kimmich, 1998). Other than Kristeva, Judith Butler and Elizabeth Grosz are invoked to belabor the scope of the theory of abject. Later, the etymology of the words 'subject', 'object' and 'abject' are also discussed to trace the evolution of their present meaning. The author of this paper shows how Lorde and Monette fight their way out of abjection into subjecthood through the function of the abject and by redefining subjecthood. Sure enough, the journey is not devoid of anxiety and feelings evoked by abjection, but it leads to a place of subjectivity that the abjected individuals carved for themselves. Here, abjection is seen as being interwoven into gender ideals and the angst that comes with not matching up to it. In the concluding section, the author explains how autobiography was used as a tool in these two cases to look at abjection in the eye to uncover its non-intrinsic and non-natural origins and thus allow the abject to redefine these positions.



In the paper 'The Return of Negation: Doppelgänger' in Freud's "The Uncanny" by Dimitris Vardoulakis, the motif of the doppelgänger is scrutinized concerning the psychoanalytic concept of subjectivity. The paper starts with a brief background of the 'doppelgänger', a term coined by Jean-Paul, and its association with a subjectivity that may be seen as faulty or defective. Later, the paper discusses the part played by negation in the creation of a doppelgänger and in doing so, Vardoulakis invokes Fichte and Jean-Paul. This author then turns to Weber's ideas on the doppelgänger wherein he undertakes a psychoanalytic approach to analyzing German literature. Through a reading of his analysis, the author could conclude that a positive ascription to doppelgänger is indeed possible. The second section of the paper talks about chiasmic subjectivity and how this is manifested in the doppelgänger. The concluding paragraph of this paper presents the argument in a nutshell, reiterating the position occupied by the doppelgänger. This is pivotal to the marriage of the common motifs associated with uncanny anxiety (the affect) and the abject. Vardoulakis states that the doppelgänger occupies a liminal position. He says, "...Doppelgänger's normal state is the overcoming and undoing the limits.." (Vardoulakis, 2006), which is a position occupied by the abject, where it threatens the creation of the fence separating oneself from the Other. This common link will be beneficial in this study.

"Taking a Break: Toilet, Gender and Disgust" by Judith Plaskow talks about the broader social issue of accessibility to toilets and as the title suggests, it takes sort of an intersectional approach to the matter. The paper starts in a gripping manner, mentioning the consequences of a 'toilet break' if taken by a woman, especially someone like Hillary Clinton who is a public and political figure. While the paper goes into detail about the problem of accessibility of clean toilet spaces, it briefly discusses the toilet as an abject space (Plaskow, 2016). Plaskow then proceeds to talk about the process of elimination (i.e. bodily waste) and how it has always been a subject arousing disgust in people. This is nothing but the fact that we are the source of our aversion. Plaskow makes some noteworthy points about our visceral reaction to the Abjected bodily waste and the illusion of our bodies being under our conscious control which will be helpful in our examination of certain themes in the primary text.

A fundamental text discussing the significance of corporeality as stressed in Kristeva's 'Powers of Horror' is Elizabeth Gross' 'The Body of Signification.' Here, Gross talks about the speaking subject- the subject in whose identification of the language and the symbolic order is indispensable. In this piece, Gross reads Kristeva and dwells on the aspect of the body, or, corporeality, that is seen as imperative to the fashioning of the self as a subject.

In the first section of her essay, she invokes thinkers from various fields and departments and briefly outlines their position on the 'body'. She swiftly moves in the direction of psychoanalysis and starts with Freud's conception of the ego, which requires one's perception of their physical body.

This idea, however, was not dealt with adequately by him. Next in line comes Lacan, who ascribes to the corporeal body a great deal of significance as the formation of an imaginary, which is one of the three registers proposed by Lacan, necessitates the idea of how one looks in the totality of their physical existence. Therefore, it also plays a key part in the establishment of the symbolic and the real. The subject, therefore, is not disembodied. In the next section, Gross talks about Kristeva and her ideas on the Abject, which deals with corporeality. Kristeva, in her book-length essay, talks about the abjection of self to sustain the self and identify with it. It is this aspect of corporeality that is tricky to navigate through. In this idea, Gross draws a parallel between early psychoanalytic theory and Kristeva's concept but brings out the novelty in Kristeva's theorization by pointing out the power she ascribes to the abject- the threat it poses to strict distinctions. Gross talks about the maternal body and the occurrence of pregnancy for abjection. First, she outlines Kristeva's ideas and then brings out the irony of her position wherein the pregnant individual is viewed as someone devoid of subjectivity. As we move towards the concluding section, Gross makes a case for the impact of the 'sexually distinguished bodies', especially the maternal bodies when it comes to the discourses on the self and identity.

#### IV. ANALYSIS

The above discussion concerning the theories is meant to set a contextual backdrop for my analysis of the short stories namely 'The Head' and 'The Embodiment'. To begin with, an interview with the author Bora Chung clarifies the intent of the author about the usage of the motifs and setting of the stories. Even in the interview, Chung mentions her fascination with horror and says she draws her inspiration from the uncanny things and concepts found in abundance in Asian horror fiction (KBS WORLD Radio, 2021). This inspiration is reflected in her first story, 'The Head', where the ominous presence of a human head-like creature haunts the toilet of an unnamed woman, referred to as 'the woman' throughout the story. This creature is called 'the head' by the omniscient narrator. The head calls the woman 'mother' and constantly reminds her of the fact that she is her creator, and it (the head) is her 'indisputable offspring' (Chung, 2023). Though the head wasn't birthed conventionally, it was made from the things that the woman released from her body into the toilet. The head, however, 'completes' its

body by itself. The recurring motif and indeed the title itself is the head, which, as per a psychoanalytic reading, may lead us to the concept of the mirror stage given by Lacan. Without identifying with an image of itself, the infant does not clearly understand its own body as a coherent entity. It has no cognizance of how the head sits on top of the rest of the body and has no understanding of where its body ends and the environment external to its body begins. The uncanny, too, can be a thing familiar to the infant, at a time when the ego takes shape and the formation of one's subjectivity happens. However, this once-familiar object gets repressed once the Imaginary (one of the registers) starts to set in at the beginning of the mirror stage. As mentioned, the knowledge of the placement of the head of the infant plays an important role in this stage. Therefore, one may credibly conclude that the repressions that took place during the mirror stage, especially something that may be related to the head of the subject, contribute to the feeling of uncanniness here. The fact that in the story, this head is made up of the abjected fecal matter and fallen hair of the woman among other things invokes the concept of the Abject here. The head says, "My body was created with the things you dumped down the toilet, like your fallen-out hair and feces and toilet paper you used to wipe your behind" (Chung, 2023, p. 2). Feces and fallen-out hair are abject. These abject materials never totally assimilate into the territory of the subject or the object. It is non-subject, but while the object (another non-subject) helps form the self by clearly demarcating a border between itself and the individual, the Abject threatens to dissolve this boundary. The narrator, while describing the head, talks about its mouth and its speech. The incomprehensibility of the message conveyed by the head is in line with the perplexity of the position the abject bodily waste occupies, and the way it elicits disgust but also gravitates us towards it. In the initial conversation between the woman and the head, there is an evident denial by the woman of her contribution to the creation of the head. This is telling of the relationship between the subject and the Abject. "Such wastes drop so that I might live, until, from loss to loss, nothing remains in me and my entire body falls beyond the limit—cadere, cadaver" (Kristeva, 1982, p. 3). Bodily waste, which belongs to the other side of the border (i.e. death), is first housed in the body. This ambivalence of the abject which exposes the ambivalence of the subject is the reason why the subject finds it hard to acknowledge the abject as a part of itself. Most of the story is set in the woman's bathroom. This necessitates a discussion on the spatial aspect. Chung, in an interview, stated how she likes bathrooms, and then corrected her statement to say she likes 'clean' toilets. She also expressed how a clogged toilet becomes an unpleasant place to be in (KBS WORLD Radio, 2021). Toilets, as

stated by Broyer, are abject spaces as that is where subjecthood is met with Abjection (Broyer, 2015). As I had argued earlier in the paper, the sublimation of abjection in the form of literature and art has the potential to take the shape of uncanny when it reaches its audience. Relating the story's basic premise to the author's interview reveals this sublimation of this abject combined with an intentional use of uncanny as a narrative tool. As she mentions in the interview, she starts with familiar territory and tries to move in the direction of unpredictability from there (KBS WORLD Radio, 2021). Doesn't it ring a bell for anyone familiar with the concept of the uncanny?

The symbolic order instilled in a subject always tries to keep the Abject at a safe distance from the subject. This is to safeguard the subjecthood of the subject and keep it from being dissolved. The visceral bodily reactions of a subject upon being confronted with the abject is what maintains this distance. When the woman interacts with the head too closely and learns that the head is directly impacted by the bodily condition of the woman, the intimacy is barely tolerated by her and her body responds in a manner that protects the boundary of her selfhood from crumbling. The narrator says, "Then, she vomited into the sink. She vomited for a long time, then rinsed the sink and left the bathroom" (Chung, 2023, p. 4). This constant confrontation with the abject left her with a feeling of being constantly watched, which could be equated to the look of the persecutor in psychosis. The Abject that marks sexual difference (for example: menstrual blood), something that should be thrust aside, was looking her in the eye and speaking to her. Later, this persecutory look becomes pervasive and she develops constipation. Down the lane, however, once she begets a child, her preoccupation with the head lessens (Chung, 2023). This detail is crucial here, as she is the 'mother' of both the head and her daughter, one allegedly and one willingly. While her direct identification with the abjected waste from her body carries a heavy connotation of death and decay, her relation with her birthed child is a reminder of vitality and continuity. However, it is important to note that maternity may also be linked to abjection in many cases. Darian Leader, while discussing the causes of psychosis, says, "In one example, a woman was found to have neglected her daughter, depriving her of food and basic care. Years later, she explained that 'I couldn't believe I could give birth to anything separate from myself.' Her baby, she said, wasn't real, and so she had treated it like an object" (Leader, 2012, p. 149). The pregnant body is a subject of both fascination and dread and is, therefore, abject (Longhurst, 2003). The initial examples of abjection in Kristeva's seminal work are that of abjection towards food and the corpse. Relating this to the pregnant body, Longhurst explains how one of the markers of pregnancy is

the unwonted desire for 'abnormal' food and the looming fear of death, as death during childbirth has been a problem historically (Longhurst, 2003). The pregnant body leaks, making it unfit for public spaces. 'The Head' doesn't mention anything about the woman's period of pregnancy. The narrative fast-forwards from her honeymoon to her becoming the 'mother' of her daughter. Therefore, it is the post-birth body and the birthed child that needs to be discussed about abjection. The woman before childbirth was frequently coming face-to-face with the abjected fluids of her body and communicated with it, thereby experiencing the effects of the threat to the dissolution of identity markers. This abjected fluid is, after all, a reminder of death. The child, on the other hand, is a reminder of life. This creation of her is not just socially accepted but expected and lauded. While 'The Head' destabilized the border, the child brought a sense of stability. It is also important to note that the child performs a crucial function- the addressee function. Previously, the threat from the head was directed just at herself. Now, with the coming of the child, she thought it was possible that the head, who also claims to be her child, is jealous of the former and is out to cause harm to her. This can be read as the personification of the introduction of a third term in this The Woman- The Head relation which may have brought a sense of sanity. The woman tells her daughter, "That was what we call a 'head.' If you see it again, just flush" (Chung, 2023). The woman tries to get rid of the head two times, but she fails. Her dealing with the abject so directly is the representation of the failure of the symbolic order to keep the abject at a safe distance from her. It is the failure in the installation of a third term properly. One of the woman's dreams is narrated in the story, where she is surrounded by multiple heads (who are the same as The Head). This may be telling of the omnipresence of the head in the woman's life and the look that is persecutory. The ending of the dream that wakes her is important, as it ends with the head replacing her daughter's head. This can be seen as the border state encroaching upon her sense of subjectivity. It is the dissolution of every demarcation and border into liminality. This issue of not having a social sense of the body's boundaries has also been talked about by the Leader in his 'What is Madness?' as a marker of psychosis.

Other than the specific events in the story that feature the head popping out of the toilet, or concern the head in any way, there is nothing eventful about the woman's life. The woman leads a regular life, without achieving any remarkable feats or doing anything that would attract negative attention. Despite that, her interaction in a spatial context (i.e. the washroom) is uncanny. The idea that a regular woman is capable of maintaining a work life and a family has a part of herself that is so drawn to the Abject

where the symbolic malfunctions are the element of uncanny in this story. The head itself doesn't account for it, as we are introduced to it at the very beginning of the story, leaving no scope for unpredictability and surprises. It is the woman here who is uncanny in the Freudian sense.

As we approach the end of the story, much time has passed and the woman's daughter is a young woman herself. The woman has also begun to treat the head with disregard, without paying much thought to its appearance and just flushing it down the toilet to deal with it. However, her abjection is triggered again by herself- her aging. Her appearance becomes the Abject. This is when, for the final time, she encounters the head in the washroom. However, 'the head' is a grown woman- a woman that she was in her youth. She was stark naked. The woman gives in to 'her young self's' request to be in her clothes and thereby gets wholly replaced by her. Here, the Abject was successful in fascinating and beseeching the woman towards it. The borders were, in reality, disestablished. Or, the border had trespassed into the realm of subjective and objective territories. "The young approached the old. Young, strong hands gripped old shoulders and neck. The young hands shoved the old's head into the toilet and quick as a flash, lifted her by the ankles. Lightly shoving the old body into the toilet, her young self closed the lid shut and flushed" (Chung, 2023, p. 17).

## V. CONCLUSION

In this short story, Chung's usage of the abject and uncanny motifs in a realistic backdrop is brilliant. Literature has always been used in the field of psychoanalysis and this is an example of how literature and fictional characters and settings can make us better understand the concepts of psychoanalysis. Here, the boundary between the subject and the object is threatened with dissolution by the abject from the get-go, and, as the story progresses, a symbolic representation of what would happen when this threat posed by the Abject becomes a reality is given. A reading of this not only reveals the richness that literature offers to the field of psychoanalysis but also tells us about the usage of psychoanalytic concepts that make a piece of speculative fiction what it is.

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# On the Five Elements of Writing English Sentences

Zhang Jingling

Department of English Education, Shandong University of Technology, Zibo, China

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**Abstract**--There are many elements that make up a good English article, but the quality of sentence writing is the most important criterion for evaluation. Sentence is the most basic unit for expressing ideas in an article, therefore, the accuracy of sentence writing directly affects the quality of the article. This article mainly discusses the writing skills of English sentences from five aspects: conciseness, diversity, coherence, unity, and dominance, in order to help students further improve their English writing ability.

**Keywords**-- conciseness, diversity, coherence, unity, dominance



## I. CONCISENESS OR BREVITY

For some students, due to objective limitations such as the amount of vocabulary, reading comprehension, and the scope of knowledge, choosing easy-to-understand vocabulary and concise sentence structures to express ideas in English writing is an effective way to achieve twice the result with half the effort. The use of concise language to express ideas is also a necessity in modern life. The pace of life in today's society is accelerating, and language expression should also keep pace with the times. "With the increasingly detailed division of labor in social professions and the increasing level of automation, in order to adapt to the accelerated pace of social life, people's language use is becoming increasingly concise." [1]<sup>28</sup>. From this perspective, the conciseness or brevity of language expression has become an important principle that people follow. In this regard, students can read more of Hemingway's works and learn from his "telegraph style" literary style. His vocabulary is simple and easy to understand, his sentences are short and concise, and there are few modifiers, but they are full of energy, emotions, and profound meanings. When Hemingway was a journalist for *The Star*, he wrote in a

corner of his desk, "Use more verbs and nouns, less adjectives and adverbs, more simple sentences, and less compound sentences" to exercise his concise language expression ability.

Specifically, how to achieve conciseness in language expression? Firstly, overly formal phrases can be transformed into words, such as "For the reason that Elizabeth was ill, she didn't finish her work on time". "For the reason that" can be replaced with "as". In this way, the meaning remains unchanged and the semantic expression is more concise. Secondly, clauses can be transformed into phrases, such as "When he pushed the door open, Dr. Smith saw a group of young people waiting for his coming". This sentence can be changed to "Pushing the door open, Dr. Smith saw a group of young people waiting for his coming". Furthermore, unnecessary compound sentences can be transformed into simple sentences, such as "Nowadays there are a lot of college students who want to go abroad for their further study". This sentence can be changed to "Nowadays, a lot of college students want to go abroad for their further study". Finally, to avoid semantic duplication, some redundant vocabulary should be removed, such as "In

my opinion, I think the problem is very serious." In my opinion "and" I think "should only be kept one.

## II. VARIETY OR DIVERSITY

The conciseness mentioned earlier is not contradictory to the diversity discussed here. The conciseness of language refers to the use of no redundant words in language expression. As long as the meaning is clear, phrases are not used where words can be used, and sentences are not used where phrases can be used. Conciseness does not equate to simplicity, and there are differences between conciseness or brevity and simplicity. Who can say that Caesar 's concise and clear words "I came, I saw, I conquered" are simple? Diversity refers to the diversity of sentence structures. If an English essay uses simple sentences from the beginning to the end, it will be tasteless and lifeless. As is well known, people's minds and thoughts are complex, which makes their lives even more complex. A colorful life requires diverse sentences to describe it. Therefore, "try to achieve sentence structure diversity as much as possible. The combination of long and short sentences can enrich language expression methods, enhance expression effectiveness and the infectiousness of the article" [1] 30. Sentence diversity can be achieved from the following aspects.

### 1. Changing the beginning of a sentence

Start with an adverb: Tom decided to go abroad, and it was something unexpected.→Unexpectedly, Tom decided to go abroad. Start with an adjective: Daisy was very angry and began to defend her reputation with courage.→Angry, Daisy began to defend her reputation with courage. Start with "unless": He will have to work overtime this weekend, or he won't finish it on time.→Unless he works overtime this weekend, he won't finish it on time. Using non-finite verb: If you want to be a good salesman, much effort is needed.→To be a good salesman, much effort is needed. He has received my letter, and he will send me a sample.→Having received my letter, he will send me a sample.

### 2. Changing sentence structure

Active and passive sentences: He lacked diligence in his study, so he failed in the exam.→Diligence was lacked in his study, so he failed in the exam. Positive and negative sentences: The story will be firmly kept in my mind.→I will

never forget the story. Normal word order and inverted word order: She didn't realize the importance of English until she went abroad.→Only when she went abroad did she realize the importance of English. Non emphasis sentences and emphasis sentences: Mary broke the glass.→It was Mary who broke the glass.

### 3. Changing the position of sentence components

He received a second Nobel Prize for his research in 1982, being the first person in the world to receive two Nobel Prizes.→He, being the first person in the world to receive two Nobel Prizes, received a second Nobel Prize for his research in 1982. Or, Being the first person in the world to receive two Nobel Prizes, he received a second Nobel Prize for his research in 1982 .

### 4. Changing the singularity of sentences, allowing simple sentences, compound sentences,

and complex sentences to coexist

"One thing visitors to London in winter should not expect is warm weather. But this won't spoil your stay. Even if it is raining, or snowing, there's still plenty to do and see indoors. London boasts some of the best museums and galleries in the world and these can be a very good place to retreat to if the weather turns bad"[2]13

## III. COHERENCE

The coherence of a sentence refers to striving for naturalness and smoothness before and after the sentence, and avoiding ambiguity in meaning expression. Semantic coherence is achieved through the orderly arrangement of the various components of a sentence. Chinese is a semantic language that emphasizes the expression of meaning; English is a structured language that emphasizes the rigor of structure. The coherence of sentences can be achieved through the following methods:

### 1. Adding conjunctions

Professor Jones heard a knock at the door. He asked. Nobody answered.(incoherent) .→When he heard a knock at the door, Professor Jones asked who it was, but nobody answered.(coherent).

### 2. The reference of pronouns should be clear

His father was a dancer, therefore he also chose it as his profession.( Unclear reference). → His father was a dancer, therefore he also chose dance as his profession.(clear reference).

### 3. Correct parallel structure

It is better to die on one's feet than live on one's knees.(incorrect). →It is better to die on one's feet than to live on one's knees.(correct). The interview will be about what you are interested in, your abilities, and your aspirations.(incorrect).→The interview will be about your interests, your abilities, and your aspirations(correct).

### 4. Avoiding erroneous suspension structures

Being the final yearly report, Mr. Swift spared no effort to complete it carefully(incorrect).→As it was the final yearly report, Mr. Swift spared no effort to complete it carefully(correct). After eating our lunch, the driver called us to the bus(incorrect).→After we ate our lunch, the driver called us to the bus(correct).

## IV. UNITY

The unity of a sentence means that a sentence can only express one complete meaning, and unrelated content cannot be placed within the same sentence. To achieve sentence consistency, the following aspects can be considered:

### 1. Removing irrelevant content

"People have certain advantages over animals. First, they are able to make more different sounds so that they are able to speak. If you want to communicate with people abroad, you first have to remove the language barriers there. Second, the thumb gives a person the power to grasp things. Third, a person's combined senses are greater than those of animals. Finally, people live longer than most animals."<sup>[2]125</sup> It is obvious that the meaning expressed in the underlined part is not related to the content expressed in other sentences and should be deleted.

### 2. Avoiding incomplete sentence components

After class, there were a lot of students played basketball on the playground.(incorrect)→After class, there were a lot of students who played basketball on the playground.(correct). For instance, the increase in the cost of buying a house.(incorrect) →For instance, the cost of buying a house has increased.(correct).

### 3. Removing redundant details

In 1832, when Joseph Andrew, then a young man of twenty-four years who had been living in Concord, came to California, a place of unknown opportunities, to serve as a teacher, he had the qualifications that would make him

equal to this job. This sentence appears bloated and the expression of ideas is not compact enough. It's better to change it to: In 1832, when Joseph Andrew came to California as a teacher, he had the necessary qualifications for the job.

### 4. Avoiding sentence structure confusion

"Her mother helped her when her new dictionary was lost and she found it a few days later". The two clauses connected by "and" do not have a parallel meaning at the semantic level. To achieve consistency in sentence expression, this sentence can be reconstructed: She lost her new dictionary, but found it a few days later with the help of her mother. Another example: As for most college students, who have succeeded in passing the interview, will have great chances to be employed. The sentence structure is inappropriate and can be rewritten as: Most college students who have succeeded in passing the interview will have great chances to be employed.

## V. THE DOMINANCE OF SENTENCES

Increasing the dominance of sentences can be achieved through the following means:

### 1. End-focus sentence

An end-focus sentence refers to a way of expression where the subordinate clause is placed before the main clause, mainly to create suspense, attract readers' attention, and enhance language expression effect. For example, Although he was interested in English, he finally decided to study computer. Another example : "It is universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife."<sup>[3]1</sup>. The sentence guided by "that" is the main sentence, and placing it at the end can have a captivating expression effect.

### 2. Parallelism sentence (progressive method)

Parallelism sentences can achieve a progressive emphasis effect. As the British preacher John Wesley once said, "Earn all you can, save all you can, and give all you can" (desperately earning money, desperately saving money, desperately donating money), he succinctly summarized the Puritan spirit through three parallel sentences. Another example, Dickens used 14 parallel sentences at the beginning of the first chapter of "*A Tale of Two Cities*", revealing a world full of ups and downs and contradictions to the fullest: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of

times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way”<sup>[4]</sup>

### 3. Inverted sentence

There are many purposes of sentence inversion, but the most important point is to strengthen the tone, highlight a certain component, and enhance the effectiveness of language expression. For example, Never have I seen such a good film. This sentence is much more powerful than "I have never seen such a good film". Another example, Gone are the days when the imperialist powers could do as they liked in China. This sentence is much better than "The days when the imperialist powers could do as they liked in China are gone".

### 4. Repetitive sentence

In Chapter 1 of Part 3 of *A Tale of Two Cities*, Dickens repeated the word "ghost" eight times, vividly depicting Charles Darnay's dangerous situation and fear at that time: "Charles Darnay seemed to stand in a company of the dead. Ghosts all! The ghost of beauty, the ghost of stateliness, the ghost of elegance, the ghost of pride, the ghost of frivolity, the ghost of wit, the ghost of youth, the ghost of age, all waiting their dismissal from the desolate shore.”<sup>[4]</sup><sup>312</sup>

5. Words, phrases, and structures with emphatic meanings

For example, The driver himself was to blame for the serious accident. Jones is the very person who is fit for the job. Do go to school earlier next time. If ever I don't want to eat anything, please do not force me to do that. It was my uncle who helped me a lot with my English.

In short, the sentences that appear in a good article should have characteristics of conciseness, diversity, coherence, unity, and dominance. These are the fundamental elements that make up a masterpiece and the fundamental requirements for writing good English sentences. The requirements for a good English composition include not only being relevant to the topic, conveying the meaning, using appropriate words, and having correct grammar, but also higher and stricter requirements for writing good English sentences: the

sentence structure should be rigorous, the sentence pattern should be varied, simple sentences and compound sentences should coexist, long and short sentences should be combined, and single sentence structures and similar sentence patterns should be avoided. "Writing good English sentences is a basic and high requirement. On the one hand, English sentences are tightly structured, and on the other hand, they are constantly changing. The rigorous and standardized syntactic form, relatively stable verb collocation, and flexible and diverse expressions make English sentences present a myriad of scenes." <sup>[5]</sup><sup>88</sup>. Articles written according to such requirements will shine brightly and have a strong sense of "foreign flavor".

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# The Writer as a Nomad and the Narrative as a War Machine: A Critical Reading of *The Pianist of Yarmouk*

Theertha Theophin<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Indra J.E<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of English Studies, Central University of Tamilnadu, Thiruvavur, India

Email: [theerthatheophin1997@gmail.com](mailto:theerthatheophin1997@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of English Studies, Central University of Tamilnadu, Thiruvavur, India

Email : [indraje@cutn.ac.in](mailto:indraje@cutn.ac.in)

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**Abstract**— This paper aims to critically analyze Aheam Ahmed's memoir titled, *The Pianist of Yarmouk* through the theoretical framework of Nomadic Philosophy proposed by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. Aheam Ahmed is a musician who hails from Syria and currently resides in Germany. He fled from Syria to escape the civil war and now gives concerts all over Europe. In his introduction to the memoir he says he wants to dispel some of the fears surrounding the refugees in Europe. This statement itself shows that how he aims to represent the collective consciousness and voice of the refugees who are often denied their identity and are treated as faceless masses in the host countries. Deleuze and Guattari argue that the nomad has a tendency towards deterritorialization and it can be found to some degree in all phenomena. This paper aims to argue that refugee writers exhibit nomadic thought. The major questions addressed here are;



a) How the writer acts as a nomadic figure throughout the narrative and how the narrative functions as a war machine against the state apparatus.

b) How far the writer as a nomad can create a counter narrative; and question the mainstream power structures across globe which functions by the formation of nation states and strict border politics.

c) To what extent the narrative can prove that the modern refugee is the opposite of modern citizen and it is an inevitable requirement of the current state of global politics.

**Keywords**— forced migration, modern refugee, nomad, refugee writer, war machine

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the beginning of the work itself, the author Aheam Ahmad clearly states there are reasons behind his decision to share his story with the world. He was forced to flee Syria due to the political uprising that resulted in civil war. He talks not only about his personal struggles, but also about the winds of change that happened in his state and how it resulted in war. My attempt in this paper is to read this narrative along the theoretical framework of nomadic philosophy proposed by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.

Deleuze and Guattari introduces the concept in their essay titled, "Treatise on Nomadology: The War Machine"

which is included in their seminal work *A thousand plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia*. The essay begins with reflections on what constitutes a state and how the state organizes the environment so that it can function smoothly. Then Deleuze and Guattari raise an important question, can anything escape the state or in other words can anything escape the structure of the State or its function. Here, they introduce the concept of 'war machine'. A war machine is described as anything that is outside the sovereignty and law of the state. "The war machine seems to be irreducible to the State apparatus, to be outside its sovereignty and prior to its law: it comes from elsewhere" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987 p. 352).

One of the major questions I will be addressing in this paper will be: is the writer and the narrative acts as a war machine, as it raises voice against the State Apparatus that functions in Syria. It is important to remember that civil war in Syria has created one of the largest refugee crises of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. So I will be examining and explaining how this narrative acts as an opposing force against those in power in Syria and how this life narrative assumes the position of a war machine.

Deleuze and Guattari discuss examples from varied disciplines to explain the relationship between the State and War machine. First they bring in the example of games Chess and Go and explain how Chess can be associated with State apparatus and how the Go game is played can be appropriated with the way in which a war machine operates. Then they refer to German poet Henrich Von Kleist. How Kleist set up the war machine through his character named Michael Kohlas, who engages in criminal activities because he cannot find justice in the legal system. Here we see how a counter method is being adopted by a person against the legal structure of the state. So the counter system becomes the war machine as per the definition of Deleuze and Guattari. Other examples given are that of Royal Science v/s Nomadic Science, Nomad and Migrant. All these examples shows that how the former one in the pair confirms to a structure and the latter one escapes it and finds an alternate way to operate. This paper aims to read the primary text as a narrative that escape the structure and acts as a counter voice that challenges the state. Another objective is to place the writer as a nomad and try to explain how his actions are nomadic in nature as it deviates from the law and order of the state he was part of earlier.

## **II. THE NARRATIVE AS A WAR MACHINE AGAINST THE STATE APPARATUS**

In the beginning of the narrative itself, the author makes it clear that he wanted to use his voice to dispel some of the misunderstandings regarding the refugees who are forced to flee their homeland. The narrative not only includes his personal experience, but also talks about the repressive measures Syrian government has adopted when political uprising started against them. A reader can notice the narrative shifting from personal to political at many points. The author says, "I would become one of those miserable grey figures, one of the millions who were now streaming into Europe... They are afraid of us. And that is why I want to tell my story now. I want to use my voice to dispel some of the fear and the lies" (Ahmad, 2019, p. 4). It is at this point, it becomes important to look at the narrative and understand how Aeham Ahmad frames his narrative, what

standpoint he chooses to tell the story. On reading the text in detail one can understand that, the narrative operates as a War Machine against the State apparatus it is part of.

The author talks about the vibrant and crowded neighborhood of Yarmouk becoming a war torn locality with broken buildings, destroyed farmlands and deaths uncertain. The narrative is clearly against the rules and regulations of existing state apparatus in Syria. The state apparatus operates in Syria based on predetermined laws, principle and order. It is just like the Chess game that is played within a fixed space with values already attributed to all the pieces. The state has strict regulations on how the system should work and the role of each member. We can say that the state operates within a fixed and striated space according to Deleuze and Guattari. Anyone who breaks the rule and does something that crosses the functions of their predetermined role is treated as a threat and falls outside the state apparatus. So that person or his/her action becomes the war machine. A war machine moves smoothly, as opposed to the fixed space determined by the state. It deterritorializes segmentations which are coded or formulated by the state.

Now it is easy to explain how this narrative falls outside of the space that is determined by the state apparatus. The narrative talks in detail about the repressive regimes in Syria, how the citizens suffered, why a change in rule was necessary and criticizes the state for restricting people from engaging in arts, especially music as it was against the religious affiliations of the state. The author talks about citizens being punished for watching television and listening to music. "In Syria, the walls have ears. It was a popular saying. We all knew that state security was everywhere" (Ahmad, 2019, p. 51). In 2000, when Hafez al-Assad died, his son Bashar came to power. Even though the dictatorship was brutal, some restrictions were loosened. Thus the citizens were allowed to watch satellite television and browse internet, though many channels and websites were blocked. The state apparatus adopted this method to control the citizens, so that they can be forever in power. They do not want any kind of war machines operating against them. But as Arab Spring called for a change and challenged long years of dictatorship in the Middle East nations, Syria also hoped for a change.

We can see a clear and fearless account of what happened in Syria in this narrative. This work acts as a counter narrative to what Assad's regime was trying to showcase to the outer world. The author remarks, "when playing to a western audience, these regimes pretended to be 'democratic', but we in the middle east saw their true face" (Ahmad, 2019, p. 101). The narrative also criticizes the Syrian state television as they always showcased Syria is

not affected by the Arab Spring and they were keen on propagating the idea that Syrian people stand fully behind their government.

On 15 March, a crowd of about 150 demonstrators made their way through the historic Hamidiyeh market, chanting, 'God, Syria, freedom, and nothing else' this was stab at the government organized marches, where people were required to chant, 'God, Syria, Bashar, and nothing else' (Ahmad, 2019, p. 102).

The author also remarks that Syrian government claimed that Al Jazeera has been giving hallucinogenic drugs to thousands of people to trigger protest. Throughout the narrative, we can see criticism against the Assad's regime, the state apparatus that is ruling Syria. So we can undoubtedly say that the narrative act as a war machine against the state apparatus in Syria. The civil war began to escalate by the middle of 2012. The narrator describes how Free Syrian Army was formed. "And when the security forces shot at the protesters, the former soldiers fought back. That's how FSA was created, the Free Syrian Army" (Ahmad, 2019, p. 119). According to Deleuze and Guattari, War Machine escapes the sovereignty of the state. It can be a political movement, counter narrative, protest or can take any form.

The state has no war machine of its own; it can only appropriate one in the form of a military institution, one that will continually causes it problems. This explains the mistrust States have toward their military institutions, in that the military institution inherits an extrinsic war machine (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 355).

In this work, we can trace how the narrative acts as a war machine; also the narrative gives a picture of how war machine operated in the form of FSA and protested against the repressive regime of Assad who was in the position of State Apparatus. The state military force and the Free Syrian Army fighting against each other is the best example of the State's attempt to appropriate war machine in the form of military. It causes its own problems, and the result is the clash between the state army and FSA, the actual war machine that exist outside the state apparatus. It is also notable that, FSA was part of the previous state army and it turned against the State itself. So the observation of Deleuze and Guattari that the war machine appropriated by State will cause its own problem stands true in this context.

### III. THE WRITER AS A NOMADIC FIGURE

Another important concern in this paper is to explain how the writer acts as a nomadic figure. Aeham Ahmad became a refugee as a result of the Syrian conflict. He now resides in Germany and being a musician, he is using his art to spread awareness about the actual state of refugees and their struggles. We can see him as a nomadic figure throughout the narrative, as opposed to a citizen who confirms to the state apparatus. He clearly states that, music is his revolution and he decides to tell his story to dispel many of the misconceptions about Syria and the helpless people who have become refugees. Deleuze and Guattari say, "The war machine is the invention of the nomads. (in so far as it is exterior to the State apparatus and distinct from the military institution)" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987 p. 380). So it is appropriate to say the narrator Aeham Ahmad is the nomad here and his story is the war machine in this context.

In conventional terms, Aeham Ahmed is a forced migrant. Deleuze and Guattari differentiate between the nomad and migrant.

The nomad is not at all the same as the migrant; for the migrant goes principally from one point to another, even if the second point is uncertain, unforeseen, or not well localized. But the nomad goes from point to point only as a consequence and as a factual necessity; in principle, points for him are relays along a trajectory. Nomads and migrants can mix in many ways, or form a common aggregate; their causes and conditions are no less distinct for that (Deleuze & Guattari, p. 380).

When we read the text we can understand even though Aeham Ahmad is forced to migrate, he not only operates as a migrant figure, he also acts as a nomad through his actions and the paths he chooses. Deleuze and Guattari say that a nomad and migrant can mix in many ways and it is true in Aeham Ahmad's case. Just like a nomad, he follows a trajectory that adjusts according to environment. This can be seen when he attempts to cross the border many times. First he was caught by the security forces and was put in prison. Then he had to go back to his home town. Later he decides to leave his wife and kids there, so that he can flee the country alone. His path is that of a forced migrant and his destination is uncertain. He adjusts his journey according to the consequences he has to face along the way. Here we can see, the functions of a migrant and nomad simultaneously operating through him. A migrant leaves an environment which has turned hostile to him, whereas a nomad finds nomadism as a weapon to fight this challenging situation. Aeham Ahmad leaves the

hostile and unsafe environment of Syria, but still we can say that he holds that space as he decides to challenge the system through his music and also through this narrative. He is simultaneously a migrant and nomad.

I played piano to spite Assad. We countered the bombing attacks with satirical songs. We countered violence with art...I'm a pianist, not a political activist. My revolution is music. My language is music. Music was going to be my form of protest, even if no one heard me. (Ahmad, 2019, p. 170).

It is evident that Aeham Ahmad migrated but never failed to hold the space like a nomad does through his music. His intention to tell the world what happened in Syria with a personal note has the power to challenge the narrative Syria as a repressive state is trying to showcase the world. "“I want you to learn a language anyone can understand”, my father said. ‘We are refugees. We can’t return to our homeland. I want you to be international.’” (Ahmad, 2019, p. 44). His music and his life narrative are a testimony and tribute to millions of Syrian refugees that are scattered across the world.

It is important at this point to acknowledge the refugee crisis the world is facing and the geopolitics and cultural politics behind that. There are many refugee narratives coming out after 2015 and all these works throws some light into how refugees are treated across globe. Aeham Ahmad even says he wanted to dispel some of the fears regarding refugees and adds that they are in the host countries not to steal anything. This refers to the xenophobia that was evident in Europe when they had to host large number of refugees and people keep coming to the borders crossing the Mediterranean. While trying to understand the refugee crisis, it is important to look at history. In the colonial period, crossing the border was not this restricted. But in the post-colonial era nation states were formed based on strict borders and boundaries and citizenship was awarded to individual, so it became very important to belong to a State, so that one is entitled to fundamental rights and protection. So modern refugee is not only the result of war and persecution alone, it is also the aftermath of modern citizen. The refugee crisis also has its implication on the current geopolitical order. It is important to look at the crisis with the perspective that every individual deserves a space in this world and has the right to basic needs. Then only we can come up with solutions that benefit the lives of refugees, rather than serving the interests of those in power in the global political scenario.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

To conclude, *The Pianist of Yarmouk* serves as a narrative that throws light into the personal experience of forced migrants and also it speaks against the repressive mechanism of their own state that caused this turmoil. This life narrative clearly functions as a war machine and the narrator acts as nomadic figure as proposed by Deleuze and Guattari. The narrative also makes us realize how modern refugee is an inevitable requirement for the modern citizen and nation states to exist; and we need changes in international policies to accommodate people who are threatened in their own homeland. I would like to remark that war machines should exist in every state apparatus to invite reforms in time of need. It should take different forms like revolution, writings, art and activism to catalyze change and question those in power. War machines and Nomads are an inevitable requirement as long as there is a State apparatus and a structured governance functions in a nation.

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# Textual Representation of Mr. Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness*

Asim. I. Twaha

Department of English, Barnagar College, Sorbhog, Gauhati University, Assam, India

[asim4all@gmail.com](mailto:asim4all@gmail.com)

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**Abstract**— The paper attempts to study the way the character of Mr. Kurtz is materialised in *Heart of Darkness*. The portrayal of Mr. Kurtz's character is studied and analysed in this research work with reference to two of the major ways of character portrayal – direct definition and indirect presentation. The direct mode of description refers to the description of a character directly and explicitly with the help of a particular word, sentence, or event, whereas in indirect presentation, a character is materialized in terms of various means, such as the action, the speech, the external appearance and even the environment. The paper with references to the textual examples from *Heart of Darkness*, endeavours to explore how Mr. Kurtz's character is sketched out using the two modes of textual representation.

**Keywords**— Conrad, direct definition, indirect presentation, Kurtz, textual representation of characters.



## I. INTRODUCTION

*Heart of Darkness* is one of the most studied narrative prose fictions in English literature. "Through Marlow and his narrative, the reader starts a journey that is too mysterious to be enjoyed and too complex to be comprehended." (Romdhani, 2022, p. 2) The character of Mr. Kurtz holds the second most important place in the novel, apart from that of Marlow. In the creative narrative, Kurtz is mostly presented from the point of view of Marlow. In his character portrayal Joseph Conrad adopts different modes of portraying. In novels, "there are two basic types of textual indicators of character: direct definition and indirect presentation" (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005, p. 61). A writer adopts one of these character portrayal modes or even through the mutuality of both. In *Heart of Darkness*, Conrad manipulates both methods in a way which reflects nothing but his artistic excellence.

## II. DIRECT DEFINITION

The direct mode of description refers to "the technique of presenting a trait of any character directly and explicitly; the text clearly indicates some particular characteristic through the use of a particular word, sentence, event or description" (Sengupta, 2012, p. 11). In *Heart of Darkness*, we first come

to know about Mr. Kurtz through the words of the Company's chief accountant; in his reference to Kurtz, he says that Kurtz is a remarkable person who deals in ivory (Conrad, 1992, pp. 20-21). Further, the Manager and the Brickmaker also give their opinions about Mr. Kurtz. These are examples of direct description. It is Mr. Marlow who gives all the information regarding Kurtz directly. For example, his description (Conrad, 1992, p. 59) regarding the background of Mr. Kurtz enables the readers to discover that Kurtz had a half-English mother and a half-French father. After the death of Mr. Kurtz all his thoughts, feelings, emotions, and philosophies are unravelled before the reader by Marlow himself (Conrad, 1992, pp. 85-86). The Harlequin, a Russian disciple of Kurtz whom Marlow meets also delineates the character of Kurtz.

After the death of Mr. Kurtz, many aspects of his character are revealed to Marlow as well as to us by Kurtz's relatives and friends and even by his wife. It is through direct description by different characters that we come to know, Kurtz had a very charismatic voice, and he could easily corrupt anybody, whoever comes into contact. Kurtz was a painter, a musician, a journalist, a politician, a diplomat and what not; all these we come to know from other characters. It is noteworthy that Mr. Kurtz himself appears on the scene only for a few pages. All the time, in the novel

he has been presented from the viewpoint of different characters. All these references give us a very static picture of Kurtz.

However, Brooks and Warren are of the view that “When direct presentation of character becomes also direct comment on a character, the author may find himself ‘telling’ is what to feel and think rather than ‘rendering’ a scene for our imaginative participation. (Understanding Fiction, 1979, p. 108)”. Therefore, the technique of direct presentation is more fruitful in the delineation of ‘flat and typical characters.’ In *Heart of Darkness*, besides Marlow and to some extent Mr. Kurtz, most of the characters are flat or static. Conrad adopts the mode of direct definition in the portrayal of all such characters as the Manager, the Doctor, the Accountant, the two women, etc. He employs Marlow, the narrator and the most ‘authoritative voice in the text’, to define the static and typical characters. For instance, Marlow’s delineation of the two women characters who would knit ‘black wool feverishly’ (Conrad, 1992, p. 10) is suggestive of their passive nature and role in the narrative:

“People were arriving, and the younger one was walking back and forth introducing them. The old one sat on her chair. Her flat cloth slippers were propped up on a foot-warmer, and a cat reposed on her lap. She wore a starched white affair on her head, had a wart on one cheek, and silver-rimmed spectacles hung on the tip of her nose. She glanced at me above the glasses. The swift and indifferent placidity of that look troubled me. Two youths with foolish and cheery countenances were being piloted over, and she threw at them the same quick glance of unconcerned wisdom. She seemed to know all about them and about me, too. An eerie feeling came over me. She seemed uncanny and fateful.” (Conrad, 1992, p. 10)

### III. INDIRECT PRESENTATION

Complementing the direct definition mode, we also perceive the indirect way of presenting the character of Kurtz. “The danger of direct presentation is that it tends to forfeit the vividness of drama and the reader’s imaginative participation” (Brooks & Warren, 1979, p. 108). Since there is a potential consequence of producing “a rational, authoritative and static impression” (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005, p. 60) on the readers during the incorporation of direct definition technique, Conrad employs the other way of textual representation of a character i.e., indirect presentation. According to the mode of indirect presentation, a character is not directly described about, instead different traits of the character are revealed through various means such as the action, the speech, the external appearance, and even the environment. Kurtz’s character is manifested before us through these means.

#### ACTION:

The character of Kurtz appears only in the third chapter of the book, he has a brief and the most striven for appearance. After a toilsome journey, Marlow, at last, is able to meet with Kurtz. Marlow says that even when Kurtz is unable to stand, he was under the spell of darkness and he was not ready to go away from that darkness, from that belief. Marlow says to himself,

“He can’t walk – he is crawling on all-fours – I’ve got him” (Conrad, 1992, p. 78)

This action of Kurtz reveals his fascination towards darkness. Marlow then remarks,

“Sometimes he was contemptibly childish. He desired to have kings meet him at railway-stations on his return from some ghastly Nowhere, where he intended to accomplish great things.” (Conrad, 1992, p. 83)

These lines again deal with Kurtz’s action which reveals his desire. Thus, these are some of the actions which reveal the character of Kurtz.

#### SPEECH:

Further, there are speeches by Kurtz that Conrad incorporates in *Heart of Darkness* to portray the character of Kurtz. For instance, when Marlow prevents Kurtz to go into the forest, the latter asserts,

“I had immense plans’, he muttered irresolutely... ‘I was on the threshold of great things’”

This speech by Kurtz exposes his ambitious soul, his strong adherence to his beliefs. Again, while coming back, in the steamboat he mutters the following lines:

“Live rightly, die, die...”

“I am lying here in the dark waiting for death.”

And finally comes out his last words,

“The horror! The horror!”

All these of his speeches mark the development of the character of Mr. Kurtz from his ambitious goals in life to his gradual realization of the truth and ultimately to his final judgement of himself.

#### EXTERNAL APPEARANCE:

In the novel, we also find the description of the external appearance of Kurtz; we find Marlow describing him,

“He looked at least seven feet long. His covering had fallen off, and his body emerged from it pitiful and appalling as from a winding-sheet. I could see the cage of his ribs all astir, the bones of his arm waving. It was as though an animated image of death carved out of old ivory had been shaking its hand with menaces at a motionless crowd of men made of dark and glittering bronze. I saw him open his

mouth wide — it gave him a weirdly voracious aspect, as though he had wanted to swallow all the air, all the earth, all the men before him. A deep voice reached me faintly. He must have been shouting.” (Conrad, 1992, p. 72)

This passage of description points towards the fact that Kurtz was moving towards his end and had lost everything in the pursuit of the darkness.

Another example of this kind is when Marlow says about Kurtz:

“He rose, unsteady, long, pale, indistinct, like a vapour exhaled by the earth, and swayed slightly, misty and silent before me”. (Conrad, 1992, p. 79)

These lines reflect the indomitable will of Kurtz which makes him stand even at the moment of sheer weakness.

#### IV. COMBINATION OF DIRECT DEFINITION AND INDIRECT PRESENTATION

Apart from the independent application of Direct definition and Indirect Presentation, in *Heart of Darkness* by Conrad, we also find a combination of both the modes in the portrayal of all the characters in general and Kurtz in particular. One of the best examples in this respect would be the following paragraph:

“He rustled one of the letters, and looking straight in my face said, ‘I am glad.’ Somebody had been writing to him about me. These special recommendations were turning up again. The volume of tone he emitted without effort, almost without the trouble of moving his lips, amazed me. A voice! a voice! It was grave, profound, vibrating, while the man did not seem capable of a whisper. However, he had enough strength in him — factitious no doubt — to very nearly make an end of us, as you shall hear directly.” (Conrad, 1992, p. 73)

Here, in this passage, we can see not only Marlow’s direct comments over Kurtz but also, we find him talking and in action. The passage reveals Kurtz’s indomitable will to do something or whatever he wants. It is not his physical strength that makes him work but it is the will of his soul which makes him do the impossible. Furthermore, the following paragraph is another instance where both Marlow’s views as well as Kurtz’s mental struggle and his sense of possession get manifested.

“Kurtz discoursed. A voice! a voice! It rang deep to the very last. It survived his strength to hide in the magnificent folds of eloquence the barren darkness of his heart. Oh, he struggled! he struggled! The wastes of his weary brain were haunted by shadowy images now — images of wealth and fame revolving obsequiously round his unextinguishable gift of noble and lofty expression. My Intended, my station,

my career, my ideas — these were the subjects for the occasional utterances of elevated sentiments. The shade of the original Kurtz frequented the bedside of the hollow sham, whose fate it was to be buried presently in the mould of primeval earth. But both the diabolic love and the unearthly hate of the mysteries it had penetrated fought for the possession of that soul satiated with primitive emotions, avid of lying fame, of sham distinction, of all the appearances of success and power.” (Conrad, 1992, p. 83)

#### V. CONCLUSION

The discussion in the paper attempts to throw light on how Joseph Conrad has textually represented characters in general and Mr. Kurtz in particular. The two major methods of character portrayal – direct definition and indirect presentation, proposed by narratologists are elaborated in the paper with reference to how these techniques are adopted in *Heart of Darkness*. Conrad through the narrator Marlow defines directly the minor characters in the novel along with Mr. Kurtz at times. Moreover, he has successfully indirectly presented the character of Mr. Kurtz through his action, speech, and external appearance.

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# The Art of Insults: A Linguistic Analysis of Trump's Verbal Attacks During Campaigns

Assist. Prof. Dr. Lina Fathi Sidig

Al-Iraqia University, College of Media, Iraq, Baghdad

[lina.f.sidig@aliraqia.edu.iq](mailto:lina.f.sidig@aliraqia.edu.iq)

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**Abstract**— *This study aims to investigate the linguistic features and strategies used by Donald Trump in his verbal attacks during his presidential campaign. The study aims to investigate the quotes, either directly or indirectly. The objective is to determine the persuasive level of verbal abuse as a rhetorical device in contemporary political discourse. A comprehensive linguistic analysis of his speeches during his campaign trail is used to examine the effect of verbal attacks on the delivery of his campaign speech in the presidential campaign and how this kind of political action affects the field of politics or politicians, which remains the main area of interest.*



**Keywords**— *Linguistic features, Trump, insults, and verbal attacks.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Few political campaigns in the United States have been as audacious as Donald J. Trump's bid for president. Littered with memorable phrases—"Little Marco," "Low-Energy Jeb," "Lying Ted," "Crooked Hillary," and, of course, "Make America Great Again"—his campaigns changed the way candidates communicate, particularly with insults. Mr. Trump's insults—which generally did not discriminate—ranged from attacking leaders of both parties to targeting journalists to undermining members of his administration. This study, in short, aspires to examine the linguistic peculiarities of Mr. Trump's verbal attacks by providing a granular analysis of his choice of words, his employment of rhetorical devices, and the ultimate impact that it had on his campaigns. By seeking to better understand Mr. Trump's insults, it hopes to shed light on their central role in his political communication and how they wound up shaping public opinion, media coverage, and ultimately the polarization of American politics during his candidacy. Through this deep linguistic dive, we aspire to better understand the particular dynamics that marked this highly important season of American politics.

## II. BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The strategic use of insults in contemporary political landscapes has become a topic of intrigue. Donald Trump's unique approach to insults has created fervent debates about their effectiveness, ethical dilemmas, and long-term effects on political communication. "Understanding the use of derogatory language in politics is crucial to comprehending the power dynamics at play." (Jost & Banaji, 1994: 248). This study hopes that linguistic analysis will contribute to and provide a better understanding of the dynamics of political discourse and persuasion.

In today's political climate, where public figures regularly trade verbal jabs, political discourse often includes insults and derogatory comments, which have become weapons of choice for many. Donald Trump emerged on the political scene with an outrageous, sometimes offensive, approach. It was a brash and often confrontational communication style that has left an indelible mark on American politics. It's also one that's worth discussing. Using insults strategically during debates, political campaigns, and policy discussions is a topic that goes far beyond words (Smith & Johnson, 2019).



This study's broader contribution stems from its ability to better reveal the implications and meanings contained within these insults. As a recent analysis noted, "deciphering the linguistic nuances, rhetorical devices, and underlying motivations behind Trump's verbal attacks is essential for understanding their impact on public perception and voter behavior" (Smith & Johnson 2020: 112). Further, this study unpacks the ethical boundaries (or lack thereof) within contemporary political discourse.

A comprehensive and thoughtful examination of the use of insults in these contexts is both timely and important in a political climate that is constantly changing and pushing the boundaries of acceptable speech. As Smith and Johnson (2020) argue, "Examining how insults shape political communication is crucial in our understanding of contemporary politics" (p. 124).

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 3.1 The rhetoric of insults in politics

In 2017, there was a widespread understanding that rhetoric serves as a powerful tool in political discourse. One of the most frequently used forms of political language to accomplish this is insult (Smith, 2017). Political platforms often feature rhetoric that lacks nuance in addressing acrimonious political relationships, as human history has repeatedly demonstrated. As part of this function, choosing to be insulting and being willing to do so repeatedly is one of the most powerful ways to assert dominance over opponents and establish a character foil (Smith, 2015). So what happens when a candidate refuses to ever respond to an insult?

Scholars primarily focus on insults as a campaign strategy, but they also note that politicians use insults in different ways. McGee (1980) explained that after studying a wide range of sources and looking at the history of political insults, he was not able to find a record of any sort of golden age. Insults in political campaign rhetoric and political discourse in general have always been staples of politics. The majority of the sources that McGee used pertained to presidential campaigns. Trump was not the type of person or politician to care about who he offended. He had no one to help him craft speeches that were meaningful and relative to the topic at hand; he said whatever was on his mind. McGee's analysis is clear: Trump was the campaigner who slayed the average way that politicians approached campaign rhetoric, so modern bile in politics was not unexpected.

Donald Trump, the victor of the 2016 election, stood out as one of the least typical presidential hopefuls in history due to his unconventional views on political discourse.

Because Donald Trump was not a typical politician, he did not communicate in a representative manner, and for some, this was the sole reason they voted for him. Donald Trump's communication methods were perceived as unsatisfactory and somewhat hostile, although some may argue that they were innovative. Donald Trump emerged victorious in the 2016 political election, prompting supporters to speculate about his winning strategy and the attributes he possessed that Hillary Clinton lacked (Smith, 2022).

Jones (2019) argues that studying Trump's use of insults in particular reveals how political communication has changed and how those in power strategically use rhetoric to change public discourse. This research methodology is more advanced as it shifts its attention from past insults to the current use of insults in politics.

#### 3.2 Linguistic analysis in political discourse

Over the past few decades, linguistic analysis of political discourse has gained prominence, leading to numerous studies on the various components of political language, including linguistic strategies, framing, and discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2013: 42; Van Dijk, 1998: 137). From Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) perspective, we can affirm that "our thought is mostly unconscious and is carried out in the form of internal symbolic manipulation." Besides, as they also argue, "It is language that provides the bulk of the examples the mind uses to work out its thoughts." (p. 5). While they are referring to political language, we can also affirm that we think through language, so language analysis in the political field is essential.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) set forth the proposition that "language shapes our perceptions and influences our judgments" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 5). This point is very salient because it shows the importance of language analysis when we look to understand political communication. The question then arises: how precisely does language shape our perceptions and influence our judgments? Is language the primary factor that shapes our perceptions of situations and decisions, or is it merely one of the few factors we must take into account when attempting to explain influences? The power of words and their utilization are substantive and have a few major implications for political communication.

The study of political language had become a critical means by which to unpack the strategies and tactics used by politicians to articulate their messages and beliefs more than a decade ago (Chilton 2004: 73). Enquiries into the use of such linguistic items as metaphors, framing devices, and persuasive rhetoric have been able to shed light on and ultimately explain the very real persuasive mechanisms at

work behind the act of political communication (Chilton & Schäffner 1997: 213).

This study adopts a linguistic approach to insults, focusing on a specific dimension of political discourse that is prominent in Donald Trump's political style. As Smith (2015) has observed, Trump's use of insults has "been one of the things that has most captured scholars', voters', and ordinary citizens' attention while he has been in the public eye. To look back at just the last year or so in politics is to remember what a unique style of politics he has practiced." (p. 8). After he won the Republican nomination in 2016, a little earlier than his critics expected (and a lot earlier than his detractors hoped), there was considerable speculation about just how promptly he would abandon the tone and approach that had carried him through an unprecedented primary campaign. Political observers, including those who questioned the veracity of pundits' predictions, remained consistent in their expectations on a few key points (Smith, 2022: 12).

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

##### 4.1 Data collection

This study relies on the meticulous collection and analysis of primary data gathered throughout Donald Trump's presidential campaigns. The primary dataset consists of the transcripts and recordings of Donald Trump's speeches and rallies held during both of his presidential campaigns; hence, this corpus of text and audiovisual material is the lifeblood of this study. Consequently, analysis of this corpus will allow us to uncover many of the intricacies and subtleties of Trump's political communication.

The aim of this analysis is to create a broad database of explicit and implicit insults performed by Donald Trump during his campaigns. Therefore, it was crucial to identify not only overt insults but also subtler forms of derogatory speech acts that Trump could strategically incorporate into his discourse. We need this broad-based database as the foundation to systematically investigate the functional and linguistic characteristics, contextual factors, and rhetorical strategies of insults in Trump's political communication.

This corpus composition uses established political discourse analysis methodologies, as laid out in Chilton's (2004) work, *Analyzing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice*. We employ these widely used methods to collect data systematically for a disciplined analysis of Donald Trump's linguistic features and rhetorical devices in his campaign speeches. By staying true to these methodologies, we hope to ensure that our analysis is rigorous and transparent so that it may contribute to the field of studying political discourse.

##### 4.2 Linguistic Analysis

We employ a complex research methodology, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods, to conduct an extensive investigation into the linguistics of Donald Trump's insults. The combination of these two methods proved to be useful in fully identifying the different linguistic signs that Donald Trump used to manipulate public opinion throughout his presidential campaigns.

This study heavily relies on qualitative analysis, which allows for a detailed examination of Trump's linguistic insults at a micro level. This analysis reveals not only the constituents of the insults (as revealed by earlier quantitative work), but also the subtle nuances of their language and intent, their rhetorical positioning, the phrasing of the attacks, and the deft integration of other discourses into the insult. Additionally, it reveals the choice of words, the pitch and delivery of the argument, how he uses words to paint vivid and visceral pictures, and how he appeals to voters through his speech.

Quantitative analysis, on the other hand, provides essential quantitative data to support the findings of qualitative analysis and put them in context. It allows us to identify patterns, trends, and frequencies in the use of insults, providing a quantitative framework from which to understand how prevalent, for example, personal insults are and how likely they are to have major social or psychological effects. We are at the stage where, with quantitative data on the linguistic structure of insults, we can begin to talk about how effective these strategies are in achieving their goals.

This argument is in line with Chilton's assertion that "a combination of quantitative and qualitative linguistic analysis is necessary for a comprehensive understanding of political discourse" (Chilton 2004: 128). After all, the use of numerical data and other statistically verifiable measures is what often enables a humanist to construct evidence and argue for its validity. The humanist toolkit of text analysis is its posture in the formal elements of language, a structure on which to hang its qualitative findings.

#### V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

##### 5.1 Lexical choices and semantic significance

The heart of this inquiry is a close look at the particular words and phrases Trump has employed in his panoply of derogatory nicknames, and especially the implications of their sometimes impressive precision. The words politicians use to address the public can make a big difference in how they see the world and make judgments and decisions. And in no realm is Trump's choice of words

more provocative—or more revealing—than in his daily assault on news outlets whose reporting he deems unflattering. As we will see, his preferred phrase of abuse, "fake news," is a topic that lends itself to deep analysis.

This analysis delves deeper than Trump's widely reported verbal assaults, concentrating on the semantic meaning these words express. Trump continues to employ pathos and targeted linguistic strategies, such as epithets and hyperboles, to manipulate the public. Specifically, this analysis focuses on rhetorical, class, and ethnic slurs used by Trump and how they go unnoticed by the public.

In his work, Johnson (2003) underlined that "the choice of words can have a profound impact on how a message is received and interpreted" (p. 452). As a result, the linguistic choices made in political communication are of acute interest. In the last couple of years, words like fake news, Crooked Hillary, Low-Energy Jeb, or Pocahontas have emerged as particularly potent rhetorical weapons, which altogether have served to discredit media outlets and political opponents and instill doubt as to the credibility of these sources of political information and the political actors themselves. This concept will guide us in the present analysis, through which we will learn to appreciate the weight of the rhetoric deployed in political language.

Donald Trump's preferred nickname for his general election opponent was "Crooked Hillary." This not-so-subtle nickname created a question about her integrity and positioned her as untrustworthy to his supporters. The use of the name "Crooked Hillary" was not designed to inspire confidence in her trustworthiness (Trump, 2016).

In one of his most successful labeling attempts, Donald Trump dubbed his primary rival Jeb Bush "Low-Energy Jeb" (Trump, 2015). Trump strategically employed this approach. Trump said this label was designed to "kill him off," and that it did so because Jeb Bush's energy was widely seen as one of his biggest weaknesses.

For example, we can examine a recent social media post from President Donald Trump criticizing Senator Elizabeth Warren, calling her 'Pocahontas' (Trump, 2018). Trump slams the release of DNA tests on 'Pocahontas.' Elizabeth Warren is far worse than ever, as she stated on Fox News. Donald said, 'Pocahontas has been a tremendous insult to Native Americans.' (2018) Despite Senator Elizabeth Warren being a native American, Trump has used this nickname, which has historical context and is extremely racist, to describe her. Her Native American heritage claims gave rise to the name.

The demonstration of language conflict through the use of a nickname and a label in the speeches of Donald Trump reflects the strategic use of language to control public opinion and create a sense of influence.

## 5.2 Syntactic structures and rhetorical devices

The study aims to conduct a comprehensive analysis of Donald Trump's rhetorical strategies by examining the syntactic structures of English, or simply any insult caption, and its translated version, in order to identify recurring rhetorical devices. Through this analysis, we plan to extrapolate core rhetorical strategies—what makes a verbal attack stick in the world of politics?

The investigation into rhetorical style will involve a close analysis of the use of metaphors, hyperbole, and irony in Trump's insults. These devices can execute a transitive act, propelling the argumentation beyond the mere exchange of words. Charteris-Black (2005) insightfully discusses the function of these devices as powerful tools in political discourse, enabling public speakers to say more than they appear to say. For example, we can also understand metaphorical language as performing representational or indicative work.

Donald Trump was famous for inserting metaphors into his speeches in order to make things stick or become more memorable. Rather than addressing immigration, Trump chose to call it 'a Trojan horse'. This call implies a potential danger, or perhaps a hidden one, that could pose a threat to the masses upon arrival. Metaphorically, Trump stated, "We will build a great wall along the southern border. And Mexico will pay for the wall. One hundred percent" (Trump, 2015). When it comes to the hyperbolic language, Trump asserted, "We have some bad hombres here, and we're going to get them out." (Trump, 2016). Moreover, Trump ironically criticizes the NAFTA deal; he stated, "Remember, it was Bill Clinton who signed NAFTA, one of the worst economic deals ever made by our country, or frankly, any other country." (Trump, 2016).

## VI. CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

A contextual analysis of the speakers and the situation is necessary to fully understand the role and effect of insults in political discourse. Understanding the importance and intention of insults in politics depends on a beneficial understanding of insolence and its importance. Observing the timing and context of an insult is key to fully appreciating it. Analyzing the use of insults chronologically will also reveal how the attackers altered their objectives.

Van Dijk (1998) insightfully pointed out, "Understanding the context in which language is used is crucial for a complete analysis of discourse" (p. 18). This idea is especially important in the case of political insults. To prove just how important this is, examples could include

any of Donald Trump's speeches and rhetoric surrounding his presidential campaigns.

Trump's speeches always had context, and along with that context was the use of derogatory comments toward political candidates. For example, Trump referred to Joe Biden as "Sleepy Joe." It was not simply the use of the nickname; it was the context and timing of when he used it that were significant. Trump would say it during a caucus, rally, or even debate. He did this to gauge the impact on voters and to diminish the energy and mental well-being of his opponent. (Manis, 2023).

This illustration underscores the significance of taking into account the timing and context of insults to accurately interpret their overall meaning. Ultimately, a contextual analysis is necessary to get a more profound comprehension of how insulting works in political communication.

## VII. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the results of this thorough investigation have proved that the domain of political insults is a very sloshy and tricky one, specifically the insults deployed by Donald Trump during his presidential campaigns. Remember, political insults and attacks extend beyond mere verbal attacks. Under supervision, politicians prepare offensive language and political jargon, using them as options to shape public opinion, fabricate political narratives, and manipulate the social and political environment.

Trump's words were not merely insults thrown about to try to wrest a political advantage. Rather, his decision to use them was a carefully calculated method to try to frame his opponents as in some way defective before they could frame him with a negative narrative. In other words, the language significantly influenced people's perception of Trump's political messages, his threats, his divisive promises, and his constant self-citation of his own genius. A rigorous screening of Trump's insults demonstrates the influence that lexical choices can exert through their semantic nuances. This close attention to linguistic choices thus underscores how language can shape our understanding of political messages and morality, lending empirical support to the claim that language doesn't just express our thoughts but also shapes them.

Contextual analysis has enabled a breakthrough in understanding political insults. Examining the timing and circumstances in which insults took place allowed us to understand their intended effect in the larger framework of political communication.

Unraveling the complex nature of political communication requires an understanding of the use of insults in political discourse. The notional breadth of linguistic elements, and invective in particular, are well situated within linguistic study. By comprehending the use of insults as an example of invective, the general application of invective, and the broader use of language, one can gain a deeper appreciation for the fundamental elements of political communication, leading to a more comprehensive understanding of politicians.

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# Teachers Roles and Question Techniques in EFL Classroom

Ahmed Abdul Salam Ayash

AL- Iraqia University, College of Media

E-mail: [ahmed.a.iash@aliraqia.edu.iq](mailto:ahmed.a.iash@aliraqia.edu.iq)

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**Abstract**— *The current research investigates teachers roles and question techniques in the EFL classroom. The purpose of this research is to investigate whether a relationship exists between the roles of teachers and question techniques in EFL classrooms at AL-Iraqia University, and to determine whether there is a difference in the roles of male and female teachers. This research employs a questionnaire as its tool. The population of the present study covers EFL teachers (male and female) who teach English language in the college of media at Al-Iraqia University for the academic year 2023/2024. The research restricts its sample to EFL teachers, both male and female, who instruct undergraduate students. The results obtained in this research indicate that there is a significant relationship between teachers' roles and question techniques in EFL classrooms at Al-Iraqia University, and there is no substantial relationship between teachers' roles (male and female).*



**Keywords**— *EFL Classroom, Teachers' Roles, Question Techniques, Undergraduate Students, and Al-Iraqia University.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms play a vital role in molding student learning and shaping outcomes. This research investigates the delicate relationship between teacher roles and questioning within the context of EFL instruction at Al-Iraqia University. While the study covers both male and female educators, the focus is on discernment of patterns and differences that come into play when asking essential questions, which serve to engage students and get them thinking on a different level.

This research collects insights from EFL instructors at the College of Media through a structured questionnaire. The target population consists of instructors who are both male and female. Data collection took place during the 2023-2024 academic year. Findings indicate a significant relationship between the questioning techniques teachers use and the roles they occupy in the classroom, with both male and female teachers using them in similar ways. Overall, the research reveals several connections between

the questioning techniques teachers use and specific pedagogical dynamics, highlighting certain effective questioning characteristics that contribute to more beneficial pedagogical dynamics.

### 1.1. Statement of the Problem

Teachers have utilized questions to stimulate thinking in the EFL classroom since Socrates, and possibly before that. Appropriate questions allow teachers and students to benefit from one another's experiences (Wood, 2001). Reviews of research findings on questioning reveal that it is an effective skill "to stimulate student interaction, thinking, and learning." Every day teachers ask dozens, even hundreds, of questions—thousands in a single year, over a million during a professional lifetime (Wragg, 2001, p.19). Questioning has been and is a dominant method of instruction in the classroom. Some say questioning is, in fact, the most important teaching technique in use today. The greatest attribute of questioning is that it stimulates thinking in the classroom (Filippone, 1998). In the classroom, teachers constantly

engage students in teaching and learning activities. The question-and-answer session is one of the most crucial sessions a teacher does during the teaching and learning process. In teaching, questioning is a crucial action.

Teachers can use questioning to assess historical knowledge by posing who, what, where, and when questions that require factual responses. The design also aims to stimulate students' thought processes. These kinds of inquiries must be carefully considered because they pertain to more serious issues, such as repercussions and the usage of how-and-why questions (Farrant, 1985). Teachers can practice a variety of questioning tactics and reinforce them in the question-and-answer session to motivate students and stimulate their thinking in the classroom. One of the most efficient strategies to get students interested in the lesson's delivery is to ask them questions. By asking questions, teachers can engage students in thinking about the class topic and receive feedback from them, demonstrating the impact of their teaching (Long, 1980).

Questioning tactics are significant because they can stimulate learning, improve students' thinking capability, lead to clear ideas, pique the imagination, and provide motivation to act. It is also one of the methods by which teachers assist students in more efficiently developing their knowledge.

When conducting teaching and learning sessions in the classroom, teachers must be aware that the quality of questions and questioning is one of the most important factors in determining the effectiveness and quality of their sessions.

### 1.2. Aims of the Research

The current research aims to identify:

1. The study investigates the correlation between the roles of teachers and their question techniques in EFL classrooms at Al Iraqia University.
2. Is there a correlation between the roles of male and female teachers?

### 1.3. Hypotheses of the Research

We put forward the following null hypotheses for verification:

1. There is no significant relationship between teachers' roles and question techniques. In EFL classrooms at Al Iraqi University.
2. There is no significant relationship between teachers' roles (male and female).

### 1.4. Limits of the Research

The present research is limited to:

1. The role of teachers and their questioning techniques.
2. Iraqi EFL teachers (male and female) who teach English language in the College of Education for Humanities at Al Iraqia University for the academic year 2023-2024.

The study only includes EFL teachers, both male and female, who instruct in the fourth year. The students' sample is limited to the year-morning study students in the English department.

### 1.5. Value of the Research

The present study's value can be expressed as follows:

1. It helps EFL curriculum designers and EFL methodologists to develop instructional materials.
2. It facilitates the role of teachers and aids students in easily and smoothly absorbing the structures and rules of English.

### 1.6. Definitions of the Basic Terms

A role is a function or part that is performed as a process, particularly in a specified operation. It refers to the effect of an experimental factor under controlled circumstances (Good, 1959).

Role: how someone or something is involved in an activity or situation and how much influence they have on it (Keeney, 1996)

Question techniques are a set of methods used by teachers when asking questions, such as wait time and bounce. Experienced teachers recognize the power of questions. When skillfully delivered, questions boost student engagement, improve understanding, and promote critical thinking.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Facilitating learning and engaging students in EFL (English as a foreign language) classrooms are the critical roles of the EFL teacher. Research shows that teachers serve not only as providers of necessary knowledge but also as query facilitators who create an environment that encourages active student participation in the learning process (Arends, 2011). In EFL contexts, where students may be unfamiliar with cultural norms and language use, the ability of teachers to employ effective questioning techniques becomes a necessity instead of an option.

### 2.1. Question Techniques in the Classroom

Teachers must play a major role in employing the correct tactics and abilities to question students in order to assist them in inspiring a high level of thinking. Teachers should notice any changes in the classroom and align these

changes with the goals they aim to achieve in the teaching and learning process. Teachers therefore need to plan carefully and take into account some of the following factors:

### 2.1.1. Attention

For classroom attention, asking questions is one of the best methods. The entire classroom must hear the question before inviting a student to respond. Before mentioning a student's name to answer the posed question, teachers should ask a question themselves. This ensures that all students concentrate on the posted questions. If the teacher mentions the student's name first, only that specific student will pay attention in class (Long, 1980).

Classroom teachers should always ask students, not just those who raise their hands. The behavior of students who raise their hands when asking a question in this situation should not influence the teacher.

Teachers frequently offer questions solely to students who raise their hands, ignoring students who do not. This is not conducive to effective teaching and learning. We should give equal attention and care to all students in the classroom.

Meanwhile, some students who are not paying attention will request that the teacher repeat the question. The teacher should not repeat the question when the student asks. If the teacher asks the same question over and over, the students are unlikely to pay attention; hence, the teacher should only ask the question once.

### 2.1.2. Voice

For a teacher, voice is one of the most significant communication instruments. When asking questions, teachers should ensure that their voices are clear and their tone is audible. Teachers should deliver the questions to the students in a clear and concise manner, anticipating their responses. This is critical in getting students to respond to a question (Long, 1980).

### 2.1.3. Pause

After presenting a question, the teacher should take a moment to look around the room and talk. Take note of the verbal signs that the learner is ready to react. After asking questions, give students time to consider their answers (Alsaqoff, 1983).

## III. METHODOLOGY

This research uses a quantitative method to investigate how teachers' roles relate to their questioning techniques in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. More specifically, it looks at EFL instructors in the College of Media at Al-Iraqia University. A structured questionnaire

was designed and administered to the instructors in the 2023-2024 academic year. The instrument had two main sections: the first sought to identify the roles teachers play in the classroom (e.g., facilitator, guide, assessor), and the second assessed the types of questions instructors ask (e.g., knowledge-based, analytical, or evaluative) and the manner in which they ask them.

The population we aimed to include comprised both male and female EFL instructors teaching undergraduate students, specifically those in the last two years of their course. We sought to obtain a representative sample, and for this, we used stratified random sampling, which yielded our desired outcome with respect to the male-female ratio that characterizes EFL instructors at this university. The actual data-gathering process involved a mixed mode of electronically and directly distributing the questionnaire to the EFL instructors. We chose this method due to its proven ability to boost response rates.

We obtained quantitative data from the questionnaires and then analyzed them using various statistical methods. We employed descriptive statistics to summarize the demographic characteristics of our respondents and used inferential statistics to test the null hypotheses we had posited. We related these hypotheses to the constructs of our study, specifically focusing on the relationships between teachers' roles and their questioning techniques. Our main goal was to identify any significant differences in the two constructs mentioned above between male and female teachers that might give us some important pedagogical insights in our EFL classrooms.

### 3.1 Content of Questions

Before asking a question, a teacher should plan the types of questions they will ask in the classroom. In this situation, it may not be necessary to write these questions ahead of time, but it is crucial to construct the "axis question." Organize the axis questions logically to ensure class continuity. The teacher should ask questions like this during a lecture to ascertain the desired direction. Keep the length of these questions to a minimum (Long, 1980, p. 144).

When asking questions, teachers should also consider the students' ages and abilities. Teachers are already aware of a student's ability in a classroom. Therefore, when posing questions, teachers have the ability to pose challenging questions to students who are clever and gifted, while presenting simpler questions to those who are weaker. The simple questions posed to the weaker students will enable them to answer the question, and this will motivate them and stimulate their thinking.

Teachers should also encourage students to ask questions with implicit answers. Teachers should also make sure



question words are clear. Students will become confused if they cannot understand the words used in a question. When students misunderstand a question, the teacher should clarify the question, allowing the student to respond first.

### 3.2 The Importance of Teachers' Asking Questions

The motivations behind teachers posing questions to their students in a classroom often diverge from those in casual conversations. In other words, classroom talk rules differ from others. We question students, not to obtain new knowledge for ourselves but to find out what they already know. Ausubel emphasizes this principle: "What the learner already knows is the most important single factor influencing learning" (Ausubel, 1968, p.2). Assimilate this knowledge and instruct the learner accordingly. Other reasons for asking questions are to stimulate recall, to deepen understanding, to develop imagination, and to encourage problem solving.

There are also classroom management-related questions, such as, 'Have you got your books?', in their first edition of the Sydney Micro Series, list eleven possible functions of questions.

The purpose is to stimulate interest and curiosity about a subject. The goal is to concentrate on a specific problem or idea. Develop an active approach to learning. We aim to encourage students to pose inquiries for both themselves and others. Organize a task to optimize learning. The goal is to identify the specific issues that are preventing students from learning. To communicate with the group that involvement in the lesson is expected and that overt participation by all members of the group is valued. To provide an opportunity for students to reflect upon information. We aim to engage students in an inferred cognitive process, believing that this will aid in the growth of their thinking abilities. To develop reflection and comment by students on the responses of other members of the group, both students and teachers (Wragg, 2001), aim to provide students with a chance to learn through discussion. Various models exist that neatly categorize question types. A favorite among teachers is the model below, which has five simple categories.

### 3.3 The Importance of students' Asking Questions

Children may ask a lot of questions, but not usually in school. Indeed, in one of Wragg's detailed analyses of questioning in twenty lessons, there were fewer than twenty questions asked spontaneously by students, and most of these questions were not centrally concerned with thinking (Wragg, 2001). Many of the questions students ask their teachers appear to be procedural, such as 'What time do we finish?' or 'Should we put the date?', rather than

being related to the thinking processes involved in the subject matter, such as 'Why is the sky blue?' or 'What happens if...?'

Ten teachers remember a testing or penetrating question asked by a student, but these sorts of questions do not occur frequently. Similarly, students often ask each other questions related to procedural or social matters rather than the subject content, unless their teacher explicitly encourages them to ask questions.

The well-known adage by Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget suggests that 'All logical thinking arises out of the manipulation of objects' could also apply to 'and the asking of questions'. In addition to procedures and subject matter, students may ask questions of the teacher or each other for various reasons. We should consider the students' attention, affection, and recognition of learning when they ask questions (Piaget and Inhelder, 1969, p.7).

### 3.4 Distribution of Questions

Teachers should pose inquiries to all students in the classroom. Teachers will ask questions to all students to encourage their participation in the teaching and learning process (Long, 1980). Teachers should also refrain from asking questions based on their students' sitting positions in the classroom. This is because students who are seated in the back and on the sides of the classroom are not paying attention during class. Therefore, we need to pose questions to all students to ensure their focus and participation.

In the meantime, teachers should be ready with questions. When students are conducting a study or project, teachers should refrain from asking questions. Teachers should constantly assist students in coming up with the right answers by pulling these answers out of them when asking questions and obtaining responses from them. In this way, students will think more deeply and attempt to answer the question (Alsagoff, 1983).

### 3.5 Levels of Questions

During teaching and learning activities, it is important to vary the levels of questioning. Benjamin S. Bloom divides the six levels of inquiries into the cognitive domain in his "Taxonomy of Education Objective (1956)". The process commences with recalling facts, marking the lowest level, and progresses to the most intricate and abstract levels, culminating in the ultimate evaluation level (Bloom, 1956). The six levels of questions are structured as follows:

#### 3.5.1 Knowledge

Students can easily remember knowledge-based questions. Teachers should use these types of questions while introducing new topics or ideas to their students.

### 3.5.2 Understanding

After introducing students to a concept and knowledge, teachers should pose comprehensible questions. This implies that teaching and learning will occur within the context of comprehension or comprehension-related activities.

### 3.5.3 Application

The following components of the questions address how students use the provided information. The application questions aim to help students apply the knowledge they've gained in class.

### 3.5.4 Analysis

The analysis question differs from other types of questions in that it seeks to separate ideas. Teachers must exercise caution when presenting analytical questions to students at a higher level, ensuring they can comprehend the subject matter and apply all necessary skills.

### 3.5.5 Synthesis

Synthesis questions require students to generate a new idea based on the provided information. These abilities necessitate high-level talents, as teachers must guide children until they are able to synthesize knowledge.

### 3.5.6 Evaluation

Students will receive evaluation-based questions at the highest level. Evaluation requires students to formulate and sustain their justifications.

## 3.6 Other Categories of Questions

There are also other ways to categorize questions. It can be performed according to its main functions as follows:

Students will receive evaluation-based questions at the highest level. Evaluation requires students to formulate and sustain their justifications.

### 3.6.1 First-order Questions

The most often asked queries are of this nature. The sequential phrasing of this question aligns with the disclosure of information in the teaching and learning activities.

### 3.6.2 Uncovered Questions

Uncovered questions are a type of question that has the potential to gradually expand students' knowledge. This technique also requires teachers to tackle creative, clear, and straightforward questions so that students do not get bored.

### 3.6.3 Open-Ended Questions

Open-ended questions are a form of independent inquiry that seeks to assess students' abilities and knowledge. Additionally, students may pose alternative questions to

the teacher in order to seek further clarification and certainty. Teachers expect this kind of response to gauge students' understanding.

### 3.6.4 Divergent Questions

Divergent questions can stimulate a wide range of thinking abilities in students. Subjective questions aid students in expanding their thinking horizons, a crucial step toward enhancing their cognitive abilities (Bloom, 1956).

## 3.7 Population and Sampling

According to Creswell (2012), a population is a group of individuals who share a common characteristic. For example, all teachers would make up the population of teachers, and all high school administrators in a school district would comprise the population of administrators. As these examples illustrate, populations can be small or large. Within this target population, the researcher then selects a sample for study.

A sample is a subgroup of the target population that the researcher plans to study in order to make generalizations about the target population. Ideally, the researcher selects a sample of individuals who are representative of the entire population.

The population of the present study covers EFL teachers (male and female) who teach the English language in the College of Education for Humanities at Al-Iraqia University for the academic year 2023-2024.

Only male and female EFL teachers who teach the fourth year make up the study's sample. The students' sample is limited to the fourth-year morning study students in the English department.

There are a total of 30 teachers who teach English. The sample includes 10 teachers, which represent 33% of the population. We randomly selected teachers with experiences ranging from 1 year to 20 years.

## 3.8 Constructing the Instrument of the Research

It is crucial to collect information about questions and techniques from teachers in a systematic manner, as this ensures the rationality of educational decisions and judgments (Hughes, 1996). Therefore, this research employs a questionnaire as its primary research instrument.

## 3.9 The Questionnaire

A questionnaire is one of the most widely used tools to collect data, especially in social science research. The main objective of questionnaires in research is to obtain relevant information in the most reliable and valid manner.

We have constructed a 10-item questionnaire for teachers who teach and are interested in the intended textbook.

#### IV. THE VALIDITY OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Validity elucidates the extent to which the collected data encompasses the actual area of investigation "Measure what you intend to measure" is the essence of validity (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005, p.92).

##### 4.1 Face Validity

Creswell (2012) characterizes face validity as the extent to which individuals involved in education, like test takers, teachers, supervisors, etc., perceive a measure's relationship to a specific construct. That is, a measurement tool has face validity if its content simply looks relevant to the person taking the test or answering the questionnaire. It evaluates the appearance of the questionnaire and test in terms of feasibility, readability, consistency of style and formatting, and the clarity of the language used. We submitted both study instruments to a jury of teachers and ELT methodology specialists to ensure their validity. After reviewing the instruments, the jurors declared them appropriate and valid, considering a few comments and modifications before preparing the final forms of the instruments.

##### 4.2 Content Validity

Content validity pertains to the extent to which a test accurately measures the intended characteristics or abilities. It verifies whether the test accurately measures the intended characteristic or ability.

Weir (1990) views content validity as the process of determining the degree to which the test tasks accurately reflect the tasks under examination. Put simply, content validity involves a methodical examination of the test's content to confirm its alignment with the material and the targeted behaviors for measurement.

##### 4.3 Reliability of the Questionnaire

We conclude the reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha formula, a statistical measure of internal consistency. It gauges the degree of correlation between a set of items. Cronbach's Coefficient value ranges between 0 and 1. It increases as the correlation between the items increases (Streiner and Norman, 1989, p. 64). The statistically obtained results show that the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire is 19.0.

##### 4.4 Pilot Administration of the Questionnaire

To conduct a pilot administration of the questionnaire, we have selected a group of three teachers. We selected the pilot sample teachers from the entire population, not just the basic sample of the study. The results have shown that

all the items are clear and understood enough, and the time needed ranges from 35 to 40 minutes.

##### 4.5 Scoring Scheme of the Questionnaire

A Likert scale is adopted in which the respondents express their level of agreement concerning each item in the following three-point scale: Agree 3, partially agree = 2, disagree = 1.

##### 4.6 Final Administration of the Questionnaire

The final administration of the questionnaire took place from June 16 to June 28, 2023. We informed the respondents about the purpose of the questionnaire and the overall goal of the study. Each one of the respondents has filled out his/her copy thoroughly.

#### V. RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The following results are obtained:

1. There is a significant relationship between teachers' roles and question techniques. In EFL classrooms at Iraqi University.
2. There is no significant relationship between teachers' roles (male and female).

We constructed the questionnaire to assess the extent to which question techniques meet the stated criteria. We analyzed the questionnaire results from the involved teachers and summarized them as follows:

1. The arrangement, design, and size of the prescribed questions are satisfactory.
2. The activities associated with the use of different questions adapt so they can be fully utilized.
3. Teachers' perspectives on their ability to teach have not been uniform. However, results show that the prescribed question techniques help teachers to best utilize their time.
4. The teachers have highly evaluated the prescribed question's content. In general, the materials within the content are motivating, explicit, and challenging.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

Questioning in teaching and learning sessions is one of the most important aspects of mastering knowledge. Teachers should focus on questioning techniques in the teaching and learning process to encourage students' interest and attention in learning. Questioning techniques increase motivation and promote students' ability to think critically and creatively.

Furthermore, these techniques help students engage actively in the teaching and learning process and stimulate the mastery of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS).

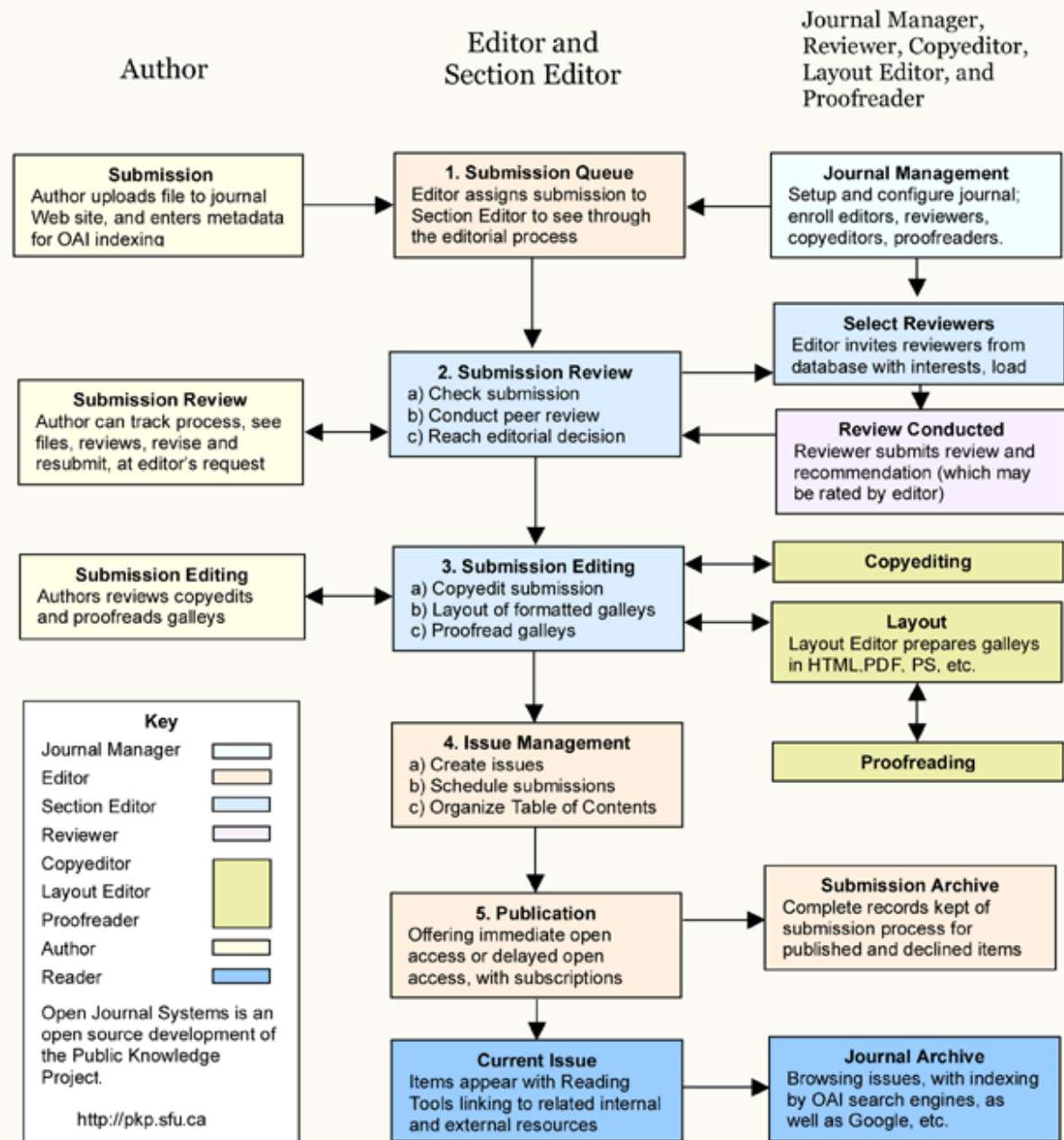
Through questioning techniques, teachers are able to explain important content so that students can understand and enable them to develop their thinking to a higher level. Therefore, questioning techniques need attention from educators in order to produce students who can compete globally.

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