Proceedings

International Conference on Economics, Business and Interdisciplinary Studies

ICEBIS 2023

Siam University

14 Octeober 2023

Thailand

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Conference Schedule

International Conference in Economics, Business and Interdisciplinary Studies (ICEBIS 2023)

14 October 2023
Venue – Building 2, Room 2-203, Siam University

Time	Description/Presentation Title
Session 1	
9.00 – 9.30	**Registration (Venue: Building 2, Room 303)**
9.30 – 9.45	**Opening Ceremony** - Welcome remarks and introduction to ICEBIS by Conference Chair – Dr. Duminda Jayaranjan - Remarks by the President, Siam University, Dr. Pornchai Mongkhonvanit
9.45 – 10.00	**Keynote session:** **Keynote Speech:** Shekh Mohammad Altafur Rahman, Ph.D. *Assistant Professor, School of Global Studies, Thammasat University, Thailand*
	Photo session
Session 2: **Session Chair**: Dr. Suraphol Srivithaya Doctor of Law (LL.D.) and Master of Law (LL.M.) Programs, Former Dean of Faculty of Law, Rangsit University, Thailand Senior Lecturer, Director (Institute of Professional Development), Siam University, Thailand	
10.00 – 10.15	**Paper 1:** Influence of Social Media Regarding Trust and Privacy on Consumer Buying Behavior by Adarsh Tripathi
10.15 – 10.30	**Paper 2:** The Role of Women in Peace Negotiations: Assessing the Importance of Women's Participation in Peace Processes and Understanding Their Unique Contributions to Conflict Resolution by Jasmehar Kaur
10.30 – 10.45	**Paper 3:** Exploring the Roles of Igbo Traditional Rulers in Fostering Peace and Harmony within Igbo Society and Nigeria by Romanus Chukwunyere Akwaka

10.45 – 11.00	**Paper 4:** The roles of clan's headers in peaceful conflict resolution in Mogadishu Somalia by Farah Abdirashid Aser
11.00 – 11.15	**Paper 5**: The Impact of Sustainable Packaging in the Food and Beverage Industry on Consumer Purchasing Behaviour – A Study at Siam University by Viktoria Pheettschomphuu Potsch
11.15 – 11.30	**Paper 6:** Restoring Family Honor: Understanding the Unnecessary Evil Still at Large by Saif Ur Rahman
11.30 – 11.45	Paper 7: Transforming Education through Artificial Intelligence: Innovations, Impacts, and Challenges by Dr. Khwanchol Kampan
11.45 – 12.00	Paper 8: Consumers Online Shopping Intentions on Short Video E-Commerce Platforms - An empirical study of Douyin Mall by Huang Xiangying and Sumaia Farzana
12.00 – 12.45	Lunch Break/

Session 3 **Session Chair:** Saif Ur Rahman Lecturer, International College, Siam University, Thailand Lecturer, MAPD, Siam University Senior Lecturer, Director (Institute of Professional Development), Siam University, Thailand	
12.45 – 13.00	**Paper 9:** Authentic Existence Of Jean Paul Sartre A Recipe For Peace In Nigeria by Peter Onyekachi Afoenyem
13.00 – 13.15	**Paper 10:** Thai Diplomacy in the New World Order and Balance of Powers in the Post-Cold War Era by AP Dr. Suraphol Srivithaya
13.15 – 13.30	**Paper 11:** The Caste System Inherited Ancient Societies, Shape Social Structures and Its Impact on Human Rights of People and Community by Harsh Vivek Raj
13.30 – 13.45	**Paper 12:** The influence of ZMOT and Mobile Technology on consumer decision making by Sabbir Hossain
13.45 – 14.00	**Paper 13:** Influence of Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Support on the Academic Performance and the Psychological Well-being of International Students in Thai Universities by Sadia Mahamood and Saif Ur Rahman

<td colspan="2" align="center">**Session 4:** **Session Chair**: Dr. Duminda Jayaranjan (online parallel session) Dean, International College, Siam University Executive Director, (Institute of Professional Development) Siam University, Thailand</td>
14.00 – 14.15	**Paper 14**: The Role of Buddhist Education in Khmer Social Development in Travinh Province of Southern Vietnam by Tran Van Doan (online)
14.15 – 14.30	**Paper 15**: Loyalty and Organizational Behavior by Dr. Veliath James Jain (online)
14.30 – 14.45	**Paper 16**: The impact of destination values and tourist satisfaction on destination loyalty: A case study of Iranian tourists in Pattaya by Katayoun Amin Ghazaei (online)
14.45 – 15.00	**Paper 17**: Digital Payment on Financial Transactions towards Economic Growth in South East Asian Emergent Countries by Dr. Martino Wibowo (online)
<td colspan="2" align="center">**Session 3** **Session Chair:** Saif Ur Rahman Lecturer, International College, Siam University, Thailand Lecturer, MAPD, Siam University Senior Lecturer, Director (Institute of Professional Development), Siam University, Thailand</td>
14.00 – 14.15	**Paper 18**: The influence of extrinsic rewards and organizational support on knowledge sharing behavior among the academic members in Bangladesh – an application of theory of reasoned action by Sumaia Farzana
14:15 - 14:30	**Paper 19:** The relationship between promotion and advertisement towards brand association and brand loyalty by Hpoo Pwint Dahlia Maung
15.00 – 15.15	**Certificate Distribution/Award**
15.15 – 15.40	**Closing Remarks by Dr. Duminda Jayaranjan**

Content

The Role of Buddhist Education in Khmer Social Development in Travinh Province of Southern Vietnam

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ABSTRACT

This study consisted of three objectives relevant to the role of Buddhist education for Khmer social development in the Travinh province of Southern Vietnam: (1) to study concepts and theories of such Buddhist education; (2) to analyze the role such Buddhist education; (3) to recommend the practice of such Buddhist education. The research applied a qualitative research methodology by using documentary research methods. The secondary data was collected from various documents, such as books, dissertations, theses, articles, unprinted documents, and other sources. The researcher analyzed all collected data using content, logical, and comparative analyses to draw research findings and conclusions, and make recommendations. This research found that Buddhist education played a crucial role in Khmer social development in the Travinh province of Southern Vietnam. The Threefold Training, the Three True Doctrines, and the Four Noble Truths, including the Four Noble Truths Action Framework, were the factors that positively impacted the Theravāda Buddhist Studies Program of Travinh province. Relevant recommendations from this research and for future research were

Keywords: Buddhist Education, Role, Khmer Social Development, Southern Vietnam, Travinh Province

INTRODUCTION

Buddhist education plays a crucial role in social development of Khmer ethnic group in Travinh province in Southern Vietnam. Khmer culture and tradition including their mindset and skills are affected by the Buddha's core teachings generally. Thachkeo (2020) emphasized the development strategy of the Theravāda Buddhist studies program (*Buddhikasiksa*) in a case study of the Khmer community in Travinh province in Vietnam that all Khmer communities believe in Buddhism. Buddhism does not only get influenced by Khmer-born Buddhists' spirituality but also by their way of life. Buddhism always helps to create social civilization and happiness for Khmer in terms of engaged Buddhism (p. 2). It is crystal clear that the role of Buddhist education becomes the cause of this study, either the Khmer social development is the effect in this research.

Travinh is a strategic place for maintaining, protecting, and propagating Theravāda Buddhism for sustainable development in the Khmer community. Nowadays, it has become the place for many Khmer Buddhist scholars to conduct their academic works. Thachkeo (2020) claimed in his dissertation that Travinh is considered the land of Khmer Theravāda Buddhism in Vietnam (p. 2). Another study indicated similar evidence, showing that Travinh province is the land of Khmer Theravāda Buddhism. Khmer people would be endowed with the

Buddha's teachings are the potential factors in maintaining peace among the different ethnic groups of Khmer, Vietnamese and Chinese in the particular location, even if they were affected by the political and historical turmoil (Dao, 2017, p. 21). Travinh is located in the Mekong Delta region which is a part of Southern Vietnam. The province had been established with an area of 2,358.2 hectares, a population of 1,045,600 inhabitants, and ten administrative units. The three ethnic groups have lived together in unity and harmony. The Khmer make up 31.63% of Travinh Provincial population. In previous times, the name of the city in Khmer is Preah Trapeang, but the modern one is called Travinh in Vietnamese. There are 143 Khmer Theravāda Buddhist temples. Each year, it has got 3,000 to 3,500 Khmer Theravāda Buddhist monks and novices conduct the three-months rainy retreat in local temples.

The priority way to educate and train Khmer children is based on Buddhist education in Khmer Theravāda temples in local places. From the past up to now, almost 143 Khmer Theravāda temples in Travinh have run a monastic school system standard for Khmer children in the Mekong Delta in Vietnam with 100% free of charge. To share for mindset and to train for skills are the crucial keys to show the Khmer complex culture. Tran (2010) wrote in his thesis, at the center of all Khmer communities in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam are the temples. By supporting the monks in the temples, the laities contribute to making and sharing communal merits. The temples, in return, serve the Khmer community in part by serving as a center of learning (p. 80). Khmer Temples and communities have joined hands together to educate and train their children under Theravāda Buddhist Studies program (TBSP) for the better lives. The accomplishments of the research are going to show at the research findings.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research applies qualitative research by using documentary research methods; the secondary data is collected from various documents, such as academic books, research papers, review articles, newspapers, and official reports of Buddhist associations and international organizations. The researcher analyzes all collected data by using content analysis, logical analysis, and comparative analysis, to make the research's findings, discussion, and recommendations. The following procedure can be represented by its three objectives as follows:

1) To study the concepts and theories of the role of Buddhist education in Khmer social development in Travinh province of Southern Vietnam, and its related research as the Buddhist strategy and Khmer way of life.

2) To analyze the inputs, process, and outputs of the role of Buddhist education in Khmer social development in Travinh province of Southern Vietnam. The key concerns are going through the Threefold Training, the Three True Doctrines, the Four Noble Truths, and the Four Noble Truths action framework, including its practice by Khmer people.

3) To find appropriate recommendations for the use of Buddhist education in Khmer social development in Travinh province of Southern Vietnam to use from this Independence Study (IS) for further study.

The conceptual framework of this research is presented below:

INPUT	PROCESS	OUTPUT/OUTCOME
CORE BUDDHIST PRINCIPLES	**PROCESS OF CORE BUDDHIST PRINCIPLES**	
(+) The Threefold Training (+) The Three True Doctrines (+) The Four Noble Truths	**The Four Noble Truths Action Framework:** (-) Understanding of Problems (-) Abandonment of Weak Points (+) Realization of Opportunities (+) Development of Strong Points	Khmer Social Development
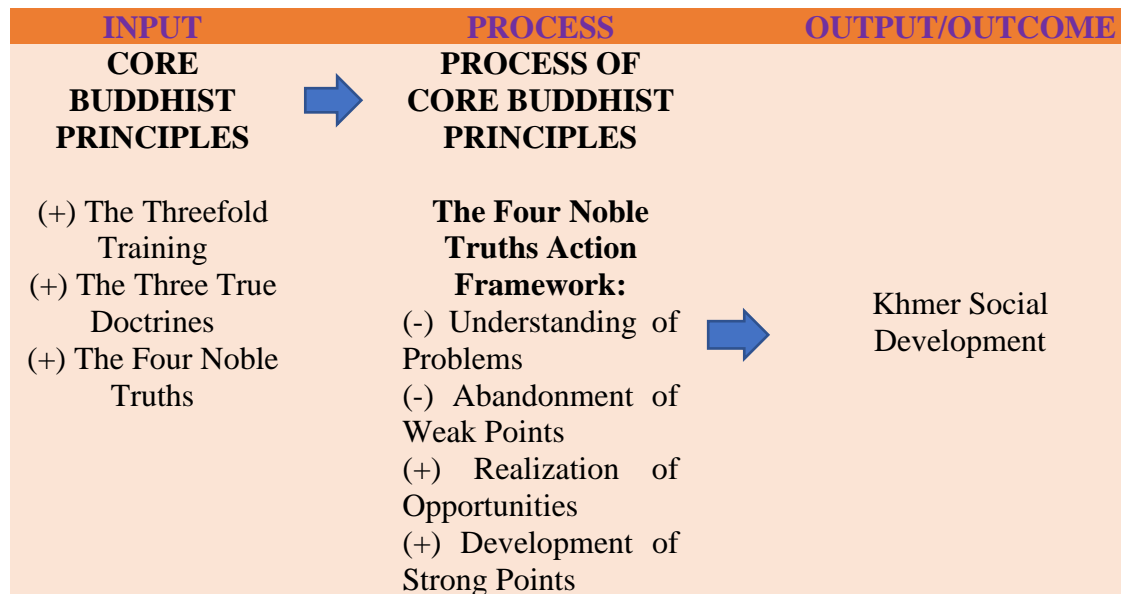
Diagram 1: Conceptual Framework of Research

The researcher analyzes the role of Buddhist education in responding to the social development need of the Khmer ethnic group in Travinh province of Southern Vietnam and their way of life as shown in the above conceptual framework.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

It is interesting to study "the role of Buddhist education in Khmer social development in Travinh province of Southern Vietnam" by using various documentary sources. The word "role" means the expected behavior pattern of TBSP and the character that is played by United-loving Nation Buddhist Monk Society in Travinh Province (UNBMST) in Khmer communities for socially sustainable development. At the same time, another source showed that Buddhist education played a crucial role in developing the Khmer Society in the Travinh province in Vietnam in particular. All in all, Theravāda Buddhist activities have become the character of local Khmer communities.

There are three purposes for Theravāda Buddhist Studies Program (TBSP) of Travinh: (1) to identify the character of Khmer Buddhist traditional values, (2) to invest intangible capital in Khmer Buddhist scholars, and (3) to propagate the Buddha's teachings for the benefits, happiness, and peacefulness of the many. One more important thing relating to the role of Buddhist education in Travinh is emphasizing the strategic development for TBSP's introduction, philosophy, slogan, mission, vision, objectives, goal, strategic methods, and headquarters, to attract all respondent sectors for Khmer social development.

There are many Peace Studies and Buddhist scholars paying attention to the role of Buddhist education in Khmer social development. Other scholars claimed that Buddhist education plays a very significant role in Khmer social development in Vietnam. Another study (Tran 2010) emphasized similar information and data, showing Khmer Theravada Buddhist monks taking all 143 temples in Travinh as the foundation center of their work and played crucial roles in contributing to the fulfillment and preservation of Theravāda Buddhist culture in the Khmer Society. Furthermore, there is research found that the Buddha's core teachings, the

Threefold Training, the Three True Doctrines, the Four Noble Truths, and its Four Noble Truths action framework are summarized as tools to fix all the known and unknown life problems. More importantly, Buddhism and modern sciences are the truths and facts integrating into a term of strategic development for problem-solving in short.

Society is the shelter of humankind. The more people are born; the more problems are. The potential problems are nonstop. Solving all life problems is known to develop people's lives based on the right way in continuation, as shown in the three important revolutions that shaped the course of history. According to Buddhism, society is created and developed by human beings themselves, which indicates their bodies and minds' responsibilities. So both body and mind are subjected to be trained for being a good citizen because one personality with morality, concentration, and wisdom developed is the basic family unit, a family is the basic socially developed unit, a social is the basic national unit and nation is the basic world qualified unit accordingly. Even all systems can be trained, and an individual is a center for Khmer social development, at least potentially.

Khmer people are accepted to be trained in mindset and developed for wisdom under the Theravāda Buddhist Studies program in their local places. 500,000 Khmer units, with 31.63% of the Travinh Provincial population are Theravāda Buddhist devotees, and they had only one teacher previously. Their teacher was the Buddha. They believed in the virtues of the Triple Gem, a reflection of daily activities, and so on, but nowadays they are turning problems. They are divided into three main groups: the first group follows a Vietnamese communist party. The second group depends on overseas Khmer. The last group is the Khmer Buddhists. These are why the Buddha's core teachings are maintained, to make these Khmer social problems solved and united again.

Introduction to Theravāda Buddhist Studies Program of Travinh Province

Thachkeo (2020) expounded that the Theravāda Buddhist Studies program in Travinh Province of Southern Vietnam, abbreviation as TBSP, is a monastic school system standard by the Buddhist rules and law. TBSP was established in 1965 by the Provincial Society. It provides Social and Sciences Studies 100% free of charge to Khmer children and Khmer social development in Vietnam. The revised core subjects are meditation and computers. Students are required to spend at least seven academic years to finish seven grades, and they are expected to obtain the outstanding outcomes as follows (p. 102);

(1) Philosophy: Self-minimizing; non self-maximizing; integration of TBSP with modern sciences; sharing for mindset and training for skills.

(2) Slogan: Ways to liberation.

(3) Mission: A monastic school system standard with 100% free of charge.
(4) Vision: An integration of TBSP with modern sciences for greater mental and socially sustainable development.

(5) Objectives: To study a Buddhist way of life; to approach Buddhism; to build a new code of peaceful life.

(6) Goal: Liberation of all kinds of life problems.

(7) Strategic methods: The Four Noble Truths action framework; the Four Great Effort's application; the four BSP actions framework; the eight principles of blue ocean strategy.

(8) Headquarter office: Travinh Province in Vietnam; contact by Facebook: Salakon Online.

One thing that is modernized by Thachkeo (2020) is a new revised TBSP curriculum. By driving from the eliminate-reduce-raise-create grid for TBSP, he decided to revise a new TBSP curriculum from grade 6th to grade 12th. This new revision had forced by several factors: (1) the eliminating granted factors of some subjects of Social and Sciences Studies, (2) the reducing factors of the learning period, (3) the rising factors of subjects of Buddhism, expanding from learning period to motivating speech in the classroom, high technology in management, and (4) creating factors of subjects of mediation and computers included training mind and developing wisdom methods, integration of TBSP with modern sciences, and five principles of extension of Buddhism if it was compared to the old TBSP curriculum (pp.103-105).

Problems of Theravāda Buddhist Studies Program of Travinh Province

The problems of TBSP are serious issues nationwide. It has no goal, adjectives, mission, vision, seal, slogan, email address, site, newsletters, or philosophy, and not everything is in existence yet, except the visible evidence such as the unprinted documents, oral test, and the existing problems. Based on a reported paper of the executive committee from the Provincial Society, the researcher found two primary problems. Those are the loss of beliefs and the lack of skills and abilities in management in TBSP's administration (The Executive Commission, 2018, pp. 21-22).

According to the Buddhist belief, all problems always have their original causal. So, what are the causes of TBSP's problems so far? The main cases are clear: on the report of summary activities of the Travinh Provincial Society in the 6th term (2013-2018), it quoted that, first of all, some abbots in Travinh have no experience in administration. Their abilities and knowledge in Dhamma and social engagement are still limited. They are not concerned enough to report the serious issues and make a request to the Provincial Society. Those cause obstacles in problem-solving for the officers. Furthermore, they do not pay attention to educating the new monkhood and novices. They will not be interested in the temples and monks. Those are the facts that make monks easily break down the Dhamma and Vinaya of the Buddha and cause negative affecting on the belief of the Buddhists. Secondly, the executive committee of Districts and City, especially the local managers of the village, the membership is not a qualification because of the disruption of monks. The knowledge, abilities, and membership of the executive committee regarding their responsibilities, their tasks, their duties, and their accountabilities are poor. Participation in the Provincial Society is still unavailable. Thirdly, the updating news and report from the Districts to the Provincial Society are not on time. The promotion of the Buddhist rules of the Provincial Society to the membership and monks is not going smoothly. There is a lack of attention, guidance, observation, puss passion, and reminding of the rule of the officers to the local place. Finally, the education and management of monks in some temples are not standard. It is easy to cause immorality and crimes in their society accordingly (The Executive Commission, 2018, pp. 21-22).

To sum up, the lack of skills and abilities in management is caused by some abbots who are poor in managing skills and abilities limitation of UNBMST's people existing from the

bottom to the top. The gap between the member participants and the Provincial headquarter office is so large, leading to the mechanical disruption of TBSP. The belief of Khmer communities in monks is going down day by day because of the moral disorder and crimes of Khmer monks frequently. These cause the main issues to the Khmer social development. Khmer people do nothing here. They adapt to them and try to find the proper problem-solution to the weak points, which are considered the cause of suffering or problems in the Four Noble Truths. The researcher hopes that we can propose a new proper strategy to solve these problems completely. Together, we can bring the TBSP of Travinh great again in our motherland.

Opportunities of Theravāda Buddhist Studies Program of Travinh Province

The Standing Members reported that the TBSP of Travinh has become the first value advantage for 57 years. There is no competition and the committees of TBSP never think of competing with others. They follow the appointment of a chairman of the executive board and run the program for the annual academic year. Below is the historic message which is based on the four opportunities in existence for Buddhist Studies to all the world citizens as the global village (The Standing Member, 2018, pp. 5-6):

Firstly, Theravāda Buddhism has become a religion of Khmer families in Travinh Province in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam. It is the heart and soul of Khmer communities. Khmer people learn the Buddha's teachings and apply them in their daily life for happiness, peacefulness, and living this life fully with the mindfulness practice.

Secondly, all the monastic schools through Travinh province provide the course 100% free of charge, and temples are becoming the main sponsors from A to Z. All abbots in the 143 Khmer Theravāda Buddhist temples attempt to apply the documents for requesting opening classes for monks, novices and Khmer children in time for the annual year.

Thirdly, every year in Travinh, there are at least 3,000 to 3,500 monks and novices taking the three-month rainy retreat and joining in studying and practicing the Dhamma and Vinaya. This scenario has become the most yellow colorful in the community.

Fourthly, Travinh has belonged to the land of Khmer Theravāda Buddhism for a very long time, and the governor monks here wish to see this land turning into the main strategic place for Theravāda and Mahāyāna Buddhism working together for the benefit of others. That is why Theravāda Buddhism becomes the Buddhist way of life for Khmer communities. So learning, practicing, approaching the Dhamma and Vinaya of the Buddha, and protecting Buddhism are the main duties of Khmer monks, novices, and Khmer generations from the past up to now.

The Four Noble Truths Action Framework

These proceeding dependencies showed that the right understanding is always important for liberation or reform system in Buddhism. According to an integration of the four actions framework expounded by Thachkeo aimed to develop the Four Noble Truths action framework for Buddhist Studies' problem solving in particular (see diagram two). One thing is clear: TBSP of Travinh needs this philosophy. Diagram two showed the Four Noble Truths

in action framework into the problem solving for the Khmer social development in Travinh province of Southern Vietnam because number one is considered as the result of number two, which needs to get the right understanding and abandoning. Number three is the result of number four which needs to realize and develop forever. In contrast, number two is the cause of number one, and number four is the cause of number three. So, there are only two things the researcher has to target. Those are the cause and effect, or the problems and opportunities (Thachkeo, 2020, pp. 57-58).
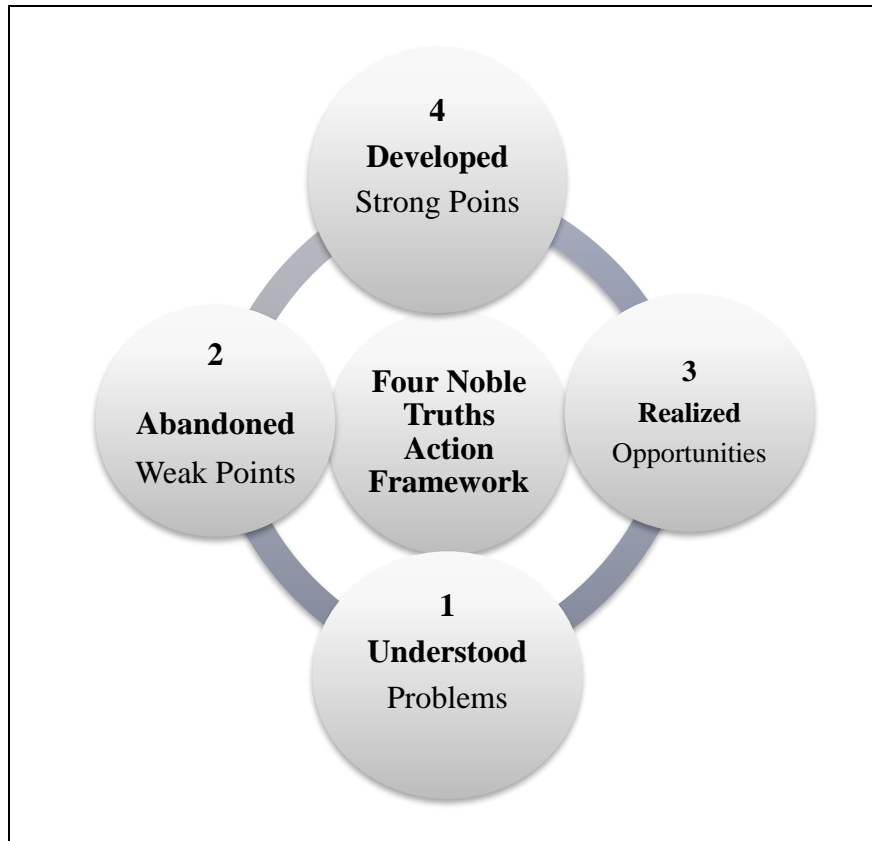
Diagram 2: The Four Noble Truths Action Framework (Thachkeo, 2020)

A lesson learned from this diagram two is important: everything has appeared and disappeared in this world because of its reason and condition or cause and effect. The most important thing we have to approach is the right understanding of things in existence. The right understanding is in need because it is a role of wisdom, and wisdom itself is the highest goal of Buddhist Studies for Khmer social civilization in Travinh province. So, the more problems people resolve, the more wisdom they attain. To resolve all kinds of life problems, wisdom is available for everyone and becomes a common choice for those who strictly follow the Buddhist Middle Way or the Eightfold Path in daily life.

A Comparison Between Weak and Strong Points in the Khmer Society of Travinh Province

A common question has been asked how the researcher would resolve these weak points? The answer must be based on the metaphor of the blue ocean strategy. Kim and Mauborgne (2015) pointed out that they keep developing strong points by rising and creating opportunities inside TBSP and Khmer Society in continuation. They make all kinds of

competition within the 143 temples and Khmer Society irrelevant and rebuild the blue ocean for Khmer social development in the local place (p. 4). This way can help TBSP as well as the Khmer Society to reduce and eliminate the weak points to beat life problems automatically because both points are alternatives. There is an essential thing to remind the researcher how to define and explain the two terms "red oceans and blue oceans" hereby because the researcher used the metaphor of red oceans to capture the reality that organizations increasingly face, while blue oceans captured the endless possibility that organizations could create. "Red oceans" are the known market space. It represents all the industries in existence today. In the red oceans, industry boundaries are defined and accepted, and the competitive rules of the game are known. Another supporting idea the researcher found in the blue ocean strategy expounds that they can create uncontested opportunities for TBSP and Khmer Society within the weak points by expanding the integrated TBSP with modern sciences and the development of strategic boundaries, including the strategic plan, the strategic development, and the day-by-day strategic set. Here is the skill and ability to change from weak points to opportunities (Kim, Mauborgne, 2015, pp. 4-5). Thachkeo (2020) again proposed that all members involved must be committed to following the TBSP strategic development, especially the philosophy of TBSP which consists of (1) self-minimizing, (2) non self-maximizing, (3) integrated TBSP with modern sciences and (4) sharing for mindset and training for skill. The answer is in our mind and soul. No weak point cannot resolve under the real strategy. However, before having arrived at the strong points of Khmer Society and creating opportunities for them, all levels of Khmer people have to recognize the strong and weak points which Khmer ethnic in Travinh province of Southern Vietnam are experiencing as below (pp. 84-85):

(+) Strong Points	(-) Weak Points
Long history (1965)	Old program (no amendment for 57 years)
Strong in traditional and cultural beliefs	Weak in practical Buddhism
TBSP run by Buddhist rules and law	No budget support from a communist Vietnam government
First value advantage of TBSP	No vision to expand
Became a common program in Khmer local region	Unclear goal setting
Got high expectations from Khmer communities	No formulation and execution principles for managers and leadership in management
Studies free of course	Time, risks, and expected benefits are never free by nature
Got high satisfaction rates from Khmer domestic countries and global	The known and unknown problems never put an end
Strong in theoretical Buddhism	Trapped at self-maximization
High sacrifice for Khmer local welfare	Lack of high-technology adaptation
Participated in Khmer social contribution	Lack of skills and abilities in teamwork
Loved the Khmer nation by heartfelt	Destroyed the Khmer nation by ignorance
Understood all the problems	Being afraid of solving problems strategically
Lovers of the knowledge	Never support good learners with a scholarship provision
Big potential of moral subjects	Lack of the classical subjects that sharing for mindset and training for skill
Khmer children became dreamers	Lack of positive thinking, lack of motivated

	speech, no goal and plan for life, rich of self-maximization
Khmer people preferring to change others	Never changing within themselves
Re-unified in rite and ritual ceremonies	Scared for insight meditation practice.
Khmer helps Khmer.	Khmer discrediting each other.

(Source: Thachkeo, 2020)

Table 1: The Strong Points and Weak Points in the Khmer Society of Travinh Province

In this comparative section, the researcher analyzed the findings in the context of the Four Noble Truths action framework, derived from the Buddha's core teachings. These are the Threefold Training, the Three True Doctrines, and the Four Noble Truths including the modern sciences referred to as the four actions framework in blue ocean strategy. This action framework was applied for the context analysis, concept analysis, and content analysis of the Khmer Society. It aimed to understand the problems, realize opportunities, abandon the weak points, and develop the strong points of Buddhist education and Khmer Society under the specific field of Theravāda Buddhist Studies program for Khmer social development in Travinh province of Southern Vietnam. Then the researcher decided to reduce and eliminate the weak points to beat the problems of the Theravāda Buddhist Studies program and Khmer Society. On another side, the researcher rose and created strong points to approach the opportunities in existence and the uncontested opportunities for Khmer social development (see diagram two).

DISCUSSIONS

The findings showed the role of Buddhist education in Khmer social development in Travinh province in Southern Vietnam. The Theravāda Buddhist Studies Program in Travinh province in Vietnam is a monastic school system standard by the Buddhist rules and law. It has been established since 1965 by the Provincial Society and provided Social and Sciences Studies 100% free of charge to Khmer children and for Khmer social development in Southern Vietnam. Potentially, students have to spend their time at least seven years to finish the Buddhist diploma. After that, students are expected to obtain the highest goal of "liberation of all kinds of life problems" and get an understanding philosophy of self-minimizing, integration of TBSP with modern sciences, sharing for mindset, and skill training. Furthermore, students can learn and practice Buddha's teachings in the right way. One more important thing, an old TBSP curriculum was proposed to be replaced by a new revised one.

It has been 57 years since the Theravāda Buddhist Studies program in Travinh was established. Naturally, it cannot avoid some mistakes so far, such as (1) the loss of belief, (2) the lack of skills and abilities in management caused by (1) the moral disorder and crimes of Khmer monks frequently, and (2) some abbots being poor in managing skills, and abilities limitation at all levels including the weak points of the Khmer Society as well. These were considered the two primary problems of TBSP of Travinh, which the Buddhist scholar proposes to get the right to understand by the Four Noble Truths action framework at number one (see diagram two).

As for opportunities hereby, the researcher divided them into two kinds, which are the highest goal of Buddhist education for mankind: opportunities in existence and uncontested opportunities. For the TBSP of Travinh, the researcher found four opportunities that had been explored. Those are: (1) TBSP is directly for Khmer children, (2) the course is 100% free of

charge, (3) there are 3,000 to 3,500 novices and Buddhist monks involved in teaching and learning the Buddhist teachings for an annual year, and (4) TBSP teaches the way of life to Khmer communities. This is considered as the opportunities in which students acquire to meet in accordance with the Four Noble Truths action framework at number three. Khmer people who see either the opportunities in existence or the uncontested opportunities can experience the benefits, peacefulness, and happiness of the Theravāda Buddhist Studies program of Travinh (see diagram two).

According to the Four Noble Truths action framework at number two, the weak points of Khmer Society are the causes of primary problems which the Buddhist scholar proposes to be abandoned completely. The weak points were expounded, like an old program (having received no amendment for 57 years), weak in practical Buddhism, no budget support from a communist Vietnam government, no vision to expand, unclear goal setting, no formulation and execution principles for manager and leadership in management, time, risks and expected benefits never free by nature, the known and unknown problems never put an end, trapped at self-maximization, and lack of high technology adaptation. These are subjected to reduction and elimination as soon as possible to put an end to all kinds of life problems for Khmer social development (see diagram two and table one).

In comparison, the strong points of Khmer Society were also expounded, like the long history of TBSP (established 1965), strong traditional and cultural beliefs, TBSP run by Buddhist rules and law, approached the first value advantage, became a common program in Khmer local region, high expectation from Khmer communities, studied free 100% of charge, got high satisfaction rate from Khmer domestic countries and global, strong in theoretical Buddhism and high sacrificed for Khmer local welfare. These are the causes of opportunities in TBSP for Khmer children, and they have been raised and created in continuation to realize the existing and uncontested opportunities. At the time, these strong points of Khmer Society can make Khmer communities stronger and ready to replace all life problems. One more important thing, the Buddha's core teachings associated with the Four Noble Truths action framework are not only for the Khmer Society but also for everyone (see diagram two and table one).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher has covered all the contexts, concepts and contents of this main topic, neither its creativity nor innovation. It is hoped that other researchers will be interested in finding out relevant answers. To keep the Buddhist education as well as the Theravāda Buddhist Studies program of Travinh moving toward progress, the researcher would ask for help from other researchers to answer the two following research questions;

(1) What are the expected benefits that TBSP students wish to obtain?

(2) Which TBSP curriculum, the old or the newly revised, is most satisfied by the students?

Responses to these two questions should be helpful to understand further the role of Buddhist education in Khmer social development in Travinh province of Southern Vietnam.

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Influence of Social Media Regarding Trust and Privacy on Consumer Buying Behaviour

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ABSTRACT

The pervasive growth of social media platforms has significantly transformed the way individuals interact, communicate, and consume information. As the number of social media users surpasses 4.2 billion worldwide, these platforms have become influential channels in shaping consumer behaviour. This research explores the profound impact of social media on consumer buying behaviour, with a particular focus on trust and privacy considerations.

The purpose of this study is to investigate how social media influences consumers' purchasing decisions. To achieve this objective, a comprehensive design and methodology were adopted, incorporating with documentary methods. Through in-depth interviews, surveys, and analysis of user-generated content, this research delves into the various ways consumers engage with social media when researching products, comparing prices, and reading reviews before making purchase choices.

The results and findings of this research highlight the crucial role of social media in influencing consumer behaviour. It uncovers that positive word-of-mouth reviews and testimonials from satisfied customers, influencer marketing, and user-generated content significantly impact consumers' trust and perception of brands. Additionally, the study reveals the effectiveness of interactive content and personalized marketing in driving engagement and fostering brand loyalty. Furthermore, the research identifies trust as a critical factor in the relationship between social media marketing and brand equity. The study underscores that brands can enhance trust and credibility through direct interaction with customers, addressing concerns, and upholding brand values. Conversely, a lack of trust due to deceptive practices on social media can negatively impact brand equity and loyalty.

The findings also reveal that approximately 20-30% of global consumers have made purchases through social media. As businesses strengthen their presence on these platforms and consumers become more comfortable with e-commerce transactions, this percentage is expected to rise. In conclusion, this research highlights the significance of social media in shaping consumer behaviour, with trust and privacy as central elements. By providing insights into the effective strategies employed by businesses to influence buying decisions, the study contributes to the understanding of consumer behaviour in the digital era. Ultimately, it emphasizes the importance for companies and brands to establish a positive image, build customer relationships, and employ ethical practices to succeed in the dynamic landscape of social media-driven consumerism.

Keywords: Social Media, Consumer Buying Behaviour or intention, Trust and Concern of Privacy

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Social media has become a major source of news, entertainment, and communication for many people and has revolutionized the way people interact and connect with each other. The percentage of people using social media worldwide was approximately 54.6% of the total population, according to the Digital 2021 Global Overview Report by We Are Social and Hootsuite. This equates to around 4.2 billion social media users worldwide. Social media is an online platform that enable users to interact and share content with others, such as text, images, videos, and links. Some examples of social media are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Snapchat. The main purpose of social media is to allow users to connect with friends, family, and other people with similar interests, share information and express themselves creatively Loanas (2020).

According to Voramontri (2019), social media has a significant impact on consumer buying behavior by providing information and shaping opinions through user-generated content, advertisements, and influencer marketing. In general, it allows consumers to research products, compare prices, and read reviews before making a purchase decision (Voramontri, 2019). Additionally, social media platforms often have features that allow businesses to target specific demographics, increasing the chances of conversation between different segment of consumers in the market. The rise of mobile devices has also made it easier for consumers to shop online while they are on social media, leading to an increase in impulse purchases.

Ebrahim (2020) argued that trust is a crucial factor in understanding the impact of social media marketing on brand equity and brand loyalty. Trust in a brand can be strengthened by both positive experiences and word-of-mouth recommendations from friends and influencers. Social media provides an opportunity for companies to build trust and credibility by interacting directly with customers, addressing their concerns, and showcasing their brand values. On the other hand, a lack of trust in a brand can have a negative impact on brand equity and brand loyalty, particularly if the brand engages in deceptive or unethical practices on social media. Moreover, responding to customer questions, comments, and reviews on a timely and engaging manner helps to build trust and loyalty towards the social media platform.

The percentage of people buying products online through social media varies depending on the region, age group, and product category (Alsare, 2019). However, a recent study found that approximately 20-30% of consumers globally have made a purchase through social media (Alawan, 2020). The number is expected to grow as more businesses increase their presence on social media platforms and consumers become more comfortable with making purchases through these channels. The exact percentage may also vary depending on the specific platform, as some platforms are better suited for e-commerce and have higher conversion rates than others. Privacy concerns have also become increasingly significant in the digital age. As individuals share personal information and engage with brands on social media, questions surrounding data security and privacy violations have gained prominence (Maria,2019). Consumers are becoming more conscious of their digital footprints and the potential misuse of their data by companies. Consequently, the level of perceived privacy and data security on social media platforms can significantly influence consumer behaviour, including their willingness to share personal information and engage with brands.

Before making a purchase, more than 77% of consumers look at user reviews. If a business has reviews, it immediately gains credibility and trust (even if they are bad). Online reviews outlook to customers the intellect that your business is genuine and delivers a real product or facility. Customers from all around the world consult these evaluations as sources of information before making a purchasing decision. Additionally, they use these reviews to develop a perception of the brand. Even if the reviews are negative, how the business chooses to respond to them can still be very important for its brand image. Companies and brands use social media to reach potential customers and influence their buying decisions in several ways:

Firstly, creating and sharing educational and engaging content to establish brand authority and build trust with consumers.

1.2 Research Problems

In today's digital age, where social media has become a ubiquitous part of daily life, understanding the intricate relationship between social media usage, trust, privacy concerns, and their influence on consumer buying behavior has become paramount for businesses and marketers (Kalieb, 2020). While there is substantial evidence suggesting that social media plays a significant role in shaping consumer decisions and trust dynamics, there remains a need for a comprehensive investigation into the nuanced factors, mechanisms, and regional variances that mediate these interactions. Moreover, in an era where online reviews and customer feedback have immense sway, it is essential to explore how trust and privacy perceptions on social media platforms impact consumers' evaluation of brand equity and brand loyalty. Therefore, this research aims to delve into the multifaceted aspects of social media's impact on consumer buying behavior, trust-building strategies employed by businesses, and the evolving landscape of online commerce through social media channels. According to a survey conducted by Global WebIndex in 2021, 43% of internet users aged 16-64 reported using social media to research or purchase products online. However, this percentage can vary significantly depending on the age, gender, and location of the users, as well as the type of social media platform being used. Additionally, digital marketing leverages the psychology of persuasion and the principles of human decision-making to create compelling messages that drive conversions (J kung, 2019) This research seeks to address the complex interplay between social media, trust, privacy, and consumer choices. By examining the extent to which trust is influenced by online interactions, user-generated content, influencer marketing, and brand engagement strategies, we aim to shed light on the mechanisms through which social media fosters or hinders consumer trust. Additionally, we will investigate the impact of privacy concerns on trust development and its subsequent effects on consumer purchasing decisions. However, it is important to note that social media can also spread false information and misleading reviews, so consumers must be cautious and critical when using it to inform their purchasing decisions.

Palalic, (2021) Through a multidisciplinary approach encompassing psychology, marketing, and data analysis, this study will endeavor to provide actionable insights for businesses seeking to optimize their social media strategies. By understanding how social media users navigate trust and privacy considerations, companies can tailor their approaches to enhance brand credibility, foster consumer loyalty, and ultimately drive successful e-commerce outcomes. According to Njuguna (2018), online promotion is vital for interacting with customers, piquing their curiosity, and raising their awareness of a brand. However, various difficulties, such as a customer's mindset, are influencing how consumers choose to respond to online advertisements (Dolega,2021). This research problem delves into the core issues

surrounding your topic and sets the stage for an in-depth investigation into the influence of social media on trust, privacy, and consumer buying behavior, highlighting its relevance and potential impact on businesses and consumers alike.

1.3 Objectives of the study

This research study refers to explore the function and influence of social media on consumer buying and evaluate the problem and privacy related issue in influencing consumer buying behavior. This study is to provide suggestions to overcome all the difficulties and promote the positive factor that they can engage more in digital media and make it more informal. Therefore, the objective of the studies are as follows:

  i.   To Examine how trust and concern of privacy should be considered during Purchasing.
  ii. To Examine the factor that effect on purchasing intention of buyers.

1.4 Scope of the study

The study would examine and draw a map of how social media affects the decision-making process of consumers and the role it plays in influencing their purchase decisions, how social media influences the awareness and attitudes of consumers towards various products and services, the study would explore the impact of demographic factors, such as age, gender, income, education, and cultural background, on the influence of social media on consumer behavior. Further on the other hand it shows an upright and effective way to reduce all the problems and challenges we are facing regarding purchasing on digital media.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Use of social media

The study by Voramontri (2019), founds that social media is a tool for users to connect with others, they believe that social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn offer users the ability to interact with people from all over the world and form new relationships. It is easy to understand and use they believe that social media enables users to share their thoughts, opinions, and experiences with others, creating a sense of community and fostering creativity with social media platforms offer users the ability to build a personal or professional brand, connect with potential customers, and generate sales some factor which influences social media buying provides users with a platform to share their experiences and opinions about products and services. This social proof can significantly influence consumer behavior. This personalization can influence consumer behavior by exposing them to products and services that are relevant to their interests and needs.

Ebrahim 2020 Consumers can use social media platforms to access information about products, services, and companies. This can help them make informed decisions when making purchases or choosing services, consumers can use social media to reach out to companies for customer service or support (Bugasana,2020). This can include asking questions, reporting issues, or making complaints overall the use of social media for consumers in many ways like reading reviews of products, accessing information, purchasing decisions and etc. It shows a positive relationship between social media and consumers.

False Information: Social media platforms can spread false or misleading information, which can negatively impact consumer buying behaviour.

Privacy Concerns: Many consumers are concerned about their personal data and privacy being exploited or misused on social media platforms.

Addiction to Comparison: Social media encourages consumers to compare their lives to others, leading to feelings of inadequacy and dissatisfaction.

Lack of physical interaction: Social media platforms are not replacing traditional brick-and-mortar shops and stores, which can cause a loss of trust for the consumer and also a lack of tactile experience which is important for some products.

Cyberbullying: Social media can be a breeding ground for cyberbullying, which can have negative effects on self-esteem and mental health.

FOMO (Fear of Missing Out): Social media can create a fear of missing out (FOMO) on experiences, events, and products, leading consumers to make impulsive buying decisions.

Algorithm Bias: Social media algorithms can show users biased content, leading to limited exposure to diverse opinions, perspectives, and products.

Fake Reviews: According to alwan. (2020), Consumers may be influenced by fake reviews and ratings, which can be misleading and harm the reputation of a brand.
Impulse buying: Social media platforms are designed to be addictive, and users are constantly exposed to new products and deals. This can lead to consumers buying products on impulse, without fully considering the purchase
Addiction and Distraction: Social media can be addictive and distracting, taking away time and attention from other important tasks and responsibilities (Saleham ,2018).

2.2 Consumer Buying Behaviour

Purchase Intention
Loanas (2020) Purchase intention refers to the willingness and readiness of consumers to make a purchase decision. Several factors influence purchase intention in the context of social media. Kaur et al. (2021) found that engaging and interactive content on social media positively affects purchase intention. When consumers find content on social media engaging, informative, or entertaining, they are more likely to express a higher purchase intention toward the products or services promoted within that content. Furthermore, Lu et al. (2019) emphasized the role of social influence on purchase intention. Social media allows users to observe what their peers are purchasing and endorsing. When consumers see their friends or social media connections buying and recommending products or services, it can significantly influence their own purchase intention. In conclusion, understanding the factors that influence trust, privacy concerns, and purchase intention on social media is essential for businesses looking to leverage these platforms effectively and build meaningful relationships with their target audience. By Aragoncillo (2018) consumer buying behaviour refers to the process that individuals go through when making a purchase. Social factors such as family, friends, culture, and reference groups can also influence consumer behavior. For example, a person's family and friends can influence their purchasing decisions by providing recommendations or sharing their own experiences. Similarly, a person's culture and

reference groups can influence their perceptions and beliefs about products and brands. Psychological factors such as perception, motivation, learning, and beliefs can also influence consumer behavior By understanding the factors that influence consumer behavior, marketers and businesses can develop effective marketing strategies that appeal to consumers' needs and preferences. M Singh, (2018), this can help them to create products and services that better meet the needs of their customers, and to develop marketing campaigns that are more likely to persuade consumers to make a purchase.

It involves a series of steps and factors that influence the decision-making process. Here are the common stages of consumer buying behavior.

Problem Recognition: The first stage of consumer buying behavior is recognizing the need for a product or service. This can be triggered by an internal stimulus such as hunger or thirst, or an external stimulus such as an advertisement or a recommendation from a friend.

Information Search: Once consumer recognizes the need for a product or service, they will begin to search for information to help them make a decision. They may use different sources such as search engines, social media, and product reviews, or ask for recommendations from friends and family.

Evaluation of Alternatives: The consumer will then evaluate the available alternatives by comparing the features, benefits, and prices of different products or services. They may also consider factors such as brand reputation, quality, and availability.

Purchase Decision: Once the consumer has evaluated the alternatives, they will make a decision on which product or service to purchase. This may be influenced by factors such as price, availability, and the level of satisfaction with the product.

Post-Purchase Evaluation: After purchasing a product or service, the consumer will evaluate their level of satisfaction with the purchase. According to al.Alwan (2020) this can influence their future purchase decisions and their perception of the brand. The factors that influence consumer buying behavior include personal, psychological, and social factors. Personal factors include age, income, lifestyle, and personality. Psychological factors include motivation, perception, learning, and attitudes. Social factors include the influence of family, friends, culture, and social status. Marketers can use this understanding of consumer buying behavior to develop effective marketing strategies that appeal to consumers' needs and preferences. Overall, the aim of studying consumer buying behaviour is to develop a better understanding of how individuals make purchase decisions and to use this knowledge to create products and services that better meet the needs of customers and to develop marketing strategies that are more likely to persuade consumers to make a purchase.

2.3 Trust

In the recent study, Pop and R.A Dabija (2020), found that trust is an important factor in consumer buying from social media. Social media platforms have become a popular channel for consumers to make purchase decisions, but with the rise of online scams and fraudulent activities, consumers can be wary of buying from unknown sources. Consumers are more likely to make a purchase from a company they perceive as trustworthy. Factors that can contribute to a company's perceived trustworthiness include their reputation, customer service, and transparency about their policies and practices regarding data privacy and security. Here are some reasons why trust is important in consumer buying from social media:

Ebrahim (2020) 1. Reputation: Consumers are more likely to buy from businesses that have a good reputation. Social media platforms allow consumers to check the reputation of a

business by reading reviews, comments, and ratings. If a business has a good reputation on social media, it can build trust with consumers.

2. Influencer Marketing: Influencers have become an important source of information and inspiration for consumers. When consumers trust an influencer's recommendations, they are more likely to buy the products they promote.

3. Security: Social media platforms have taken measures to ensure the security of their users. Consumers are more likely to trust social media platforms with robust security measures to protect their personal information.

4. Social Proof: Social media platforms provide social proof in the form of likes, shares, and comments. When consumers see that other people are using and liking a particular product, it can build trust and influence their own purchase decision. Transparency: Social media allows businesses to be more transparent with their customers. When businesses are open and transparent about their products and services, it can build trust with consumers(Lakshmana P. 2018).Overall, trust is an important factor in consumer buying from social media. Building trust with consumers can lead to more sales, customer loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth marketing. Businesses can build trust with consumers by being transparent, providing excellent customer service, and maintaining a good reputation on social media platforms.

2.4 Privacy Concern

According to Jozani and Ayaburi, (2020), privacy concerns can have an impact on consumer buying behaviour on social media. Consumers are becoming more aware of the privacy risks associated with sharing personal information on social media, and are becoming more cautious about the types of information they share. Here are some ways privacy concerns can impact consumer buying behavior on social media. Privacy concerns can erode trust between consumers and businesses on social media. Consumers are more likely to trust businesses that are transparent about their data collection practices and take steps to protect their personal information (M.Y zhang,2019) .Social media's targeted advertising, driven by data and analytics, customizes ads based on users' interests and demographics. While this approach can be highly effective, it has raised privacy concerns among consumers who worry about data breaches and third-party access to their information. This hesitancy to share reviews and ratings on social media platforms can limit the valuable information available to help other consumers make informed purchase decisions. The study delves into the impact of privacy concerns on consumer buying behaviour on social media. To address these concerns, businesses need to build trust by being transparent about their data collection practices and taking concrete steps to protect consumers' personal information. Simultaneously, social media platforms must enhance their security measures to safeguard user data. This approach is crucial because social media significantly influences consumer purchasing behaviour on a global scale.

2.4 Past Research

Past research on consumer buying behavior has provided valuable insights into the factors that drive purchase decisions, as well as the strategies that marketers can use to influence consumer behavior. there has been a significant amount of research on consumer purchase intention over the years their are respective articles highlight the importance of trust and privacy in shaping consumer buying behaviour or purchase intention, particularly in the

context of e-commerce and mobile commerce. Research in the realm of consumer buying behaviour has furnished valuable insights into the determinants of purchase decisions and the tactics marketers employ to influence consumer conduct. A substantial body of work has been dedicated to scrutinizing these intricacies over the years, elucidating the pivotal role that trust and privacy play in moulding consumer buying behaviour, particularly within the domains of e-commerce and mobile commerce.

Pauline M. Dibben and Christine Anew (International Journal of Bank Marketing, 1999) delved into the sphere of trust within consumer relationships with financial services providers, encompassing banks and insurance companies. Their research illuminated the indispensable role trust occupies in forging enduring bonds with customers, underscoring the imperative for businesses to emphasize trustworthiness by delivering dependable and transparent services.

Consumer buying behaviour varies depending on the complexity of the purchase. In cases of complex buying, as elucidated by Ayaburi,(2020) decisions entail a deliberate and meticulous process. These purchases typically involve high costs, possess long-term ramifications, and necessitate a significant degree of customization or personalization. Complex buying necessitates meticulous strategic planning, patience, and a profound comprehension of the requisites and priorities of all stakeholders participating in the decision-making process.

In a study titled "Privacy and Online Behavioural Advertising: Perceptions and Reactions of Online Users" (M. Borroni 2018). the impact of online behavioural advertising on consumer privacy perceptions and reactions was scrutinized. The research findings underscored that consumers harbour a general scepticism toward online behavioural advertising, with privacy and data protection concerns wielding substantial influence over consumer attitudes in this domain. Collectively, these studies underscore the significance of trust and privacy concerns in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviours, particularly in the realms of e-commerce and online shopping. Businesses seeking to allure and retain customers within these settings should prioritize the cultivation of trust and the resolution of privacy concerns. The intricate interplay between complex buying and privacy concerns reflects a multifaceted landscape, shaped not only by individual consumer preferences but also by the actions and policies of the companies and institutions involved in the transaction.

3. Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework presented in this section aims to provide a comprehensive and integrated perspective on the influence of social media on purchase intention, with a specific focus on the roles of trust and privacy. It is essential to recognize the intricate interplay between these factors in shaping consumer behaviour within the dynamic digital landscape. In today's digitally-driven world, social media plays a paramount role in shaping consumers' lives and their purchase decisions. Consumers often turn to online platforms for various purposes, including researching products, comparing prices, reading reviews, and seeking recommendations. Social media platforms serve as information hubs where consumers gather insights and opinions about products and services from peers, influencers, and brands.

Digital media play a important role in consumer life and choices. Consumers often read online reviews of products before making a purchase decision. Positive reviews can increase the likelihood that a consumer will buy a product, while negative reviews can turn them off. Privacy concerns and online purchasing behavior: A review" by Liang Chen, Yan Zhang, and

Jianghua Zhou, published in the Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services (2019). According to this article privacy takes a big place in digital media buying,Consumers also want to feel confident that their personal and financial information is secure when making a digital purchase. Websites that offer secure checkout and payment processes, as well as clear privacy policies, can help increase consumer confidence in the security of the transaction.

Key factors   **Influences**

Trust

Privacy   **Purchase Intention**
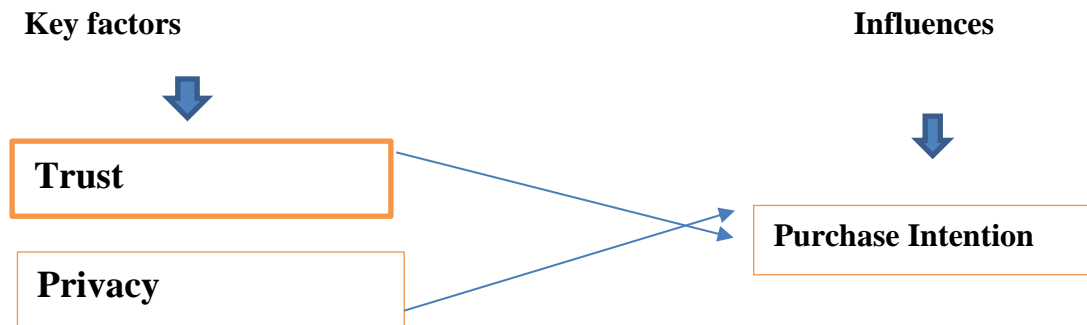
Figure. Conceptual framework of the factor which influence consumer buying behaviour.

4. Methodology Content Analysis

The scope of the study is to analyze and collect information about all the factors from the book, journal, article, etc. which are related to digital media on consumer buying in every aspect whether it is positive or negative. In our study on the Influence of Social Media Regarding Trust and Privacy on Consumer Buying Behaviour, we employed a content analysis methodology to systematically examine and interpret data from various social media platforms. This approach allowed us to uncover patterns, themes, and insights related to trust, privacy, and consumer buying behaviour.

5. Result and Discussion

Our research on the Influence of Social Media Regarding Trust and Privacy on Consumer Buying Behaviour reveals that trust and privacy perceptions profoundly influence consumer choices on social media platforms. We find that various social media features, including user-generated content and influencer marketing, are influential factors. Findings indicate that trust and privacy perceptions on social media significantly impact consumer choices. Features like user-generated content and influencer marketing play pivotal roles. Regional and demographic variations in trust and privacy perceptions are noted. Businesses can use these insights to enhance social media strategies and build trust. Comparisons with existing literature enrich our understanding, while acknowledging study limitations prompts future research Moreover, regional and demographic differences in these perceptions are evident. These findings offer actionable insights for businesses aiming to improve their social media strategies by building trust. Our work also contributes to the existing literature and identifies avenues for future research. Understanding social media's role in shaping trust, privacy, and consumer behaviour is pivotal in the modern digital landscape.

6. Recommendation

This study found out when it comes to consumer buying behavior, trust and privacy concerns are two important factors that can influence purchase decisions The insights derived from this study underscore the pivotal role of social media in influencing consumer behaviour, particularly in the context of purchase intention, trust, and privacy. Building on these findings, we offer the following recommendations for businesses and marketers seeking to leverage social media effectively.

Cultivating Trust

- **Deliver Excellent Customer Service** Investing in responsive and empathetic customer service on social media platforms is essential. Promptly address customer queries, concerns, and issues to build trust with your audience.

- **Enhance Transparency:** Be transparent about your business practices, data collection methods, and privacy policies. This transparency can alleviate consumer concerns and enhance trustworthiness.
- **Leverage Influencer Marketing:** Collaborate with trustworthy influencers whose values align with your brand. Influencer marketing can be a potent tool to foster trust and reach a wider audience.
- **Maintain a Positive Reputation:** Actively manage your social media reputation. Encourage satisfied customers to share their positive experiences, as positive reviews and testimonials contribute significantly to building trust.

Addressing Privacy Concerns

- **Transparent Data Practices:** Clearly communicate how you collect, use, and protect user data. Being forthright about data practices can mitigate privacy concerns.
- **Responsible Targeted Advertising:** Implement targeted advertising practices that respect user privacy boundaries. Avoid overly invasive advertising tactics that may deter users.
- **Robust Data Security:** Invest in robust data security measures to safeguard user information. Prioritize cybersecurity to protect both your users and your brand's reputation.

Conclusion

In summary, this research delves into the multifaceted relationship between social media, purchase intention, trust, and privacy. The findings illuminate the profound influence of social media on consumer behaviour and emphasize the critical importance of trust and privacy in this digital landscape. The absence of findings and discussion sections in this paper is acknowledged. Given the extensive literature review and conceptual framework established, further research is needed to generate empirical findings and insights from data collection and analysis. Future studies should aim to systematically investigate and present research outcomes, offering a comprehensive understanding of the nuanced dynamics at play.

In conclusion, this study contributes valuable insights into the influence of social media on purchase intention, highlighting trust as a foundational element and privacy concerns as a potential barrier. Businesses and marketers can leverage these insights to refine their

strategies, ultimately building lasting customer relationships in the digital age. Strengthening trust, addressing privacy concerns, and staying attuned to evolving consumer behaviours are essential steps toward success in the dynamic landscape of social media-driven consumerism.

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The Role of Women in Peace Negotiations: Assessing the Importance of Women's Participation in Peace Processes and Understanding Their Unique Contributions to Conflict Resolution

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ABSTRACT

The role of women in peace negotiations has garnered increasing attention as a crucial aspect of conflict resolution and sustainable peace-building efforts. This research study seeks to assess the significance of women's participation in peace processes and understanding their unique contributions to conflict resolution, by analyzing a diverse range of case studies and empirical data. This research aims to shed light on the often-underestimated impact of women's involvement in formal and informal peace negotiations; to explore how women's inclusion in peace negotiations enhances the overall quality of dialogue; to foster broader representation of affected communities and brings novel perspectives to the negotiating table. This research is qualitative research using the documentary research method. Documentary data were collected from related academic books, case studies, papers, and research reports, as well as official documents from relevant international organizations concerned that were studied by content analysis and logical analysis. The research analysis investigated the impediments and challenges faced by women in participating effectively in peace processes and identified potential avenues for overcoming gender-based barriers and promoting greater gender equality in diplomatic engagements, as well as examined the distinct approaches and strategies employed by women in resolving conflicts, involving their emphasis on human security, gender-sensitive policy formulation, and social cohesion initiatives. The research findings will contribute to the development of more gender-responsive policies and strategies in conflict resolution and peace-building initiatives, paving the way for more equitable and effective peace processes worldwide.

Keywords: Role of Women, Peace Negotiations, Peace Processes, Conflict Resolution, Security, Women and Peace

INTRODUCTION

There is plenty of evidence from international relations scholarship to back up the claim that men and women approach conflict and conflict resolution in different ways. Women's position, their representation in national legislatures, and the duration of women's suffrage are all known to reduce the likelihood and/or severity of wars between nations (Melander 2005; Caprioli and Boyer 2001; Caprioli 2000). Research highlighting gender differences in

simulated negotiations supports the normative idea that women bring a unique perspective to peace processes, a belief that underpins international initiatives like UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions, as well as national action plans on women, peace, and security (Boyer et al 2009).

Women in state administrations or civil society organizations have received a lot of attention in the study on the widespread effects of women on conflict outcomes. While this is going on, researchers looking at non-state armed groups (NSAGs) have shown that women have participated in insurgencies in 60 different nations since 1990, making up most of these organizations that have been active during this time (Mazurana 2014; Henshaw 2016, 2017; Wood and Thomas 2017). Particularly, these women continue to be underrepresented in peace negotiations, according to the United Nations. Even where women were present, they "continue to be disproportionately highly represented in groups that agitate for peace and mobilize communities and society to demand that parties to the conflict lay down their arms" (UN Women 2012: 6). According to a 2012 report from UN Women, only about 9% of all negotiators in major peace processes 1992–2011 were women. This highlights a troubling discrepancy between the actual frequency with which women participate in NSAGs and the lack of such women in negotiations that are supported globally.

The Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) was adopted by the United Nations in 2000, and it was then that academics and practitioners started to pay greater attention to women's participation in peace processes. The first of its type, Resolution UNSCR 1325, called for the participation of women in the peace process while highlighting their unique contributions to it (UNSC 2000). There are now around seven more UN Security Council resolutions that recognise the different contributions women contribute to peace processes, including UNSCR 1820 (UNSC 2008), UNSCR 1888 (UNSC 2009a), UNSCR 1889 (UNSC 2009b), and UNSCR 1960 (UNSC 2010) collectively known as the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. The systematic and representative participation of women in peace processes as negotiators, mediators, arbitrators, etc. has generally been argued to significantly increase the likelihood of achieving lasting peace outcomes (Myrttinen 2016; Gizelis 2009; Nakaya 2004; Byrne, Marcus, and Stevens 1995; Boals 1973; Sen 1999; Byrne 1995, 1996; UNSC 2016). While ignoring other social identity markers' significant role in excluding women, researchers have frequently used a narrow definition of gender - men versus women - to explain unequal social relations that exclude sections of society from the peace process (Pratt and Richter-Devroe 2011). Aiming "to elevate women's voices and leadership, increase their participation in peace processes and leadership in security institutions, and bring grassroots strategies for peacebuilding to the international level" (Donnelly et al. 2020), the Women Peace and Security Agenda aims to "improve women's status and leadership."

LITERATURE REVIEW

It's crucial to note that this review of literature on women's involvement in peacemaking mostly focuses on formal negotiating procedures. Even when they are not formally involved, women have created networks and groups to influence formal peace negotiations and have participated in less formal and informal conversations to resolve disputes (Porter, 2003). One well-known instance of women's external impact on official peace negotiations is the example of local women's organizations encircling buildings in Liberia to force peace negotiators to remain in the room until conversations are over (Diaz & Tordjman, 2012). As far as research is concerned, United Nations Women (UN Women) has been the most reliable

source. Following an analysis of 31 significant peace processes, they emphasized the appalling levels of women's involvement in peace settlement and talks in their 2012 paper. They discovered that just 4% of peace agreement signatories and less than 10% of peace negotiators between 1992 and 2011 were women (UN Women, 2012). Similar findings were made by the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GmbH), which concluded that "women frequently have no direct access to mediators or the official mediation and negotiation teams and there is no official, standardized mechanism for accessing information about the peace process and for developing women's interests" (2013, p. 15).

Both Karam (2000) and El Jack (2003) contend that the exclusion of women from the peace table is motivated by essentialist views of women who see them as passive participants in conflict as opposed to active participants who provide different viewpoints. According to Mpoumou (2004), who wrote on the Congo peace process, "the Congolese government, as well as other warring parties, strongly opposed the inclusion of women in formal peace negotiations because, for them, war and peace are exclusively the business of men" (p. 122). , Jama (2010) notes that in Somalia, "women have used their positions within the clan system [as "neutral" peacemakers] to bridge clan divisions and to act as a first channel for dialogue between parties in conflict," even though "women are typically excluded from decision-making forums."

Another group of researchers investigating peacebuilding are more interested in whether the results or reports of peace settlement procedures explicitly recognize the role of women in post-conflict communities rather than the proportion of women who participate in the peace agreement process. For instance, in a 2015 study, a group of scholars under the direction of Radhika Coomaraswamy evaluated the state of resolution 1325's implementation at the international, regional, and national levels as well as how it affected the language used in peace accords. According to the survey, 27% of peace agreements signed after 2000 have mentioned women, which is more than twice as many as those reached between 1990 and 2000. Similarly, the UN Secretary-General noted the growing trend of women's inclusion in peacemaking processes in a report to the Security Council. According to him, gender or women's rights elements were included in 50% of the 16 peace accords reached in 2014 as opposed to 30% in 2012 and 22% in both 2011 and 2010 (UNSC 2015).

The UN has asked nations to increase the number of women deployed as part of their efforts to peacekeeping after the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325. In addition to addressing concerns about sexual violence against local women, whether committed by local men or male peacekeepers, the deployment of women to peacekeeping operations was anticipated to motivate local women and girls to fight for their rights and to take part in peace processes (Simi 2010; Gizelis 2009; Kent 2007; Koyama and Myrttinen 2007; Olsson and Tryggestad 2001; Stiehm 2001). Only 874 of the 10,785 UN police officers and 24,74 of the 90,181 military troops were women as of April 2009, according to a UN Department of Peacekeeping (UNDPKO) report (as referenced in Simi 2010, p. 192). Owing to this gap, scholars such as Simi (2010) argue that males continue to dominate the "hypermasculine" realm of peacekeeping.

Beardsley and Karim (2013) also point out that, despite an increase in female peacekeepers, the majority of female military personnel are often stationed in low-risk locations. They frequently aren't sent to places where they could be most needed, including where sexual assault and gender equity are serious issues (p. 463–6). For instance, in countries where sexual assault and gender inequality are well-documented, such as Afghanistan, Burundi,

Liberia, Cambodia, or Tajikistan, there were absolutely no women participating in military peacekeeping missions (International Women's Tribune Centre, 2002). For two reasons, this is concerning. First, it may make female military personnel's contributions to peacekeeping missions less valuable. According to UN Security Council resolution 1325, improving gender sensitivity of peacekeeping missions at the local level and improving the perception of women in local contexts are two essential goals for involving women in peacekeeping operations. The likelihood of achieving this aim decreases if women are not sent to areas with severe gender disparity. Second, sending women to only low-risk battles may feed stereotypes that they are less capable and vulnerable than males and require their protection.

This topic has mostly been the subject of essentialist or social constructionist discussion. On the one hand, essentialist ideas such as women being innately calm and emotionally responsive serve to justify the urge for women to be involved in peacekeeping operations. According to the UN, for example (UN DPKO 2000), the pacifying presence of women in peacekeeping operations lessens aggression and hypermasculinity. According to UNDPKO, "women's presence in [peacekeeping operations] improves access and support for local women... [and] makes male peacekeepers more reflective and responsible." (Source: Simi 2010, p. 189-0). As noted by Kent (2007), the presence of female officers tends to make peace missions more accessible. Victims, particularly women and children, are more receptive to speaking with female peacekeepers. A world run by women, according to Fukuyama (1998), would be "less aggressive, competitive, violent... [and] less prone to conflict." (p. 27-33) seems to support these essentialist ideas about women in peacekeeping.

Women peacekeepers often have the "skills that can lead a war-torn society through a process of nation-building, economic development, and reconstruction" (Rehn and Johnson 2002, 65) because of their diverse identities and experiences. Making peacekeeping operations "more reflective of the societies with which they deal, thereby giving them a better chance to achieve a sustainable peace" should be the ultimate goal of including both men and women in these operations (Hudson 2005, 793). As previously stated, peacekeeping operations are typically short-term measures used to allow post-conflict societies to maintain physical security while efforts are made towards the reconstruction of society and the resolution of underlying causes of the conflict — peacebuilding. Peacekeeping operations do not aim to address the root causes of a conflict.

In post-conflict circumstances, women instinctively step up to weave the "fabric of life together," according to Mindry (2001) (1197). In peacebuilding, women frequently don't have much of a choice since "they are left with children, the elderly, the wounded and ill, amid devastation and have to find ways to survive" (Porter, 2007). Because they are "intertwined [with] everyday issues] of gender equality, demilitarisation, promoting non-violence, reconciliation... and sustaining the environment," women's roles in peacebuilding, according to Mazurana and McKay (2002), are typically less visible. Without being acknowledged by themselves or the greater community, women perform significant roles in promoting peace.

Because it enables "different activities [to be] recognised as part of peacebuilding practise, power dynamics in society to be laid bare and possibly confronted," the active engagement of women in peacebuilding "changes the meaning of peacebuilding itself" (Shepherd 2016). Skjelsbaek (2001) demonstrates the intimate relationship between gender and peacebuilding in his writings based on case studies in Vietnam, El Salvador, and the former Yugoslavia. According to Skjelsbaek's research, there is a significant link between women's involvement in peacebuilding and war narratives. The research demonstrates that, although women were actively involved in peacebuilding processes in all three countries, women's contributions were more noticeable in El Salvador, Vietnam, and Yugoslavia than in Yugoslavia due to the

nations' diverse war histories. The efforts of all parties—including women—are valued when wars are rationalised as being required for liberation goals, as they were in Vietnam and El Salvador. Women's involvement in peacebuilding, however, is less stressed when wars are perceived as needless and particularly oppressive towards women; instead, the focus is on what males can do to safeguard women in the future.

Women are perceived as life-creators (mothers), nurturers, trustworthy, less violent, and more loving due to their biological features and social orientation, making them more equipped for peacebuilding efforts (Anderlini 2007; Porter 2001; Moola 2006; Boulding 1990; Caprioli 2000, 2003). Women are often seen as trustworthy by all sides of a disagreement because they are less likely to be involved in it. In post-conflict communities, this sense of neutrality and their desire to interact with all sides go a long way to lessen worries and uncertainties and foster peacebuilding (Anderlini 2007).

According to scholars such as Agbajobi (2010), the involvement of women in peacebuilding should not be supported by any stereotyped attributes; rather, women need to have a role in the consolidation of peace in their communities because they make up half of the post-conflict communities. Additionally, the comprehensiveness of the process is inevitably constrained by the absence of women from peace-building initiatives, who are those most directly impacted by war. Most of the researchers make use of the idea of intersectionality to highlight the social, economic, and historical disparities that may interact with gender disparities to affect women's engagement in peacebuilding. For instance, Myrttinen, Naujoks, and Schilling (2015) evaluate the moderating impact that the availability of natural resources has on women's engagement in peacebuilding based on case studies in Kenya and Nepal. They conclude that in regions where conflicts have been heavily influenced by struggles over natural resources, women's participation in peacebuilding processes alone will not be sufficient to change unequal power structures and access to resources. Instead, a comprehensive gender relational approach to peace-building and natural resource management, as well as the active inclusion of women in significant decision-making processes, are necessary for peace-building efforts to be successful. Similar studies conducted in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine have been cited by Moghadam (2005) to support his claim that women are trapped in all three nations by "weak states, occupying powers, armed opposition movements, and patriarchal gender arrangements" (63). Understanding how each of these factors affects and defines women's daily lives is necessary before one can comprehend the contributions women may make to peacebuilding. True security necessitates not just the absence of conflict but also the abolition of unfair social connections, as noted by Tickner (1992) in his observation that "the achievement of peace, economic justice, and ecological sustainability is inseparable from overcoming social relations of domination and subordination" (128).

According to Lakshmi Puri, women's roles and contributions to peace education are crucial not only because they make up the majority of the world's population, but also because they are the main forces behind the dramatic shift in attitudes, institutions, and cultures that we want (UN Women 2014, para. 5). In general, experts have argued that women should be seen as key agents of peace education since they are touched by conflict and violence, if not most affected. This is in addition to their 'natural' affinities with children and their intrinsic love for parenting and teaching. Women should be included in peace education because, in the opinion of Adirika (2014), "they are first and foremost, humans, flesh and blood, affected by every issue that affects humanity. They should be involved because they are involved, [because] they exist!!!" (3). By their distinctive "perspectives and experiences," as well as

their capacity to advance a "gender-just peace," which is essential for long-term processes of peacebuilding and reconstruction, women, according to Kirk (2004), serve an important function in peace education (53).

For years, Brock-Utne (2009) argues, that even though women typically form the core of peace organizations, they are rarely acknowledged for their contributions. They are mostly ignored in history texts, which are typically "his-story" books that describe the emergence of violent conflicts or wars that were begun by males. (215). Only a few peace education programmes have considered gender disparities, despite the UNSCR 1325's passage bringing women's participation in the peace process to the attention of the world (Taylor 2014; Becker 2012; Pruitt 2013). According to the UN Women (2014), gender concerns are still marginal in peace education circles and women's objectives are still seen as secondary to the "hard" problems of peace and security.

By instructing male ex-combatants in financially viable professions (such as carpentry, metalwork, auto mechanics, and plumbing) while instructing female ex-combatants in less lucrative pursuits (such as catering, soap-making, hairdressing, and weaving), peace education programmes in places like Sierra Leonne, for instance, have bought into gender stereotypes.

In conclusion, it is evident from the literature on women's participation in the peace process that women are in a position to significantly contribute at each stage of the peace process. Even though it's frequently ignored, including women can improve the possibility of achieving sustainable peace. For example, in peacebuilding, women can draw attention to structural causes of violence that take the form of social inequality. In peacekeeping, women can make missions more approachable and sensitive to issues like sexual violence.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study applied qualitative research by using a documentary research method. All documentary data was collected from related research reports, academic books, case studies and papers, as well as official documents and information of the United Nations and other international organizations concerned. All collected documentary data were studied by content analysis, critical analysis and logical analysis throughout the data triangulation process to achieve comprehensive research results and discussion, conclusion and recommendations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The formulation and implementation of gender-sensitive changes in the post-conflict governance, security, and justice sectors can be facilitated by the engagement of women. As they frequently support peaceful methods and conflict prevention, women's participation in peace processes can help to reduce violence both during and after conflicts. Increased gender equality can result from women's engagement in peace negotiations by enabling them to assume leadership positions in politics, civil society, and government. Women may prioritise and address humanitarian issues during peace talks, including the protection of civilians, the well-being of internally displaced people, and access to essential amenities. Women leaders frequently place an emphasis on social healing and reconciliation, concentrating on re-establishing connections and trust within communities and between parties involved in conflict. Future generations of women and girls can draw inspiration from women's

participation in peace processes, which will motivate them to take leadership positions and actively participate in conflict resolution.

Significant Case Studies Establishing Women's Involvement in Peace Negotiations and Conflict Resolution

1. The Liberian Women's Peace Movement

The horrific civil war in Liberia, which lasted from 1989 to 2003, was characterized by extensive brutality, violations of human rights, and evictions. Deep-seated racial and political differences characterized the battle, which featured several armed organizations.

The Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace movement, led by women like Leymah Gbowee and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, was one of the key elements in the country's peace process. This grassroots movement started as a reaction to the Civil War's terrible effects on families, especially for women.

Key Contributions and Strategies

Non-violent Protests: Women protested peacefully, holding sit-ins and holding marches, calling for an end to the fighting and their involvement in the peace talks.

Cross-Ethnic Solidarity: Women from many ethnic and religious backgrounds joined together to promote peace in the movement, which was remarkable for its inclusion. This interethnic cooperation served to heal the gaps that had stoked the violence.

Advocacy for Women's Participation: The campaign effectively fought for the participation of women in the peace negotiations and significantly contributed to ensuring that the final peace deal took account of women's concerns.

Pressure on Warring Factions: Women applied pressure on the opposing sides by their moral power as mothers and civic leaders. They organised demonstrations at the peace negotiations and demanded that the mediators pay attention to their concerns.

Impact and Results

The 2003 Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement established a National Transitional Government and contained provisions for the inclusion of women in post-conflict governing systems. The Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace leader Ellen Johnson Sirleaf later assumed the office of president of Liberia, making history as the continent's first female head of state. The peace accord improved stability and paved the stage for Liberia's healing and rebuilding.

Critical Lessons

The Power of Grassroot Movements: Women-led grassroots groups may have a significant influence on peace processes by uniting communities, promoting change, and putting pressure on negotiators to take the demands of the people into account.

Inclusivity: The inclusivity of women from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities in the peace movement fostered unity and reconciliation.

Women as Change-Catalysts: Women's roles as mothers, carers, and community leaders gave them a unique viewpoint on the peace process and helped them successfully win over the opposing sides' humanity.

2. Colombia's Peace Negotiations

The peace process in Colombia, especially the negotiations with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), provides substantial insights into the challenges involved in putting an end to protracted armed conflicts. More than five decades of armed conflict in Colombia, primarily involving the government, Leftist guerrilla organizations like the FARC, and paramilitary forces led to widespread Human rights violations, extensive violence, and displacement.

The Government of Colombia led by President Juan Manuel Santos was a key factor in the Peace negotiations. The FARC has strong roots in Colombia's rural communities and was one of the biggest and most enduring guerrilla organisations in Latin America.

Peace Process Important Stages

The peace process officially began with exploratory talks(2010-2012) facilitated by Norway and Cuba. These early discussions laid the groundwork for the formal negotiations.

The formal negotiations were held in Cuba's capital city of Havana(2012-2016). They were broken down into six primary agendas including land reform, political engagement, drug trafficking, victims' rights, disarmament, and peace accord implementation.

The Colombian government and the FARC came to a historic peace accord in 2016, after four years of negotiations, which was put to a referendum for approval. However, the referendum narrowly rejected the agreement.

To take into account objections made by opponents, the government and FARC revised the peace agreement in 2016. This revised agreement was then ratified by the Colombian Congress.

Key Contributions and Strategies

Inclusion of Gender Perspective: The Colombian peace process was remarkable for emphasizing the value of including a female perspective. The "gender sub-commission" made sure gender concerns were taken into account when creating the peace agreement.

DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration): The disarming and reintegration of FARC combatants into civil life was outlined in the peace agreement.

Victims' Rights: The agreement included clauses protecting the rights of victims, including assurances against recurrence and the pursuit of justice, truth, and reparations.

Challenges

Deep social differences in Colombia were made clear by the peace process. Some groups opposed giving up to the FARC, while others thought that peace was necessary. It was extremely challenging to ensure the protection and safety of former FARC fighters, especially during their transition back into society. Throughout the procedure, political polarisation remained, hindering the execution of the peace accord.

Impact and Results

Thousands of FARC fighters were disarmed and demobilised as an outcome of the peace agreement. As a result of their political transformation, the FARC took part in democracy. In many parts of Colombia, the peace process helped to significantly reduce violence and boost security. The agreement's implementation was still fraught with difficulties, particularly in tackling rural development and security issues.

Critical Lessons

Inclusivity & Adaptability: It is essential to involve a variety of stakeholders, including women's organisations, civil society, and disadvantaged communities in achieving sustainable peace.In complex peace negotiations, flexibility and adaptation in the face of obstacles and setbacks are vital.

International Mediation & Long-term Commitment: International mediators like Norway and Cuba may play a crucial role in maintaining momentum and fostering confidence. Colombia's ongoing peace process emphasises the necessity of a consistent dedication to peacebuilding.

3. Northern Ireland's Women's Coalition

The main issue of the violent three-decade-long Northern Ireland Troubles was the constitutional status of Northern Ireland, which pitted nationalist Catholics and unionist Protestants against one another. Numerous thousands of people died, and the area experienced extreme polarisation.

During the negotiations that led to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, a number of women from diverse backgrounds came together to form the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition in order to make sure that women's opinions were heard.

McWilliams and Pearl Sagar, founding members of the NIWC, were instrumental in promoting the participation of women in the peace talks. Women from diverse backgrounds, representing a wide spectrum of political, religious, and communal connections, were members of the coalition.

Key Contributions and Strategies

Cross-Community Collaboration: The NIWC was exceptional in that it overcame sectarian barriers to bring together women from both nationalist and unionist areas. This intercommunity strategy was crucial in a society that was highly polarised.

Mediation and Compromise: Members of the NIWC were prepared to make concessions to achieve a peaceful resolution and played a mediating role in bridging differences with other political groups.

Advocacy for Gender Equality: In the peace discussions, the coalition underlined the necessity for inclusive government systems while promoting gender equality and addressing the unique needs of women.

Challenges

The NIWC was initially opposed by certain major political parties because they saw it as a new player threatening the status quo. In a nation where political leadership was typically controlled by men, the coalition encountered skepticism from both men and women. Extremist groups threatened and intimidated members of the NIWC, as they did with many other people active in Northern Ireland politics.

Impact and Results

The NIWC was a key proponent in getting the Good Friday Agreement to include a commitment to women's rights and gender equality. The majority of people in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland approved the Good Friday Agreement, which played a

key role in ending the Troubles. With its members holding seats in the Northern Ireland Assembly and participating in the region's government, the NIWC continued to be active in politics during the post-agreement period.

The 1998 Good Friday Agreement was directly influenced by women who had access to the negotiations. They increased the emphasis on social concerns on the agenda and finally succeeded in getting language about victims' rights and peacemaking, along with a promise to help young victims of violence, included in the agreement. The full and equal participation of women in politics was also mandated by another provision. The NIWC also suggested a civic forum to connect the peace process to a post-negotiations public dialogue.

Critical Lessons

Inclusivity is crucial: In cultures with severe societal divisions, inclusiveness and inter-communal cooperation can play a crucial role in resolving disputes and fostering peace.
The Power of Grassroots Movements: Women-led grassroots groups have the power to significantly influence political and peace discussions.
Advocacy for Gender Equality: Women's rights and gender equality should be at the forefront of all accords for peace and governance.
Courage and Resilience: In the midst of dangers and difficulties, members of the NIWC showed extraordinary bravery and resiliency, highlighting the need for persistence in peace efforts.

4. Parallel Consultative Forum in Guatemala

In order to bring interested parties together on one stage and provide non-binding suggestions to the parties engaged in negotiations—the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union and the government—the Assembly of Civil Society in Guatemala was established in 1994. Representatives from eleven different interest groups, including the women's movement, indigenous groups, religious communities, and human rights organisations, attended the meeting. This was made possible in part because the nation's active civil society was well-organized and had consistently put pressure on governments for peace over time.

Key Contributions and Strategies

Women had a massive impact on the composition of this meeting and the agenda it would follow. The women's sector represented 32 women's groups, and the women who represented those groups formed alliances with the women who represented other groups in the assembly to bridge gaps and bring the varied groups together. Additionally, they argued for the participation of other marginalised groups including displaced communities in order to promote greater variety in the composition of the assembly.

Challenges

However, the implementation phase of the Guatemalan peace process also exposed its shortcomings. The most extensive revisions to the constitution were to have been included in a vote two years after the Civil Society Assembly approved the peace accords, but it was unsuccessful. This has been linked to several factors, including the lack of an institutional basis for civil society engagement following the signing of the agreements and organized civil society's ineffective communication with the general public.

Impact and Results

The peace mediators and the deal they came up with were significantly influenced by this forum. On all the pertinent topics being discussed at the negotiating table, the assembly prepared recommendation papers. The parties to the negotiations incorporated the majority of its suggestions either directly or indirectly. This includes wording on women's rights, political participation, and gender equality, as well as women's roles in carrying out the peace deal.

Critical Lessons

Inclusivity and Representation: The Parallel Consultative Forum's inclusivity and representation were a major strength. Indigenous people, in particular, and other historically marginalised groups, were able to express their concerns and participate in the peace process. Because of the diversity of the Forum's composition, more comprehensive peace accords were made possible by taking a wide variety of perspectives into account.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Give financial assistance to women's groups, alliances, and networks so they may expand sustainably and take advantage of chances to originate, initiate, and participate in peace processes.31 Long-term finance, beyond a 12- to 24-month project cycle, would be needed for this.
- Create basic knowledge materials on gender and political power-sharing that are simple to use (such as a checklist, a list of typical problems and solutions, or an introduction training session for men and women).
- Conduct more analysis and study in areas of political power-sharing that are pertinent to women in general, such as elections and appointments for temporary power-sharing agreements.
- Create visible campaigns for gender equality before meetings (such as online campaigns) collaborate with strong allies (men, institutions that mediate disputes, etc.) and maintain close observation on attacks and harassment of women.
- Design a global training program on gender perspectives for those living in conflict-affected areas. The course should be supported by evidence, presented by practitioners who have demonstrated their expertise and made accessible at both the national and regional levels.
- Support structures and capacity-building programs for women should be incorporated to grow their influence and effectiveness before, during, and after a peace process.
- It will also be necessary to place more focus on engaging women in both the prevention of conflict before it occurs and the implementation of peace accords once they have been established.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that women's participation in peace negotiations is not just crucial for gender equality but also for establishing a sustainable, inclusive peace. This also emphasizes the significance of tackling the difficulties and obstacles that continue to prevent women from fully participating in peace processes by looking at case studies and the distinctive contributions that women have made to conflict resolution. It asks for a deliberate effort to empower and engage women in decision-making processes linked to

peace and security at the global, regional, and local levels. In the end, a more peaceful and equitable world depends on recognizing and utilizing the potential of women in peace discussions. Beyond the technical effort required to enable women's engagement in practice and the conceptual changes in the way people perceive peace, there is still a deeper ideological barrier to women's full participation that necessitates forming alliances across countries. Women are at the forefront of developing original strategies to promote participatory processes that move all citizens closer to the objective of peace.

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Exploring the role of Igbo Traditional Rulers in Fostering Peace and Harmony within the Igbo Society and Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

There is no society without tradition; hence the role of Igbo traditional rulers in fostering peace and harmony in Igbo culture and the broader Nigerian environment cannot be undervalued. This research aims to shed light on the varied ways in which Igbo traditional rulers promote social cohesion, conflict resolution, and sustainable development and also provide valuable insights into the instrumental role of traditional leadership in promoting peace and stability. The research is geared towards observing significant instances of unrest that the Igbo society has experienced in the past and recently, to examine the factors contributing to this unrest. A qualitative research methodology was used in this study and secondary data is acquired from a range of sources. The study's findings show that to promote long-term peace and harmony in Igbo society, it is important to understand better the historical and cultural foundation of traditional leadership in Igbo society. This study is timely since it concentrates on finding a solution to a critical problem that could affect the Igbo race and economy if not dealt with as soon as possible. Therefore, traditional leadership and contemporary governance institutions must collaborate

Keywords: Igbo traditional rulers, Igbo society, Peace and Harmony

INTRODUCTION

General background of study

The Igbo society is an important society that makes a significant contribution to the expansion and improvement of the Nigerian state. It is situated in the southern region of the nation and has a rich cultural heritage that includes a traditional form of government. The five states that make up the Igbo society are Enugu, Imo, Abia, Ebonyi, and Anambra. Traditional leadership, which is highly powerful, is present in all states and serves as their authority.

The Igbo civilization has historically experienced a wide range of violence, unrest, and crises on various fronts, including political, religious, and other fronts. This is clear despite the Igbo rulership system's well-known and admired rich cultural legacy and resources. This exhibits the 1929 Aba Women's Riots, as described by Evans (Evans, 2009).

This research attempts to investigate and address these challenges and provide workable and reliable solutions to address and restore long-lasting peace and harmony within various Igbo civilizations through the effective utilization of traditional rulership as a vital actor. The

impact of Igbo traditional chiefs on tranquility and peace inside Igbo society and, consequently, in the greater Nigerian context, must be carefully examined. This project effort has been put together, which is important, to achieve this peace in Igbo society and Nigeria generally.

Statement of the research problem:

Despite the presumptive rich cultural depository and heritage within the Igbo rulership system being accorded with high influence, regard, and respect in maintaining peace and harmony, the Igbo society has historically experienced various forms of violence, unrest, and crises, both in the past and recently, politically, religiously, and otherwise. To better understand the dynamics of peace-building in the Igbo community and the broader Nigerian context, the research thoroughly explores the role of the traditional rulers.

Aim and Objectives

The main aim and objectives are to explore the role of Igbo Traditional Rulers in Fostering Peace and Harmony within the Igbo Society and Nigeria. While the specific objectives are:
1. To study concepts and theories of the historical foundations that guide the Igbo traditional leadership structure
2. To analyze the specific roles, responsibilities, rights, and liabilities of Igbo traditional rulers in achieving peace and promoting harmony.
3. To recommend possible and viable suggestions that should help the traditional rulers maintain peace and harmony in the Igbo society and Nigeria at large.

Qualitative Research Hypothesis

This work aims to explore the following:
1. Examine the historical principles and theories of the Igbo traditional leadership structure.
2. Evaluate the unique contributions that Igbo traditional rulers have made to creating harmony and achieving peace.
3. Why Igbo traditional rulers, if given more consideration, might contribute to fostering permanent peace and harmony within Igbo society and the larger Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The majority of academics hold the belief that to be credible and pertinent, a valid disclosure must embrace a theory. So, for this study, the researcher used John Dewey's pragmatic theory.

The Pragmatic Theory of Truth's History

The history of classical American pragmatism is intertwined with the history of the pragmatic notion of truth. C.S. Peirce is credited with originally putting forth a pragmatic theory of truth, William James is credited with popularizing the pragmatic theory, and John Dewey is credited with later reframing truth in terms of warranted assertibility, according to Capps (2019). The notion that real beliefs are those that will stand up to scrutiny in the future is linked with Peirce; the notion that true beliefs are reliable and helpful is associated with

James; and the notion that truth is a feature of thoroughly confirmed statements or "judgments" is related with Dewey (Burgess & Burgess, 2011, p.4)

Dewey's Pragmatic Theory of Truth

In light of his extensive publications on other subjects, John Dewey (1859–1952), the third representative of the golden age of classical American pragmatism, had surprisingly little to say about the idea of truth. Anecdotally, Dewey, (1938) only makes one reference to "truth" in his Logic Theory of Inquiry, and that reference is to a footnote that mentions Peirce. The audience is instructed to "Look at his warranted assertibility".

John Dewey believed that inquiry, whether scientific, technical, sociological, philosophical, or cultural, is self-corrective over time if openly submitted for testing by a community of inquirers to clarify, justify, refine, and/or refute proposed truths. He held that this belief is less widespread than William James' but much more broadly than Charles Pierce's. Dewey (1938) provided the following definition of inquiry in The Theory of Inquiry.

Investigation, also known as inquiry, is the controlled or guided transformation of an ambiguous situation into one that is distinct in its basic distinctions and relationships as to alter the elements of the initial situation into a coherent whole Dewey, (1938, p. 108).

The index of the same book has only one entry for "truth," which refers to the following footnote: From a logical standpoint, I think Peirce's definition of truth, which reads: 'The opinion which is fated to be ultimately accepted by all who investigate what we mean by truth, and the object represented in this opinion is the real is the best one I'm aware of'.

Dewey expands on his definition of truth by using his preferred concept of warranted assertibility as the goal and outcome of research Dewey, (1938, p.14).

Exploring the role of Igbo traditional rulers in promoting peace and harmony inside and outside Igbo society in connection to the theory. It is important to remember that the Igbos' traditional seat of government is located in higher realms of truth. The scepter of authority is held in truth. In correlation looking at Dewey's account of the theory, emphasizes the connection between truth and rigorous scientific inquiry; like James, Dewey views truth as the verified result of past inquiry rather than as the anticipated result of inquiry proceeding into an indefinite future. This study imbibed exploring the role of Igbo traditional rulers in correlation to how they maintained peace within the region.

Literature Review:

Igbo traditional ruler

Rulership, the majority of researchers agree that three sources influenced the growth of Igbo kingship institutions. The first is the conventional and ancient priesthood, which in republics founded on villages sometimes combined the ecclesiastical and political duties of leaders Lorelle, (2012). Ezes were discovered in the most populous Igbo sub-group, Arochukwu, Awka, Nri-Igbo, Owere, Northern Nsukka, and Ngwa. Communities of Igbo-Eze can be found in Enugu-Ezike, Ovoko, and Iheakpu-Awka. Josiah Ndubuisi Wachuku was an Eze

with royal ancestry. The King is referred to as either Eze or Ezedike, depending on lineage Falconer, (1944).

Second, by occupying specific regions of Nigeria, the neighboring Benin Empire imposed certain traditions. On the other hand, others claim that the Eze of Nri had a say in how the Benin Oba's status was determined. Divergent viewpoints are concentrated primarily on the Asaba, Onitsha, and Oguta populations. Igbo rulers of these locations can directly trace the historical roots of their investiture to the Oba of Benin, as claimed by some scholars who contest the so-called Afigbo and Omenka Thesis on Origin. They frequently go by the honorific title Obi, which is royal.

The third source of Igbo royalty is thought to be the British colonial authority in the 19th and 20th centuries. The colonial government established "warrant chiefs," choosing reputable people to be administrators, rulers, judges, and tax collectors as part of an indirect rule policy Beverly, G. (1983). Warrant chiefs were typically chosen from among the individuals who worked best with the colonial government and were native to their areas. Igbo communities sometimes despised and occasionally outright rejected the power of warrant chiefs for this and several other reasons. The Igbo Women's War of 1929 serves as an illustration of this resistance.

October 1, 1960, several of those warrant chiefs tried to redefine their political duties to maintain their positions of power. Honorary titles with Eze-sounding names were purchased by those with political authority and newly acquired wealth. They struggled to be retained by the government of independent Nigeria's group of traditional leaders, as a woman who served as Colonial Nigeria's ruler Achebe & Marc, (2011).

Igbo society
The term "Igbo" as an ethnic identity emerged relatively recently, during the Nigerian Civil War and the decolonization process. The numerous Igbo-speaking groups have historically been divided and decentralized; according to Nigerian author Chinua Achebe, the Igbo identity should be positioned midway between a "tribe" and a "nation", The Igbo are sometimes referred to be a "stateless nation" since the fall of the Republic of Biafra in 1970 Achebe, (2000).

Peace
This is a state of harmony, peace, and tranquility. It is a place where there is no civic unrest. The phrase "state free of war" can also be used to describe it. A community is said to have gained peace when is free of all social vices. Furthermore, a community is considered to have acquired relative calm or peace when its crises are at a minimum. The absence of violence is only one aspect of peace, according to research by Christian Davenport et al., (2018, pp. 35–78). Other aspects of peace include issues with conflict resolution, justice and the law, equality and non-discrimination, political freedom and civil rights, socioeconomic opportunity, human rights, social integration, reconciliation, trust, harmonious relationships, and good standing. Therefore, the goal of this study project is to achieve this by examining the responsibilities of Igbo rulers and how they might be used to foster this long-lasting peace within the Igbo community.

Research Methodology:

Both primary and secondary data were used as the investigational method in this case. The researcher conducted one-on-one interviews with a few notable chiefs who prefer to be anonymous and persons to gather primary data. Additionally, a survey was distributed using a

random sample. The researcher focuses solely on Anambra State because he was unable to interview everyone involved in the case study. To represent the Igbo society, eight (8) questionnaires were distributed to each of the 21 Local Government Areas that make up Anambra State. The administration of the questionnaire involved a mix of eight (8) respondents from each Local Government Area. Additionally, the research calls for the use of percentages and tables, which will successfully break down the data gathered based on the information gathered. Journals, textbooks, magazines, newspapers, websites, published and unpublished works, magazines, and other related material are examples of secondary sources.

Data presentation and analysis

According to the research technique, this study's inquiry was conducted using both primary and secondary data. After the intended research approach was finished, a total of one hundred sixty-eight (168) respondents from each of the twenty-one Local Government Areas that make up Anambra State were expected to answer the questionnaires. One hundred forty-seven (147) of the one hundred and sixty-eight surveys were discovered and had responses returned. Also, personal interview sessions were held with sixteen prominent persons both physically and on the phone to get their views on the capacity of the Igbo traditional rulers to foster peace and harmony.

Table 1: Showing distribution based on the gender of the respondent

S/N	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	79	53.7%
2	Female	68	46.3%
	Total	**147**	**100%**

Source: Fieldwork July 2023

The above table shows distribution according to gender in which 53.7% of the respondents were males and 46.3% were females.

Table 2: Distribution based on age of respondent

S/N	AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	19-29	33	22.45%
2	30-41	49	33.33%
3	42-53	40	27.21%
4	54 and above	25	17.01%
	total	**147**	**100%**

Source: Fieldwork July 2023

This table displays the distribution by age. It displays the various responses from various grade levels. It showed that the age group of 30-41 years contributed the most to the data collection for this study, with 33.33%, followed by the age group of 42-53 years with 27.21%. Additionally, it should be noted from this table that the 54+ age group donated the least, at 17.01%.

Table 3: Showing distribution based on the leadership/rulership position of the respondent

S/N	OCCUPATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Paramount Ruler	2	1.36%

2	Village head	23	15.65%
3	Community Chiefs	55	37.41%
4	Youth leaders	30	20.41%
5	others	37	25.17%
	TOTAL	**147**	**100%**

Source: fieldwork July 2023

The distribution of duties depending on leadership responsibilities is displayed in this table. It demonstrates that the biggest percentage of data citing (37.41%) came from the village chiefs' answer to the researchers' postulation. The table also demonstrates how all facets of Igbo society's leadership, including those charged with ruling were involved in the process and contributed to the study's result.

Table 4: Showing distribution based on the Education of respondent

S/N	OCCUPATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Paramount Ruler	2	1.36%
2	Village head	23	15.65%
3	Community Chiefs	55	37.41%
4	Youth leaders	30	20.41%
5	others	37	25.17%
	TOTAL	**147**	**100%**

Source: fieldwork July 2023

This table displays the distributions along the line of education. According to the table, the highest response rates (44.89% and 40.81%, respectively) were given by those who had completed secondary and tertiary education. This indicates that the opinions obtained from the field data should be reliable to rely on because of the degree of education at which they were obtained.

Table 5: Showing the disposition of the respondent to how the role of Igbo traditional rulers can foster peace and harmony in Igbo society

S/N	RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Igbo traditional stool is a tool that can be harnessed to foster peace	80	54.42%
2	Igbo traditional stool of leadership has no connection to the unrest going on within the Igbo society	25	17.01%
3	Igbo Rulers if educated can improve their role in fostering peace	30	20.41%
4	With or without the Igbo traditional rulers, it cannot foster peace within the Igbo society.	5	3.40%
5	Others	7	4.76%
	Total	147	100%

Source: field work, July 2023

According to the chart above, it is conceivable that the Igbo traditional rulership can promote peace and harmony inside the Igbo community and throughout Nigeria in its capacity. This can be inferred from the 54.41% of respondents who filled the box that said that they

believed the "Igbo traditional stool is a tool that can be harnessed to foster peace" was the highest. When the appropriate Igbo traditional ruler intervenes in any situation that causes disturbance within Igbo Society, peace and harmony are established, according to a particular chief who desired to remain unnamed who was questioned over the phone by Ebene in Aguata.

In the table, the second-highest percentage of respondents, or 20.41%, believe that Igbo Rulers can play a greater role in promoting peace if they receive education. We can also state that this is related to the idea that the Igbo community can achieve peace and harmony provided adequate respect is shown for traditional Igbo monarchs and rulers.

When asked in a one-on-one interview about how education affects traditional leaders' roles in promoting peace, Chief Mezie Mbadiwe of Ebenato still in Oguta, Anambra State, responded that some traditional leaders with educational backgrounds tend to perform better in their adjudication of duties than those without, as they may have weaknesses when it comes to relating to outsiders. The 17.01% of respondents who think there is no connection between the current disturbance in Igbo society and the traditional stool of leadership is another sign to support this claim.

When some well-known members of the Isioji community were asked to participate in an interview to determine the cause of the unrest in Igbo society, nearly all three respondents agreed that many other unidentified factors are more likely to be at play. They talked about things like inequality and poverty. The table also reveals a very small percentage of respondents -3.40 % and 4.76%—who indicated that it is impossible to promote peace inside Igbo society and among other groups, respectively, with or without the Igbo traditional rulers. This in no way undermines the significance of the role played by the Igbo traditional leaders in promoting peace and harmony.

Table 6: Showing distribution of the possible causes of unrest

S/N	RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Government policies	30	20.41%
2	The traditional Rule	10	6.8%
3	The community youths	7	4.76%
4	Strangers	40	27.21%
5	Other factors	60	40.82%
	Total	**147**	**100%**

Source: field work, July 2023

From the field source mentioned above, we may infer that 40.82% of votes were cast as the root reasons for various discontent in the Igbo society, which can be attributed to a wide range of order issues. Two villagers in the Onono community, Ezianam, Anambra West, were interviewed to find out additional factors that include "other factors" as the primary reason for unrest; one of them connected it to the conflict between herders, and the other thought it was a result of the difficult economic situation that has bred resentment. The gods are unhappy with them, according to a different person interviewed in the nearby town of Onono, Umudora. In addition to other reasons, the figure shows that government policies account for 20.41% of all causes of instability in the Igbo community. It demonstrates how certain government policies, which are unpleasant to some, are a source of instability. 6.8% and 4.76% of respondents chose traditional rule as the cause of disturbance in the Igbo society,

respectively, whereas 27.21 % of respondents answered that foreigners are a contributing factor.

Table 7: Showing personal interview session on the capacity of Igbo traditional rulership to foster peace and harmony within the Igbo society

S/N	RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Igbo traditional rulers can foster peace within the Igbo society	10	62.5%
2	Igbo traditional rulers cannot foster peace within the Igbo society	2	12.5%
3	Others	4	25%
	Total	16	100

Source: field work, July 2023

The above table indicates personal interviews with sixteen persons of Igbo extraction on the capacity of the Igbo traditional rulers to foster peace. The table shows that 62.5% voted the highest on the subject and that overrides the belief of 12.5% stating that the Igbo traditional rulers do not have such capacity. The table also shows others who are indifferent to the tune of 25%.

DISCUSSIONS: MAJOR FINDINGS AND VERIFICATION OF FINDINGS

Critical analysis of the data presented and analyzed above reveals that Anambra state, the region of Igbo society where the effects of unrest have been felt the most, is quite similar to most other states that make up the Igbo society in terms of traditions, culture, rulership characteristics, and activities. The promotion of peace and harmony within Igbo society and Nigeria by Igbo traditional rulers thus displays a variety of elements, primarily the items below.

a. How the Igbo traditional stool can be used as a tool to promote harmony and peace within the Igbo society. This result supports the study's premise that investigating the function of Igbo traditional rulership can significantly promote peace and harmony within the Igbo society with the highest percentage of 54.42%.

b. That education helps Igbo Rulers play a better leadership role, which is consistent with promoting peace. It will strengthen the function to promote peace and harmony if education is introduced as a new requirement for leadership jobs.

c. There is no link between the upheaval taking place inside Igbo society and the traditional stool of leadership in the Igbo people. When interviewing some of the respondents and posing the question of whether the traditional stool would be somehow related to the unrest, the results were unfavorable because most people said there was no relationship between the traditional stool and the unrest, which is something that occurs in every civilization throughout the world. The majority of those surveyed agreed that when the proper individual occupies the position of traditional ruler, it promotes peace and harmony.

d. That a variety of other elements, including outsiders like the herders, are the main causes of discontent in Igbo society. Additionally, a few undesirable government initiatives are implemented.

Conclusion

This paper aims to add to the body of knowledge on traditional leadership, peacebuilding, and conflict resolution by examining the role of Igbo traditional rulers in fostering peace and calm within the Igbo community and Nigeria generally. The results of this study will have an impact on the formulation of policies and the design of useful interventions aimed at promoting peace and stability in Nigeria. Applying at least some of the recommendations this report will provide will be crucial. Inductive reasoning was used to assess the pertinent data that was acquired. The role of traditional rulership in Igbo society in promoting peace and harmony was examined in this study. It has been found that traditional rulers' education, one of the key factors, has a significant impact on how they contribute to fostering peace. The traditional leaders' pursuit of peace will be facilitated by their practical application of truth while performing their duties. You might recall that the pragmatic theory of truth, which is an example of the scepter of authority, served as the framework for the researcher's study.

Recommendations

The researcher is delighted to offer the following suggestions to enhance the traditional Igbo leaders' ability to promote peace and harmony within Igbo society and throughout Nigeria.

a. A formal education requirement should be included as other traditional aspects as part of the requirements for assuming the seat of traditional rulership in the Igbo society, by the government of the Igbo society and its traditional institutions of the traditional rulership.

b. To prevent conflict, the government should work together with the many tiers of authority within Igbo society when drafting policy.

c. Laws that permit Igbo traditional leaders to manage indigenous securities while being held accountable to the government should be passed.

d. d A law should be passed that completely forbids any current government in the Igbo society from interfering with or having an interest in determining who becomes a traditional ruler after satisfying all requirements. Instead, the traditional forces and tenets should be allowed to direct the process. And whoever is chosen, the government is required by law to approve them and cooperate with them to further peace and harmony.

e. To stop foreigners from causing trouble, the government and traditional leaders should form a committee to investigate what they are doing in the Igbo regions.

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The impact of destination values and tourist satisfaction on destination loyalty: A case study of Iranian tourists in Pattaya

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the primary reasons why Iranians choose Thailand as a tourist destination. Many scholars argue that the level of incentives plays a crucial role. To determine the perceptions of Iranian visitors regarding the image of Thailand, a survey will be conducted. In the tourism industry, the perceptions of a tourist destination are critical to its image. The image can be a mental image created by the marketing department or an associative image developed by the consumer. Therefore, tourism destinations must carefully manage their image to align with the way potential travelers perceive them. The study found that cultural sightseeing, friendly people, and food were significantly important to some Iranian visitors when considering Thailand as a tourist destination, while others were interested in the nightlife and entertainment. Additional research was conducted to propose guidelines for marketing promotion and service quality that align with the behavioral expectations and needs of Iranian tourists in Thailand. This research involved administering a questionnaire to gather data from Iranian tourists. Furthermore, interviews were conducted with representatives from the private local sector, the government-involved sector, and Iranian tourism communities in

Keywords: Pattaya, Destination image, Iranian tourists, Perception, Satisfaction, loyalty, Incentives

Introduction:

Tourism is one of the world's most profitable industries and plays a significant role in Thailand's economy. The related sectors are rapidly growing, creating jobs, and contributing to a flourishing economy. Tourism serves as a crucial source of income and brings in foreign exchange. It also provides economic development opportunities, even in areas that are challenging to develop (Glaesser, 2003).

Being the third-largest export sector globally, tourism is essential for job creation and the prosperity of communities worldwide (UNWTO, 2017).

In the highly competitive landscape of attracting tourists, especially among Southeast Asian countries, Thailand considers tourism a major economic contributor. It is one of the most important income-generating industries, encompassing various businesses that significantly contribute to Thailand's economy. According to Lee-Anant, Choibamroong, and Srikhwan (2022), the tourism industry plays a fundamental role in the Kingdom of Thailand's economy,

generating substantial income and helping distribute national income. However, in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a significant decline in international tourist arrivals in Thailand, negatively impacting Thai tourism and the country's image (Bhaskara & Filimonau, 2021).

The COVID-19 restrictions led to a decrease in tourists, which had adverse effects on Thai tourism and the overall image of Thailand. To stimulate tourism and increase tourist arrivals in Thailand, the Thai government has implemented policies. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has positioned Thailand as a cultural, natural, and historical destination, emphasizing its unique attractions and diverse offerings (Rittichainuwat & Qu, 2000). Therefore, understanding the perceptions of tourism is crucial for effective tourism marketing.

Cultural and social impacts of tourism significantly influence the perceptions of both local communities and tourists, thereby shaping the image of a tourist destination (Henkel, 2006). Thailand also faces the challenges posed by the negative consequences of an influx of tourists, such as uncontrolled tourism in Phuket. As a result, the Thai government is taking steps to develop sustainable tourism. Protecting a country's tourism assets for future generations involves minimizing ecological, cultural, and social impacts while maximizing the benefits for environmental protection and local communities (UNEP, W.2005).

Understanding the perceptions of stakeholders and tourists is essential in defining the sustainability of a tourist destination and ensuring its competitiveness and long-term viability (Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Jenkins, Dredge & Taplin, 2011; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Welford & Ytterhus, 2004).

Over the past twenty years, Thailand has emerged as a popular tourist destination for Iranians, attracting leisure tourists and medical tourists, particularly individuals seeking transgender surgery. Iranian tourists, in general, have been impressed by the hospitality offered in Thailand (Prebensen, 2007). Hence, this study aims to characterize Iranian tourists' perceptions of Thailand, including the characteristics of the Thai tourism industry, the extent to which it fulfills the needs of Iranian tourists, and the factors influencing Iranian travelers' decision-making process. The study analyzes the image of Thailand as a major tourist destination to sustain positive perceptions. Additionally, the study attempts to determine the demographic factors that influence Iranian tourists' perceptions.

Literature review:

In this section, the academic literature related to the concepts of destination image, tourist perceptions, and motivations will be reviewed. The review will also encompass the definition of tourism motivations, including an interpretation of the various explanations and the significant factors that influence destination choice.

The concept of destination image is a crucial aspect of understanding tourist behavior and decision-making. Destination image refers to the mental representations or impressions that individuals have of a particular destination. These mental images are shaped by various factors, including personal experiences, media portrayals, word-of-mouth, and marketing efforts (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). Balaji and Roy (2019) emphasize that destination image refers to the mental representations or impressions individuals hold regarding a particular destination, which are shaped by various factors including personal experiences, media portrayals, word-of-mouth communication, and marketing efforts. Understanding the formation and influence of destination image is essential for tourism marketers and policymakers in crafting effective strategies to attract and retain tourists.

Tourist perceptions play a vital role in shaping destination image. Perceptions are subjective evaluations and interpretations of tourists' experiences and encounters during their visit to a destination. These perceptions are influenced by a range of factors, such as the quality of services, hospitality, cultural experiences, safety, and attractiveness of the destination (Govers & Go, 2003; Kim, H. B., & Kim, W. G, 2012). Positive perceptions lead to favorable destination image, increased satisfaction, and likelihood of repeat visits, while negative perceptions can have the opposite effect.

Motivations are the underlying drivers that influence individuals' decisions to engage in tourism and select specific destinations. Tourism motivations can be categorized into different types, such as hedonic (seeking pleasure and enjoyment), utilitarian (seeking relaxation or escape), social (desiring social interactions), and cultural (seeking cultural immersion and learning) motivations (Mansfeld, 1992). Understanding tourists' motivations is crucial for destination marketers to tailor their offerings and experiences to meet tourists' needs and desires.

Destination choice is a complex decision-making process influenced by numerous factors. These factors can be categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Intrinsic motivations are internally driven and include factors such as personal interests, preferences, and values. Extrinsic motivations, on the other hand, are externally driven and encompass factors like destination attributes, accessibility, costs, and marketing efforts (Bieger & Laesser, 2004; Um, Chon, & Ro, 2006). The interplay of these motivations and factors shapes tourists' decisions in selecting a particular destination.

In conclusion, the review of the academic literature highlights the significance of destination image, tourist perceptions, and motivations in understanding tourists' decision-making process and destination choice. By comprehending these concepts and factors, tourism marketers can develop effective strategies to shape and enhance destination image, cater to tourists' motivations, and ultimately attract and satisfy tourists.

Thailand as a popular tourist destination:

Thailand is internationally renowned for its beautiful islands and beaches, attracting people from around the world. With its ancient temples, diverse food scene, tropical beauty, and vibrant nightlife, Thailand has a unique charm. Tourism plays a significant role in the Thai economy, contributing to economic activity and employment generation (Horner & Swarbrooke, 2016). However, it is important to acknowledge the longstanding association between tourism and issues such as prostitution, particularly in locations like Pattaya (Lines, 2015).

Thailand's popularity as a destination among Iranians is evident, with a reported 160,000 Iranians traveling to Thailand in 2011 (Entekhab, 2012). Iranian travelers to Thailand can be categorized into families and male groups. While families are primarily interested in shopping and nature, solo male travelers often visit Pattaya for its sex tourism industry. It is worth noting that many Iranian tourists are unaware that prostitution is illegal in Thailand, and the sex workers involved do not have hygiene cards to demonstrate their health status.

The restrictions imposed by United States sanctions on Iran have limited Iranian tourists from using international bank cards, forcing them to carry cash. This has made them vulnerable to theft, particularly in encounters with women they meet in Thailand, leading to cases of robbery where bar girls have been known to drug and steal from Iranian men. Unfortunately, many of these incidents go unreported due to the victims' feelings of shame.

Perceived Destination Values:

Destination image is a significant area of study in tourism literature (Lopes, 2011). The evaluation of a destination experience and the feelings associated with it shape the image individuals have of the destination. Understanding the factors that influence image development is crucial for tourism professionals. The destination image can be perceived in two distinct ways: as a mental image created by marketing efforts or as an associative image developed by the consumer (Pereira, Gupta, & Hussain, 2022). It is essential for destinations to actively promote positive images to counter potential negative perceptions resulting from adverse media coverage or word of mouth from previous visitors (Huerta-Álvarez, Cambra-Fierro, & Fuentes-Blasco, 2020). Consumer research has demonstrated that the alignment of a product image with the consumer's own concept of the product influences their decision-making process (Sirgy & Su, 2000).

The performance of a destination can be assessed by examining tourists' perception of destination travel attributes, aiding market segmentation and promotion. Travel attributes refer to the set of characteristics that describe a travel destination (Heung & Qu, 2000). Various studies in tourism literature have explored the role of travel attributes in destination choice (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Kozak, 2002; Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Alegre & Garau, 2010). These attributes can be functional or tangible, as well as psychological or abstract (Etchner & Ritchie, 2003). Given that tourists often have limited knowledge about a destination they have not visited, they rely on symbolic information acquired from media or social groups when making their choices (Abd Aziz, & Ariffin, 2009).

This study assumes that Iranian tourist groups can be segregated based on demographic factors such as gender, age, marital status, and geographic origin. It examines the relationship between their perception of travel attributes and satisfaction. By understanding this relationship, the study aims to determine how the perception of destination travel attributes influences tourist satisfaction among different demographic groups.

Methodology:

The population for this study consists of Iranian travelers. Tourists' observations, criticisms, and recommendations are valuable sources of insight for improving service quality and innovation in any destination. The study aims to empirically verify models based on a literature review. Interviews and collected data are utilized to gather information. A questionnaire was designed to assess the satisfaction levels and perceptions of Iranian tourists in Thailand. The data were collected through this questionnaire, which was specifically created to identify the issues Iranian tourists face in Thailand and gauge their satisfaction levels.

Results and Discussion:

The research has successfully achieved its objectives; however, there are some limitations that need to be considered when discussing the findings. To enhance the study's depth, including interviews with Iranian tourists would have been beneficial. These interviews could have provided more insights from Iranian tourists about their experiences in Pattaya and allowed for more open discussions.

The study had limitations in terms of the number of surveyed participants and the limited time available for conducting the research. Additionally, economic factors played a role in reducing the number of Iranian tourists during the period of 2018-2019. Economic influences, such as income and price, have a significant impact on tourist activity. The crisis of Iran's

national currency and the economic sanctions imposed by Washington were the main reasons for the decline in the number of Iranian tourists during that time.

Despite these limitations, the findings of the study are robust and provide valuable insights for tourism management and marketers in Thailand, particularly in Pattaya.

Recommendation:

To attract more visitors from Iran, the Thai tourism industry needs to understand Iranian perceptions, as the Thai market is popular among Iranian tourists. Previous research has highlighted the importance of culture and understanding the perceptions and motivations of different nationalities. Further research on cultural dimensions, based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, can benefit the tourism industry, as cultural differences play a significant role in tourism studies.

The study focused on evaluating the relationship between the expectations and motivations of Iranian tourists in Pattaya, tour quality, tourist satisfaction, and loyalty. It emphasized the importance of attracting tourists to revisit and recommend the destination to others. The findings of this study provide new insights into tourists' satisfaction and offer recommendations for tourism managers.

Based on the study, the following suggestions are made:

Upgrade the city environment by addressing issues such as public amenities and cleanliness, as some respondents expressed dissatisfaction in these areas. Prioritize the urban environment, ecology, and healthcare, as cleanliness and effective healthcare are highly valued by tourists.

Encourage the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) to design value-for-money tour packages to attract visitors from lower-income groups.

Ensure that TAT and tourism operators have control over the pricing of products and services in Pattaya.

Thailand's unique and exotic tourist products do not necessarily need direct association with national tourism development, as large and well-established tourism businesses can thrive independently.

Improve Thai tourism's image by emphasizing characteristics such as advancement, manufacturability, and fissionability, which can help change the perception of sex tourism.

Ensure safety for all tourists, as feeling safe contributes to loyalty towards a destination. Thailand should provide enhanced safety measures to promote itself as a quiet, green, clean tourist destination with a caring and friendly population.

To address the issue of Iranian tourists carrying cash due to American sanctions, which makes them vulnerable to theft, offering a solution such as the "Visit Thailand Card" by Super Rich, which acts as a Thai Baht debit card, could attract more Iranian tourists.

Conduct further research to address the lack of studies on the impact of gender on the travel motivations of Iranian and Muslim women.

Give significant attention to cultural factors, as culture plays a crucial role in influencing tourists' behavior.

Based on the research and feedback from Iranian tourists, it is recommended that authorities focus on shaping a favorable image for Pattaya and improving tourists' perceptions of value and service quality to enhance destination satisfaction and loyalty.

Conclusion:

This section provides an overview and summary of the previous chapters in the research. It begins by presenting the background and key characteristics of Iranian tourists traveling to Pattaya. The literature review examines various aspects, such as destination image, tourism motivation, positive and negative perceptions, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty. The review highlights the lack of previous studies on the motivations of Iranian tourists to visit Pattaya and the influence of their cultural background on their perceptions of the destination.

The research justifies the use of a combined method approach, involving both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods. It emphasizes the importance of understanding tourists' motivations in effective tourism marketing and the significance of customer satisfaction in the competitive business environment.

The study's findings provide a clear understanding of Iranian tourists' perceptions of Pattaya and the motivations that drive them to visit. Factors such as freedom from Islamic roles, good value for money, Thailand's positive reputation among Iranian tourists, and the popularity of Thai beaches are identified as influential in motivating Iranian tourists. The study also highlights the preferences of different groups, such as single men, families, and elderly male tourists, and the impact of factors like personality, lifestyle, living conditions, age, and gender on tourists' behavior and perceptions.

Overall, the research focuses on Iranian tourists' perceptions and motivations, providing insights into their reasons for choosing Pattaya as a tourist destination.

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Thai Diplomacy in the Rules-Based World Order and Balance of Powers after the Cold War Era

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ABSTRACT

This paper is a part of the research on "Thai Diplomacy in the Changing New World Order and Balance of Powers in Southeast Asia". The study applied qualitative research by a documentary research method. All document data and information were collected from various books, papers, and research reports, as well as media information, documents of Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs and international organizations. Various collected data and information were studied by content analysis, critical analysis and logical analysis. The research results found that, since the end of cold war and the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the new world order was shifted from the bipolar balance of powers between the United States and the Soviet Union into the unipolar new world order under the American hegemony for decades. The rise of China as a new rival superpower of the United States together with China and Russia alliance has transformed the unipolar to the multipolar new world order. The "**Thai bamboo diplomacy**" and foreign policy have to be muddling through and readjusted with this strong wind of change. Thailand has its national instinct and ability to detect any direction of changing wind in order that the Thai bamboo diplomacy can be flexible enough to bend before the wind and bend with the wind for keeping a balancing act in a new ruled-based world order and balance of powers for the restoration of the world

Keywords: Thai Diplomacy, Rules-Based World Order, Balance of Powers, Cold War Era

INTRODUCTION

On 2 June 2022, US President Biden published in the New York Times titled 'How the US is willing to help Ukraine' in which he declared that Russia's action in Ukraine 'could mark the end of the rules-based international order and open the door to aggression elsewhere, with catastrophic consequences the world over' (Biden, 2022). Other Western leaders have likewise invoked the 'rules-based world order' to criticize non-Western states, especially Russia and China, for their international rule of law misconduct, but such references have been inconsistent with international law. An illustration of this is provided by the Declaration issued by the Heads of State at the conclusion of the 2022 Madrid Summit of NATO which stated that 'we adhere to international law and to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We are committed to upholding the rules-based international order'. The European Union leaders have an ambivalent attitude towards the rules-based world order, while they are prepared to go along with the United States and insisted that international relations are governed by international law. This was made clear in a statement issued by the European Union and its Members States in the General Assembly of the United Nations when Russia-Ukraine war started on February 2022 (Popan, 2021).

In its invasion of Ukraine, the Russian Federation has violated fundamental principles of international law and the United Nations Charter, ranging from the unlawful use of force and the violation of the territorial integrity of another sovereign state to brutal violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law. These violations of international law are best judged by an international legal order accepted and understood by all nations of the world rather than by an amorphous regime advocated by one of parties to the conflict. The statement issued by the European Union condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine as a violation of Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter, a crime of aggression under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and a violation of peremptory norms of international law (Popan, 2021) carries more weight than US President Biden's assertion that the invasion violates the rules-based world order (Biden, 2022). A final reason for discarding the rules-based world order as a means for judging the behaviour of states is that it is an unnecessary and harmful obstacle to attempts to agree on international law as a universal order governing all states when it comes to the application of international law but they seldom threaten the universality of international law.

The U.S., the NATO and the E.U. have different notable foreign policy from Russia and China vis-à-vis the ruled-based world order. While the Western countries concentrates democratic governance, human rights, environmentalism, and globalization, Russia and China emphasize the sovereign equality of states, non-intervention in the internal affairs of states, the settlement of disputes by mechanism to which states have consented, the immunity of states and their officials, and the condemnation of double standards in the treatment of states. This Sino-Russian approach to international law was spelled out in 2016 in the Declaration of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China on the Promotion of International Law (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 2016). The West's adherence to a rules-based world order and international law undermines efforts to agree upon a universal system of international law premised on the same fundamental rules, principles and values. The world order founded on the UN Charter as it has evolved since the end of the 2nd World War is a sounder recipe for peace and security than the discriminatory rules-based world order. As a result, the balance of power and geostrategic competition played by Russia-China alliance in Indo-Pacific region is currently a reflection for the rise of China's power as a new hegemonic actor in the broader regional order in Southeast Asia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The definition of world order today is whether the rapid shifts in the global balance of powers make war between rising and dominant powers very likely. The master narrative of the past seventy-two years has revolved around the idea of a U.S.-led post-World World II liberal hegemonic world order with three key characteristics: (1) maintain global international order; (2) provide public goods in the key areas of security, economy, and finance; and (3) maintain a gravitational normative pull, generating a large enough following to sustain the U.S. world leadership (Sørensen, 2016). The challenges of the rule-based world order in transition are compounded by the interconnected complexity of world today's global issues, heightened by rapid technological advancement by digital revolution, all of which makes all countries and international organization's governance harder consensus. While the idea of world community with shared destiny is perhaps now invoked more often than at any point in the past, there is no mutually agreed set of rules of international law and principles of diplomacy for how world societies should be organized and relate to one another in international relations. Thailand and other ASEAN member's states have to face with difficult consensus on rule-based world order.

The term of a "rules-based world order" is increasingly referred to in speeches within many international forums as well as declared from national political tribunes, foreign policy and diplomacy. The initial question is whether this notion is of purely political nature since it is not used in the UN Charter or in other international conventions. This term is not also relied upon by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) or by the UN International Law Commission (ILC) (Vylegzhanin, 2021). With the popularization of such a political discourse, the frequent usage of this term by many great powers, not only of Western countries, especially the US and the EU, but also of China and Russia, can affect the UN Charter and international law. Therefore, the rules-based world order confronts significant challenges, but it is not unraveling-at least, not yet. Climate change is the biggest wild card in trying to predict the future of world society. If the world's major powers, especially the US, EU, China and Russia, cooperate with each other to combat climate change, then other threats to the rules-based world order should be manageable, if the UN and its major powers fail to address the climate crisis by 2040 or 2050 (Sloss, 2022). Due to the attractive wording the concept gets widespread in international conference, but lacking a common understanding of its content, every country might put a different meaning into the concept and the legal meaning of the term rules-based world order.

Although the above questions about the legal meaning of the term "rules-based world order" have arisen only in recent years mainly in the context of the anti-Russian rhetoric of Western politicians, the term has been used much earlier at different levels in a wide variety of topics. The question of inconsistent perceptions of this term is another reflection of a more general problem of weakening or strengthening the universal legally binding international order. One of the appropriate interpretive versions of this concept might be that "rules-based order" means first and foremost the world order which is based on norms of international law (which are mandatory as well known), and on applicable non-binding international rules containing a normative element, such as international rules provided in the documents of intergovernmental organizations and conferences, interstate political arrangements, and other mutually accepted rules, formed in the contemporary practice of international relations (Vylegzhanin, 2021). This legal interpretation allows bringing the concept in line with modern international law and the practice of diplomacy. However, it is necessary to respect the distinction between the norms of international law, which are binding, and other rules, which do not create State's obligations under the UN Charter and international law.

The rules-based world order concept may have a negative impact on the existing international legal order insofar as it "washes out" the established legitimate procedures of international law-making, thus rejecting traditional international values of legal stability and diminishing the role of international law. Such scenario would not only multiply legal uncertainly and even unreasonable expectations among the participants of the international processes, but also might lead to undermining the fundamentals of modern international law based on the UN Charter. The latter in its turn will inevitably lead to the global legal instability and will dramatically increase the risks of World War III. At the moment, the frequent abuse of the term "rules-based world order" by the representatives of the NATO countries in support of their politically motivated statements, agreed upon only among them, impedes achievement of accepted understanding of the concept at the universal level, that might be consistent with international law (Vylegzhanin, 2021). Therefore, the concept of the rules-based world order is founded on diplomatic relationships between states and through international institutions and UN Charter frameworks, with shared rules and agreements on behaviour of their member's states. Three functions of the rules-based world order are to manage stable relations of great powers; to maintain prosperity of world systems; and defend democracy and spread freedom.

METHODOLOGY

This study applied a qualitative research by using a documentary research method based on the review literature's frameworks of the rules-based world order and balance of powers after the post-cold war periods. All documentary data was collected from related research reports, academic books and papers, as well as official documents and information of Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the United Nations and other international organizations. All collected documentary data were studied by content analysis, critical analysis and logical analysis throughout the data triangulation process in order to achieve comprehensive research results and discussion, conclusion and recommendations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this research found that Thai diplomacy has to face with the new challenges of the rules-based world order and balance of powers after the post-cold war periods. How can Thailand adapt its classic style of Thai diplomacy to the new challenges of the rules-based world order and the balance of powers in the Indo-Pacific and Southeast Asian Region? To answer this research question, the researcher analyses documentary data of research results in 3 aspects as follows:

1. The evolution of the characteristics of Thai diplomacy and foreign policy;
2. The challenge of the rules-based world order and balance of powers; and
3. The role of Thai diplomacy in the challenges of rules-based world order.

1. The Evolution of the Characteristics of Thai diplomacy and Foreign Policy

Having avoided direct Western colonization, Thailand provides a unique model for the study of international relations conducted by small-medium states. Unlike other Southeast Asian countries, where European colonizers ran foreign relations, Thailand (Siam) improvised and developed an independent form of foreign policy from its interactions with Western powers and Asian neighbours (Reid, 2015). Thailand has exercised pragmatic options throughout its long diplomatic history. Today, Thailand has established asymmetrical relationships with the US (formal), China (informal), and Japan (informal) (Busbarat, 2016). It has also formed symmetrical and formal relationships with regional organizations, such as the European Union (EU), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and various partnerships of Mekong sub-regional organizations. These tendencies is a propensity of Thai diplomacy and foreign policy for what are often realistically described as seeming alliances of interest and convenience. Some academics have characterized this style of Thai diplomacy as "bamboo diplomacy", which bends with the wind and bends before the wind, yet never snaps (Chinvano, 2021). Therefore, Thailand always follows the pragmatic primary goals of Thai diplomacy and foreign policy in order to maximize its national sovereignty and territorial integrity, while keeping external interferences of any great powers to a minimum.

During the post-Cold War period, Thailand has strived to play a central role in rules-based regional order and supply chains in Southeast Asia, and to promote itself as providing an attractive strategic location between US-China competitions. The Thai government agreed to a nearly 900-kilometre, Chinese-backed, North-South rail network connecting Kunming in the North to Singapore, crossing over Laos, Thailand, and Malaysia along the way. This high profile and expensive high-speed rail project is believed to be a critical part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in Southeast Asia and at the heart of China's infrastructure goals for the region. In terms of trade, China, Japan, and the US consistently ranked among the top three trading partners with Thailand between 2009 and 2019. Interestingly, China was Thailand's largest export partner for seven years, while the US held that position for four

years. Thailand also enjoyed a trade surplus with the US and consistently suffered a trade deficit with China (Ashley and Shipper, 2022). As for security aspect, Thailand continues to maintain a formal defense treaty with the US. In 2003, the US elevated Thailand's status as a major non-NATO ally (MNNA). However, with a cooling in its formal relations with the US following the 2014 coup d'état, Thai leaders have leveraged their informal security ties with China to expand military cooperation by purchasing Chinese military equipment and inviting the People's Liberation Army to join bilateral military exercises (Ashley and Shipper, 2022).

Another evidence of Thai bamboo diplomacy to alliances during the post-Cold War period is found in its pragmatic multiple partnerships and multidirectional leveraging of all four major governance institutions for the Mekong River. Thailand actively participates in the China-backed Lancang Mekong Cooperation (LMC), the US-backed Mekong-US Partnership, the Japan-backed Greater Mekong Subregion-Japan Partnership, and the regional Mekong River Commission (MRC). Thailand's participation in and leadership of these partnerships enables it to leverage all parties to maintain Thai sovereignty and to promote its prosperity. Since 2014, Thailand has been satisfied with cultivating its positive international image as a "bridgemaker" (Ashley and Shipper, 2022). By this historical evolution, Thai diplomacy and its foreign policy have been characterized as "**Thai bamboo diplomacy**", due to its flexibility in balancing act, not just bends with the wind but bends before the wind. In other words, Thai diplomacy is always pro-active and not reactive. Thai foreign policy has to bend where the wind is blowing in order to keep safe and survive in a dangerous difficult world (Chinvano, 2021). As a result, Thai bamboo diplomacy has always been very pragmatic, very practical, and very realistic in swaying with the wind. In order to response the balance of powers between the great powers, Thai leaders and their diplomats should have their ability and intuition to detect the direction of the wind in order to manage the art of Thai bamboo diplomacy in muddling through successfully the balance of powers among the great powers in Southeast Asia and Indo-Pacific region.

2. The Challenge of the Rules-Based World Order and Balance of Powers

The new rules-based world order established by the victorious allies after the World War II has been remarkably established the enduring rules of the UN Charter and international law. The framework of liberal democracy rules, embodied in the network of the United Nations, enforced by the most powerful nations: United States, Soviet Union and China, have caused the conflicts and proved resilient enough to guide the world into a new balance of powers. After the end of cold war and the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the hegemony of US global leadership and the power expansion of China, has opened the space for other countries to pursue a "might is right" strategy to their own foreign policy priorities. Russia annexed Crimea in violation of commitments to the Budapest Memorandum, has intervened directly in the armed conflict in Ukraine, and has laid out a doctrine that brazenly demands recognition of a Russian sphere of influence around its neighbourhood. The expansion of Chinese leadership is taking steps to turn its contested claims over islands in the South China and East China seas into a fait accompli (Chatham House, 2015). Regional powers in Southeast Asia and Indo-Pacific region are taking the preservation of their security into their own hands. The question arises, therefore, whether the post-World War II institutions and rule-based new world order can survive these challenges to the hegemony of US global leadership and the expansion of China-Russia influences around the world. Since the end of the cold war and the Soviet Union collapsed, the rules-based world order was shifted from a bipolar balance of powers between the United States and the Soviet Union to a unipolar new world order under the US hegemony for many decades. The emerging of China as a new rival superpower of the

United States together with China and Russia alliance has transformed the unipolar to the multipolar new world order.

The US Indo-Pacific strategy was trying to contain and counterbalance the expansion of the Chinese New Silk Road or Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI). The US-NATO Western alliance are confronting with Russia in the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine. How can we build up a rules-based world order for world peace under the UN Charter and international law? The answer to this question is that the new world order was mostly depended on the transformation of multipolar balance of powers between the US, China and Russia in the Post-Cold War era. Therefore, the rules-based world order may have a negative impact on the existing international legal order under the UN Charter and international law insofar as it washes out the established legitimate procedures of international law-making, thus rejecting traditional global values of legal stability and diminishing the role of international law in diplomacy. Such scenario would not only multiply legal uncertainly and even unreasonable expectations among the participants of the international processes, but also might lead to undermining the very fundamentals of modern international law based on the UN Charter. The latter in its turn will inevitably lead to the global legal instability and will dramatically increase the risks of World War III (Magomedova and others, 2021). The frequent abuse of the rules-based world order by Russia and NATO countries in support of their politically motivated statements impedes achievement of accepted understanding of the rules-based world order, which might be consistent with the UN Charter and international law.

The rise of new non-Western great powers: China and India is more likely to see an evolution than a degradation of the current rules-based world order that many great powers beyond the US invested in current world institutions. Great powers are transgressors of the UN Charter and international law, and some who are seen as revisionist are strongly supportive of norms, such as territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs of sovereign States. While welcoming continued US leadership, foreign policy makers should not see continued hegemony of US dominance as indispensable for order and justice in world affairs (Raymond, 2017). While the ASEAN Community advocates the need for a rules-based regional order, there are different visions of the rules-based regional order within or beyond the existing legal framework of the UN Charter and international law. The success to the development of a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region depends on the regional states can find a common ground to negotiate between the US, China and Russia through the shifting balance of powers. It remains to be seen whether ASEAN diplomacy can reconcile the variety of sentiments and policy preferences at the national levels to synergize the ASEAN regional order with rules-based world order. ASEAN diplomacy will need to be effectively put into practice to filter out the negative excesses of competition between China's New Silk Road or Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and US's Indo-Pacific Strategy. Thus, the **Thai bamboo diplomacy** and its foreign policy have to be muddling through and readjusted with this strong wind of change. Thailand has its national instinct and ability to detect any direction of changing wind in order that the Thai diplomacy can be flexible enough to bend before the wind and with the wind for keeping a balancing act in a ruled-based new world order and balance of powers for the restoration of the world peace and security under the UN Charter and international law.

3. The Role of Thai Diplomacy in the Challenges of Rules-Based World Order

The global security and geopolitical challenges nowadays are witnessing significant rivalry between the US's Indo-Pacific Strategy and China's New Silk Road or Belt and Road initiatives (BRI). The US, Japan, India and Australia attended the Summit meeting of the

Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) in March 12, 2021. The QUAD Summit has been driven by the rise of China's power and security threat it poses to rules-based world order. Despite there is no direct reference to China in the QUAD's first-ever joint statement, the summit outcomes are related to COVID-19 vaccine production, facilitating cooperation over emerging technologies, and mitigating climate change. Post-summit statements, which stressed the humanitarian origins of their collaboration in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, set out the group's uniting principles - democracy, a rules-based order, and a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific - and emphasized its role as a "force for global good". These provide the broad framework within which the QUAD will operate with the aim of shaping new world order in an age of transition from the US "unipolar" world to one in which China is seeking a decisive role (Kutty and Basrur, 2021). Despite doubts about the possibility of deeply institutionalized collaborations among the QUAD countries, the meeting indicated that the four powers are willing to cooperate on pressing issues of common concern, such as the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and the global impact of climate change, in addition to traditional security challenges. According to the joint statement issued at the close of the meeting, the four nations pledged to "redouble our commitment to the QUAD engagement" (Dermawan, 2021). Rather it is not perhaps an "Asian NATO", the QUAD is designed as a loose-network of like-minded partners aiming at a broader purpose.

The threat posed by China in Southeast Asia is not only at political and military strategy but also economic and technology one. As evidenced by its proactive pursuit of territorial claims in the South China Sea and the East China Sea, it is also economic and technological expansion in Asia-Pacific region. China is a pivotal player in global supply chains, most visible today in its major role as a major investor of surplus capital globally through the Belt and Road Initiative and rapidly rising technological power. It is this broader aspect of world order that the QUAD summit aims to address, as is clear from two of the joint statement's specifics, which focus on the establishment of working groups on vaccine development and critical new technologies. Both these efforts seek to constrain China's central position in the world system, but also to develop inclusively the new rules-based world order. The third working group being set up is on climate change, an area in which China is a cooperative player and not a competitor with the QUAD member's states, and thus downplays the notion that the QUAD is simply an instrument of containment (Kutty and Basrur, 2021). With these three initiatives are designed to create an environment that encourages China to be a positive player and persuades other states in the Southeast Asia and Indo-Pacific region to shed their hesitancy toward the QUAD strategy for building a ruled-based regional order in the South China Sea, Southeast Asia and Indo-Pacific region.

Despite focused on non-military initiatives, the QUAD strategy by no means downplays the military cooperation. Its members have established the basis for regular defense cooperation through naval exercises, and the sharing of intelligence and military logistics. Adding further heft to previous bilateral efforts, the trilateral India-US-Japan Malabar naval exercises expanded to include Australia last year. The four states have consolidated their military responses by building a set of nested strategic partnerships: linking their bilateral relationships with the India-Japan-US, India-Australia-Japan, and US-Japan-Australia trilateral. The QUAD strategy is a logical extension of this network and has the potential to build a "QUAD Plus" arrangement involving Canada, France (scheduled to join in a five-nation military exercise), and perhaps New Zealand and the United Kingdom (Kutty and Basrur, 2021). The QUAD is only a strategic grouping that seeks to enlist the support and cooperation of ASEAN and others countries in both military and non-military actions. The "QUAD Plus" idea bases on the framework of elasticity for other states who may want to link to and unlink themselves from

specific QUAD initiatives as deemed useful. But China has long viewed the QUAD grouping as an American-led attempt to contain and counter its global rise of power, and the grouping's consolidation could well heighten further the tensions between the two superpowers.

Southeast Asia is one of regions in which Sino-American rivalry is most critical for ASEAN. The South China Sea remains an ongoing crucial hot sport, in which the US Navy is frequently challenging China's expansive "nine-dash line" claim over the vital waterway with frequent Freedom of Navigation Operations. The US has become actively involved in these territorial disputes by directly challenging the legality of China's claims (Dermawan, 2021). The four QUAD powers have taken their interests in the South China Sea disputes to promote a free and open rules-based regional order to advance security and counter China's threats in Southeast Asian Region. In brief, ASEAN and the four Indo-Pacific powers: US, Japan, India and Australia are yet to form a unified stand on Indo-Pacific Strategy of regional security order mechanism while keeping the connectivity of ASEAN centrality mechanism intact. The QUAD strategic diplomacy seeks to create a platform for mutual development in the Indo-Pacific region and engage with like-minded nations in the quest for a rules-based regional order that promotes respect for sovereignty, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, free and fair trade system. ASEAN and QUAD countries can be an Indo-Pacific partnership to play a constructive role in building a ruled-based regional order in Southeast Asia region.

In response to the challenges of rules-based world order, the Thai government has to adjust its diplomacy and foreign policy of General Prayuth Chan-o-Cha that was closer relations with China than the US and the EU, who sanctioned the coup d'état in 22 May 2014. Nowadays, it was appropriate time for the newly elected government to adjust Thai bamboo diplomacy to restore balancing equidistant closer relations with the US, the EU and China. After 2023 general election and the MOU broken down of 8 opposition parties' coalition government between Move Forward Party and Pheu Thai Party, the latter shifted to form a new elected government with 11 Prayuth government parties. Without being labeled as an autocratic regime, the diplomatic posture of the incoming government under Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin will be more vigorous and build on existing progress and achievements. Even though the government's official policy has yet to be announced, it is not difficult to outline some of the salient features of Pheu Thai-led foreign policy practices. For major areas are top priorities – maintaining strategic autonomy with great powers, empowering ASEAN in all dimensions, advocating multilateral political and economic negotiations, and ensuring a rules-based regional order. These four pillars will enable Thailand to respond gradual and rapid shifts in geo-economic, geo-strategic, and geo-political imperatives. A high level Pheu Thai Party insider has described it as hybrid diplomacy, borrowing the concept of hybrid warfare. Admittedly, the outgoing Prayut government has been working hard to boost the country's profile and economic security through multilateral engagements, but its efficacy has not been as successful as expected. The autocratic imprint continues to haunt and undermine the outgoing government's positive track record (Chongkittavorn, 2023). The new elected government will restore Thai bamboo diplomacy towards the great powers, especially the US, the EU, China, ASEAN plus three (China, Japan, South Korea), and India.

As opposition party, the Move Forward Party (MFP), which won the most seats in Thailand's General Election on 14 May 2023, has unveiled its foreign policy vision, aimed at developing greater international cooperation, promoting human rights and addressing regional challenges. With a commitment to a more open and inclusive foreign policy, the party is looking to strengthen Thailand's role on the global stage and contribute positively to regional and global affairs. As head of the MFP, Pita Limjaroenrat formulated their foreign policy as "**Revive, Rebalance, and Recalibrate**" (**3Rs**). Under the MFP leadership, Thailand's foreign

policy agenda will reflect an unprecedented move from traditional approaches to active diplomacy, cooperation and the promotion of shared values. Firstly, Thailand's "**Revive**" foreign policy will no longer be one of quiet diplomacy. Under his leadership, the foreign policy will have an active impact on international matters. Secondly, with "**Rebalance**", a middle power can also lead in "rule-based diplomacy," and Thailand is ready to lead the region under his governance. Finally, "**Recalibrate**" will see foreign policy in the light of how Thailand can mutually benefit with other countries and international organisations around the world (ThaiPBS WORLD, 2023). As young and progressive leader, Pita believes that Thailand should play proactive role in promoting human rights, rules-based world order, and maintaining close cooperation with ASEAN. He sees Thailand as middle power that can help shape the new world order. Most importantly, Thailand's voice must be heard, vowing not to follow the brand of quiet diplomacy that has been the standard practice for decades (Chongkittavorn, 2023). In unveiling this foreign policy vision, the MFP redefines Thailand's role on the global stage, fostering closer ties with international partners and contributing to global peace, stability and sustainable development. The party signifies a departure from the country's diplomatic tradition and signals its commitment to a more forward-thinking diplomacy, after decades of seeming inactivity world (ThaiPBS WORLD, 2023). Consequently, the MPF foreign policy will restore more proactive Thai bamboo diplomacy in promoting the rules-based world order and balance of powers among the great powers after the post-cold war era.

After the disband of the Future Forward Party (FFP) by the Constitutional Court, the Move Forward Party (MFP), as the FFP successor, is committed all FFP foreign policy to restoring Thailand's credibility through international forums through by laying foundation for strong domestic democratic regime, compliance with international regulations, creating a balancing act with superpower nations to protect Thailand's interests and promote Thailand's role as a guardian of democracy, human rights, tolerance to diversity, promotion of gender equality and elimination of discrimination based on religions and faiths. To achieve those goals, the MFP will strengthen cooperation among the ASEAN community in vertical and horizontal aspects, covering the three pillars of political and security community, economic community and civil society and cultural community, along with pushing ASEAN mechanism as a channel to meditate conflicts in the region and promote human rights, allowing ASEAN to be an important instrument in which Thailand and other member nations can carry out their roles under international standards. The MFP is also committed to human rights as a principle in diplomacy and relationship building foreign countries, including promotion of rights and liberty (Future Forward Party, 2019). In economic sphere, the MFP will push for a fair policy in negotiating trades and investment, with mutual interests in mind. The party supports formal and informal bilateral negotiations to broaden free trade policies. The MPF supports membership in key cooperation pacts in the region, with regards to benefits Thailand will receive in term of trades, investment, and balance of power with all superpowers. The party also supports signing and ratifying international treaties that will bring political, economic and social institutions of Thailand to meet international standards. In cultural domain, the MFP will utilize Thailand's cultural force to build her soft power in international levels in order to increase economic opportunities and political roles. The MFP will end the practice of allowing domestic political disputes to dictate foreign affairs, especially the use of nationalist ideologies to stir hatred against other nations and use of diplomatic means to eradicate political enemies.

CONCLUSION

The current challenges to Thai diplomacy and foreign policy in general are that Thailand is in a changing rules-based world order and balance of powers nowadays, where it must deal with the rivalry of power between the US and China in the Indo-Pacific region. This is the great challenge to Thai diplomacy, how to handle the relationship between these two superpowers of the Indo-Pacific region. Apart from the challenge of the China-US confrontation, there are also variable challenges that Thai bamboo diplomacy must face to bend with the wind toward the EU, India, Japan and South Korea in balancing Thai relations between the US and China. Back in the 20th century, people often said the 21st century would be the Pacific century. Nowadays, there is a wind of change in world balance of powers in the Indo-Pacific century. Therefore, India has become a rising regional power in Asia and the Indo-Pacific region. There are opportunities of Thailand and ASEAN Community to strengthen our relations with India because, in the contemporary geo-strategic regional setting, perhaps there has been too much emphasis on China and not enough interest in India. It is very unfortunate that India did not join in the recent signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), an ASEAN-led free trade agreement by ASEAN plus 6 dialogue partners (China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and India) that Thailand places these ties on most important track to formalization. There are a lot of opportunities for Thai bamboo diplomacy as a balancing act to play an important role for a rules-based world order. At the end of the cold war, there are the challenges of Thai relations with great powers in the Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific region, which is always the real challenge of Thai diplomacy and foreign policy: how to deal with the new rules-based world order in the changing balance of powers.

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Consumers' Online Shopping Intentions on Short Video E-Commerce Platforms - An empirical study of Douyin Mall

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ABSTRACT

The effect of trust on shopping behavior intention (BI) was added to the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2) in order to find out what makes Chinese consumers and Chinese students in Thailand who use Douyin Mall want to shop. The findings are based on regression analysis and equation modeling using SPSS software, with a total of 358 sample data collected from Chinese consumers and Chinese students in Thailand. All the constructs of UTAUT2, namely Facilitating Conditions, Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Habit, Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, and Trust, exhibit a significant relationship with Behavioral Intention towards online shopping. This study also finds that Trust was reported to have the strongest influence on behavioral intention to shop at the Douyin Mall. This study discussed the consumer purchase intention at Douyin Mall. Based on the findings of the

Keywords: Consumer Behavioral Intentions, Douyin Mall, Online Shopping, China, UTAUT2

INTRODUCTION

Global business practices around the world have been revolutionized by the rapid development of technology and the spread of the Internet. One of the most significant outcomes of this digital transformation is the development of e-commerce platforms, which have reshaped the retail landscape and opened up new opportunities for businesses and consumers alike. (Albérico & Ricardo, 2021) (Tobias et al. 2022). The development of global e-commerce platforms has unfolded over the past few decades, propelled by technological advancements and changing consumer behaviors. Global e-commerce sales will cross the $5 trillion mark in 2022, marking a historic achievement. By 2025, total spending will surpass $7 trillion despite sluggish growth (Ethan, 2022). The presence of platforms like Amazon, Walmart, eBay, and Alibaba has significantly shaped the e-commerce industry. According to Digital Commerce 360's estimation, U.S.-based companies included in the Top2000 list are likely to experience significant domestic growth in the year 2022, with an expected increase of 6.2% to reach $784.38 billion (Digital Commerce 360, 2022) These platforms have not only facilitated online transactions but have also created ecosystems that encompass various services, including logistics, payment processing, and customer support. Therefore, they have established their dominance in the global e-commerce sector.

Amazon, Walmart, eBay, and Alibaba have achieved success due to their knack for delivering convenient and safe online shopping experiences, a wide array of products available, competitive pricing, and dependable delivery services. The outcome has been exponential sales growth and a fundamental shift in the way people worldwide engage in commerce. China's e-commerce boom started with the establishment of Alibaba in 1999, which then launched its Taobao platform in 2003. (Yang, 2019) Since then, the way Chinese people shop has changed tremendously. According to the China Power Project, China's Gross National Income (GNI) per capita has grown more than ten-fold since 2000, reaching $10,410 in 2019. (China Power Team, 2017) This growth has been significantly influenced by prominent e-commerce platforms in China, including Taobao, JD (Jingdong), and PDD. As of 2021, Alibaba and JD.com have a combined market share of more than 60% in China's B2C E-Commerce market. (Yang, 2019)

Taobao, launched in 2003, quickly emerged as a leading consumer-to-consumer (C2C) platform, allowing individuals to buy and sell a wide range of products. (Taobao, 2022) In December 2022, almost 1.1 billion people in China were actively using their mobile devices to make purchases. With more than 892 million active users each month as of March 2023, Taobao was one of the most well-liked shopping apps in the nation. (Thomala, 2022) JD, founded in 1998, shifted its focus to business-to-consumer (B2C) e-commerce, ensuring quality control and enhanced customer experiences. In 2023, the company reported total revenues of US$202.6 billion, an increase of 23.4% from 2022, mainly driven by the growth of its online retail and online marketplace businesses. (JD.com, 2023) PDD, a relative newcomer established in 2015, gained popularity through its innovative group-buying model, enabling consumers to enjoy discounted prices by forming purchasing groups. PDD's total revenue in 2022 was RMB1,057.9 billion (US$153.4 billion), up 61.8% from the previous year. The growth in transaction services and online marketing services revenues, which together represented 63.5% and 36.5% of total sales, respectively, was the main driver of the increase. (PDD Holdings, 2023).

Global pandemics have become more common in recent decades, such as SARS in 2003, H5N1 in 2006, and H1N1 in 2009, all of which impacted corporate activity and economic growth (Chung, 2015). The outbreak of epidemics, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, has further accelerated the development of e-commerce platforms in China. Amid lockdowns and social distancing measures, consumers increasingly turned to online shopping, causing a surge in e-commerce sales. This period also marked a shift in consumer preferences, with a greater emphasis on essentials, health care, and online entertainment. At the time of the COVID-19 epidemic, Douyin officially launched Douyin Mall in March 2021. (Zhe, 2021) Douyin, often known as TikTok outside of China, began as a short video platform that quickly grew in popularity among youthful users worldwide. Six hundred million of China's 1.4 billion people use Douyin on a regular basis, with 400 million searching for videos. (Red Digital China, 2021) Douyin is popular with the younger generation (about 85 percent of users are under 30 years old) because they can spend hours scrolling through 10-30-second videos. (Red Digital China, 2021).

Recognizing the opportunity to integrate e-commerce into its platform, Douyin offered a number of features that enabled a smooth buying experience within its app. This was a big shift, as it leveraged its large user base and addictive content to generate e-commerce sales. The gross merchandise value (GMV) of Douyin increased 320% year on year in the fiscal year ending in April, as the company sold more than 10 billion products. (Lee et al., 2021). Douyin's e-commerce endeavors have produced remarkable outcomes, with a substantial rise

in sales volumes. By effectively utilizing its recommendation engines and advanced user targeting capabilities, Douyin has achieved success in connecting users with relevant products, stimulating impulsive purchases, and enhancing overall user engagement. The incorporation of e-commerce aspects within the platform has elevated Douyin to the forefront of the Chinese e-commerce industry. Douyin is expected to continue its growth and success in the e-commerce sector for the foreseeable future. With its expanding user base, marketers have the opportunity to target a sizable audience and devise novel marketing strategies. Douyin holds immense potential in defining the landscape of social commerce by fusing entertaining content with hassle-free buying experiences, further blurring the lines separating entertainment from e-commerce.

Thus, this study aims to investigate consumers' shopping behavior when they shop using the Douyin Mall. This study will also examine whether there is a significant relationship between consumers' purchases and their motivation. The results of this study will provide insights into how to build a user-friendly platform.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Facilitating conditions

Facilitating conditions predict behavioral intention toward the acceptance of information technology. It refers to the degree to which an individual believes that an organizational and technical infrastructure exists to support use (Venkatesh et al., 2012). According to the UTAUT2 paradigm, this construct influences behavioral intention as well as usage behavior (Chopdar & Sivakumar, 2019; Hanif et al., 2022; Mosquera et al., 2018). The adoption of short-form video e-commerce platforms, mobile devices, personal knowledge, and assistance from others are included in the facilitating conditions in the current study. Therefore, the hypotheses 1 is proposed:

> H1: Facilitating conditions will positively impact behavioral intention.

Performance expectancy

Performance expectancy is the extent to which individuals believe that using the system will help improve shopping performance (Venkatesh et al., 2012). Adapted performance expectations for live shopping consider how customers perceive the benefits of utilizing short-form video e-commerce platforms (Zhou et al., 2021) In previous studies, e.g., live-streaming shopping, this construct was significantly manifested as a determinant of behavioral intention (Widyanto et al., 2020), mobile shopping (Hanif et al., 2022; Tak & Panwar, 2017) and live-streaming shopping (Sun, 2022). According to earlier studies, hypotheses 2 is proposed:

> H2: Performance expectation will positively impact behavioral intention.

Effort expectancy

Effort expectancy refers to the degree of ease associated with the use of a system by consumers (Venkatesh et al., 2012). It is similar to the Technology Acceptance Model's perceived ease of use (Davis et al., 1989), which has been shown to have a significant impact on people's willingness to engage in online shopping (Nagy & Hajdú, 2021), and mobile banking (Mahakunajirakul, 2022). In this study, effort expectancy involves ease of utilizing, selection, payment method, and interaction of live-streaming shopping (Hanif et al., 2022; Zhou et al., 2021). According to earlier studies, hypotheses 3 is proposed:

> H3: Effort expectation will positively impact behavioral intention.

Social influence

Social influence predicts behavioral intention towards the acceptance of information technology. It refers to how other people important to the users such as family, friends, and colleagues impact the way users interact with a particular technology (Venkatesh et al., 2012). The present study on social influence includes family, friends, colleagues, supervisors, key opinion leaders, and societal tendencies. Significant people's experiences will influence consumer shopping intentions toward short-form video e-commerce platforms. Previous literature mentions that social influences is a key factor in online purchases in Vietnam (Doan, 2020), mobile shopping in Pakistan (Hanif et al., 2022), mobile banking usage in Albania (Çera et al., 2020), and internet banking services in Gujarat (Patel & Patel, 2018). Therefore hypothesis 4 is proposed as follows:

H4: Social influence will positively impact behavioral intention.

Habit

Habit represents previous experience feedback and is thus linked to consumer decisions to use new technologies, both in terms of behavioral intent and actual usage behavior (Zhou et al., 2021). Droogenbroeck and Hove (2021) found that habit influenced both use intention and the actual use of online grocery shopping in Belgium. Therefore hypothesis 5 is proposed as follows:

H5: Habit will positively impact behavioral intention.

Hedonic motivation

Hedonic motivation is defined as the user's pleasure in using a system (Venkatesh et al., 2012). According to Falode et al. (2016), Hedonic shopping is an excellent shopping experience in which customers may have a satisfactory emotional reaction to the activity regardless of whether they make a purchase. Compared to traditional online shopping, short-form video e-commerce shopping combines entertaining aspects by having KOLs in the event (Wang et al., 2021). Therefore hypothesis 6 is proposed as follows:

H6: Hedonic motivation will positively impact behavioral intention.

Price value

Price value means the perceived benefits of using technology are greater than the perceived monetary cost incurred to use the technology (Mosquera et al., 2018; Zhou et al., 2021). There is an important distinction between the consumer and corporate contexts in which UTAUT was established (Venkatesh et al., 2012). A previous study found that pricing value has a substantial effect on the continuation intention of mobile shopping applications (Chopdar & Sivakumar, 2019). Therefore hypothesis 7 is proposed as follows:

H7: Price value will positively impact behavioral intention.

Trust

Trust is an individual's subjective assessment of the trustworthiness, honesty, consistency, and aptitude of another person or company (Alalwan et al., 2017). Consumers frequently utilize internet technology for receptive information-related tasks (Venkatesh et al., 2016). Thus, trust is an essential concept that is commonly used as a determinant for influencing both behavioral intention and usage behavior in a wide range of fields, especially in the electronic context. Despite prior research showing the importance of trust in both behavioral intention and usage behavior in online shopping, it is still necessary to be involved in the context of short-form video e-commerce shopping. Therefore hypothesis 8 is proposed as follows:

H8: Trust will positively impact behavioral intention.

Figure 1: Proposed Hypothesized Model
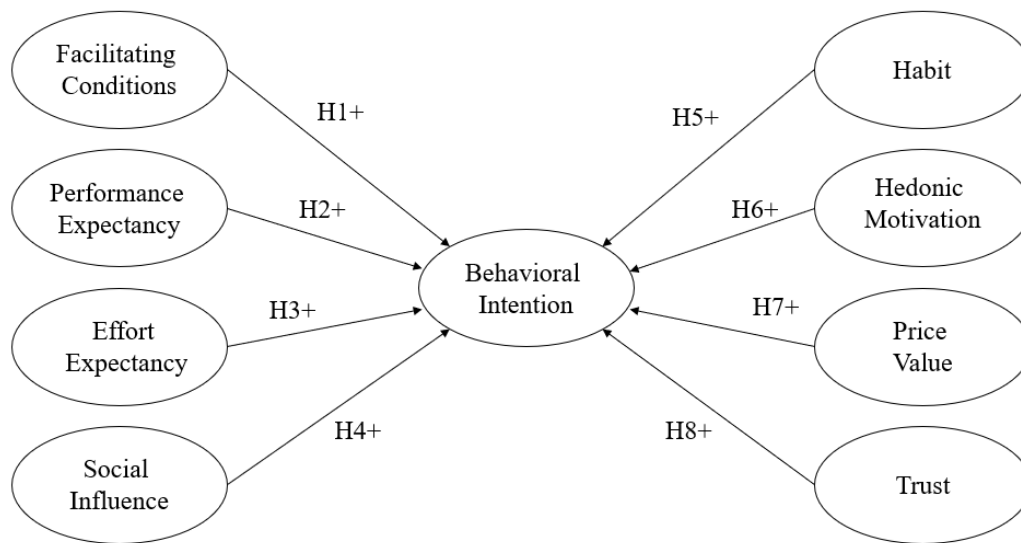
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

In order to study the trend of Douyin Mall, an online survey was devised to collect quantitative data for the purpose of testing the proposed hypothesis. Researchers use online surveys to measure consumer purchase intentions. This study uses an empirical research approach to examine the relationship between consumers' Facilitating Conditions, Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Habit, Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, Trust, and Behavioral Intention. The questionnaire used for this study has been adapted from existing literature (Venkatesh et al., 2012). The survey consisted of several dimensions, following: Facilitating Conditions, Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Habit, Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, and Trust. Its purpose was to evaluate the relationship between online shopping intention and Behavioral Intention. On the other hand, online shopping intention is the dependent variable, along with demographic information such as gender, age, educational background, and income. The data will be analyzed to draw conclusions and suggest improvements.

Scale measurement

The survey utilized in this study was developed by drawing upon existing scholarly literature. (Venkatesh et al., 2012). Based on previous studies, online shopping can be described as a form of human-computer interaction behavior. Therefore, using the Extended Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2) presents an appropriate theoretical framework for exploring the core variables that impact consumers' online purchasing behavior. According to the study conducted by Tak and Panwar, it has been established that the UTAUT2 model shows significant explanatory ability in various situations, including online shopping, in-store smartphone usage, mobile banking, and the use of communication technology. Moreover, it is widely used in the field of consumer behavior. (Venkatesh,2012).

Thus, the present study has its basis in the UTAUT2 model, aiming to assess the factors that impact consumer behavior in online purchasing. This study only examines the behavioral intentions of consumers, resulting in a reduction of the usage behavior variable in the original model. The present study employs a quantitative methodology to evaluate the proposed theoretical framework. A two-part online self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. The first part is demographic data, the demographic questionnaire covers the gender, age, educational background, income and online shopping of the respondents. The second part consisted of a Likert scale with seven points, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). This scale was used to measure the opinions or behaviors of the participants. There was a total of 39 questions, adapted from Venkatesh.

Data collection
The survey was conducted using an online questionnaire. The survey included both the Chinese and English languages in order to accommodate the selected participants for this study, who consisted of consumers from mainland China and Chinese students living in Thailand. The questionnaire was formulated and finalized in July of 2023, and then administered and completed. A predefined search was introduced into the research to assess potential participants' suitability, asking whether respondents have used shopping activities through the Douyin Mall platform. Only those respondents who confirmed their prior experience were able to proceed to the after question. It is difficult to conduct on-site surveys in mainland China so we used the Convenience Sampling Method. Based on the convenience sampling method questionnaire intermediaries in mainland China were commissioned to send and receive uniform questionnaires. The data collection period spanned from July to August 2023, utilizing an online questionnaire administered through Google Forms. Personal information like names and email addresses were not collected in order to maintain confidentiality, and participants were informed that the survey could be launched at any time. The primary data was collected from consumers residing in mainland China. A grand total of 358 responses were obtained.

Operationalization of variables
This study includes nine distinct independent variables, specifically Facilitating Conditions, Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Habit, Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, Trust, and the Association between Behavioral Intention.
Initially, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software in order to ascertain the validity of the variables. Then, a reliability test was conducted for each individual variable. The inclusion of control variables was done to improve the appropriateness of the model. The mean scores for all variables were computed, and comparisons were conducted to assess the validity of the concepts.

Data analysis techniques
The data utilized in this study was acquired through the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. The responses were recorded and stored in the (sav) format for after data analysis using SPSS. The statistical software SPSS was employed to conduct an analysis of means for demographic information and online shopping intentions. In addition, a bivariate correlation analysis was performed using Pearson's correlation coefficient to examine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Following the inclusion of certain control variables, the obtained results were subjected to analysis in order to determine the disturbance for the purpose of testing the proposed hypothesis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Demographic information

The respondents (n=358) who participated in the survey were from China. Among the respondents, there were 178 (49.7%) female and 180 (50.3%) are male. The majority of participants 176 (49.2%) were study in university, followed by 61 (17.0%), 21 (5.9%), 17 (4.7%) and 7 (2.0%) were from Bachelors, Masters, Professional and Doctorate program respectively. From the monthly household income, 104 (29.1%) were having income below 4000 yuan (20000 Baht) and 114 (31.8%) were earning more than 7000 yuan (35000 Baht). The most frequently purchased item among the respondents was 40 (11.2%) Office & School Supplies, with the highest frequency being Twice a week 125 (34.9%).

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics and Education Aspects

Aspects	Statistics	
Gender	Male:	178 (49.7%)
	Female:	180 (50.3%)
Education Level:	Nursery school to 8th grade:	6 (1.7%)
	High school, no diploma:	22 (6.1%)
	High school graduate:	48 (13.4%)
	Some college credit, no degree:	77 (21.5%)
	Technical training:	46 (12.8%)
	Associate degree:	53 (14.8%)
	Bachelor's degree:	61 (17.0%)
	Master's degree:	21 (5.9%)
	Professional degree:	17 (4.7%)
	Doctorate degree:	7 (2.0%)
Income Level:	Below 2000 yuan (Below 10000 Baht):	44 (12.3%)
	2001-3000 yuan (10000-15000 Baht):	21 (5.9%)
	3001-4000 yuan (15000-20000 Baht):	39 (10.9%)
	4001-5000 yuan (20000-25000 Baht):	43 (12.0%)
	5001-6000 yuan (25000-30000 Baht):	48 (13.4%)
	6001-7000 yuan (30000-35000 Baht):	49 (13.7%)
	7001-8000 yuan (35000-40000 Baht):	36 (10.1%)
	8001-9000 yuan (40000-45000 Baht):	33 (9.2%)
	9001-10000 yuan (45000-50000 Baht):	27 (7.5%)
	Over 10000 yuan (Over 50000 Baht):	18 (5.0%)
Types:	Apparel & Accessories	42 (11.7%)

	Shoes & Bags	38 (10.6%)
	Beauty	35 (9.8%)
	Household Cleaning	12 (3.4%)
	Furniture	15 (4.2%)
	Food & Beverage	27 (7.5%)
	Medical devices	30 (8.4%)
	Home Appliances	18 (5.0%)
	Office & School Supplies	40 (11.2%)
	Electrical Equipment	35 (9.8%)
	Tools & Hardware	21 (5.9%)
	Sports & Entertainment	36 (10.1%)
	Chemicals	3 (0.8%)
	Vehicles and Transportation	6 (1.7%)
Frequency:	Everyday:	16 (4.5%)
	Once a week:	64 (17.9%)
	Twice a week:	125 (34.9%)
	Once a month:	89 (24.9%)
	Twice a month:	64 (17.9%)

4.2 Analysis of the survey
4.2.1 Correlation Analysis

Bivariate correlation was calculated between Facilitating Conditions, Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Habit, Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, Trust on online shopping Behavioral Intention. All factors were positively correlated. The correlations were found to be significant ($p < 0.001$, 2-tailed) according to the table below. Trust and Facilitating Conditions exhibited a moderately strong correlation (Pearson's correlation coefficient = 0.550) with statistical significance ($p < 0.01$). The study demonstrated that Trust had a noteworthy positive correlation ($p < 0.01$) with Behavioral Intention, exhibiting a Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.541, denoting a reasonably strong correlation. Similarly, Trust showed significant positive correlation ($p < 0.01$) with Effort Expectancy, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.541 indicating a correlation of moderate strength.

Table 2 Exhibits Correlations among all the Variables.

Correlations

		FC	PE	EE	SI	HB	HM	BI	PV	TR
FC	Pearson Correlation	1	.356**	.367**	.390**	.447**	.472**	.483**	.443**	.550**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358
PE	Pearson Correlation	.356**	1	.406**	.335**	.434**	.332**	.360**	.387**	.494**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358
EE	Pearson Correlation	.367**	.406**	1	.431**	.382**	.401**	.442**	.330**	.541**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358
SI	Pearson Correlation	.390**	.335**	.431**	1	.353**	.314**	.358**	.404**	.528**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358
HB	Pearson Correlation	.447**	.434**	.382**	.353**	1	.405**	.314**	.405**	.523**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358
HM	Pearson Correlation	.472**	.332**	.401**	.314**	.405**	1	.415**	.420**	.514**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358
BI	Pearson Correlation	.483**	.360**	.442**	.358**	.314**	.415**	1	.442**	.541**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358
PV	Pearson Correlation	.443**	.387**	.330**	.404**	.405**	.420**	.442**	1	.514**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358
TR	Pearson Correlation	.550**	.494**	.541**	.528**	.523**	.514**	.541**	.514**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Reliability Test

The internal reliability consistency of all the variables was determined to be at a moderate level, as shown by the reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) values. The scores for the variables in the study are as follows: Facilitating Conditions = 0.936, Performance Expectancy = 0.923, Effort Expectancy = 0.924, Social Influence = 0.920, Habit towards shopping behavior = 0.921, Hedonic Motivation = 0.923, Price Value = 0.895, Trust on shopping behavior = 0.922, and Behavioral Intention = 0.920.

Table 3: Cronbach's alpha for the variables

VARIABLES	ALPHA
Facilitating Conditions	0.936
Performance Expectancy	0.923
Effort Expectancy	0.924
Social Influence	0.920
Habit	0.921
Hedonic Motivation	0.923
Price Value	0.895
Trust	0.922
Behavioral Intention	0.920
* Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	

Validity Test

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO and Bartlett's Test) showed that Facilitating Conditions had the highest factor loading with 0.862 (p =.000) and Price Value had the lowest factor loading with 0.745 (p =.000). Table 4 shows how all the variables load on each factor. Performance Expectancy was 0.764 (p =.000), Effort Expectancy toward Behavioral Intention was 0.764 (p =.000), Social Influence was 0.762 (p =.000), Habit was 0.855 (p =.000), Hedonic Motivation was 0.858 (p =.000), Price Value was 0.745 (p =.000), and Trust on Behavioral Intention was 0.859 (p =.000).

Table 4: Kaiser Meyer-Olkin test for factor instrument (KMO and Barlett's Test)

| VARIABLES	KMO*	SIG.
Facilitating Conditions	0.862	0.000
Performance Expectancy	0.764	0.000
Effort Expectancy	0.764	0.000
Social Influence	0.762	0.000
Habit	0.855	0.000
Hedonic Motivation	0.858	0.000
Price Value	0.745	0.000
Trust	0.859	0.000
Behavioral Intention	0.853	0.000
* Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		

Linear Regression analysis

The beta coefficients for each variable were computed after to the calculation of the eight factors and the assessment of the intention become involved in online shopping on the Douyin Mall. The utilitarian and conservative shopping values were assessed using the trust and intention of consumers in mainland China and Chinese students in Thailand in the context of online shopping. From the results of the regression analysis, it was determined that there is a positive relationship between Facilitating Conditions and Behavioral Intention (β = 0.483, p .000) with a R square of 0.233 (i.e., FC explains approximately 23% of online shopping intentions), indicating that H1 is supported. Based on the analysis, it was determined that Performance Expectancy and Behavioral Intention (β = 0.360, p .000) with the R square of 0.130 (i.e., PE explains 13% of attitudes toward shopping behavior) support the H2 hypothesis.

On the other hand, Effort Expectancy (β = 0.442, p value .000) is positively related to Behavioral Intention with a R square of 0.195 (it explains 20% of attitudes toward shopping behavior), which supports the H3 hypothesis. In addition, the Social Influence value (β = 0.358, p value .000) is positively related to Behavioral Intention with the R square of 0.128 (i.e., it is approximately 13% on attitudes toward online shopping behavior), which supports the H4 hypothesis. This analysis shows that the Habit value (β = 0.314, p .000) is weakly positively related to Behavioral Intention with the R square of 0.099 (it explains 10% of attitudes toward online shopping), supporting the hypothesis that H5 is significantly related. In this analysis, we discovered that the Hedonic Motivation value (β = 0.415, p value .000) is positively related to Behavioral Intention with a R square of 0.172 (i.e., HM explains 17% of the reasons for online shopping), which supports the hypothesis that H6 is significantly related. The result revealed that the Price Value towards Behavioral Intention (β = 0.442, p value .000) is positively correlated with the R square of 0.195 (it explains 20% of the variance between attitudes and intention to shop online) and is also significant, which

supports the hypothesis H7. From the result between Trust and Behavioral Intention (β = 0.541, p .000), a significantly positive relationship was observed with a R square of 0.293 (i.e., approximately 30% of the variance can be explained by the relationship between Trust and online shopping intention), supporting the hypothesis H8.

Figure 2: The Results of the Structural Model
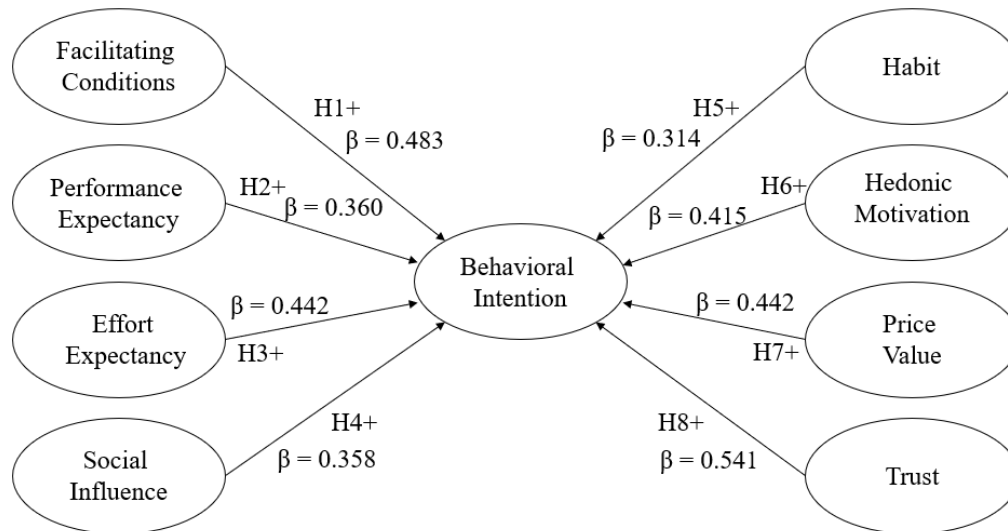
CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The purpose of this study is to understand the purchase intentions of Chinese consumers at Douyin Mall. The Trust factor was added to the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2) framework. It examines the relationship between Facilitating conditions, Performance Expectancy, Effort, Social Influence, Habit, Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, Trust, and Behavioral Intention to shop online. (Venkatesh et al., 2012). The online questionnaire yielded 358 valid responses, and the analysis revealed the relationship between each factor, which is consistent with the theoretical hypothesis of this study.

The results of this study show a positive correlation between consumers' online shopping Behavioral Intention in Douyin Mall and the factors of Facilitating Conditions, Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Habit, Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, and Trust, as defined by the UTAUT2 model proposed by Venkatesh et al. (2012). The variables of Trust, facilitating conditions, and Price Value showed statistically significant positive effects.

By adjusting the UTAUT2 model, the results show that trust is significantly and positively related to consumers' behavioral intention. This is consistent with Hong, I. B.'s (2015) research on Understanding the consumer's online merchant selection process. This study found that Trust is the strongest determinant of consumers' online shopping behaviors. The trustworthiness of an e-commerce platform has a significant impact on whether or not a consumer will make a purchase. This is consistent with the study by Musleh J, Cho H, Lee, et al. This implies that good quality of goods, perfect customer service, and protection of consumers' interests are the conditions that increase consumers' trust in online shopping, which leads to purchase actions. Xuemei Sun. (2022). Platforms with high trust are more

likely to stimulate Chinese consumers' positive attitudes towards online shopping. We find that facilitating conditions also have a significant positive effect on consumers' behavioral intention in Douyin Mall. This finding suggests that Chinese consumers tend to use more convenient platforms to meet their shopping needs. The results of the study show that price value also has a positive effect on consumers' Behavioral Intention to shop in Douyin Mall. This is in line with Fadzil et al.'s study on factors influencing behavioral intention to use mobile apps in Malaysia. Contrary to the previous literature of Venkatesh et al. (2012) on perceived value. This finding suggests that price value is an important consideration for Chinese consumers when making online purchases.

Limitations

Every study is accompanied by inherent limitations, which in turn create opportunities for future research. The survey was administered through an online platform, with respondents consisting exclusively of Chinese citizens. Therefore, the results of this research fully reflect the perspectives of Chinese consumers regarding their shopping behavior at Douyin Mall. Furthermore, the extent to which the findings can be generalized is limited due to the significant number of respondents in this study being mainly Chinese mainland consumers, with a relatively small representation of Chinese students in Thailand. The opinions shown by the participants in this research are not representative of the entire Chinese student population in Thailand. Also, the present study did not examine the possibility of moderating the effects of social variables such as age, gender, shopping experience, and monthly income on purchase intention within the context of Douyin Mall. Future research should aim to conduct a deeper look into these moderating factors and use behavioral analysis.

Every study is inevitably accompanied by certain limitations, which in turn create opportunities for future research. Further study might include more factors, such as security and confidentiality, in order to get a greater understanding of users' shopping intentions when using Douyin Mall. In conclusion, despite certain limitations, this study points out some benefits connected to short video e-commerce platforms.

Recommendations

Using Douyin Mall as an example study, the results of this research provide valuable insights into the analysis of consumer behavior on online shopping platforms that are derived from short video media. With the rise of short video media around the world, the combination of short video media and online shopping has yet to be thoroughly researched and cited. The study of this particular form of electronic commerce is extensively conducted in China. This study confirms that Trust, Facilitating Conditions, and Price Value are important predictors of Chinese consumers' and Chinese students' behavioral intentions to use Douyin Mall in Thailand. As these significant factors are of concern to all market participants, these findings may be useful for e-commerce and other industry participants, such as short video media developers.

For developers to build a platform with a high degree of user trust, they have to prioritize safeguarding consumer rights and providing better after-sales service. Work with secure payment platforms, for instance, to create systems that protect the personal information of users. Developers might need to think about incorporating animation tutorials and online support to facilitate users' learning of the application more quickly.

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The Impact of Sustainable Packaging in the Food and Beverage Industry on Consumer Purchasing Behaviour - A Study at Siam University

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ABSTRACT

Packaging is an essential part of any product. It does not only fulfil specific functions but also adds value to the overall product for customers. Yet, conventional packaging used by end consumers often yield ecological drawbacks such as CO_2 emissions and water pollution. In this regard, this study aims to explore the impact of sustainable packaging of products in the food and beverage industry on consumer purchasing behaviour. In addition, it investigates whether sustainable packaging adds value to a product and increases the likelihood of a consumer to pay more for it giving the firm a competitive advantage. Here, the research intends to measure consumers' behaviour and their purchasing intention of sustainable packaging as well as their awareness and relationship to environmentally friendly practices regarding consumption of packaging. Furthermore, the research incorporates the Theory of Planned Behaviour by Icek Ajzen to understand how sustainable packaging relates to (1) attitude toward behaviour (2) subjective norm and (3) perceived behavioural control, which affect both behavioural intention and actual behaviour. This work will use a cross-sectional study to research whether consumers show a propensity to buy food and beverages with sustainable packaging. Thus, an online questionnaire and judgmental sampling will be employed targeting undergraduates, graduates and faculty members at Siam University, Bangkok. The questions will be in both English and Thai, whereas for the Thai questionnaire back-to-back-translation will be used. Lastly, the data will be analysed with IBM SPSS Statistics V25 software. The researchers expect to find that sustainable packaging adds to the value proposition of food products and beverages making them more attractive to consumers than products with conventional packaging. However, financial constraints might display one of the main barriers to buying those products. Additionally, respondents might not be very well educated on environmental issues and practices.

Keywords: Sustainable Packaging, Ecological Issues, Theory of Planned Behaviour, Green Purchasing, Green Perceived Value

INTRODUCTION

In today's consumer society, one witnesses not only augmented by also excessive consumption of all kinds of products. These products almost always come with packaging which for instance is needed to protect the product or provide information to the customer yet contributes to the ecological downside of modern consumption. One of the main sources of packaging is the food and beverage industry (Ibrahim et al., 2022). Thus, daily food and beverage consumption leads to a high quantity of waste in form of wrappings, boxes and bags which often end up in landfills or body of waters as pollution. Especially, plastic packaging poses a fundamental threat to the environment. The OECD's first Global Plastics Outlook reports that from the year 2000 to the year 2019 global plastics waste has more than doubled and that 40% of this waste stems from packaging (Plastic Pollution is growing relentlessly as Waste Management and Recycling fall short, says OECD, 2022). More concretely, in 2021 390.7 million metric tons of plastics were produced globally (Statista Research Department, 2023).

To combat environmental issues, governmental institutions and offices worldwide are introducing policies and initiatives to reduce pollution. For instance, in Thailand in 2019 the Thai cabinet approved the "Roadmap on Plastic Waste Management 2018 – 2030" which was proposed by the Pollution Control Department of the Thai Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. The targets of this roadmap include banning seven types of single-use plastics and recycling 100% of the national plastic waste by 2027. The first goal to ban plastic bottle cap seals, oxo-degradable plastics and plastic microbeads has been successfully achieved by 2019 (Rujivanarom, 2021).

In addition, the economy also addresses the environmental challenges the world faces by providing more and more sustainable packaging solutions to the consumers. Now, the consumers can show different kinds of behaviour in response to the incorporation of sustainable packaging in a product which either helps protect the environment or not. This proposed study wants to further explore the impact that sustainable packaging in the food and beverage industry can have on the purchasing behaviour of consumers. It is crucial to know how environmentally friendly packaging is perceived by the consumer and what effect it has on them. This has significant relevance for the companies that market and implement sustainable packaging as well as society that is ought to support sustainable practices. Right now, there seemingly is a discrepancy between intention and actual behaviour of consumers as on one hand green awareness and trends are propagated through political movements like Fridays for Future or asked for by other environmental advocates in the media, yet on the other hand polluted landfills, endangered ecosystems and water pollution are prevailing. This depicts the starting point of the motivation to conduct the proposed study.

Objectives

This study aims at exploring to identify the following:

(1) the impact of sustainable packaging on consumer purchasing behaviour,
(2) consumers' green purchasing intention regarding sustainable packaging,
(3) the awareness and relationship to sustainable practices regarding consumption of packaging.

Contributions

In this juncture, the research will contribute to academia, management practices and the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. To begin with, to contribute to research in the field of packaging and consumer behaviour the proposed study is ought to identify the factors that influence sustainable purchasing behaviour to help understand the impact and importance of sustainable packaging on consumer purchasing behaviour in particular. In addition, the paper intends to give insight on the value perception of different demographic groups regarding green consumption. Lastly, it will also explore the intention-behaviour gap in sustainable consumption.

Furthermore, with this study companies will gain knowledge on green marketing strategies and consumer behaviour. In the same manner, its results will facilitate the creation and advertisement of green products for companies and organizations as it will help capitalize on green value perception. Moreover, universities and governmental institutions will be able to use the findings to create campaigns which will increase sustainable awareness to promote green consumption practices. In addition, they will also be able to better estimate appropriate investments in education-related sustainability which plays an important role in maximizing sustainable consumption. On top of that, this study will also contribute to community engagement via public lectures, company training courses and local school initiatives by sharing information on environmental issues and raising a sense of social and environmental responsibility.

Finally, this paper will also contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. Here, particularly two goals are enforced. First, the research adds to Goal 12 which puts an emphasis on guaranteeing sustainable management consumption and production patterns by investigating consumption that seems to harm the environment as well as green awareness and consumer intention on this matter. Similarly, this study promotes Goal 9 which focuses on creating resilient infrastructure and enforcing inclusive and sustainable industrialization as well as innovation (The 17 Goals, n.d).

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Theory of Planned Behavior
To explain and predict behaviour Icek Ajzen presented his Theory of Planned Behaviour in 1991. According to him behaviour is a function of three factors: (1) Attitude toward Behaviour (2) Subjective Norm (3) Perceived Behaviour Control. Firstly, the attitude of an individual toward a certain behaviour relates to as how favourable or unfavourable they evaluate the behaviour. This is influenced by behavioural beliefs which means that any person balances the perceived advantages and disadvantages from a certain action. Additionally, subjective norm touches upon the social pressure someone feels to act a certain way. This entails normative beliefs meaning that often there is a normative referent who will determine an individual's final behaviour. Third, perceived behavioural control relates to how easy or difficult an individual perceives the behaviour to be, and thus includes factors of feasibility. These three factors then lead to intention which indicates how hard someone is willing to try to perform a particular behaviour. According to Ajzen (1991), intention finally leads to behaviour.

Ajzen hypothesizes positive relationships between all variables as one can see in his model

which will also be adopted by the authors of the proposed study. The Theory of Planned Behaviour will be used as the base of this study to develop a conceptual framework. Thus, further concepts are added to this related theory to develop additional hypotheses.
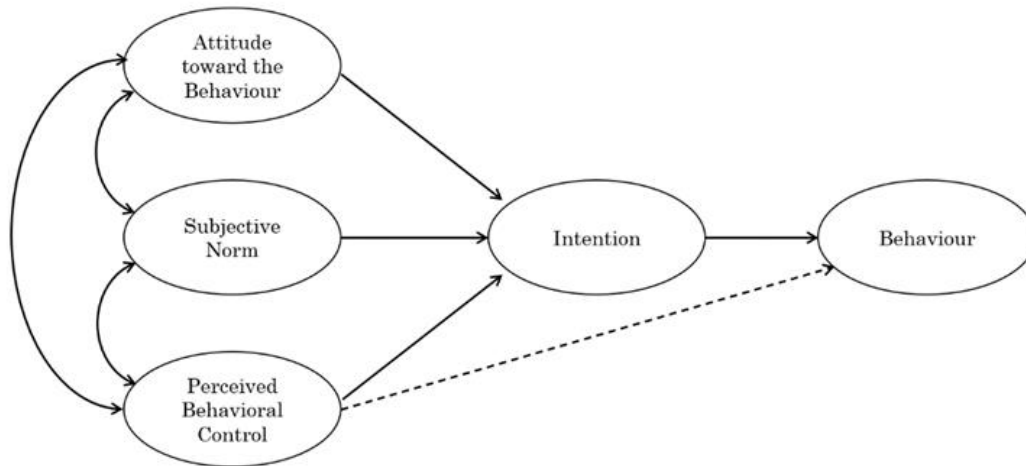

Figure 1: Theory of Planned Behaviour by Ajzen

Sustainable Packaging

Dörnyei et al. (2023) define sustainable food packaging as follows: „Sustainable food packaging is an optimized, measured (quantified) and validated solution, which takes into consideration the balance of social, economic, ecological and safe implementations of the circular value chain, based on the entire history (life cycle) of the food product package unit." In addition, they state that although there are fine distinguishments, environmentally friendly and green packaging are often used synonymously for sustainable packaging which will also be the case for the proposed study.

Following Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour a consumer's purchasing choice comes from the attitude towards the product which is based on the benefits the consumer thinks the product will yield for them. Generally, packaging can directly and indirectly be beneficial for a consumer. For instance, it can add functions like portability to the overall product or provide benefits through consumer inferences (Steenis et al., 2017) like augmented perceived product quality. The Theory of Planned Behaviour depicts a general attitudinal model that can identify the propensity of consumers to purchase sustainable packaging yet does not specify the effect of a variable, e.g. sustainable packaging, on consumer's attitude. To take the impact of sustainable packaging into account too, the proposed study suggests that factors of sustainable packaging, ie. features of sustainable packaging like function, material, type and product quality, are positively associated with consumers' attitude. For example, Steenis et al. (2017) showed that sustainable packaging has salient association and moderate importance for consumer attitude.

Green Perceived Value

This study will consider the Green Perceived Value of Sustainable Packaging which can be described as "the perception of customers regarding the green product characteristics, and its

impact on the environment" (Song et al., 2019; Hänninen & Karjaluoto, 2017, cited in Ahmed et al.). It is given to environmentally friendly products by consumers and indicates the benefits they believe to obtain through the purchase of a green product (Chen & Chang, 2012).

Demographic Variables

Chirilli et al. (2022) argue that the characteristics of sustainable packaging alone cannot bring about a positive environmental development as they must be enforced by the consumers' wish and propensity to purchase sustainable packaging. Thus, the consumer becomes determining for the success of sustainable packaging. Subsequently, demographic variables form part of the model of the proposed research as they depict sustainable consumer characteristics that enable researchers to explore the drivers and barriers to sustainable consumption as well as have been identified as key determinants of sustainable consumption by various authors (Nguyen et. al, 2019). In the past for instance, socio-demographic characteristics have been hypothesised and proven to significantly influence environmental sustainability awareness, behaviour and consumers' expectations (Chirilli et al., 2022). In the same manner, Shoeran & Kumar (2022) who based their research on sustainable consumption on the Theory of Planned Behaviour as well argued that the demographic variables gender, age, annual income, and education level have a significant moderating effect between attitude and sustainable consumer behaviour intention, between subjective norms and sustainable consumer behaviour and between perceived behavioural control. Likewise, the proposed study includes demographic variables as moderating variables of the research's conceptual framework. The demographic variables that will be used are age, gender, nationality and earning of income.

Proposed Hypotheses and Conceptual Framework

The hypotheses incorporated in this study apart from the hypotheses established in the Theory of Planend Behaviour (H2 – H5) do not only correlate with the objectives of this study but have also been recently formulated by authors like Shoeran & Kumar (2021) and Ahmed et al. (2023). Hence, from the above argument including the Theory of Planned Behaviour by Ajzen, the proposed hypotheses are developed:

H1: Sustainable packaging is positively associated with attitude toward behaviour.
H2: Attitude has a significant positive influence on behavioural intention.
H3: Subjective norms have a significant positive influence on behaviour intention.
H4: Perceived behavioural control has a significant positive influence on behavioural intention.
H5: Intention has a positive relationship with behaviour.
H6: Green perceived value has a mediating effect on behavioural intention and behaviour.
H7: Demographic variables age, gender, nationality, and earing of income have a moderating effect on the relationship between attitude and behavioural intention.
H8: Demographic variables age, gender, nationality, and earing of income have a moderating effect on the relationship between subjective norms and behavioural intention.
H9: Demographic variables age, gender, nationality, and earing of income have a moderating effect on the relationship between perceived behavioural control and behavioural intention.
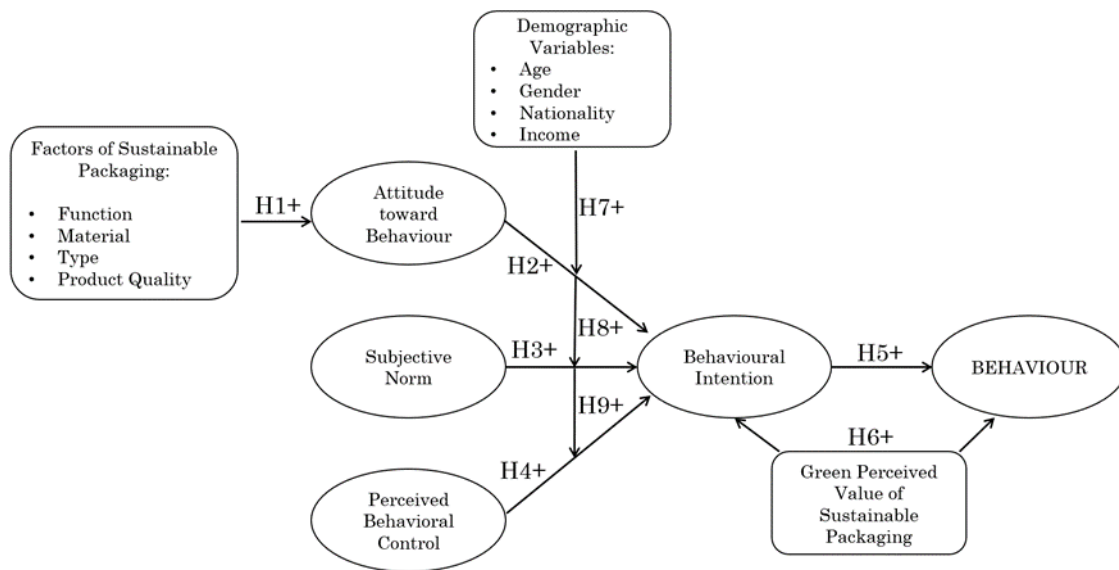
Figure 2: conceptual framework developed for proposed study

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For this study quantitative and explanatory research will be employed. The independent variables are Sustainable Packaging, Attitude toward Behaviour, Subjective Norm, Perceived Behavioural Control and Intention while the dependant variable is Behaviour. Besides, there are also the Demographic Variables as moderating variables. The data will be collected through online questionnaires via Google Forms. They will be both in English and Thai (back-to-back-translation) and consist of two parts. The first part identifies the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the second includes items that focus on the variables of the conceptual framework. First, a pilot study will be conducted. The sampling method that will be used is judgmental sampling. Here, the research will be designed to explore consumer purchasing behaviour of Thai and International undergraduates, graduates and faculty members selected by the authors at Siam University, Thailand. The participants will be those who purchase sustainable packaging. As for data analysis IBM SPSS V25 will be used, and the measurement scales are all adopted from prior literature.

PLAN

The research planning started in week 36 of 2023. Both the planning and the literature search took extensive time – up to two months. Furthermore, developing the questionnaire, which will be both in English and Thai, will be finished by the end of week 45. Then, the pilot study will be carried out in week 46. The real data collection is planned to start within the same week, after potential adaptions of the questionnaire. Lastly, the report will be written and presented by week 48.

Year	2023												
Research (Activities)	wk 36	wk 37	wk 38	wk 39	wk 40	wk 41	wk 42	wk 43	wk 44	wk 45	wk 46	wk 47	wk 48
1.Planning of													

Task														
research	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨									
2.Literature Search			▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨						
3. Development of questionnaire						▨	▨	▨	▨					
4.Pilot study									▨					
5.Data collection												▨	▨	
6.Data entry and analysis												▨	▨	▨
7. Report writing and presentation													▨	▨

Table 1: Gantt Chart

EXPECTED OUTCOME

This study's goal is to explore green purchasing intention and awareness as well as actual consumer behaviour of respondents at Siam University in Thailand. Hence, a questionnaire will be employed to investigate the relationship between the different variables of the authors' conceptual model which is based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour. The authors expect to find a direct positive relationship between all variables as well as that sustainable packaging, including product quality, function, material and type, has a positive and significant impact on consumers' purchasing behaviour. Furthermore, the study hypothesizes that demographic variables have a moderating effect on the relationship between attitude toward behaviour and behavioural intention, between subjective norm and behavioural intention and between perceived behavioural control and behavioural intention (Shoeran & Kumar, 2021). Prior research using the Theory of planned Behaviour have found that the three factors attitude toward behaviour, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control have a positive and/or significant relationship with intention (Prakash & Pathak, 2017; Shoeran & Kumar, 2021; Ahmed et al., 2023).

In sum, the research aims at shedding light on consumer purchasing behaviour of packaging in the food and beverage industry and the influences on it as well as depicting whether consumers show a propensity to buy sustainable products the way recent trends suggests or whether one can rather detect an intention-behaviour gap.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This cross-sectional study will be limited both to the food and beverage industry as well as to the participants at Siam University which means that the research does not allow any generalization of the findings. On top of that it will not address the polemic of greenwashing that can be seen in relation to the implementation and selling of allegedly sustainable products.

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The Roles of Clan's Headers in Peaceful Conflict Resolution in Mogadishu Somalia

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ABSTRACT

The Horn of Africa is one of the multi-ethnic and unstable regions in the world. The Somalia is a country that is highly affected by intra and inter-state conflicts--clannism, endemic clashes over resources and power, and territory and boundary disputes with the neighbor countries. The state of Somalia, which is the state of Mogadishu-Somalia, has been governed by the traditional governance structures (TGS) of the different Somali clans since precolonial times. The purpose of the study is to investigate on the contribution of clan leaders and conflict resolution mechanisms in Somalia. Firstly, the role of clan leader in conflict resolution is analyzed. Secondly, the impact of clan protection and influence on conflict resolution in the country is discussed. Finally, a case study is presented. The results of the case study show that the clan leaders have a significant role in regulating the social interaction of the communities. It is concluded that the Somalia clans are both apt to discipline and subservient to command. This concept is indicative of how the Somali traditional values are imbedded with an inherited traditional form of governance which observable in all Somali societies even in this contemporary world. The findings of this study suggest that there is a need for the development of a credible government that is accountable to its citizenry and sensitive to their needs. In addition, the international community, institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and Somalis in Diaspora, need to come to the aid of Somalia by providing funds to rebuild the ruined infrastructures.

Keywords: Role clan leaders, clan protection, Somalis in Diaspora, conflict resolution, World Bank

INTRODUCTION

The Horn of Africa is known for being riddled with conflict. The great northeastern shield of Africa is comprised of Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti, and conflict persists in all four nations. The disagreements between these nations are longstanding and complex, described as first a clash of tribes, then imperial consolidation and foreign colonialism. Once independent, these expectant nations desired to test their newfound sovereignty, which was complicated by superpower support during the years of the Cold War. Violence continued through revolution, fractured militia competition, and a failed state. To understand the progression of the Horn's conflicts, colonization of the region must first be examined.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Desertification (IGAD) was created in 1986 with a very narrow mandate in the order of the issue of Drought and Desertification. While then, and especially in the 1990s, IGADD become the acknowledged medium for

regional security and political dialogue. (IGAD, 1996: 1) The founding members of IGAD decided in the mid- 1990s to revive the organization into a fully-fledge regional political, economic, development trade and security entity alike to SADC and ECOWAS.

It was envisaged that the new IGAD would type the northern sector of COMESA with SADC representing the Southern sector. One of the primary motivations for the revival of IGADD was the survival of numerous organizational and structural problems that made the implementation of its goals and principles unsuccessful. The IGADD Heads of State and governmental met on 18 April 1995 at an extraordinary Summit in Addis Ababa and resolved to revitalize the Authority and expand its area of regional cooperation. On 25 March 1996, the Heads and government at the second Extraordinary Summit in Nairobi approved and adopted an Agreement establishing the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

The elders function as a court with broad and flexible powers to interpret evidence, impose judgments, and manage the process of reconciliation. The mediator leads and channels discussion of the problem. Parties typically do not address each other, eliminating direct confrontation. Interruptions are not allowed while parties state their case. Statements are followed by open deliberation which may integrate listening to and cross-examining witnesses, the free expression of grievances, caucusing with both groups, reliance on circumstantial evidence, visiting dispute scenes, seeking opinions and views of neighbors, reviewing past cases, holding private consultations, and considering solutions. The process may be time-consuming and encourage broad discussion of aspects that may seem unrelated to the central problem, as the mediator tries to situate the conflict in the disputants' frame of reference and decide on an appropriate style and format of intervention. The elders or other traditional mediators use their judgment and position of moral ascendancy to find an accepted solution. Decisions may be based on consensus within the elders' or chiefs' council and may be rendered on the spot. Resolution may involve forgiveness and mutual formal release of the problem, and, if necessary, the arrangement of restitution.

Influence of poetry. Poetry is a celebrated art form in many societies. Poets are highly respected in the community and have been traditionally involved in peacemaking. In many cultures, poetry is widely understood and enjoyed, and has the power to influence opinion.
In inter-clan peace conferences, distinguished poets recite poems advocating peace. Poetry in places like Somalia can help move people toward either war or reconciliation. Poetry can help identify grievances, argue for causes, rights and responsibilities, and justify the views and demands of different groups. The modern parallel of the traditional mechanism of poetry is mass media's effect on public opinion. Religious figures. In many traditional societies of the Horn, religious men are somewhat dissociated from society at large. They are considered separate from warriors and are the repository of traditional wisdom and sometimes the vehicle of religious judicial systems, such as sharia law. This special place in society makes them an ideal link between feuding groups who might otherwise have be unable to establish a dialogue.

Local peace conferences. Overall cross-clan peace conferences should be preceded by a combination of subclan deliberations about grievances, issues and representation, and a series of cross-subclan deliberations and consultations. Through this process perspectives are gathered, procedural steps are negotiated, and the basic parameters are set for moving toward a more explicit forum, guided by the elders' council (called the Guurti in Somalia). The larger

forum or peace conference can take the form of large, usually public meetings, which involve lengthy speeches and the extensive use of poetry. Preparing for and holding such a series of peace conferences commonly takes four to six months. Throughout the process, elders prepare, moderate, listen, and often arbitrate procedural problems They help formulate an eventual consensus of the clans. Various inter- and sub-clan deliberations occur on the side simultaneously. Key authority structures of conflicting parties must be included in the process, including traditional, military, administrative, and religious leaders.

Somalis turned back to clan and subclan structures to meet basic needs, including security, with the state's disappearance and breakdown into warlords. While the ascendency of clan politics in Somalia encouraged certain patterns of conflict, traditional mechanisms were revived and adapted to resolve interclan killings and conflicts over resources. Lineage elders, who led smaller units within the clan, returned to prominence and the mediating authority of Akils heads of lineage groups—was reestablished. Their functions expanded into the vacuum left by the collapse of the national government. According to a survey of traditional local structures commissioned by the UK-based NGO ACTIONAID, such structures have enabled Somalis in some areas to break the momentum of war.
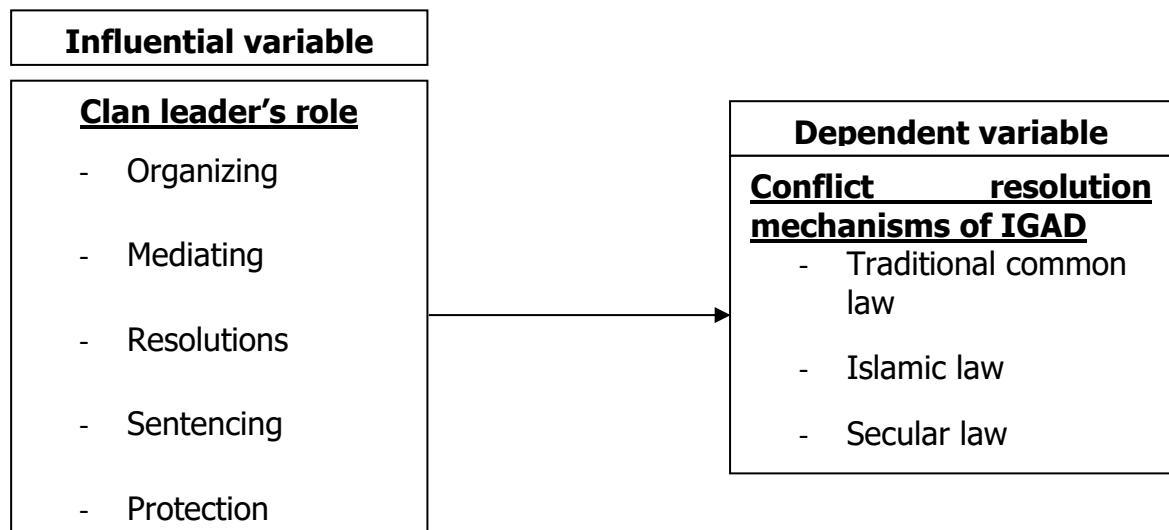
IGAD aims to develop the areas of regional collaboration, enhance the members' dependency on one another and encourage policies of peace and stability in the region in order to reach food security, sustainable development management and sustainable development. In general, there is no consensus on the states that compromise the region, but, for this paper, I will consider the following IGAD's member states; Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, Sudan (North and South) and Uganda because of not only geography of the region but its politics.

In many areas residents have achieved agreements to end fighting through local peace conferences. These peace conferences brought together and were guided by the elders of interdependent subclans. The conferences dealt with immediate concerns, made local leaders responsible for interclan fighting, and helped identify appropriate representatives for clan concerns. Once such local agreements were secured, it was possible to repeat a similar process at a higher level with a wider set of clans. These processes included a reliance on elders, lengthy oral deliberations, creation of a forum or assembly of elders, and negotiations over access to resources and payments for deaths between clans.

Clan elders authorized peace conference agreements but other traditional leaders' politicians, military officers, religious figures, poets—have played crucial roles in the peace process. Religious figures such as sheikhs or wadaads (Islamic scholars) have peacemaking responsibilities, with authority based on the esteem with which they are held as spiritual leaders. Spiritual leaders are seen as ideal, neutral arbiters who have allegiance to universal Islamic values that transcend clan loyalties. They do not settle disputes themselves, or sit in judgment; this is done by councils of elders. The responsibility of religious figures is to encourage rivals to make peace. Delegations of renowned holy men participated in all major peace initiatives between clans in Somaliland.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Influential variable

Clan leader's role
- Organizing
- Mediating
- Resolutions
- Sentencing
- Protection

Dependent variable
Conflict resolution mechanisms of IGAD
- Traditional common law
- Islamic law
- Secular law

The methodology of the research, the various tools and procedures that were applied in the research findings. These include the design, population, sample size, research limitations and methods, data instruments, among others.

This research is correlation research with a cross-sectional design. It is co-relational research because it examines the relationship between clan leaders and conflict resolution mechanisms in Somalia. It is of a cross-sectional design because the data was collected once. The research was carried out in Mogadishu-Somalia, the target population of this study consisted of 132 respondents; these respondents included government officials, local community, NGOs, clan leaders, and mediators.

This research employed the Slovenes formula in determining Sample Size for Research Activities. The formula used for these calculations was:
Solvn's for

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(0.05)^2}$$

DATA ANALYSIS

According to Amin (2003) sampling is the process of selecting elements form the population in such a way that the sample elements selected represents the population. The study used Purposive Sampling techniques as the population of the study area is precise and limited to the company's employees.

Primary source of data collection was the original and first-hand information which has not existed before. This involved interviewing and use of questionnaires to get the first-hand information from the respondents.

Interview; Interviews was provided to some of the members of the community and the clan leaders in order to ascertain the research findings.

Questionnaire; There was systematic designed questionnaires which will be closed ended questions printed on the piece of paper to be answered by the participants. So printed questionnaires were given out to the selected respondents who can understand the questions clearly and are able to answer them then after to be retrieved for the analysis.

Secondary data refers to re-analyzing data that has already been collected for some other purposes other than the one at hand. The data in literature review was mostly obtained from this source such as text books, and internet.

Documentation and library; The researcher also gathered information from other related literature from various documentations concerning the study topic which was used in the research.

The researcher ensured content validity of the questionnaire by constructing items that were in conformity with the study conceptual framework. Questionnaire pre-tested were carried out to identify and eliminate those questions that could pose problems. Inputs were obtained from human resource experts and senior lecturers in the field of management in College of Higher Degrees and Research of Kampala International University who calculated the relevance and clarity of items in the instrument. Content validity index (CVI) was calculated using the formula:

CVI $\qquad$ n
$\qquad$ N $\overline{\qquad}$

Where N represents total Number of items (questionnaires) and n represent Number of items declared valid in the questionnaire.

Reliability of the instrument on multi-items variables was tested using reliability statistics. It was very consistent and realistic. The instruments were finally checked for accuracy, consistency and completeness using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (Sikaran, 2003). The instrument had a high degree of reliability, with all Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for all items tested. The standardized Cronbach's alpha can be defined as;

$$\alpha_{\text{standardized}} = \frac{K\bar{r}}{(1 + (K-1)\bar{r})}$$

Where K is as above and $\bar{r}$ the mean of the $K(K-1)/2$ non-redundant correlation coefficients (i.e., the mean of an upper triangular, or lower triangular, correlation matrix).

Data Gathering Procedures
Data gathering procedures was divided into three phases, these will include before, during and after. The researcher followed these phases to reach to the conclusion of the data gathering procedures.

Before, before the research, the researcher was required to get an introductory letter from the College of Higher Degrees and Research. After this letter, the researcher was required to present this letter to the field officials before carrying out the data gathering.

During; in the process of collecting data, the researcher educated the respondents about the research and also inform them about the future use, benefits and outcomes of the research report. This was done by the researcher with the help of three to five people by distributing the questionnaires to the respondents.

After; after collecting the data from the field research the analysis process and presentation will emerge. The researcher will make sure she collects all the questionnaires from the respondents since the questionnaires will be vital in data analysis procedures and presentation.

The researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data analysis to analyze data that will be collected from the field. Qualitative techniques of data analysis will be employed by writing down the data, and editing it on each day of carrying out the research from there, the data will be quantified by renaming it using numerical figure, and summarizing it into meaningful pattern. On the other hand, quantitative techniques of data analysis will involve the following use of descriptive statistics. This will enable the researcher to derive meaningful description of scores or measures using descriptive indices or statistics.

Frequency distribution tables, pie charts, and bar graphs will also be used to analyze the data, there will be used so as to add meaning to the data, and also for easy interpretation. The bar graphs and pie charts will be created using Microsoft Excel. Microsoft Excel will be used to create the bar graphs and pie charts because it will be readily available, and also easy to use.

Table 1: Summary of the Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Category		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender:	Male	82	62.2
	Female	50	37.8
Total		**132**	**100**
Age:	20-39	22	16.7
	40-59	50	37.8
	60 and above	60	45.5
Total		**132**	**100**
Education Level:	Diploma	30	22.7
	Degree	60	45.5
	Master	31	23.9
	PhD	11	7.9
Total		**132**	**100**
Marital status	Married	82	62.1
	Single	30	22.7
	Widowed	20	15.2
Total		**132**	**100**

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of gender, age, length of service, level of education, and marital status. Males were 82 (62.2%) and females were 50 (37.8%). This implies that males dominated the sample as evidenced in their large numbers in the studied population.

Out of the 142 respondents involved in the study 22 (16.7%) were between 20 and 30 years of age, 50 (37.8%) were between the age bracket of 40-59 and 60 (45.5%) were in the age bracket of 60 years and above. This implies that most of the respondents were in the age brackets of 60 and above and the ages of 40-59, and the minority were in the age bracket of 20-30 years.

Out of the 142 respondents, 30 (22.7%) were holders of Diploma in secondary education, 60 (45.5%) had attained degree in various fields, 31 (23.9%) had master's degree in various field but related to business and conflict management or international relations and 11 (7.9%) only had attained PhDs. The study findings showed that majority of the respondents had attained Bachelor's degrees in various fields concerning business, and social studies.

Out of the total of 142 respondents, the research findings showed that only 82 (62.1%) were married and 30 (22.7%) were single and the rest (15.2%) were widowed, this was therefore concluded that the respondents were mainly married followed by singles ones and there was a small portion of the widowed respondents.

Table 2: Traditional Mechanisms of conflict resolution with IGAD

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution with IGAD			
The traditional legal system is helpful in conflict resolution	3.2	Satisfactory	5
The Islamic law system is helpful in conflict resolution	3.1	Satisfactory	6
Secular laws are helpful in conflict resolution	3.0	Satisfactory	7
Enabled effective distribution of aid	3.0	Satisfactory	7
Created the unity of forces from different countries	3.5	Satisfactory	9
The court system is also helpful in conflict resolution	3.1	Satisfactory	6
Sharia courts have helped in conflict resolution	4.0	Very Satisfactory	9
Elders being put on pressure has helped in conflict resolution	3.1	Satisfactory	8
Brought law and order	3.0	Satisfactory	8
Total	**3.2**		

Table 2 shows The responses from the survey results show that, according to the respondents, most of them are satisfied with the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in the country. Somali women and children have been living in harsh conditions for more than twenty years. The subsequent years of drought and conflict led to repeated crop failures, a decline in livestock numbers, rising food prices, a deterioration in purchasing power, an erosion of coping mechanisms and a prolonged state of emergency in which women and children bear the brunt of being already poor and defenseless. . Although Somalia recorded positive developments in 2012 in terms of policies, access to humanitarian assistance and food security, the majority of children still suffer from some of the greatest vulnerabilities and poverty in the world. Many of them are still beyond the reach of UNICEF support.On August 1, 2012, the National Constitutional Assembly in Mogadishu adopted an interim constitution that significantly strengthens the rights of children. On September 10, 2012, the new Somali parliament elected Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as President of the Federal Republic of Somalia. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet are already in office. The government's sphere of influence has expanded through the activities of the African Union Peacekeeping Force

(AMISOM) and the Somali National Armed Forces. This opened up
areas for life-saving humanitarian operations for the first time in five years.Acute watery diarrhea/cholera is endemic and kills hundreds of people each year, particularly in densely populated areas of the CSZ, including internally displaced persons camps.

Somali elders practice reconciliation and derive their authority from delegation and accountability to their communities. Hajji Abdi Hussein Yusuf speaks from his perspective as a respected elder in Somaliland about the qualities expected of Somali elders and the role they play in peacekeeping. It is clear that Somalia urgently needs good economic planning, good governance, effective institutions and leadership, but is unable to emerge from its fragility and ensure human security given its current dependence on proven international support. As Rwandan President Paul Kagame simply said, "The history of international assistance to Africa is a dead end." President Kagame said that the international community has provided $300 billion in aid to Africa since 1970, without success, largely because she spent it on creating and maintaining clientelistic regimes of one kind or another, with no regard for economic growth and social development.

results (see Dead Aid by Dambisa Moyo).On October 10, 2013, Naoyuki Shinohara, deputy managing director of the International Monetary Fund, confirmed President Kagame's observation and said that previous IMF approaches had not resulted in the implementation of effective measures in fragile states.

However, Somalia will not achieve human security and become a unified nation unless it finds a way to extricate itself from this strangulation and focus on its own internal solution. It is true that the country cannot function without the stabilization of the security forces, and at the same time foreign forces and assistance cannot ensure national and human security. Only Somalis themselves can do that.

reinforce or contradict each other over time. The question of whether we need a new vision that frees us from dependence and constant charity is a question of degree. As I was writing this article, I was struck by the significant gap between modern concepts of government and those prevalent in the past. As a result, I became more concerned about the growing gap between the reality of the country we all so desperately wanted to create and the theory that guided it in the first place.

Somalia's economic recovery continues to be hampered by difficult security situations, poor infrastructure and the country's limited financial resources. The Somali economy remains heavily dependent on large amounts of aid and remittances. According to UN sources, humanitarian and development assistance to Somalia amounted to US$750 million in 2012, one of the highest per capita figures in the world (African Development Bank Group, 2013). At an estimated $1 billion to $1.5 billion per year, remittances contribute the most to national capital inflows and the country's wealth (2013). In the past, Somalia relied primarily on its own resources, be they land or sea, before looking outside. For example, the 1974 famine was a time of psychological awakening for the country, and Somalia showed its resolve by focusing on managing the land for food security and economic development.

It appears that achievements and innovations in our Somali culture have now been lost and dependence on artificial international aid has become the sole focus of survival. Focusing on food and water supplies, law and order, human rights, etc. will have a major impact on human security. The country's security and development programs must be adapted to the real

situation on the ground. This means that the government must create and manage its support in line with local commitment and local determination of long-term needs and capacity development.

By defining problems and solutions locally, people can have a genuine interest in actively participating in and solving problems and creating the kinds of communities they want to be a part of. Prioritizing a development and support area depends on the specific context of the problem and requires a good understanding of local leadership, capacities, situations and conditions.

The government's role is then to find ways to generate revenue from the country's resources and businesses and put these into the hands of the public. For example, investing in the public and private sectors is a great way to create jobs and collect taxes. In this context, priority must be given to youth and women, who make up more than half of the Somali population and, for women, are often responsible for the daily care of the family and wider social networks

The problems of young people and women are problems of society as a whole and thus change economic, political and social situations. Specific programs need to be created to promote real opportunities for women and young people to fully enjoy their rights, autonomy and inclusion; and help them build their own capacity to overcome situations of vulnerability, instability and dependence. There are many displaced refugees in Somalia, some 1,373,080, in Mogadishu alone (possibly more today), according to UNHCR's 2013 National Operations Report. This means that the need is great and resources are scarce, but with allocation and proper planning it is possible to create human security. When people are free from fear and hunger and their basic rights are fulfilled; They tend to live with each other in dignity and harmony and build a culture of sustainability.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Somalia political instability has been attributed to internationalization of the conflict by the Barre's regime in its aim of achieving the Greater Somalia vision. The use of clannism as a clarion call backfired with the defeat of the army in Ogaden, leading to the collapse of the state. The raise of the tribal warlords keeps on fueling the conflict and complicating the peace process in the region. The immediate post independent era was marked by internal socio-political instability centered on the merger of the colonial territories and the support of irredentist conflict activities in the north-eastern Kenya and south-eastern Ethiopia. When Barre consolidated his power base he adopted a calamitous policy, which favored his clan, and this led to disintegration of the Army that was formerly the central figure of his power structure.

The collapse of the state in 1991 left the country without a central government or viable infrastructures. However, the disaster in Somalia was not created by fighting alone, but rather by the massive, persistent and deliberate violations of human rights committed by all factions. The collapse of the state has been followed by diverse mediation efforts. These range from regional bodies, UN, US and many others without success. The most recent and successful effort has been under the auspices of IGAD. The outcome of the 14th Somali Peace and Reconciliation Conference in Kenya led to a possible rebirth of the Republic of Somalia. The conference elected 275 members of parliament and new president, Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf.

The prospects are however gloomy for the new government as it is faced with anarchy, and

fears of growing terrorist groups. This is why Kenya, a terrorist victim in 1998 and 2002 has been in the forefront to ensure that order, stability and security prevail in Somalia. Another challenge is repatriation of about three million refugees back into the country; who are spread in many parts of Kenya, Horn of Africa and the rest of the world. A reconciled Somalia will offer hope for security, stability and peace in the whole Horn of Africa.

The leaders need to work on a progressive plan aimed at restoring peace, security and stability by involving the clans and their leaders and not just the warlords, especially in disarmament to pacify the process. That the government must face the challenge of reconciling people at all levels of the society including inter and intra clan and sub-clans, factional and political groupings. The people have to be determined to support this new dawn and future.

The conflict has resulted to disunity on the basis of clan, ethnic, political, and sectarian religious lines. Rehabilitation, reintegration and transfer of skills to generations of gunmen and women who missed school and vocational training opportunities in all disarmament programmed will therefore be critical.

Emphasis has to be put on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of basic infrastructures to prepare the country to enter a constitutional phase. This will include building institutions of democratic governance, rule of law, decentralization of power, protection of human rights and safeguarding the integrity of the country.
All disputes must henceforth be settled through dialogue, negotiations and other peaceful legal means. In keeping with the United Nations arms embargo against Somalia, the neighboring countries have to cooperate to make sure that their borders are not used for weapons movement. The international community needs to assist in establishing an impartial National Somali Army and Police Force.

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Transforming Education through Artificial Intelligence: Innovations, Impacts, and Challenges

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ABSTRACT

The present paper aims to explore the integration of Artificial Intelligence in education (AIED). It brought the findings and perspectives of researchers, educators, policymakers, and industry professionals to discuss the transformative potential of AI in teaching and learning. Firstly, the paper focused on innovative AI applications such as intelligent tutoring systems, personalized learning, and virtual reality in education. Secondly, it addressed the impacts of AIED including three categories of administration, instruction, and learning. Finally, it highlighted AI ethical considerations as the significant challenge of AIED. By fostering responsible and effective integration of AIED, the paper hopes to present a better view of AIED for the future and to empower learners and educators in the digital age.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Artificial Intelligence in education (AIED), transforming education, curriculum design, innovations, challenges

INTRODUCTION

Transforming education has been discussed various times during the Transforming Education Summit. As the global situation has been changed into more digitalization. The worldwide crisis in education—one of fairness and inclusion, quality, and relevance—led to the convening of the Transforming Education Summit. The future of children and teenagers around the world are being severely harmed by this crisis, which is frequently gradual and unnoticed (United Nations, 2022). These grave problems are not being addressed by the existing global education system, which also fails to offer high-quality education to all people throughout their lives. According to UNESCO (2022), the key areas that need to be transformed in education are 1) inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy schools: crisis in education. Millions of people are still prevented from learning because of high rates of poverty, exclusion, and gender inequality. The inequality in education access and quality was also highlighted by COVID-19, and the insecurity level has been raised by violence, armed conflict, natural catastrophes, and the reversal of women's rights. 2) Learning and skills for life, work and sustainable development: providing students the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes they need to be resilient, flexible, and prepared for an unpredictable future while also promoting sustainable development for both people and the earth is what it means to transform education. To achieve this, a focus on foundational learning for fundamental reading and numeracy, education for sustainable development, which includes education on environmental issues and climate change, and entrepreneurial and employment-related skills, must be made. 3) Teachers, teaching, and the teaching profession: in order to achieve

learning outcomes, SDG 4 and the reform of education, teachers are crucial. The training, motivation, and support of all educators are necessary for accelerating progress toward SDG 4 and reforming education, as well as an adequate number of instructors to satisfy learners' requirements. This is only feasible if policies acknowledge and support the teaching profession, elevate the position of teachers, and appropriately fund education. 4) Digital learning and transformation: utilizing technology as part of broader systemic initiatives to alter education and make it more inclusive, egalitarian, effective, relevant, and sustainable demands digital transformation. The three guiding principles for digital learning should be: center the most marginalized; provide free, high-quality digital education resources; and promote pedagogical innovation and change. 5) Financing of education: increasing the efficiency and equity of allocations and expenditures, upgrading education finance data, and mobilizing more resources, particularly domestic ones, are the three main policy initiatives needed to close the funding gaps in education.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education has emerged as a transformative force, raising intriguing questions about its role, impacts, and challenges. First and foremost, (1) what is the role of AI in education and how it has shaped and enhanced the learning experience. In tandem, (2) how has AI affected Education, with a specific focus on Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIED). This investigation seeked to understand the tangible and intangible effects of AIED on educational outcomes, student engagement, and the overall learning environment. Furthermore, (3) what sort of challenges have been associated with the implementation of AIED. By addressing these key research questions, this study endeavored to contribute valuable insights to the ongoing discourse surrounding the intersection of AI and education.

RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This paper had aims and objectives as follows:
1. focusing on innovative AI applications such as intelligent tutoring systems, personalized learning, and virtual reality in education.
2. addressing the impacts of AIED including three categories of administration, instruction, and learning.
3. highlighting the ethical concerns of using AIED as the main challenge by fostering responsible and effective integration
4. presenting a better view of AIED for the future and to empower learners and educators in the digital age.

EDUCATION 4.0

The fourth industrial revolution is linked to the learning method known as "Education 4.0," which aims to transform education in the future through automation and cutting-edge technology. This technological revolution includes robotics, artificial intelligence, and smart technology. They all have impacts on how we live each day. If universities want to continue turning out successful graduates, they must prepare their students for a world where cyber-physical systems are pervasive throughout all businesses. This means integrating technology into the curriculum, completely changing the way that people learn, and using technology to improve college life (Joshi, 2022). With teachers and mentors serving as facilitators and enablers, Education 4.0 (Figure 1) reimagines education as an inclusive, lifelong experience

that puts the onus of skill-building on the student (World Economic Forum, 2023). The three critical skills should play a central role in each student's personal curriculum in Education 4.0 as; 1) problem solving: 2) collaboration: 3) adaptability.
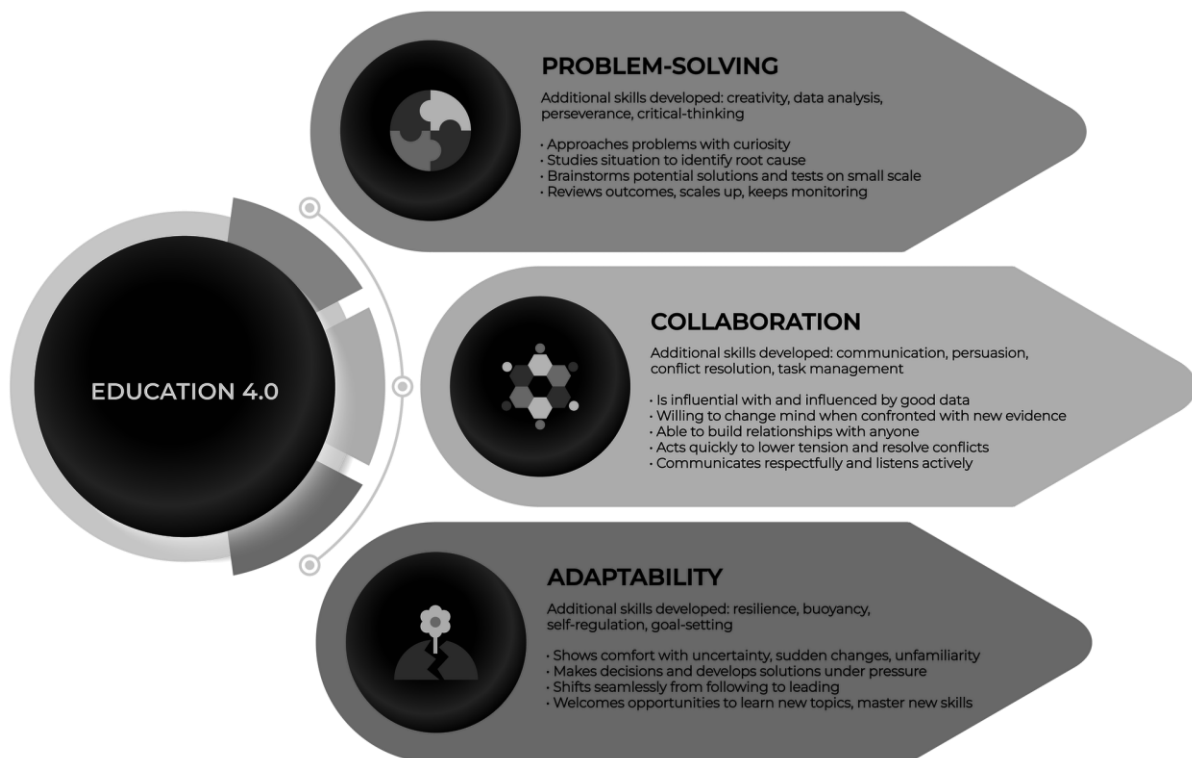

Figure 1. Education 4.0

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) stands at the forefront of technological innovation, embodying the quest to replicate human intelligence in machines. At its core, AI refers to the development of computer systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence. These tasks span a broad spectrum, encompassing everything from problem-solving and language translation to pattern recognition and decision-making (Russell & Norvig, 2010).

The foundation of AI lies in machine learning, a subset of AI that empowers systems to learn from data without explicit programming. Through a continuous process of exposure to data, machine learning algorithms can adapt, evolve, and improve their performance over time (Mitchell, 1997). This ability to learn and adapt sets AI apart, enabling it to handle complex tasks with remarkable efficiency.

References to AI can be traced back to ancient history, but the contemporary AI era emerged in the mid-20th century. The term "artificial intelligence" was coined at the Dartmouth Conference in 1956, where early pioneers like John McCarthy and Marvin Minsky laid the groundwork for the field (McCarthy et al., 1955). Since then, AI has evolved through various phases, from rule-based systems to the current dominance of machine learning and neural networks.

Machine learning, a paradigm within AI, is empowered by large datasets and advanced

algorithms. Supervised learning involves training a model on labeled data, allowing it to make predictions or classifications. Unsupervised learning, on the other hand, deals with unlabeled data, encouraging the model to identify patterns and relationships independently. Reinforcement learning introduces the concept of agents learning through trial and error, receiving positive or negative feedback based on their actions (Goodfellow et al., 2016).

One of the most prominent applications of AI is natural language processing (NLP), enabling machines to understand, interpret, and generate human language. Virtual assistants like Siri and Alexa exemplify the strides made in NLP, providing users with conversational interfaces. Computer vision, another AI domain, equips machines with the ability to interpret and make decisions based on visual data, as seen in facial recognition technology and autonomous vehicles (Zhao et al., 2003).

While AI holds immense potential for positive impact, ethical considerations and societal implications cannot be ignored. As AI systems become increasingly sophisticated, concerns about bias, transparency, and accountability come to the forefront. Striking the right balance between innovation and responsible deployment is a critical challenge that researchers and policymakers grapple with (Jobin et al., 2019).

AI represents a transformative force reshaping the technological landscape. Its evolution from theoretical concepts to practical applications underscores the relentless pursuit of creating intelligent machines. As AI continues to advance, it is imperative to navigate the ethical dimensions and societal impacts, ensuring that this powerful tool contributes to the betterment of humanity. The journey of AI is an ongoing narrative, and with each breakthrough, the boundaries of what machines can achieve in emulation of human intelligence are continually pushed.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATION (AIED)

Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIED) represents a cutting-edge intersection of technology and pedagogy, promising to revolutionize traditional learning landscapes. The integration of AI into educational settings seeks to enhance teaching methodologies, personalize learning experiences, and optimize educational outcomes. At its core, AIED utilizes artificial intelligence technologies to tailor educational experiences based on individual learner needs. One prominent application is intelligent tutoring systems (ITS), which leverage machine learning algorithms to provide personalized guidance, feedback, and content delivery (VanLehn, 2011). These systems can adapt to a student's pace of learning, offering targeted support in areas where improvement is needed, thus fostering a more customized and effective learning journey. Furthermore, AIED encompasses natural language processing (NLP) to facilitate communication between students and virtual instructors. Chatbots and virtual assistants equipped with NLP capabilities enhance the interactive aspect of online education, providing instant clarification and support (D'Mello & Graesser, 2012). This real-time engagement contributes to a dynamic and responsive learning environment.

The incorporation of AIED is not confined to K-12 or higher education; it extends to lifelong learning and professional development. Adaptive learning platforms use AI algorithms to analyze a learner's progress and adjust content accordingly, ensuring a continuous and personalized learning experience (Kizilcec et al., 2017). This adaptability is particularly valuable in addressing the diverse needs of adult learners in various professional contexts.

The potential of AIED to democratize education cannot be overstated. It has the capacity to bridge gaps in access to quality education by providing personalized learning experiences to learners in diverse geographical and socio-economic contexts (NewAfrican, 2019). Additionally, AIED can support educators by automating routine tasks, allowing them to focus more on personalized interactions and instructional design.

Artificial Intelligence in Education represents a paradigm shift in the way we approach learning and teaching. The applications of AIED, from intelligent tutoring systems to adaptive learning platforms, demonstrate its capacity to create dynamic, personalized, and inclusive educational experiences. However, as we navigate this transformative journey, it is crucial to address ethical considerations and ensure that AIED contributes to the advancement of education for all.

IMPACTS

Recent research and studies have reported various impacts of using AI in education. These impacts have varied from one area to another in education. Chen et al., (2020) categorized the impacts into three main fields in education including administration, instruction, and learning. The results of studies have shown that administrative tasks such as management, designing curriculum, pedagogical opportunities, assessment and evaluations have been highly affected with AI (Luckin & Holmes, 2016; ILkka, 2018; Zawachi-richter et al, 2019; Hwang et al., 2020; Chiu et al., 2023). The first area to mention is data analysis in the management system. Zawachi-richter et al. (2019) found profiling and prediction as the two main categories with three sub-categories naming admission decisions and course scheduling, drop-out and retention, and student models and academic scheduling. Using AI has facilitated these tasks in the education management system. AI has also transformed designing curriculum into AI-driven one. Therefore, the educational organizations and institutions have added digital skills such as digital competency and computational thinking to their curriculum to prepare students for the digital and AI-powered world (Pedro et al., 2019). Learning these skills can assist the students to be ready for the fast paced world in the future. Besides, using AI in education has been found effective on new pedagogical opportunities (ILkka, 2018). These opportunities have enhanced the teaching and learning environment. Designing productive activities using AI (Hwang et al., 2020) or providing personalized assistance with better learning outcomes (Luckin & Holmes, 2016) could be the examples of the impacts. It is believed that intelligent virtual reality has created learning support in an authentic environment (Luckin & Holmes, 2016). Lastly, using AI has provided the chance for educators to assess and evaluate students' performances continuously (Luckin & Holmes, 2016). As a result, observing students' learning process (Hwang et al., 2020) and diagnosing gaps in order to (Zawachi-richter et al., 2019) provide feedback and guidance has become automated.

Instruction has been one of the significant reported impacts of the AI. Studies have shown that teaching is no longer a burden for teachers and instructors with AI. It has facilitated instruction by affecting teaching methods and course content creating process, and could also be used as a teaching assistant (Chassignol et al., 2018; Zawachi-richter et al., 2019). Using AI in teaching has given teachers and instructors the chance to tailor their teaching method based on learners' personal needs (Chen et al., 2020). Therefore, teaching has gone beyond the classroom (Chen et al., 2020). Creating course content has also become customized and more authentic (Luckin & Holmes, 2016; Chen et al., 2020). Finally, AI has been reported as an assistant for teachers and instructors (Holmes et al, 2019). As a result, tasks such as grading, course scheduling, feedback, and have become smoother and faster and teacher's

working efficiency has increased.

Lastly, AI has had an impact on the learning process among students according to recent research. Though these effects have been vast, three major ones could be enhancing collaborative learning, providing a lifelong learning companion, and adaptive learning system (Luckin & Holmes., 2016; Holmes et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2020). Using chatbots or other types of AI applications have created the opportunity to have more collaboration among teachers and other classmates even beyond the classroom. This has brought more support and guidance to the learners in their learning process. As a result, AI has become a learning lifelong companion. In addition, the ability of monitoring and figuring the shortcoming of the learners out and addressing them individually (Chen et al., 2020). Thus, students' learning systems have become more adaptive. In other words, students can decide how, when, and where to use AI and the instructions can be trailed based on their needs.

CHALLENGES

Recent investigations and research have widely reported the positive benefits of AI technology in various aspects of education as discussed in the previous section. However, it is essential to acknowledge the challenges inherent in its implementation. Ethics in AIED have been one of the most reported challenge in this regard (Holmes et al., 2019; Pedro et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2021).

Some ethical considerations of AIED can be equity, data privacy, and Al algorithm bias (Pedro et al., 2019; Huang et al., 2021; Kordzadeh & Ghasemaghaei, 2021). The concern of fairness and equity have been promoted by using AI in education (Huang et al., 2021). The fact that developing countries and underdeveloped countries have less opportunity to use AI developments in education can not be denied. Thus, it is crucial to make AI-resources accessible for all students and the responsibility is on the education sectors to overcome this challenge (Huang et al., 2021). In addition, the data collection process, keeping the data safe, and having access to the data are the three main ethical concerns in AIED (Pedro et al., 2019; Huang et al., 2021). Hence, personal and sensitive information need to be protected while using AIED. Regarding this issue, Huang et al. (2021) suggested "strengthening the supervision of AI technology and its products requires the public to discuss the ethics, responsibility and safety involved" (p.212).

Lastly, studies have shown AI users lack enough information about AI algorithms in the decision making process (Holmes et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2021). In other words, it is difficult for users to understand how AI makes decisions. Thus, the question of how AI analysis data has raised biased assumption concerns (Holmes et al., 2019). This has also caused misusing AI resulting in inequality (Yang et al., 2021). The algorithms driving AIED systems must be transparent, fair, and accountable to avoid perpetuating or exacerbating existing educational inequalities.

AI has been used as a tool in education with the hope of transforming education due to the worldwide crisis in education; however, the educational challenges seem to remain and become more critical with the widespread use of AIED. Thus, the necessity of having clear policies to pave the way for teachers, students, and school stakeholders should be considered more seriously.

CONCLUSIONS

AI is rapidly changing the world and the world of education is not an exception. Although it has brought various and undeniable challenges, the results have shown that the impacts have been significantly positive and beneficial. Thus, learning the required skills to work with AI does not seem to be optional for both learners and educators any longer. However, the use of AI needs to become human-centered as education is far more complicated than data analysis and AI algorithms (Zawachi-richter et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2021). Therefore, educators and instructors should be trained to use AI in order to pass the basic education system and to be able to transform education more innovatively and sustainably. If the education system can be transformed and enhanced successfully with the use of AI, it would benefit both students and teachers to be more prepared for the upcoming and unpredictable changes in the future.

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The Influence of ZMOT And Mobile Technology on Consumer Decision Making Choices

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ABSTRACT

The Internet has changed how people decide what to buy by keeping them connected and providing lots of information about products. Before going to a store, consumers now look for more information. Two important concepts, the First Moment of Truth (FMOT) and the Zero Moment of Truth (ZMOT), focus on key moments in the buying process. The FMOT stresses the importance of the in-store experience and the first few seconds when consumers see brands on the shelves. The ZMOT is about the online research phase before making a purchase, where people use online word-of-mouth to make informed decisions. This research aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the influence the Zero Moment of Truth (ZMOT) and mobile technology on consumer decision-making choices. In a digitally connected era dominated by smartphones, understanding the complex dynamics between ZMOT and mobile technology is crucial for businesses navigating the evolving background of consumer behavior. People are using mobile devices more and more in their everyday lives. Every year, these devices get better and faster, and they don't cost as much. This means anyone can get information whenever and wherever they want. Through an analysis of recent marketing research and case studies, this paper will demonstrate how mobile optimization factors prominently in the new path to purchase. Brands now require a strategy encompassing the entire ZMOT to guide consumers efficiently through educational resources towards transactions. Those failing to have an online presence or not mobile-optimized are likely missing opportunities to influence up to 70% of some shoppers' journeys. This paper examines the practical applications of the Zero Moment of Truth (ZMOT) concept, drawing insights from specific case studies. The paper concludes by offering a set of recommendations for effectively implementing marketing strategies utilizing the ZMOT concept. The paper aims to highlight evolving habits in order gain insights into which segments can be influenced most heavily by an optimized mobile presence throughout the path to purchase.

Keywords: Moment of Truth, Zero Moment of Truth, Buying Decision Process, Mobile Technology.

INTRODUCTION

Consumer purchasing decisions, particularly influenced by globalization, undergo various dynamics in today's world. Contemporary consumers are more conscientious and proactive, possessing awareness of their needs and preferences. With access to multiple sources like the Internet and social media, consumers have diverse channels at their disposal. This study explores the impact of the zero moment of truth and mobile technology on consumer purchasing decisions. Next, the concept of the Zero Moment of Truth (ZMOT) is defined, the

initial phase of this concept involves the definition of Moments of Truth (MOT), which outlines the points of interaction between a potential customer and a brand. Google defines the Zero Moment of Truth as the critical juncture in the buying decision process where marketing activities take place. ZMOT is derived from the First Moment of Truth (FMOT), a term coined by Procter & Gamble, signifying the moment of decision-making at the store shelf when a consumer chooses between different brands (Aichener, 2012). Spurred by the rise of digital and mobile devices, consumers increasingly conduct extensive research before deciding to purchase products, a process Google dubbed the "Zero Moment of Truth" (ZMOT) (Lecinski, 2011). This new concept reflects the modern reality that consumers often consider brands more during the information gathering and research phase rather than when first made aware.

As mobile devices proliferate worldwide, the ZMOT is often initiated via smartphones and tablets (Google, 2013). Recent surveys found that 79% of smartphone owners use their devices for shopping related activities, while 84% of tablet owners leverage them to research products (Interactive Advertising Bureau, 2016). This mobile usage directly impacts paths to purchase, as 73% of shoppers who conduct online research using their smartphones said it changed what they decided to buy (Google, 2015). A key element enabling the ZMOT concept is the proliferation of mobile devices and near ubiquitous access to information. As of 2019, 5.11 billion people have mobile devices, while over half of the world's web traffic is generated via mobiles (Kemp, 2019). This has firmly entrenched mobiles into shopper behavior and the path to purchase. A recent study found that 70% of shoppers' journeys are now influenced by mobile devices, increasing to nearly 80% for millennial shoppers (Think with Google, 2018). Whether researching products, comparing prices, accessing reviews, finding stores, or purchasing, mobiles are intertwined with making decisions.

The influence of mobiles on shopping is magnified during critical moments throughout the shopper journey known as micro-moments (Google, 2015). During these moments, consumers leverage mobiles to address needs or intents instantly. An effective ZMOT strategy requires brands optimize for micro-moments that matter to their goods and services. Yet with limited time to make an impression, providing utility, building trust, and conveying brand purpose become critical. Amidst the rise of digital influences, traditional marketing models have proven increasingly outdated. The sales funnel concept that guided strategies for decades no longer captures modern consumer behavior (Edelman, 2010). This linear model fails to address the complexity of options and multiple touchpoints in shopping journeys today. Yet many brands still dedicate disproportionate resources attracting initial awareness compared to guiding consumers through research and consideration phases. The ZERO Moment of Truth underscores how brands must adopt strategies encompassing the entire path to purchase. Those that optimize for smartphones and tablets stand the best chance to influence decisions. An effective modern approach requires brands transform digitally to provide utility when sought, convey authenticity during evaluations, and drive conversion through optimized experiences.

This research will assess mobile optimization strategies for influencing consumers during the ZMOT across micro-moments and devices. Insights aim to inform executives on how to continually improve mobile utility amidst environments requiring real-time relevance. Through a review of current marketing research and relevant case studies, patterns will be identified in how mobile devices factor into education, research, and overall purchase journeys. The analysis will highlight best practices for brands seeking to guide modern consumers efficiently through the ZMOT by way of optimized mobile web presence and apps.

. LITERATURE REVIEW:

A literature study is conducted to gain a better knowledge of the areas in which research has already been conducted as well as to shed light on potential areas that have yet to be explored As established in the introduction, the ZMOT concept and mobile technology growth have significantly impacted consumer shopping journeys and decisions. A review of key literature explores these emerging influences in further depth.

Shift from Sales Funnel Models:
Multiple studies underscore how the linear sales funnel framework is outdated amidst digital disruption of shopping behavior. Edelman (2010) outlined the need for brands to engage consumers in more personalized and authentic ways not captured in traditional funnels. Court et al. (2009) introduced a new purchase decision journey model featuring an expansive evaluation stage. This reflected online research commanding greater influence long before actual transactions.

Emergence of ZMOT Concept:
Seeking to update frameworks again, Lecinski (2011) coined the term Zero Moment of Truth. This recognized the exploding impact of digital on the path to purchase again, as consumer research shifted to moments closer to transactions. A Google/Shopper Sciences study further examined how mobile in particular is intertwined with these final moments that now make or break decisions (Google, 2015). ZMOT is identified as the point at which marketing activities play a pivotal role in shaping purchasing decisions. Early research by Google suggests that consumers engage in extensive online research and consult various sources before making a purchase decision. Beal (2011) emphasizes the role of ZMOT in the consumer journey, depicting it as a strategic approach where consumers consciously engage with digital channels to gather insights and validate their decisions.

Mobiles and Micro-Moments:
As Kemp (2019) notes, mobiles now account for over half of web traffic globally, leading Think with Google (2018) to find ~80% of shopper journeys shaped by smartphones. This influence manifests during micro-moments where intent and need prompts mobile usage to learn about products, solve problems, or complete transactions (Google, 2015). Understanding mobile micro-moments provides insight on new factors driving decisions. The proliferation of mobile technology has transformed the way consumers access information and make decisions. With the ubiquity of smartphones, consumers now have the power to research products, read reviews, and compare prices on the go. This section of the literature review focuses on empirical studies that explore how mobile technology facilitates information acquisition during the decision-making process (Smith & Johnson, 2018).

Integration of ZMOT and Mobile Technology:
The synergy between ZMOT and mobile technology is a critical aspect of contemporary consumer behavior. Studies examining the integration of these two elements shed light on the intricate relationship between online marketing strategies and the use of mobile devices in shaping consumer choices (Lee et al., 2019). This section aims to synthesize findings that highlight the complementary nature of ZMOT and mobile technology in influencing decision-making.

The Role of social media and Mobile Apps:

Social media platforms and mobile applications play a significant role in the ZMOT-Mobile Technology nexus. Consumers often turn to these channels for product recommendations, reviews, and real-time updates. Research addressing the impact of social media and mobile apps on ZMOT and subsequent decision-making processes will be reviewed to understand the multifaceted dynamics at play (Chen & Wang, 2020).

Understanding consumer behavior in the digital age is paramount for marketers navigating the complex interplay between ZMOT and mobile technology. Research in this domain focuses on how digital platforms shape consumer preferences and the evolution of decision-making processes in response to technological advancements (Kumar & Lim, 2017). The influence of ZMOT and mobile technology on consumer decision-making may vary across cultural contexts. This section reviews studies that explore cross-cultural differences in the adoption of mobile technology during the decision-making process and the implications for marketers operating in diverse global markets (Hofstede, 2018). Lappeman et al. (2021) present a rich explanation on how the decision-making model works adapted to the marketing field, being highly applicable to the current online consumer behavior, reminding that even though decision-making is part of many disciplines, "consumer marketing is fundamentally underpinned by consumer behavior and their decision-making processes" (Lappeman et al., 2021, pp.153).

ZMOT Strategies and Optimization:

Given the central role of mobiles within the ZMOT, multiple frameworks outline best practices for optimization. xAd (2017) examined mobile page speed, reliable apps, attractive visuals and responsiveness as key for engagement. Forbes (2018) noted the importance of location signals and intent data to drive relevance. Google (2016) advocates balancing utility and branding across moments.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This is descriptive research that utilizes secondary data analysis to understand the influence of ZMOT (zero moment of truth) and mobile technology adoption on consumer purchase decisions. As a descriptive study, new data will not be collected, instead published literature on this topic will be reviewed.

The secondary data collection for analysis will be done from various credible published sources like academic journals and market research firm reports that contain relevant insights, trends and survey data. Specifically, peer-reviewed articles found in scholarly databases, industry reports by firms such as Forrester and Gartner that relate to mobile commerce and decision journey, as well as consumer survey data from reputed agencies will be analyzed. The aim is gathered both recent and historical data that can point to growth patterns of mobile and ZMOT usage over the years across product segments and consumer cohorts.

The analysis technique will majorly involve identifying key themes and descriptive statistics to summarize the secondary data. Content analysis methods will be helpful in highlighting relationships between stages in consumer decision making and mobile technology adoption. Percentages and means will be useful to represent trends and comparisons across different sources of datasets gathered through the secondary research. Finally, limitations associated with reliance on secondary data, such as potential discrepancies or gaps in the literature will also be acknowledged. Overall, through this descriptive research using detailed review of

previously published data, the attempt is to build greater clarity on interconnections between ZMOT, mobile technology penetration and evolving consumer purchase decisions. These insights would be useful for both academics and practitioners.

DISSCUSSION & RESULT:

Role of Mobile Technology

The study places a significant emphasis on the pivotal role of mobile technology in shaping consumer decisions. Mobile apps, social media platforms, and mobile commerce were identified as key elements that play crucial roles in various stages of the consumer decision-making process. Mobile applications, characterized by their accessibility and user-friendliness, emerged as influential decision enablers, providing consumers with convenient avenues for brand engagement, access to product information, and participation in loyalty programs. Social media platforms, including Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, were found to be instrumental in influencing consumer perceptions and preferences. These platforms serve as hubs for product discovery, peer reviews, and real-time updates from brands, allowing users to engage with content, share experiences, and seek recommendations. Mobile commerce, on the other hand, was highlighted as a transformative force in the transactional aspect of consumer decisions. Features like mobile payment options, one-click purchases, and integrated checkout experiences contribute to the efficiency of transactions, influencing consumers to make purchase decisions in the moment. Furthermore, the study emphasized that mobile technology facilitates real-time information acquisition and product comparison, empowering consumers to make informed decisions on the go, aligning with the principles of the Zero Moment of Truth (ZMOT). In essence, the findings underscore the multifaceted nature of mobile technology, which has become integral to the modern consumer decision-making journey, providing marketers with strategic opportunities to enhance engagement and influence preferences.
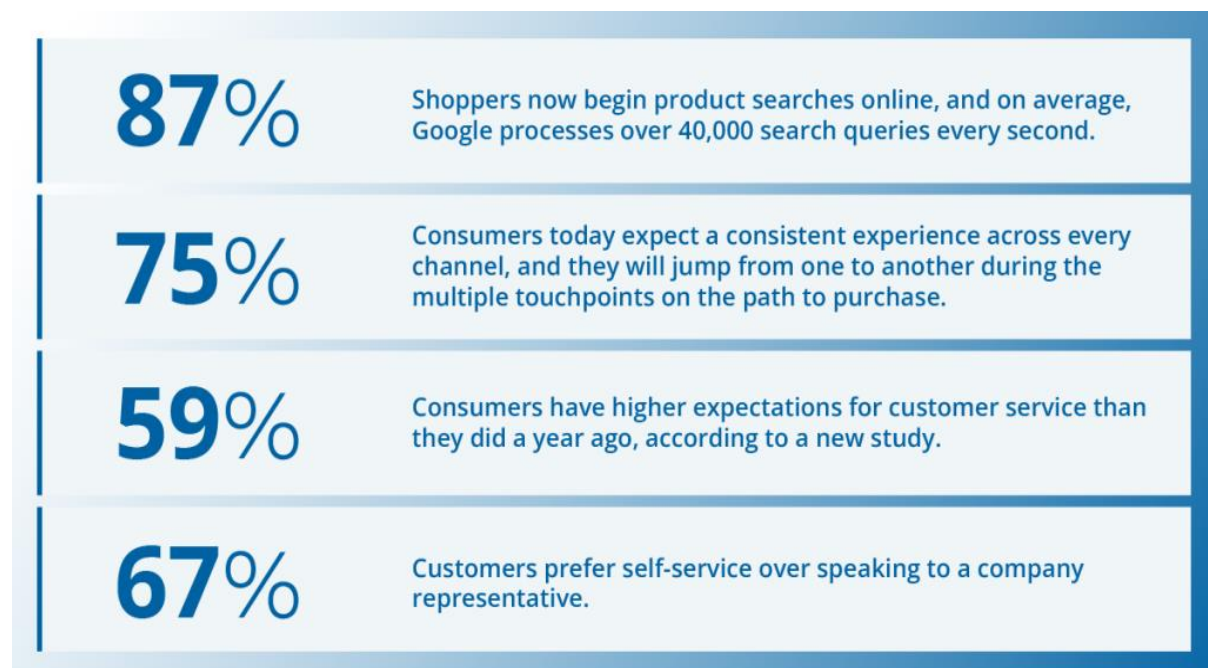
87% Shoppers now begin product searches online, and on average, Google processes over 40,000 search queries every second.

75% Consumers today expect a consistent experience across every channel, and they will jump from one to another during the multiple touchpoints on the path to purchase.

59% Consumers have higher expectations for customer service than they did a year ago, according to a new study.

67% Customers prefer self-service over speaking to a company representative.

Figure 1: Importance of Mobile technology in consumer behavior. Image source: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/10-mind-blowing-stats-consumer-behaviour

Mobile apps as a decision driver:
The analysis of secondary data highlights the growing influence of mobile apps across every stage of the consumer decision journey. Mobiles apps have emerged as a key touchpoint shaping the initial consideration sets and final purchase decisions for majority of consumers today. ZMOT significantly impacts consumers' initial perceptions of mobile apps, with online reviews, social media opinions, and app store ratings playing a crucial role in the pre-purchase phase. Simultaneously, the accessibility and convenience provided by mobile technology emerged as key drivers in the decision-making process.

decision drivers, with their functionality, user experience, and overall value proposition strongly influencing consumer choices. Establishing trust through secure transactions, transparent data practices, and reliable app performance was found to enhance consumer loyalty, fostering long-term relationships.

However, challenges such as privacy concerns, app performance issues, and information overload were identified, presenting obstacles to leveraging mobile apps as effective decision drivers. Recognizing these challenges provides opportunities for businesses to differentiate themselves by addressing consumer concerns, delivering personalized experiences, and optimizing ZMOT strategies.

Location-based apps are also driving impulse purchase decisions for quick service restaurants, cafes and other local retail. The data shows higher conversion rates for brands offering personalized in-app experiences like exclusive sales, targeted push notification and frictionless payments. However, gaps exist in adoption of apps among few consumer cohorts like older demographics or deals-driven buyers relying more on mobile sites through discount brokers and price comparison engines. The research also highlights opportunities to drive app adoption in emerging ecommerce areas like groceries, luxury, healthcare, automotive etc.
Overall, mobile apps have evolved as the channel of choice and an influential driver across all stages of the consumer decision journey - not just as a purchase facilitation tool but also for product evaluation, brand engagement and loyalty. Targeted app strategy hence emerges as an imperative for brands today to succeed amidst intensifying retail competition.
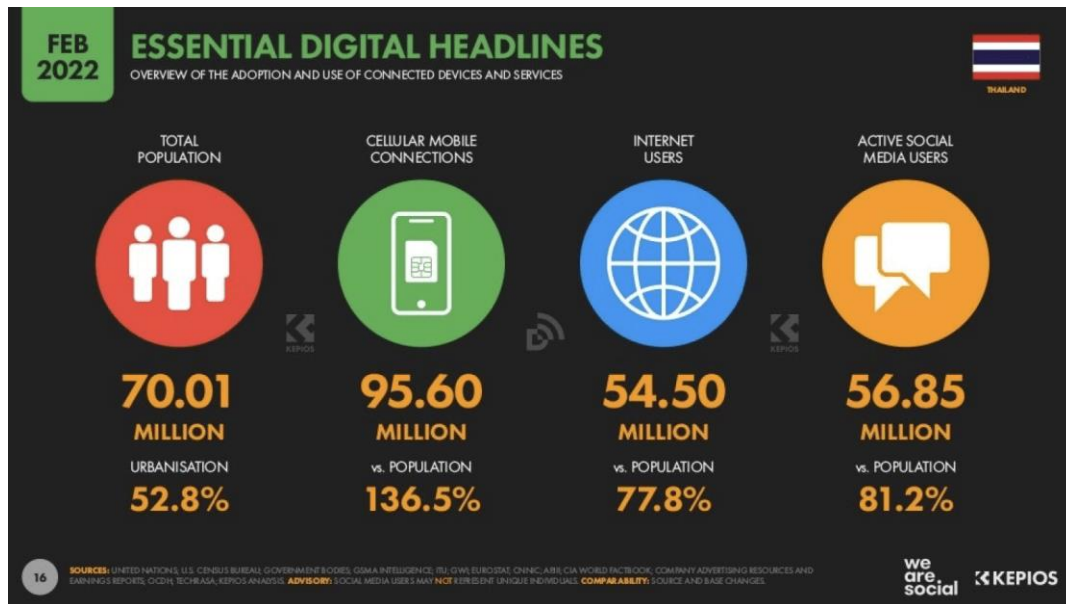
Figure 2: Internet users in Thailand. Source: e-commerce in Thailand:
https://www.everydaymarketing.co/trend-insight/insight-thailand-digital-stat-2022-we-are-social/From the above-mentioned data, we concur that it is possible for Thailand to become

The role of social media in the zero moment of truth (ZMOT):
The analysis reveals that social media platforms have emerged as highly influential touchpoints shaping the initial research phase also known as zero moment of truth (ZMOT) in the modern consumer decision journeys. Over 70% of digital consumers now use Facebook, Instagram and other leading social networks to discover and evaluate products through recommendations, reviews, branded content and influencer opinions.

Specifically, visual-first platforms like Instagram and YouTube have an outsized influence in building early consideration and driving discovery especially for experience-driven categories like travel, food, fashion and consumer tech products. Consumers also rely extensively on friends, family and social influencers for initial opinions and social confirmation even for high involvement purchases like automotive, real estate and education. Further, platforms like Twitter and niche online communities drive vital early research on capabilities, pricing, comparisons around electronics, appliances and other specialty products.

Figure 3: social media and consumer behavior. Source: Pew Research, 2021.

In the context of consumer decision-making, the interaction between Zero Moment of Truth (ZMOT) and social media emerges as a critical focal point. The results underscored the significant impact of ZMOT in shaping initial perceptions of products or services, particularly as consumers increasingly turn to social media platforms during the pre-purchase phase. Social media channels play a pivotal role as sources of information and reviews, shaping ZMOT and contributing to consumers' overall decision-making process. The immediacy and accessibility of information on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter contribute to the amplification of ZMOT, creating a dynamic environment where consumers engage with diverse perspectives and experiences. This interconnectedness between social media and ZMOT emphasizes the need for businesses to strategically leverage these platforms to influence and shape consumer decision-making effectively.

Personalization target marketing in ZMOT phase:
The analysis indicates significant potential for brands to influence the initial research stage or zero moment of truth (ZMOT) through greater personalization enabled by mobile technology. As consumers increasingly discover and evaluate products on their personal devices, there is a wealth of data opportunity for brands to customize messages and content that resonates at an individual level right from the evaluation start point.

Specifically, location data, past purchase behavior, browsing patterns and survey feedback can help segment audiences and tailor portfolios, features and messaging accordingly. Personalized product recommendations, geo-targeted promotions, and AI-curated idea triggers on brand apps and sites could sway initial impressions for several new purchasers. Even tailoring the review stack, influencer suggestions and community group visibility based on consumer preferences can make the ZMOT experience more relevant. Personalization at the ZMOT stage, facilitated through mobile technology, amplifies consumer trust and positively influences decision-making. As consumers encounter tailored information and offerings during their initial research phase, the likelihood of converting them into customers increases. The integration of personalized content at the ZMOT not only caters to individual needs but also establishes a more profound connection, fostering a sense of relevance and loyalty. This underscores the importance for businesses to incorporate personalization strategies within the ZMOT framework, leveraging mobile technology to create more impactful and meaningful interactions that resonate with the diverse preferences of today's consumers

Figure 4: Consumer prefer customized experiences. Image Source:
https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/consumer-insights/consumer-trends/how-digital-connects-shoppers-to-local-stores/

However, concerns around data privacy, lack of back-end integration to leverage insights and inconsistent omni-channel personalization still limit the customization potential. But the research highlights that the brands that get personalization right during the early ZMOT phase of discovery stand to gain an unrivaled competitive advantage in engaging and delighting the always-connected consumers of today and tomorrow.

ZMOT and Brand Loyalty:
The analysis reveals intriguing connections between the initial research phase i.e., zero moment of truth (ZMOT) and longer-term brand loyalty. The research indicates that a positive, personalized first impression during the ZMOT shaped by reviews, recommendations and brand content could lay the foundations for sustained competitive advantage through building consumer confidence, satisfaction and loyalty over time. a positive ZMOT experience significantly contributes to the establishment of brand loyalty,

creating a cycle where satisfied and loyal customers are more inclined to engage in repeated purchase behaviors. This emphasizes the strategic importance for businesses to focus on creating impactful ZMOT experiences, utilizing mobile technology as a tool for building and maintaining enduring connections with consumers, thereby solidifying brand loyalty in today's competitive marketplace. Specifically, brands that facilitate an effortless, relevant discovery process on mobiles using tools like personalized reminders, comparisons, virtual trials etc. are likely to be rewarded with greater trust and preference. Further, the depth, authenticity and uniqueness of information shared across owned channels in the ZMOT phase signals brand commitment for several consumers.

Post-purchase, fulfilling promises set by product claims and buyer experiences during ZMOT also strengthens perceived brand reliability for future purchases. Consumers today expect consistent omni-channel experiences right from discovery to advocacy journey - enabled by smart digital tools that remember their zero moment interactions.

Thus, brand success likely hinges on first getting the ZMOT touchpoints right. Building familiarity and proficiency in assisting mobile research not only provides a transactional edge but also boosts brand equity over the long-term amongst discerning, connected consumers spoiled for choice in the digital economy.

The role of mobile technology in post purchase satisfaction:
The analysis indicates that mobile platforms are becoming critical for brands to drive customer satisfaction and positive word-of-mouth in the post-purchase stage. Smart use of mobile apps, messaging and Internet of Things ecosystem can enable more delightful, convenient experiences leading to higher customer lifetime value.

Specifically, features like purchase tracking, prompt redressal over messaging apps, and intuitive returns through mobile have become staple expectations for most online buyers today. Moreover, personalized after-sales care, timely feedback collection, warranty management and rewards integrated into brand apps boost confidence and satisfaction levels for recent customers.

Post-purchase is also a pivotal moment for brands to reinforce the buying decision and reiterate product value through targeted mobile push notifications, helpful usage videos and value-adding app-based services. Maintaining ongoing omni-channel dialogue using data from the mobile purchase journey is vital. Emerging technologies like digital receipts integrated with promos, reviews and reorders take this further.

The findings reveal that mobile technology acts as a key facilitator in enhancing post-purchase satisfaction, playing a pivotal role in customer engagement and support. Consumers, armed with smartphones and mobile applications, experience a seamless transition from the point of purchase to post-purchase interactions. Mobile technologies, such as customer support apps, feedback platforms, and personalized communication channels, contribute significantly to addressing consumer queries, concerns, and providing timely assistance. Moreover, the immediacy and accessibility afforded by mobile technology empower consumers to share their feedback, reviews, and experiences in real-time, contributing to the overall post-purchase satisfaction landscape. Businesses that strategically integrate mobile technology into their post-purchase processes can not only address customer needs promptly but also foster a positive and ongoing relationship with consumers, thereby influencing repeat purchases and brand advocacy.

Thus, brand success likely hinges on first getting the ZMOT touchpoints right. Building familiarity and proficiency in assisting mobile research not only provides a transactional edge

but also boosts brand equity over the long-term amongst discerning, connected consumers spoiled for choice in the digital economy.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION:

The descriptive study analyzing existing literature and secondary data on this topic concludes that adoption of mobile devices and platforms has significantly disrupted traditional consumer purchase journeys. The zero moment of truth (ZMOT) enabled by mobile has become the most pivotal research phase shaping everything from initial discovery and education to final retailer choice.

Mobiles empower consumers with constant access to information, reviews, recommendations and transaction capabilities. Their pervasiveness has collapsed previous distinctions between online and offline shopping channels. For brands, having an effective mobile-first consumer engagement strategy centered around ZMOT insights has become an imperative to remain competitive. The Zero Moment of Truth (ZMOT) has emerged as a critical touchpoint, influencing consumers' initial perceptions and paving the way for their decision-making journey. Mobile technology, acting as a ubiquitous companion in the hands of consumers, plays a central role in amplifying the impact of ZMOT across various stages of the decision-making process.

The findings underscore the interconnectedness of ZMOT and mobile technology, highlighting their collaborative influence on factors such as brand loyalty, post-purchase satisfaction, and personalized consumer experiences. ZMOT, when enriched by the immediacy and accessibility of mobile technology, becomes a powerful tool for businesses to create meaningful interactions, establish trust, and foster long-term relationships with consumers.

As mobile technologies continue advancing with emergence of AI, IoT, AR/VR and more, they will further blur lines between intent and action within increasingly complex consumer journeys in the foreseeable future.

Based on the research analysis, the following recommendations emerge for brands:

Strategic Integration of Mobile Technology: Businesses should strategically integrate mobile technology across all stages of the consumer journey, from initial awareness to post-purchase interactions. This includes optimizing websites for mobile, leveraging mobile apps, and implementing personalized communication channels to enhance consumer experiences.

Enhanced Personalization at ZMOT: Recognizing the pivotal role of personalization, businesses should focus on tailoring content and interactions during the ZMOT stage. Utilizing mobile technology to provide personalized recommendations and targeted messaging can significantly influence consumer decision-making.

Investment in Post-Purchase Mobile Solutions: Acknowledging the importance of post-purchase satisfaction, businesses should invest in mobile solutions that facilitate seamless customer support, feedback collection, and engagement. Mobile apps and platforms can serve as effective tools for addressing consumer concerns and building loyalty.

Continuous Monitoring of Consumer Behavior: Given the dynamic nature of consumer

behavior, businesses should adopt a proactive approach by continuously monitoring and adapting strategies based on emerging trends in ZMOT and mobile technology. This includes staying abreast of evolving consumer preferences, technological advancements, and industry best practices.

Omnichannel Personalization: Truly integrated personalization across mobile, web, in-store and other touchpoints remains a challenge for even leading brands presently. Investing in unified customer data infrastructure, quality analytics and organizational workflows to leverage insights garnered from mobile to orchestrate connected omnichannel experiences would be vital to win.

Foster trust and community through transparent reviews: By embracing transparency in reviews, businesses create an environment where consumers can make informed decisions based on authentic and honest feedback. Thoughtful chatbots contribute to this by providing instant and personalized assistance, addressing queries and concerns in real-time. This not only enhances the customer experience but also builds trust by demonstrating a commitment to customer satisfaction. Additionally, adopting a mobile-centric approach to customer service ensures accessibility and convenience, aligning with the preferences of today's mobile-savvy consumers. By integrating these elements, businesses can cultivate a trusting community where transparency, personalized interactions, and mobile accessibility converge to create a positive and cohesive consumer experience.

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Restoring Family Honor: Understanding the Unnecessary Evil still At Large

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ABSTRACT

In the name of regaining family-honor, numerous extra-judicial interventions are taken in many conservative societies across the world, particularly South Asia. Though unacceptable and deeply contrasting with the worldview, these crimes have permeated and prevailed across civilizations. The victims of such 'social crimes' are mostly women and the normative values supersede the true essence of justice. An unlimited impunity is often accorded by societies to those involved and a compelling-acceptance by victim's family is enforced so that they return to normalcy often unlamented. This descriptive documentary research infers from some contextually relevant publications and eye-opening incidents that exemplified honor-cases with serious aftermath faced by young women for trespassing the normative boundaries of conservative societies. The study argues that honor-crimes that do not result in fatalities often remain unreported making the recorded incidents lower than actual. It identifies various factors ranging from immoral, familial, societal, religious to socio-cultural, that guide the people of position and power to prescribe heinous actions to help 'revive' their lost honor and dignity. These undignified measures range from capital punishment, mass rape, solitary confinement, to grave human rights violations. The study recommends a multi-pronged, gender-inclusive and mutually tolerant initiatives at state, society and local levels to help reduce this phenomenon. By raising awareness within and between societies to override the religious and other obligations, it may reduce the social stigma of honor-crimes across countries.

Keywords: Gender-based violence, Honor Killing, Honor Crime, Intimate Partner Violence, Family Honor, Social Justice

1.0   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background Rationale

The extensive social-media presence and spirited lifestyle of a young working woman was not approved by her family and society in a conservative Asian country. This resulted in her untimely death by her brother that reminded the conscious world that "modest girls" are expected to remain compliant to family values and societal traditions (Alam, 2020; Baloch, 2019). Demonstration of such a freedom is regarded as empowerment by a free-world but ordained a punishable offence by certain people holding positional power within some family-domicile and conservative society (Geldenhuys, 2023). In another Asian Muslim

country in 2020, a father was sentenced to prison for beheading his teenage daughter who apparently brought dishonor to the family (Nortajuddin, 2020). These tragic deaths are examples of ongoing femicides inflicted on the weaker gender to revive lost family-honor in some societies having discriminatory 'socio-cultural contexts' (Geldenhuys, 2023).

Upon hearing the term 'honor-killing' one gets a feeling of a terrible injustice, a human rights violation and gender subordination, inflicted on some innocent victim. There are numerous publications on this issue, yet little has been done to eradicate this activity that permeates across diverse cultures and identities. This article is an endeavour to understand 'honor-killing', in which honor comes to be a consistent and unchanging term that points at some hegemonic meanings which subside other possibilities, struggles and violence (Grewal, 2013). Vitoshka (2010) defined "honor-killing" as the murder or forced suicide of a person from a family or clan, or a hired killer upon the suspicion or insinuation that the person has compromised his or her virtue and thus stained the family's honor (or involved in immoral acts and disgraced own family). Honor-killing hence, is regarded as a severe form of domestic violence (Grewal, 2013; Rahim, Jahangir & Holden, 2016) and serious violation of human rights (Assembly, 1948).

Honor-killings reportedly have their origins among nomadic peoples and herdsmen: such populations carry all their valuables with them, and they do not have proper exposure to state's own law (Vitoshka, 2010). Statistics show that thousands of women have been killed around the world in the plea of honor and face-saving of families (Rahim, Jahangir, & Holden, 2016). Honor-killings are directly related to preservation of family dignity in some societies and mostly prevalent in honor-based cultures. Many Asian countries are considered as honor-based societies and widely reported in regions throughout the Middle East and South Asia. It is also recorded in the developed immigrant societies in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States where violation of honor codes has caused severe consequences (Grewal, 2013). Honor-killing however, may extend to boys and men also, depending on the nature of crime and the socio-psychological context of the violation. The present study investigates some scholarly articles and scenario-based real incidents reported by the participants; and honor-incidents published in newspapers. It further highlights related human rights concerns that are often violated with little or no fatalities thus may be called 'honor-crimes' and often remain unrecorded.

1.2   Problem Statement

In a conservative society, it is expected that a girl or woman does not get involved into an extramarital sexual relation, which is regarded as quite offensive for her to infringe honor code by indulging into such an act or relationship. It is also unexpected by the society that the current frenzy of extensive appearance in various social media platforms are regarded as violation of social boundaries with severe consequences. Honor-killings are homicides that are promulgated to purify tarnished honor, mostly the honor in question is female chastity (van Eck, 2002). Honor-killings result from hegemonic masculinity that persist even in many moderate conservative Asian societies in the name of gender-based violence (Anwary, 2015). Honor-crimes are gender-based violence, predominantly colluded and committed by male family members against female of the same family or society who have caused or fetched some dishonor (TJC, 2021). In South Asia, honor-crimes demonstrate how the value of feudalism and patriarchy are prevalent and deep-seated in the social system of a particular country (Kaushal, 2020). According to United Nations, gender-based violence is "any act that results in bodily harm, and/or sexual, mental harm/suffering inflict upon women - deprivation

of liberty, occurring in public or in private life". The victims of these 'social crimes' are mostly women and it is important to find out if the normative and traditional values supersede the true essence of justice with unlimited impunity to those involved in such social-corrections.

1.3 Scope and Purpose of Study

This study focuses on the issue of honor-killings and honor-crimes prevailing the South Asian conservative societies and identify relevant factors influencing these. It also identifies some preventive approaches to reduce these social problems. The purpose of this study is to examine the relative influence of religious fervor and societal shaming resulting in the loss of 'honor' or loss of 'face' within a society. If 'loss of honor' occurs when the incident surfaces to public, can a moral judgmental lens from socio-cultural theories of Bandura (2002 and 1999) explain the severe human response? The study attempts to find theoretical connections with human attitudes and behaviors about, "Why do people remain free from guilt even after committing such offences like honor-crime?"

1.4   Research Questions

The study examines the practice of honor-related violence in general and South Asia in particular to seek the following:
>   a.   What are major factors contributing to honor-crimes, in South Asian countries in particular?
>   b.   What are the likely measures to reduce the practice of honor-crimes in general?

2.0   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Honor-Killing in General

The instances of honor-killings as a social phenomenon can be traced back to ancient history. In antiquity (around 700 B.C.), the female were considered as property of the male, and male partner (husband) used to make sure only he would benefit from the his property. He would demand that his wife be chaste before marriage and inflict severe punishment including death upon any woman who strayed. Thus, honor-killing has been the punishment for women who allegedly have betrayed the trust and offended the honor of her man. Her violation becomes a punishable offence as it offends her husband and her community in tribal societies which has group-thinking norms. Furthermore, women were the property of men, so when they were dishonored by other men, it demonstrated an insult to their "owners." Often, a male's rival would assault his female relative to get revenge by damaging his property (Vitoshka, 2010). The rape, disfiguration, or murder of a woman deprives her of her potential to marry and, therefore, of her reproductive value, thus rendering her useless and insulting her male relatives for their inability to protect her. Typically, men kill assaulted female relatives to hide the perceived shame and offence to their male honor. As a result, women are often battered for adultery, as well as for rape and incest. According to tribal beliefs, dishonor is erased only with blood (Vitoshka, 2010). Societies call for a 'good woman' who will be one to comply with the intersectional roles of daughter, wife and mother as desirable of her by the society, but not demonstrate higher abilities to contribute higher attributes than the male. A 'Good' woman is not typically expected to reveal her sexuality, and are discouraged from expressing independent desires or making decisions (Solotaroff & Pande, 2014).

2.2   Honor-killing: a Violation of Human Rights

As part of social verdicts, the three most common types of honor killings are - murder, forced suicide and murder for a fabricated offence (Vitoshka, 2010). The "honor-crimes" are violences with a less severe verdict that impose coercive measures for transgressing moral values, are perceived as intolerable. The victims of "honor-killings", as well as the perpetrators, can be male or female. Mostly, such behaviors result from personal and family feuds outside the formal legal framework thus not resolved through judicial proceedings. Rather, family members or local clan-based or non-governmental entities resort to local arbitrations to determine the guilt of the accused outside criminal penal codes. In most cases, the accused have no opportunity to defend themselves, and no procedure is followed to determine an appropriate legal sanction except the 'pronouncement of capital punishment with revengeful disgrace and death' (Vitoshka, 2010). It violates most articles of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights [1] (UDHR) and the guidelines adopted in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)[2] (Assembly, 1979). Many of the countries where honor-killing occurs have ratified these documents, It demands immediate national and international attention with the goal of helping assault survivors, preventing future loss of life, and, ultimately, eradicating honor-killing. No local practice, law, policy or practice should have the effect of undermining or violating the dignity of any person of group of persons. It should uphold the 'Universality and interdependence of rights[3]'. The contents of any related policy, development assistance, health care, and criminal justice cannot contradict the above.

2.3   Reasons for Honor-Killing

Honor-killings often show violence as the "manifestation of unequal power relationship" between men and women in all societies (WHO, 2002; UNGA, 1997). Globally, about 5,000 cases of honor-killings and many more honor-crimes occur where the women are their principal victims - South Asia is the worst-affected region (Bhanbhro, 2021; Chowdhury, 2021; D'Lima, Solotaroff & Pande, 2020). Incidents are underreported if not "normalized" by cover-ups as 'acceptable social behavior' in conservative societies (Coomaraswamy, 2005). Most importantly, the victims of honor-killing vary widely, and numbered in the thousands every year and come from different continents, ethnic backgrounds, religions and socio-economic levels. They differ in age, gender, and mental capacity (Vitoshka, 2010; Grewal, 2013). It is prevalent in six continents and thirty-one countries, including Asia, Europe, North America, Latin America, Australia, and Africa[4] (Vitoshka, 2010; Rahim, Jahangir & Holden,

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1 For example, Article 3 states that "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person." Article 5: "No

one should be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment," etc. See The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations, 1948. http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html, last accessed on February 11, 2021.

2 See Convention on the Elimination on All Forms of Discrimination against Women, United Nations, 2002. http://un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/, last accessed on February 11, 2023.

3 Principles of human rights suggest: a) Equality and non-discrimination, b) Universality and inalienability, c) Indivisibility d) Participation and inclusion, e) Accountability and rule of law, f) Interdependence and interrelatedness are equally applicable to all. Additionally, human rights principles also focus on the 'preservation of Human Dignity' which is a fundamental principle of human rights (Assembly, 1979).

4 Honor-killings have been officially reported in thirty-one countries. The list includes Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, Haiti, Guatemala, India, Israel, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Netherlands, the Palestinian National Authority, Pakistan, Peru, Punjab, the

2016). Studies show that Victims share three common sufferings in an attempt to restore family honor: 1) all of them were abused and helpless; 2) all were murdered—or forced to kill themselves and, 3) amounting to extra-judicial crimes afforded no honor defence judicially. One can conclude that they demonstrate the pattern of behaviour: 'taking law in your own hands', resorting to self-help and materializing personal vendettas against culturally perceived disobediences and violations (Vitoshka, 2010).

2.4   Factors influencing Honor-Killing

Vitoshka (2010) suggests that religious beliefs and gender discrimination against women are major arguments to have high number of female honor victims in Muslim societies, yet honor-killing is not exclusively a gender or faith-based practice. Honor-killings are in vogue in a much broader social context and suggests that honor-crimes and related attacks are also frequently carried out outside Muslim-dominant societies where victim's male family or community members may be involved. The assumption that honor-killing happens only to women, particularly in Muslim societies, is a misrepresentation of the actual reason, and prevents it from being addressed in its entirety. The most important factors that may influence an honor-killing may be: financial gain, covering up crimes, achieving forced marriages, and attempts to uphold and preserve an ethnic identity (Vitoshka, 2010).

2.4.1   Honor-Killing and the Role of Religion

While the ancient roots of honor-killing demonstrate its origin based on gender power-dynamics, these roots do not explain the relationship between religion and murdering for honor. Honor-killing occurs in communities of the most popular religions in the world – Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Sikh. The legal provisions suggest that the codes of a number of Muslim countries, such as Pakistan, were based on Indo-British law. In fact, British laws dating from colonial times provided for similar legal considerations for crimes of passion in Western and Islamic states (Vitoshka, 2010). Honor-killing was a part of Western legal history and tradition before being institutionalized in Muslim countries. Though majority of the honor-killings are committed in Muslim communities (United Nations, 2002), it may be related to socio-historical development, with a stronger connection of the social practice rather than faiths. As discussed by D'Lima, Solotaroff and Pande (2020), 'Male Control of Property' remains a cornerstone in the marriage system within the Hindu and Muslim societies of India and Pakistan. It helps settle disputes on inheritance and inter-family feuds. In Hindu society, however, the issue caste and prohibition of inter-caste marriages often emerge as serious flashpoints for honor-crimes and marriage to a lower-caste is violently disapproved (D'Lima, Solotaroff & Pande, 2020). Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism strongly support the values that honor-killing aims to enforce. Either the perpetrators act on misconceptions of what religions teach, or there are factors other than faith. To summarize, while religious beliefs play an important role in the modern practice of honor killing, they do not trigger it. Instead, they provide one more excuse for engaging in it. Murdering in the name of honor punishes individuality and disobedience to social norms, it advocates that the group value is larger than individual religious beliefs and practices.

2.4.2   Poverty: Devaluation of Human Life

Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Uganda, Venezuela, Yemen, and other Mediterranean and Persian Gulf countries, such as France, Germany, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, as well as the United States (usually within migrant populations) (United Nations 2002, 4; 10; 12).

In ancient times, community strength depended on sustaining a large population, making a man's currency with his wife's fertility, chastity, and loyalty to husband and tribe. Today, while women are still needed for group prosperity, they are increasingly willing to defend their human rights and put these before the demands made by their families and communities. When individuals, on whose personal sacrifice a community depends, rebel against making this sacrifice, the society is threatened. Thus, honor-killing is a community affair, rather than a family affair, as confirmed by the fact that if a family refuses to murder one of its members, the clan appoints a killer and murders the victim anyway (Bedell, 2004). Studies suggest that both in Pakistan and India, male relatives, typically fathers, brothers, uncles, were the principal perpetrators committing honor-crimes either to avenge, or to substantiate some economic and honor-issues (D'Lima, Solotaroff & Pande, 2020; Kundsen, 2004). Furthermore, there are falsifications of financial claims to unpayable debts or to fix someone for lust for money and commit false honor-victims. Afzal, Raza and Manzoor, (2021) suggested that sometimes poverty lead to dishonest means to deceitfully frame charges against someone for adultery involving own spouse and killing her in order to nullify lender financial claims (p 20).

2.4.3 Political Structure

The common corruption of local police, gender-discriminatory application of laws by male dominated courts, and the ensuing systematic disregard for governmental authority replaced by alternative dispute resolutions. Such measures are taking law in their own hands and are challenging the existing codes of human rights and the very essence of humanity. A notion of self-help replaces the formal legal system with the consideration of stern prescriptions like honor-killings by local society elites. Financial incentives and imposing traditions of sexism in the face of poverty and challenges on cultural identity seem more attractive than accepting westernized legislature and increasingly secularized governments.

2.4.4 Protecting Cultural Identity

While economic conditions can motivate honor-killings, the practice is also affected by a country's political situation. This was further enforced as an aftermath of 9/11, honor emerged as a political and humanitarian problem alongside an extension of anti-Muslim sentiment on a global scale (Cetinkaya, 2023). Local instability is often associated with international: e.g. external (often Western) interventions, war and conflicts. These events impoverish an already destitute country. Thus, while poverty is intensified by war, poverty is often a result of external interventions. In an attempt to differentiate themselves, Muslim countries assert local, communal norms that existed before such "invasions." One aspect of these early traditions is honor-killing, which currently is increasing in order to counter the Western value of individualism. Cetinkaya (2023) described the dissemination of honor-crimes and honor-related violence as an attempt of 'Coloniality' by the West against the Muslim-majority populations as part of human rights discourse. This aspect however, has not been thoroughly dealt in this study.

2.5 Conceptual Framework and Variables

Conceptual framework is drawn from numerous documented evidences of honor-killings included in numerous academic researches. In honor-based societies, the term honor is

symbolic to a virtue, that is associated with morality, integrity of character, and altruism (Bhandari, 2021). A person will sacrifice personal freedom and desires in consonance with the specified codes of honour of his/her society. In order to correct the persons involved in an alleged honor-crime, local punishment to an individual is showed as altruism for the greater benefit of the group. Families forcibly accept at the expense of their individual victim(s) but its magnitude and nature vary across religion, country, society and cultures (Sen, 2005). Bandura's theory of Moral Disengagement explains the justification of honor-crimes and its high frequency of occurrence in the hands of own people (Ne'Eman-Haviv, 2021).

Figure 1 - Concept Mapping of honor-related violence
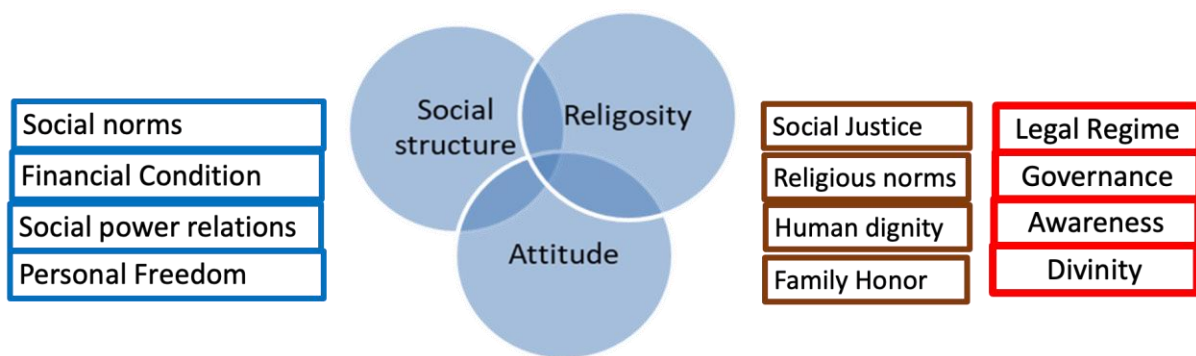
3.0　Methodology

This study pursues a This descriptive documentary research infers from some contextually relevant publications and eye-opening incidents that exemplified honor-cases with serious aftermath faced by young women for trespassing the normative boundaries of conservative societies. Methodologically this is a qualitative study. The authors of this research have extensively studied numerous journal articles, research monographs, books and newspapers and supranational institutions' documents related to the issue and gathered knowledge to draw inferences.

4.0　Results and Findings

This study examined factors that permit and encourage honor-based incidents and locally resolve the honor-crimes and gender-based discrimination against women in the poor and developing societies. The frequency is more against women in the Muslim societies, but it is not exclusively a gender or faith-based practice. Most important factors influencing may be: financial gain, covering up crimes, achieving forced marriages, avenge other crimes and to uphold an ethnic identity that motivate and promote honour killing (Vitoshka, 2010). Even the working women who are well-educated and better positioned find inferior voice and standings in the family and decision-making occasions. Ancient roots demonstrate its origin based on gender power-dynamics, but do not explain the relationship between religion and murdering for honor. Most honor-crimes occur in communities of the two most popular religions - Christianity and Islam, and among some Sikhs (United Nations, 2002). Honor-crimes are efforts to control non-conforming women and girls within any patriarchal society,

by social interventions ranging from forced marriages, body-shaming or forced rape, physical abuses, seclusion to extreme measures like honor-killings.

Nezar (2020) suggested that the priority should be given to raising awareness among communities to voice against honor-killings. People should be aware that men are not superior to women in the eyes of the law. So, the public must not subscribe to cold-blooded murders and other brutalities that are taking place in the domestic spaces of their homes. To preserve social importance and 'respectable position' of influence in the society, both men and women engage in honor-killings in South Asian societies but it is less related to religion and more related to 'face saving' to the outsiders (Nezar, 2020). This is, thus, primarily a socio-cultural problem rather than a religious one. People have a tendency to be conservative about exposing the personality of their woman and try to protect them by fencing strong rules around them instead of appreciating and tapping from their power and potential (Cetinkaya, 2023). The restrictions are often coming from a moral panic and attempts to desexualize their image to the outsiders. But in reverse, sexuality has been prominently displayed, enjoyed and presented in the developed world which is contradictory. If oriental women dared to step outside their boundaries, some of them may risked themselves to face serious consequences. Furthermore, the proliferation of gender diversity and freedom, particularly with regards to LGBT+ community, is highly disapproved in many societies (Cetinkaya, 2023). 2015 annual report by the UN High Commissioner expressed that LGBT persons "have also been victims of so-called 'honour' killings…for transgressing gender norms or for sexual behaviour, including actual or assumed homosexual conduct" (UNHRC, 2015).

To combat and reduce honor-related crimes, countries need to develop their young into more responsible citizens of the future by making equitable justice for all genders. This should begin at the early ages, as suggested by Bronfenbrenner's ecological subsystems show influence of family, friends, teachers and society that can positively shape their psychological growth. A more gender-sensitive inclusive policy framework should be formed by ministries by aligning the various socio-political, cultural and economic factors with focus on health, safety and human rights of women. Society and educational institutions need to promote desirable normative standards the moral justification of people to permit a wrongdoing should be dependent of their social upbringing (from theory and study).

5.0   Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1   Conclusions

Honor-killing is one of the cruelest forms of gender-based violence that is psychologically complex, sociologically complicated and morally distressing targeting the weaker gender. Killing in the name of "honor" is a highly discussed human rights discourse that demonstrated injustice imposed on the women. In adjudicating honor-crimes, the verdict and aftermath often lead to honor-killings in societies, to regain lost-honor, even sometimes hideously for monetary gains. Honor-crime is a display of inequalities; it is a homicide and a direct violation of human rights. Honor-crimes include allegations against women and male victims jointly, and sometimes targets the young adults, and LGBT, whenever their behavior exceeds the limits of community norms. The understanding of family honor and social honor vary between countries and societies and internationally there is lack of consensus to underline the relative importance of religion, society or law as key reasons (Cetinkaya, 2023). If a policy is to successfully deter honor-killing it must emphasize that it respects cultural concepts of honor for societies that acknowledges it as an important value.

From a legal lens, these offences are culpable homicides thus punishable by local and international laws. There are socio-economic, and political factors that trigger honor-killing, so improving economic well-beings of people could reduce the tendency of honor-crimes happening due to financial exploitations. These should be viewed institutionally for remedial measures: a) Institutionalization of Honor Offences – as study finds strong connection between financial disparity and honor-crimes. Formal legislation may be introduced to prohibit any monetary transaction to compensate for honor-crimes. The law may disinherit any perpetrator convicted of murder or committing injustice and showing signs of motivation of "societal/family cleansing" in the name of regaining family honor; b) Political Centralization - the law must identify the motivations behind honor-case and address it from a consequentialist lens that it must prevent from being escalated to the levels of homicides; c) Education on Religion - both religious and non-religious educational institutions should appropriately highlight the perils of extra-judicial measures to handle honor-crimes and mention that it goes against the true spirit of religions (Vitoshka, 2010). Those who are considered weaker, such as women, young adults, and homosexuals—or whose behaviour does not go well with community norms—are more likely to become victims; there is neither a strong centralized legal system nor incentives for other local tribal members to protect them. Due to intense poverty, financial resources determine the outcomes of most disputes.

Political instability and the perceived threat of Westernization lead to a rejection of the notion of human rights, undermining the need for a moral defence. It is believed that the measures outlined above can have a positive effect towards the reduction of honour crimes and honour killings and upholding of human rights. Most importantly, only changes in social mentality and some restraint on tribal behaviour, together with legal enforcement, there can be significant improvements in the social fabric and reduce chances of honour killing. Some form of international pressure and obligations could also compel governments to develop rules and institutions to protect the victims, deter the perpetrators and enforce practice of human rights for all.

Nazar (2020) described that religion cannot be utilized by any Muslim to justify an honor-related violence because Islam strongly opposes such a brutal and inhumane practice. Cetinkaya (2023) suggested that there are different international positions to examine honor-related violence and the role of Western propagations tend to criminalize some religion-based communities of the developing world, including South Asian Muslim societies. While this requires some caution, this must not enable anyone to prescribe any extra-judicial measure and inappropriate handling of honor-victims. It also should not show lenience/impunity toward perpetrators as it often leads to serious social injustice. The criminals must not be protected or given impunity in the name of moral-compass or partial judgment under religious or societal norms. The future direction of study may encompass a thorough comparative investigation by addressing honor-related violations in various parts including the developed societies, and examine how best the existing human rights-related provisions define, determine and enable mitigation measures.

5.2   Recommendations

In view of the above discussions, the following are recommended:

   a. **Partnering**. A definite positive partnering between human rights agencies and the state apparatus must be worked out.

b. **Regulatory Measures**. Government should take appropriate measures to regulate all alternative dispute resolution measures and practices, to resolve honor-issues.

c. **Legislative and Judiciary.** Existing systems and provisions should be reviewed and reformed to ensure equitable rights and justice for all genders.

d. **Coercive Tool.** Appropriate legal judgments including punishments may be promulgated against the inappropriate social leaders who commit or advocate honor-killings.

e. **Reporting.** Women should be assisted to find safer and dignified way of reporting about the honor-crimes to the appropriate authority without further humiliation.

f. **Awareness**. Well-crafted awareness program by ministries and implemented at various levels of community, society and educational institutions.

g. **Mainstreaming Victims**. Victims of honor-crimes must be mainstreamed under the sponsorship of society and government with financial, social and other supports.

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Jean-Paul Sartre's Authentic Existence: A Means for Peace in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This work is an expose of authentic existence as proposed by Jean-Paul Sartre, a French philosopher whose position gives way for people to live out their authentic lives without pretense or allowing themselves to be limited by any means. Through his submission, this work is able to use his position to bring out means through which a dying and fragile peace in Nigeria can be brought back to life. This work gives reasons why peace is becoming a thing of the past among the various religions, tribes, and political affiliations in the country of Nigeria. Some of the factors of disharmony and disunity include tribalism, corruption, inferiority complex and the effect of colonial rules in the minds of the people. However, with the use of the authentic existence of the African man, the ubuntu ideology of the Nigerian people will give room for peace and unity and the cooperative existence of all irrespective of tribe, religion, or political affiliation. It points out means through which peace and harmony can be restored and further gives recommendations for future research.

Keywords: Authentic existence, Peace, Bad Faith, Freedom, Choice, Responsibility, Existential Facticity

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria, one of the African continents, has experienced significant development setbacks due to the activities of European imperialists in the past. The country was subjected to humiliation, exploitation, and degradation, leading to psychological trauma, imprisonment, loss of identity, and an inferiority complex. The colonial nations' motives were to milk Nigeria and the African people, but Nigeria's current state is marked by issues such as kidnapping, bribery, corruption, religious/ethnic crises, and Boko Haram. Nigerians frequently lose sight of their origins as the original, pure African people, and these problems shouldn't be attributed to the colonial powers.

African, especially Nigeria, is currently facing poverty and lack of basic amenities, with leaders not taking care of these issues. People are actually suffering in almost every African nation as they never did during the colonial era. Sartre's teachings, based on these circumstances, emphasize the importance of taking full responsibility for every choice made and living an authentic life. This work argues that Nigerians, both leaders and the led, must work together to improve their lives and take responsibility for their actions and liberation. By transcending the past and becoming actors in the existential stage, Nigerians can authenticate and actualize their Being, living peacefully with one another.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES/ METHODOLOGY:

The method of data collection in this research will be based on interviews. Research interviews will be set out to inquire from certain people what is needed to achieve peace and unity again in Nigeria which has been divided by ethnicity, banditry, religious disunity, killings, kidnapping, Fulani herdsmen, et cetera. This methodology makes it easier to hear from the people what and how peace and love could be achieved. Our data will be basically on the information obtained from the people during the interviews to be conducted in the course of the research.

RESEARCH INTERVIEWS

Rev. Fr. Dr. Ugochukwu Ngana (2023) believes that using Sartre's position of authenticity of life can help salvage Nigeria's current situation. He believes that Nigerians have lost the values of their 'ubuntu philosophy' from 1940-70, leading to a nation of harmony and peace. However, the unimaginable began to creep into the country in the 1970s, resulting in civil unrest. To bring back unity, peace, and collective progress, Ngana believes that the application of justice, removal of bad leadership, and election of competent and qualified candidates with verifiable track records can bring back unity, peace, and collective progress. He also emphasizes that all sections and tribes should be treated equally, treating them as equal citizens. To eliminate insecurity, banditry, Fulani herdsmen killings, and Boko haram, Ngana suggests that the government should value the lives of its citizens, tackle military corruption, and create jobs for unemployed youths. This will help reduce criminality, banditry, and kidnapping, as many youths are unemployed and resort to criminal activities for survival. By engaging these youths in work, these evils will be reduced, promoting a more harmonious and prosperous Nigeria.

Mr. Richard Afoenyem (2023), an army officer during the Biafran/Nigerian civil war between 1967-70, believed that Nigeria could not be one and will never have peace and harmony. He believed that Nigeria's history of British greed and colonialism led to the amalgamation of three countries, the Igbos, Hausa, and Yoruba, into one entity called Nigeria. Before the amalgamation, Nigeria had various countries operating independently, but after the amalgamation, there was political unrest and injustice. Afoenyem believed that the northern part of Nigeria saw themselves as the owners of the country, leading to unfairness in the country. He argued that the northern candidates for university admission and mineral resource sharing were not equal, and the majority of Nigeria's revenue came from Igbo land. Afoenyem argued that peace can still be achieved through justice and equity in land distributions and that the Igbos should be considered the major key players in the country. This inclusiveness would automatically end banditry, kidnappings, and other social vices that kept the country at a standstill.

Mr. Echezona Ekengwu (2023), a lecturer at Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Anambra state Nigeria, believes that peace can only return in Nigeria when a true federal system of government is implemented. This system would allow states to have control over police and other forces to protect their localities and ensure the security of lives and properties. Ekengwu also believes that Nigeria's situation is influenced by incompetence in government elections, as seen in the February 2023 election where the Labour Party presidential candidate won, but the unneutral umpire sided with the ruling party. He believes that achieving these goals is crucial for securing lives and a better future for Nigerians who value their livelihoods.

AUTHENTIC EXISTENCE BY JEAN PAUL SARTRE

Sartre's philosophy erupted as a result of the dissatisfaction with the traditional belief which holds that 'free will' is an illusion and that everything that happens, including all the things people do or say is causally and logically determined a priori. But Sartre maintained that 'free will' is an intrinsic and necessary feature of the human condition. It is a feature that is directly implied by the very nature of consciousness as being in itself. As such, it is not determined. He maintained that man is totally free and responsible for his actions as such, he is not determined in any manner. All his actions evolved around the choices he made. For him, man is what he makes of himself, man is condemned to be free.

When Jean-Paul Sartre (1996) used the phrase "bad faith" it was to refer to any sort of self-deception that denied the existence of human freedom. Bad faith according to Patrick Ezechukwu (2022) is an outward sign of an inauthentic life. The inauthentic individual always assumes that all his life activities are necessitated by an imminent power, deterministic necessity or the gene of heredity and abdicates his absolute responsibility allowing himself to be drafted along with the world. Sartre thinks that having bad faith makes people choose certain decisions that they should not have ordinarily chosen since a man to deliberately chose inferiority, he does so by the effect of 'bad faith' prompted by the spontaneous consciousness realized in the end pursued by the will and the end obtained.

(a) **Freedom and authenticity**: Sartre's propositions emphasize the importance of freedom and authenticity in our being. He believes that man is free because he is not himself but presence to himself, and that freedom is the nothingness that forces human reality to make itself instead of being. He links freedom and consciousness by placing them in the very being of man, stating that since man has nothingness that can make him other than what he is, he must be limitlessly free in his actions. Jean-Paul Sartre (1962) emphasizes that the indispensable and fundamental condition of all action is the freedom of the acting being. This being-for-itself, which Sartre called man, is contingent but essentially free, and it is a necessary condition of its existence that it is not free to cease being free. He states that man cannot be both slave and free; he is wholly and forever free or he is not free at all.

Sartre argues that freedom lies in our hands rather than determining what we would like to be. He believes that man cannot change his present situation, as it is common in our race or acquired during childhood. Therefore, we are what we make of ourselves, choosing what we want to be through 'free choice'. People make themselves through a series of choices and decisions, converting their existence into the essence of their final self. In summary, Sartre's propositions emphasize the importance of freedom and authenticity in our being. He emphasizes that freedom lies in our hands and that we are what we make of ourselves through choices and decisions.

(b) **Existential Facticity**: Facticity, defined by Sartre (1996) in 'Being and Nothingness,' is a concept that highlights the limiting factors that affect the existence of things. It includes factors such as place, body, past, position, sex, background, and fundamental relationships with others. Sartre argues that humans are made by various factors, including climate, earth, race, class, language, history, heredity, childhood circumstances, and acquired habits. However, facticity can be a 'bad faith', as it neglects the potential for transcendence that is inherent in humans, allowing them to change and choose. Sartre argues that everything that happens to us is always human and equal to us and that there cannot be any determined situation in human existence. Although this facticity constitutes a barrier against actualizing our authentic self, it can be surpassed.

NIGERIAN SITUATION AND THE AUTHENTIC EXISTENCE OF SARTRE COMPARED.

(a) Explications of the Nigerian Problem

Nigerians were initially subjected to colonial rule, where they were subjected to humiliation, exploitation, and degradation. The colonial masters worked for the interests of their country's origin, and it was a difficult process to let go. However, Nigerians were liberated and freed from their colonial lords, but freedom requires transcending one's past. Nigerians are now concerned about their past, as they can and should transcend their past. The country is divided by violence, corruption, political assassinations, religious and ethnic crises, and social vices. Chinua Achebe (1983) argues that Nigerians are not corrupt because their current system makes corruption easy and profitable. The 2023 election could determine the future of Nigeria, with many people prioritizing the candidate's tribe and religion over a competent candidate. This attitude does not foster peace and demonstrates the inauthentic living of the Nigerian people, as Sartre emphasized. Blaming white men for their motives to milk the continent of Africans will not yield any fruit. Healing these self-inflicted wounds will lead to peace for both leaders and the entire population of the country.

(b) Ambivalence of Islam and Christianity to Constitutional Secularity

The Nigerian people today are divided along religion, primarily between Christianity and Muslims. This division cannot guarantee unity and peace in a nation, as the modern state prides itself on being secular and not a theocracy. The modern state must be unbiased and morally equal, and no religion may enjoy a privileged position. The state constitution, which is regarded as continually binding on and directing residents, applies to every human institution and individual. A good citizen respects and submits to the state's constitution's sovereignty, without regard to one's religion.

The underlying ambiguity of post-colonial Islam is forcefully brought up by an Egyptian Muslim scholar named Nasr Abû Zayd (2004), who questions whether it is possible to be both "good citizens" and "good Muslims." The bane of Nigerian peace is a lack of understanding or respect for constitutional secularity and its implications for religious activity and its bounds (Olusesan Raymond 2016). The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) released a statement in April 2014 on the interaction of state and religion in Nigeria, challenging the widespread belief that Nigeria's constitution is secular. The bishops submitted that the problem relies on how to reconcile two conflicting principles, both enshrined in Nigeria's constitution: that Nigeria is 'one nation under God' and that there shall be no state religion in Nigeria, either on the Federal or State level (art. 10 of our constitution).

This under-appreciation of Nigeria's secularity is the root cause of numerous incidents of religious violence and strife in different regions of the country. The root of religious disputes in the southern region of Nigeria is a struggle to balance the freedom of the individual with the demands of the prevailing civilization (religion, culture). Conflicts between tradition and personal integrity are unavoidable when the constitutional guarantee of the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion is not respected. If these growing religious tensions are curbed by the authorities, there will be no conflicts, disunity, and chaos between these two major religions in Nigeria, Christianity, and Islam. Religious bigotry by Muslims led to the death of Miss Deborah Samuel Yakubu, a second-year college student killed by a mob of Muslim students in Sokoto state, Nigeria, on 12th May 2022.

Creative imagination is required to combat chronic human rights violations and the culture of impunity. Stakeholders and crucial members of civil society must aggressively oppose

actions against justice and peace. This is particularly true if the lawfully in power, but irresponsible administration conceals its culture of impunity under arguments for "sovereignty" and "national interest."

(c) Corruption

Nigeria's corruption is a significant issue that hinders the development of the nation. The country is plagued by corrupt leaders who embezzle public funds for community development without arrest or prosecution. This has led to embittered youths and caused problems. Corruption has contributed to the poverty and misery of a large segment of the Nigerian population. Examples of such corruption are found in various sectors such as offices, police extortion, and public embezzlement. Chinua Achebe (1983) states that corruption in Nigeria has reached a fatal stage, and Nigerians must continue to pretend they are only slightly indisposed. Even those caught in the act of corruption and bribery have not been questioned or detained. This demonstrates how Nigeria's system allows for anything to take effect without being questioned.

More than their colonial overlords, Nigerian leaders have demonstrated their incapacity and ulterior purposes. The system under which they live make it easier for corruption to creep into every corner of the nation. The issue is not that Nigerians lack the necessary skills; rather, it is that their objectives and beliefs are flawed. Flavored affluence is a popular but unfortunate index of good life in Africa, which allows for public embezzlement and lack of accountability. Corruption serves as a blockage to man's total development and self-realization, as outlined in Sartre's philosophy. This deprives the poor masses of the opportunity to act on their initiative and responsibility, limiting their living conditions worthy of human freedom. When the leaders of the country are corrupt, what do you expect from their citizens? Corruption does not allow for peace and harmony to reign in a society. Youths are used to destabilize the peace of nations by corrupt leaders who have used public funds for their private use.

(d) Tribalism

Tribalism is a significant issue in Nigeria's development, exposing citizens to unfair treatment and social injustice. Promotion and employment are often based on tribes and "godfatherism," resulting in job mismatches and a lack of merit. This denial of merit can harm not only individuals but society as a whole. The motive for this denial may be tribal discrimination, sex prejudice, political, religious, ethnic, or corruption and bribery. To truly develop Nigeria, Nigerians must transcend the level of voting solely for those from one's tribe and culture and forget the capabilities of opponents. The national election in Nigeria on February 25th, 2023, showed that many people prioritized tribe and religion over competence, causing stunting and undemocratic

(e) Inferiority Complex

Neo-colonialism, a form of imperialism, has led to a loss of confidence in one's capabilities and a belief in foreign goods as superior to their own (Kwame Nkrumah, 1966). This has led to a loss of appreciation for locally made goods and a desire for Europe and Americans to supply all their needs. This inferiority, as described by Sartre, has led to a decline in dignity and progress in Nigeria. Some individuals who seek improvement programs are often weighed down by those around them, hindering their true self-authenticity and realization of their being-for-itself. This inauthenticity can lead to a tragic outcome, as the initial zeal has been killed by the inauthentic Nigerian person. Sartre's concept of being who one is made of is essential for living an authentic life. However, Nigerians seem to have adopted an

inferiority complex over an authentic life, leading to a life that is not theirs, hindering peace and progress.

SARTREAN SOLUTIONS AND SOME OTHER PERSPECTIVES

The Nigerian predicament is a complex issue that requires a solution that can be solved by embracing the philosophy of Sartre. J. F. Kennedy (www.Thinkexist.com) believed that every problem created by humans has a human solution, indicating that all hopes are not lost. This work aims to use the philosophy of Sartre to propose solutions for the liberation of Nigerian minds from colonialism and inferiority complex, allowing them to live authentic African lives. Sartre emphasized that human freedom is inseparable from God, nature, society, and the past and that Nigerians should forget the negative influences of the past and use it for personal growth. They should work out for value and efficiency, as an act causes value to emerge, making most problems surmountable.

To avoid the negative effects of the inferiority complex, Nigerians should work out for value and efficiency, encouraging locally-made goods and commodities. They can also solve their problems by becoming enquirers themselves, engaging in dialogue with philosophers, learned individuals, and youths to curb the chaos and killings that have ravaged the country. Nigeria needs peace more than ever, as the country is divided by ethnicity, religion, and political affiliations. Nigerians should be careful in selecting leaders, considering their competency, regardless of tribe, state of origin, or party. Discrimination, ethnicity, tribalism, corruption, and poverty are closely related to the people's ability to secure employment and earn a living. The government should engage in social policies to spur economic growth and provide opportunities for the transcendence of facticity and bad faith, ultimately leading to the liberation of the mind and self-actualization of the African person.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Sartre's philosophy of freedom, choice, and responsibility is a call for self-assessment and realization among the Nigerian people. He believes that man is completely free from hindrance and infringement and that he is responsible for everything he does. Life is a life of choice and alternatives, and an authentic life is one where individuals are fully aware of their free choice and assume full responsibility for it. However, Sartre's notion of freedom has some loopholes, such as treating freedom as limitless. He also emphasized that freedom goes with responsibility, limiting the absolute free act of man. Furthermore, Sartre cannot neglect the effect of facticity and experience on freedom, as they limit it to a great deal.

In conclusion, Sartre's philosophy of freedom, choice, and responsibility calls for self-assessment and realization among the Nigerian people. He argued that rules and moral guides can limit potential and determine actions, but he failed to acknowledge that each society has its principles that guide people's way of life, including cultures and traditions. Society plays a greater role in shaping the human person, and Sartre's argument that we should not be regulated by pre-existing rules but instead create our own rules and values would cause chaos in society.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THIS RESEARCH

Sartre, an existential philosopher, believed that existence precedes the essence of things, and everything comes from us. He believed that we are free and live in freedom and that facticity and the past are human situations that we can overcome. Nigeria's current situation is not solely due to European influence, as African rulers and chiefs have taken control of captives and negotiated with buyers (Obi Oguejiofor, 2001). Blaming Europeans for Nigeria's

problems is not effective, as Nigerians must work within themselves and tell themselves the truth. Nigeria's leaders are thorns to Nigerians flesh, with a focus on family and close friends. Corruption is increasing, and the country's democracy is theoretical. The tragic situation in Nigeria is due to the mismanagement of natural resources and corruption by leaders who forgot that independence is not an end in itself but a means to attain other ends. The Nigerian government's efforts to improve the country have been criticized for being inefficient, with criminals and corruption taking control. The country's infrastructure and hospitals are in poor shape, and the government's lack of leadership is a major issue. Sartre believes that man is an open possibility, and we can achieve our goals if we find leaders who possess the will, ability, and vision. Both leaders and the masses should play their roles in living in harmony, focusing on the future and the potential for change. The task of planning harmony and a peaceful society lies with the leaders, and the electoral processes should be checked based on the competency of individual programs of activities. Sartre emphasizes the importance of avoiding negative influences from the past and embracing our authentic selves. Nigerians should reject habits that hinder their aspirations and chances of becoming a modern and attractive country. By adopting positive approaches, we can actualize our true destiny and free ourselves from the indelible mark of our past and the facticity of life.

RECOMMANDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Jean-Paul Sartre through his authentic existence has enlightened us about being who we are and the power of maintaining our identity. Having x-rayed his position and given some insight through which Nigerians can become more authentic to themselves, the work recommends that future research should center on the reason why Nigerian people kept blaming the colonial masters of the massive failures that is witnessed in the country today.

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Influence of Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Support on the Psychological Well-being and the Academic Performance of International Students in Thai Universities

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ABSTRACT

This quantitative research aims to explore the influence of emotional intelligence (EI), organizational support, on the psychological well-being and academic performance of international students studying at Thai universities. Emotional intelligence enhances individuals' ability to manage stress and relationships, while organizational support fosters a conducive environment, both of which positively impact psychological wellbeing and academic performance. This research wants to examine the various experiences of international students during their academic life. Data Collection will be carried out by distributing a self-administered questionnaire to the international students of the university. Open-ended survey questions will also be distributed to the faculty members to gather teachers' context and opinions on this issue. The overarching goal of this research is to furnish universities with valuable knowledge regarding the needs, vulnerabilities, and challenges faced by international students. Furthermore, this research seeks to provide actionable insights and recommendations, which can inform effective strategies for enhancing the psychological well-being and academic achievements of international students. Such contributions stand to benefit universities globally and offer valuable guidance to both institutional decision-makers and policymakers.

Keywords: academic performance, emotional intelligence, organizational support, psychological wellbeing

INTRODUCTION

As higher education becomes increasingly globalized, an increasing number of international students are enrolling in universities, bringing a variety of viewpoints to academic communities. Additionally, the free flow of international education is positively impacted by globalization. This exciting mix comes with its set of challenges for international students, like adjusting to new cultures and dealing with language differences. In their 2007 study, Galchenko and van de Vijver reported that during the process of adjustment in the foreign nation, the least adjusted group experienced significant stress and cultural distancing. Modern psychology emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence (EI) in Higher Education

Institutions (HEIs), which involves the ability to perceive, access, and generate emotions for thought and intellectual growth. Scholars have expressed interest in the numerous ways that research studies have taken to comprehend the relationship between EI and other variables, like psychological well-being. Generally, individuals with emotional intelligence look for opportunities in every situation, demonstrating their value to the organization while preventing unfavorable consequences for both people and organizations. In addition, organizational support is a motivational gesture that enhances employees' emotional pledge to their organization, promoting their belief in the organization's value and care for their well-being. Similarly, organizational support is considered as a norm where individuals develop emotional attachments when they receive compassionate and optimistic esteem (Lartey, et.al., 2021).

Thailand has seen a notable increase in the number of international students enrolled at its colleges during the last ten years, which is indicative of a developing trend in global education. Interestingly, there has been a noticeable rise in the number of foreign students studying in Thailand, and many universities actively engage in accepting students from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Under the direct supervision by the Ministry of Education, Thailand has 82 public universities, 72 private universities/colleges, and 1 community college. Furthermore, there are additional specialized institutions overseen by various ministries and agencies. (*Thailand*, n.d.) According to the SAWASDEE THAILAND (Center, 2023), in recent years, both public and private universities in Thailand have garnered considerable attention from the global academic community, attracting an increasing number of international students. Specifically, over the past five years, there has been a consistent and noteworthy rise in the enrollment of students from abroad. During the first semester of the academic year 2022, the total count of international students pursuing higher education in Thailand reached 34,202. The composition of this international student body reflects a diverse representation from various nations, with the top 20 countries of origin as follows: China (21,419 students), Myanmar (3,708 students), Cambodia (1,443 students), Nepal (651 students), Vietnam (546 students), Laos (538 students), The Philippines (460 students), India (363 students), Indonesia (326 students), Bhutan (262 students), South Africa (259 students), Korea (248 students), Japan (243 students), Nigeria (228 students), USA (205 students), Bangladesh (204 students), Malaysia (170 students), Taiwan (161 students), Pakistan (129 students), and Germany (109 students). This influx of international students underscores the growing recognition of Thailand as an appealing destination for higher education among the global student community.

While this internationalization of education is an enriching experience, it brings forth a spectrum of challenges for students at each educational tier. Language barriers, cultural adjustments, and the complexities of navigating a novel educational system are hurdles faced by undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate international students alike. These challenges extend beyond the academic realm, influencing social and cultural dimensions, creating a complex landscape for students pursuing diverse educational paths in Thailand. This research aims to systematically measure and comprehend the diverse challenges faced by international

students throughout their academic progression in Thailand. By undertaking a detailed examination of these challenges, the primary beneficiaries of this study are the international students themselves. The goal is to provide nuanced insights that can inform and enhance support mechanisms within educational institutions, thereby benefiting not only the students but also educators, policymakers, and support services. The analysis of challenges at different academic levels serves the purpose of contributing to a more inclusive and supportive educational environment. In this regard this research sets out to explore how two important factors, emotional intelligence (which is about understanding and handling feelings well) and organizational support (the help universities provide), can make a big difference for these students. This research further wants to comprehend how emotional intelligence and the support from universities can impact the mental well-being and academic success of international students. This study aims to provide a clear picture of how these aspects work together, contributing valuable insights to help create more supportive and effective educational environments for international students. The aim is to offer actionable recommendations to refine the overall experience for international students, promoting their psychological well-being and academic success in the Thai higher education context. Through this research, it is expected to contribute to the ongoing dialogue on effective support systems for international students and to foster a more welcoming and enriching educational environment in Thailand.

RESEARCH QUESTION

How Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Support influence on the Psychological Well-being and the Academic Performance of International Students in Thai Universities?

CONTRIBUTION

In the realm of academic research, numerous studies have explored diverse variables influencing the well-being and academic performance of students. However, the distinctiveness of our research lies in its focus on the Influence of Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Support on the Psychological Well-being and Academic Performance of International Students in Thai Universities. Unlike previous research, which often examined general aspects, our study narrows its scope to the specific context of Thai universities and international students. Additionally, while various studies have separately investigated emotional intelligence or organizational support, our contribution lies in the integrated exploration of both factors and their combined impact on psychological well-being and academic performance.

This research stands as a pioneering effort in addressing the unique challenges faced by international students in Thai universities, making it a significant departure from prior studies conducted in different cultural and educational settings. By examining these influential factors in the Thai context, the study aims to provide actionable insights for universities, policymakers, and decision-makers to enhance support systems for international students. In essence, our research not only contributes to the existing body of knowledge but also offers practical and culturally tailored recommendations for optimizing the psychological well-

being and academic achievements of international students in Thai higher education institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and effectively use one's own emotions, as well as understanding and being empathetic towards the emotions of others. This concept was made popular by Salovey and Mayer (1990) who defined emotional intelligence as "the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (p. 189). According to Goleman (1995), there are five dimensions of emotional intelligence and are typically identified as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. As cited by Wan Sulaiman & Mohd Noor, (2016) "Emotional intelligence is an important variable in individual's achievement of success in all aspects. According to Petrides (2010), emotional intelligence can be considered a trait, and it is a "constellation of emotional self- perceptions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies" (p. 137). Although IQ and other factors are important, it is clear that emotional intelligence is very importance for optimal performance (Goleman 1995)."

Perceived Organizational support

Perceived organizational support in the context of university students and academia refers to the perception and experience of students feeling valued, respected, and assisted by their educational institution. It involves the university providing resources, guidance, and a supportive environment to facilitate students' academic success, personal development, and overall well-being. This support can encompass various aspects, including access to educational resources, mentorship programs, counseling services, and a positive campus culture that fosters learning and growth. The theory of organizational support was first introduced by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa in their 1986 paper titled "Perceived Organizational Support."

As cited by Maha Alreshidi et al., (2023) "several studies reveal that student academic support plays a vital role at the college level and is often associated with a higher level of adjustment in the university (Thompson and Mazer, 2009; Awanget al., 2014). For example, Yau et al. (2012) identified the dimensions of university support necessary for students' transition. The study of Avcı and Dogan (2020), on the other hand, showed that determining the perceived university support of first-year students is an influential factor in the adjustment processes, which directly impact the psychological, social, and academic performances of students."

Psychological Well-being

Psychological well-being refers to an individual's overall mental health and satisfaction with life. It encompasses factors such as emotional stability, resilience, a positive sense of self, and the ability to cope with stress and challenges. Psychological well-being reflects the subjective experience of an individual's mental state, including their emotional and cognitive functioning, contributing to an overall sense of contentment and fulfillment in life.

As cited by Pimple Jui, (2023) "Psychological Well-being is affected by various factors like resilience, social support, mindfulness, yoga, physical health, etc. Emotional intelligence is one of those factors that can impact psychological well-being. Mayer and Salovey (1997) have defined emotional intelligence as the knack to perceive emotions, access and produce emotions to assist thought, understanding emotions, and emotional knowledge, and to introspectively regulating emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth. Goleman (1995) describes emotional intelligence as a combination of five aspects namely, managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others, and handling relationships. A study conducted by Judge and Arora (2017) to find the impact of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being on life satisfaction among adolescents shows a positive correlation of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being at 0.01 significance level. The results also showed emotional intelligence and psychological well-being as relevant predictors of Life satisfaction."

Academic Performance

Academic performance, in the context of this research, refers to the overall achievement and success of international students in their educational endeavors at Thai universities. It encompasses factors such as grades, course completion, and overall competence in academic pursuits. Academic performance is a crucial aspect as it reflects the students' ability to navigate and excel in their studies within the Thai higher education system.

In accordance with the findings of Puyod et al., (2022), emotional intelligence (EQ) is one characteristic of a student that has been regularly being studied that helps students manage their academic stress in class. EQ is associated with students' academic achievement improvement, social behaviors, lesser distress, and good evaluations. In addition, students with high emotional competency had greater academic goals, a higher level of motivation, self–discipline, and stress control. They learn more, hence get high grades.

As cited by Rahman (2018), "According to McInerney (2012), little is known about the academic motivation of the sojourners as they relocate from home to host cultural arena and it can cause psychological stress for the international students. Rujipak and Limprasert (2016) showed in their study that academic adjustment has a significant positive relationship with the students' psychological well-being."

As Also cited by Pimple Jui, (2023), "A review study by Ramesh, Thavaraj, and Ramkumar (2016) after reviewing researches from peer-reviewed publications and Google scholar concludes that emotional intelligence is also associated with the academic achievements of

students. Emotional intelligence and psychological well-being both are also found to be associated with academic performance which makes it more significant to assess them in college students which can aid in designing programs for the development of emotional intelligence and increasing the psychological well-being of students.

PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS

In this research, several hypotheses are formulated to investigate the relationships and connections between Emotional Intelligence (EI), Perceived Organizational Support (POS), Psychological Well-being, and Academic Performance among international students in Thai universities. These proposed hypotheses are as follows:
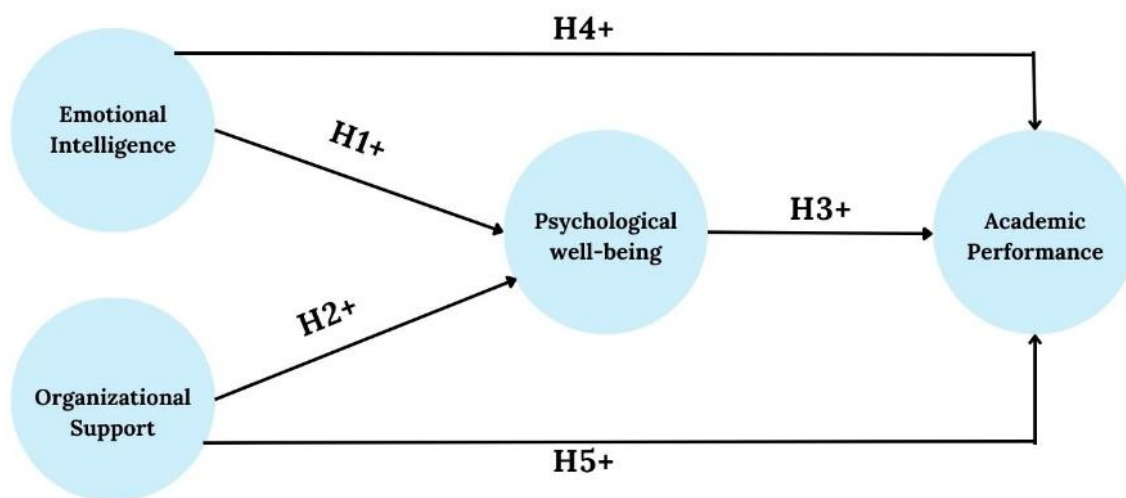
H1: There is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and psychological well-being among international students in Thai universities.

H2: The presence of strong organizational support in Thai universities is positively associated with the psychological well-being of international students.

H3: Higher levels of psychological well-being among international students in Thai universities are positively associated with improved academic performance.

H4: Greater levels of emotional intelligence (EI) among international students in Thai universities are positively associated with higher academic performance.

H5: Strong organizational support in Thai universities positively influences the academic performance of international students.

These hypotheses form the foundation of the research, and their examination will help uncover the intricate relationships between Emotional Intelligence, Perceived Organizational Support, Psychological Well-being, and Academic Performance among international students

in Thai universities, providing valuable insights for institutions, policymakers, and decision-makers.

PROPOSED RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design
This study employs a quantitative research design to investigate the influence of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Organizational Support on the Psychological Well-being and Academic Performance of international students in Thai universities. A cross-sectional approach will be used to collect data at a specific point in time. The study aims to establish relationships and associations between the independent variables (EI and Organizational Support), the mediator variable (Psychological Well-being), and the dependent variable (Academic Performance). The design allows for the examination of these variables within the context of the unique challenges faced by international students in Thai Universities.

Participants
The participants in this study will be international students who enrolled in various programs at Siam University. There will be 100 participants from bachelors and master's program. The inclusion criteria involve students from diverse cultural backgrounds, representing different nationalities, genders, age, faculty, educational backgrounds, GPA, and years of study. The aim is to capture a comprehensive view of the experiences of international students in Thai universities. Participants will be recruited through purposive sampling, ensuring a representative and varied sample.

Data Collection
Data will be collected through self-administered questionnaires distributed to international students in Siam University. The questionnaire will include sections on demographic information, Emotional Intelligence (measured using a validated scale such as the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale), Organizational Support (measured using a validated scale like the Perceived Organizational Support Scale), Psychological Well-being (measured using a scale like the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale), and Academic Performance (using official academic records).

In addition to the student surveys, open-ended survey questions will be distributed to faculty members to gather qualitative insights into the context and opinions related to the challenges faced by international students and the support systems provided by the universities. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, ensuring confidentiality and voluntary participation. Participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without consequences.

Variables and Measurements

In this research study, we identify the independent variables as Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Organizational Support. Emotional Intelligence, or EI, will be assessed using the Wong

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and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS), a well-established and validated scale developed by Wong, C.-S., & Law, K. S. (2002). This scale consists of 16 items designed to measure various aspects of emotional intelligence, providing a comprehensive understanding of individuals' emotional awareness and regulation.

Organizational Support, the second independent variable, will be measured using the Perceived Organizational Support Scale. This scale, developed by Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchinson, S., & Sowa, D. (1986), comprises 9 items. It evaluates the extent to which individuals perceive support from their educational institution, reflecting the organizational climate and assistance provided.

Additionally, the research includes a mediator variable, Psychological Well-being, assessed through the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). Developed by Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985), this scale consists of 5 items. It captures individuals' overall life satisfaction, contributing valuable insights into the psychological well-being aspect of the study. Furthermore, Academic Performance, our dependent variable, will be evaluated based on GPA. This concise and validated framework aims to investigate the relationships between Emotional Intelligence, Organizational Support, Psychological Well-being, and Academic Performance among international students in Thai universities.

Construct:	Source Adaption:	Item:
Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence (WLEIS)	Wong, C.-S., & Law, K. S. (2002)	16
Perceived Organizational Support Scale	Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchinson, S., & Sowa, D. (1986).	9
Psychological Well-being Scale: using "Satisfaction with Life Scale" (SWLS)	Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985)	5

*The measurement scale for academic performance would be students GPA points which will be collected through survey questions.

Table of questionaries for the survey:

No:	Questions:	Variables:	Likert scale:
1.	In most ways my life is close to my ideal.	Psychological Well-Being	Items were measured using a seven-point Likert

2.	The conditions of my life are excellent.		scale with values varying from Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Slightly Disagree = 3, Neutral = 4, Slightly Agree = 5, Agree = 6 and Strongly Agree = 7 (Rujipak – Limprasert, 2016).
3.	I am satisfied with my life.		
4.	So far, I have gotten the important things I want in life.		
5.	If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.		
6.	The organization strongly considers my goals and values.	Perceived Organizational Support	Responses are obtained on a 7-point Likert-type scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree.
7.	Help is available from the organization when I have a problem.		
8.	The organization really cares about my well-being.		
9.	The organization is willing to extend itself in order to help me perform my job to the best of my ability.		
10.	Even if I did the best job possible, the organization would fail to notice.		
11.	The organization cares about my general satisfaction at work.		
12.	The organization shows very little concern for me.		
13.	The organization cares about my opinions.		
14.	The organization takes pride in my accomplishments at work.		
15.	I always know my friend's emotions from their behavior.		
16.	I am a good observer of other's emotions.		
17.	I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others.		
18.	I have a good understanding of the emotions of people around me.		
19.	I can control my temper and handle difficulties rationally.		
20.	I am quite capable of		

		Emotional Intelligence Scale	Items were measured using a seven-point Likert scale with values varying from Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Slightly Disagree = 3, Neutral = 4, Slightly Agree = 5, Agree = 6 and Strongly Agree = 7
	controlling my own emotions.		
21.	I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry.		
22.	I have a good control of my own emotions.		
23.	I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time.		
24.	I have a good understanding of my own emotions.		
25.	I really understands what I feel.		
26.	I always know whether or not I am happy.		
27.	I always set goals for myself and then I try my best to achieve them.		
28.	I always tell myself that I am a competent person.		
29.	I am a self-motivated person.		
30.	I always encourage myself to try my best.		

Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis will involve statistical techniques such as factor analysis and regression analysis to examine the relationships between the variables. The demographic characteristics will be analyzed descriptively. Mediation analysis will help understand the extent to which Psychological Well-being mediates the relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Organizational Support, and Academic Performance.

Limitations

While this research aims to explore into the complex dynamics of Emotional Intelligence, Organizational Support, Psychological Well-being, and Academic Performance among international students in Thai universities, several limitations should be acknowledged. The challenge of collecting data from a large number of international students poses a practical constraint, potentially impacting the generalizability of findings. The study's focus on Thai universities may limit the applicability of results to other cultural or educational contexts. Reliance on self-reported data, especially for Academic Performance, introduces the possibility of response bias. The cross-sectional design hinders establishing interconnection, and language and cultural barriers may affect the accuracy of participants' responses. Ethical considerations, particularly in obtaining informed consent, may face challenges due to language differences. Despite these limitations, the research seeks to offer valuable insights,

emphasizing the need for cautious interpretation and future investigations to navigate the complexities of international higher education effectively.

EXPECTED RESULTS

While we anticipate aligning with previous researchers who have studied similar topics and found positive associations between Emotional Intelligence, Organizational Support, Psychological Well-being, and Academic Performance, our research aims to contribute new insights and uncover nuances specific to the context of international students in Thai universities. Given existing literature suggesting that high Emotional Intelligence and strong Organizational Support associate with improved Psychological Well-being and Academic Performance, we expect our findings to support these relationships. However, our study also endeavors to unveil unique factors or variations in this context that might contribute to a more comprehensive understanding. By exploring the experiences of international students in Thai universities, we seek to identify potential cultural or institutional factors that may influence the relationships between Emotional Intelligence, Organizational Support, Psychological Well-being, and Academic Performance. Consequently, while confirming existing patterns, we aspire to contribute new perspectives that enhance the broader knowledge base in this field.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study confirms the positive relationships between Emotional Intelligence (EI), Organizational Support, Psychological Well-being, and Academic Performance among international students in Thai universities. Utilizing reliable scales such as WLEIS, Perceived Organizational Support Scale, and SWLS, our findings align with existing literature, reinforcing the importance of these constructs in educational settings. However, our unique focus on the Thai context unveils additional factors like cultural nuances, cross-cultural adaptation challenges, and language proficiency that influence these relationships. These insights provide practical implications for universities and policymakers aiming to enhance support system. As global higher education diversifies, our study's applicability extends beyond Thailand, offering valuable insights for universities worldwide seeking to improve the well-being and academic achievements of their international student populations.

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The Caste System Inherited Ancient Societies, Shape Social Structures, and Its Impact on Human Rights of People and Community

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ABSTRACT

This research paper critically examines the caste system, an entrenched social hierarchy that has deeply influenced societies and impact on the lives of millions of people in India. A documentary qualitative research method was used in the investigation. Documentary data were gathered from pertinent academic publications, papers, books, articles, and research reports, as well as official documents from various relevant organizations. All collected data were analyzed by content analysis and logical analysis. This research explores its origins, historical development and comprehensive understanding of the social exclusion in complex dynamics surrounding the caste system. Its impacts on individual rights, human rights, gender equality, open society and intergenerational transmission by ruling elites; its analyzing factors i.e. socio-cultural, religious, political, occupation and economic and formation and shaping social hierarchies; religious texts, social practices, unequal access to resources, struggle for social mobility and institutional structures. Finally, with multidimensional approach the importance of addressing caste-based inequalities, affirmative action, promoting social justice, legal reforms (advocacy), social movements, grassroots initiatives, inclusive policy interventions (State and NGO) and working towards a more inclusive and equitable society for all. Dismantling the Hindus believe that it is a divinely ordained system. Caste system is a major obstacle to the growth of the people and the nation as well as stands against the norms or hindrance for inclusive development i.e. liberty, equality and fraternity of Republic (Sangha) and Democracy.

Keywords: Caste System, India, Human Rights, Equitable Society, Social Justice

Introduction

The world is flourishing with rapid globalization and developed AI tools. People sharing and understanding different culture will create an attentive responsible world hoping peace all around. But parallelly human emotion of happiness and problems in common also gets global. E.g. issues like feminism, discrimination and caste etc. When the new world order was shaping with end of colonialism and military rules and freedom was getting celebrated. Still in parts of Asia and other parts of world a major human rights issues was going global from India i.e. Caste. Caste is different from class as 'Caste' is believed to be divine origin on basis of birth and status is permanent, it is a 'closed group' with no social mobility and inherit hierarchically; while 'Class' is purely open system depends on economic factors and social circumstances. Lower caste i.e. Shudras (Backward caste) and Untouchables (Dalit/schedule

caste and Adivasi/schedule tribe) were socially and economically excluded from rituals, education, temples, wealth accumulation, and public services etc at every section of society i.e. hidden apartheid they had to suffer (Backelin-Harrison, 2018). The history can be traced by various factors i.e. archeological evidence, literary sources, languages exisisted and foreign travelogues. The fact which uncovers the political or king rise successfully mostly laid on the foundation of social and cultural revolution led by their group of intellectual and philosophers. E.g. After Buddha's revolution in society the Buddhist kings rise like Ashoka, after revolution of Adi-Shankracharya Shaivites kings rise (later Hindu kings), similarly poets, saints and scientific intellectual philosophers like Ravidas, Guru Nanakdev, Kabir etc Sikh kingdom rise and after that history it connects with Chokamela and Namdev philosophy that led to establish Hindvi King Sivaji, Joytirao Phule and Dr.B.R.Ambedkar to BAMCEF and Bahujan Samaj Party and political party of social justice rise e.g. Ayyankali, Narayana guru, Adi-Dravida Mahajana Sabha, Kumaran Asan and Periyar philosophies led to DMK rise and it is major power in south India but it philosophies in modern times impact all Indians and rationales. So before any successful revolution in power capturing foundation is lead on social and cultural revolution otherwise power shrinks and later vanishes without proper ideology.

Caste- Understanding Origins, historical development and social exclusion (complex dynamics).

Origin of caste in unknown in terms of historical timeline as ancient history of India starts from Indus valley civilization i.e. 2600 B.C. to 1400 B.C. but according to archeology and texts (indecipherable) there is no evidence of caste and civilization is Buddhist that is truth unrevealed e.g. Big stupa, cities towns were developed with drainage system; stones were discovered like small stupa dancing doll etc. Place was found by British historian and archeologist Alexander Cunningham in 1873 when he was searching for Buddhist stupas according to text of Faxian (Chinese Buddhist scholar travelled India in 422 C.E). Patliputra the epicenter and capital of ancient kings does not mention about any Hindu king. While few scholars claim Vedic period i.e. 1400 B.C. to 600 B.C. rise of brahmin as there is no archeological or scriptures as give evidence about that it is verbal only, arrival of Aryan was not invasion but migration can be traced and four fold division on basis of 'Varna' and Pancham (5th division Dalit/Untouchables who rejected brahmin autonomy and leadership) in society and rise of castesim mentioned in 'Purusashukta' (10th book of Rigveda) but it happened after Buddha period. Buddhist at that time used Dhamma/Brahmi script but Brahmans used Devnagri script. Society was controlled on basis of four Vedas i.e. Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda but there is no evidence based on archeology and scriptures. According to UNSECO (Ref N° 2006-58), last written evidence of Rigveda oldest dated manuscript traced in 1464 A.D. i.e. Lodi dynasty timeline means medieval period and total number of manuscript is 30, one manuscript is written on birch bark and the remaining 29 are written on paper. While script used is sharda script which itself evolved by western branch of Dhamma/Brahmi script and its timeline is 8th -12th century A.D as well as all texts of sanskrit used this language so evidence of Brahmans can be cleared from language and its text origin.(UNESCO, UN, 2004). 600 B.C. to 7 C.E. is flourishing and almost starts of declining of Buddhist kingdom later respectively. So, with rise of Buddha in 600 B.C. evidence of Brahmin and their four fold division (Varna System), caste and untouchability in society doesn't reflect in scriptures and archeology of that contemporary buddhist king's period, King Asoka and other Buddhist kings time. In 302 B.C after 250 year of Buddha Greek historian Megasthenes who visited Magadha main power centre of King Chandragupta Maurya (His grandson King Asoka spread Buddhism and its teaching to all parts of Asia and

other parts with trade and cultural relation) describes Indian society in 'Seven Classes' not caste in his book named Indica i.e. philosophers, cultivators, herdsman, artisans and traders, soldiers, overseers, and councilors (Schwanbeck and Kuldeep, 2015). The language of ancient India was Pali or Prakrit (means naturally born language) and down south Tamil (one of oldest Indian language) can be traced from archeology, scriptures and stones but Sanskrit the sacred language of brahmin hasn't been evident at that time. So existence of sanskrit language is not found so how brahmin talks or writes it's clear that they were not present parallelly. If brahmin speak sanskrit and Indian people speak pali, how they communicate without common language this type of logical question is still unanswered by greatest Indian brahmin scholars. Till 7th century sanskrit (which was created by accustoming Pali and Prakrit as well as other languages) can be traced in intellectual group (Norman and Kenneth, 1983). There was rise of 'Crypto-Buddhist' Adi Shankracharya who challenged philosophy of Buddhist monks and gave theory of Advaita Vedanta and rise of Shavisim to undermine Buddhist culture and way of Indian life (Biderman and Shlomo, 1978); parallelly Vajrayan Buddhism in India-Tibet was also rising as well as buddhist hybrid sanskrit were introduced by monks for educational purpose. Later after 7th century, proper form of sanskrit was almost developed, when buddhist kingdom and hold of monks started shrinking in India due to internal fraction with social structure of society as it was getting challenged by brahmin and their kings (followers of shaivites and vaishnavites) as well as external Muslim invaders combined who were continuously attacking Indian society destroying Buddhist institutions, universities massacred monks (Brahmanism and Muslim can be equally hold accountable). While Buddhist kingdom stayed till 12th C.E. notable events i.e. Pala dynasty (1161) and King Jayachand (1194) fall, Nalanda university (1198) was destroyed in this very time, monks were massacred so they flew in other Asian countries and Buddhism survived little in other parts of country (Stewart, L.M. 1988). This was high time of brahmin with their kings and foreign invaders who took control of India but in fragmented parts. Gradually the king who lost with Brahmin revolution and external invaders their people were made slaves (shudras) and monks who survived anyhow were caught and declared as untouchables. Buddhist from ancient to medieval respectively can be called "The Untouchables (pure) to Untouchables (impure/dirt)". So, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar made clear statement that "Today's untouchables were ancient Buddhist" and also proves the history of India is nothing but the "Battle between Brahmanism and Buddhism". From 13th century inclusive of Mughals Period caste based division and discriminatory practices were highly practiced and prevailed in worst form in all parts of India. Brahmin also started writing and compiling their text, one of book Manusmriti or Laws of Manu written by Manu (brahmin) set of legal code and constitution for brahmanical society to put their supremacy, cultural capital at top of social structure and institutionalized caste-based discrimination. As there was evidence of resistance from philosophers, poets and rational scientific intellectual like Ravidas, Kabir, Nanakdev, Namdev, etc from different parts of country but it was not united like umbrella under one roof because of no king from their own groups (Chandra and Mittra 2003). History of dalits were almost forgotten that they were previously buddhist and in modern history during British India, impurity of caste were rediscovered because it was so smoothly mixed in culture and practice that it was difficult to be noticeable by British intellectuals. At same time intellectual and academia group of britishers were rediscovering ancient history and buddhism of India from extracting archeological evidence, scriptures, stones etc combining and contrasting it with foreign travelogues and their writings. As brahmanical text doesn't mention about Indus valley civilization, King Asoka and their greatest empire, Nalanda university burning and real facts history of Indian land. New history were getting discovered and dalits were unknown that this was their real history which were hidden from centuries it was later uncovered by Dr.B.R.Ambedkar, George Ware Briggs and other scholars. Britishers

did not carry slaves from Africa or other parts in India because here it was already full of hierarchical untouchables and shudras respectively 5th and 4th fold of societal structural division. Year 1818 Battle of Bhima Koregaon was turning point in history when King of Peshwa and his 28000 soldiers lost to 500 soldier (Untouchables), dalit fought against and suppression of Peshwa rulers because caste discrimination was highly practiced. 'Third Anglo Maratha War' but it should be named as Anglo Peshwa War because there was not Maratha king present and not led war, Peshwas, who overtook Maratha kingdom of Chattrapati Sivaji after him and his son Sambhaji Maharaj death by conspiracy (Galton, J. 2018). Many scholars claim Sivaji as Shudra caste as Hindavi king not Hindu king but in modern India this theory was diluted according to political needs of different communal parties (Deol, 2020). In 1835 T.B. Macaulay with 'Minute on Indian Education' opened doors of education for everyone irrespective of caste via method of downward filtration model. On social ground in name of caste discrimination in Travancore Kerala 'Breast-Tax' was prevalent (untouchables and shudras women were denial to cover breast until she pay tax) also in Madras province lower caste were sold in open market; to which Vivekananda called it lunatic (BBC, 2016). Thus, after British crown took over India control after East India Company (1858) they did 1st caste based census in 1872 to identify different groups and caste of society to rule in better way. Last census was done after every ten years in 1931 in which 4147 caste were notified in 1941 census was not done due to world war II. After that from 1951 government of India thought with caste census figure may prove caste based sentiments and thus it was stopped (Bhagat, 2006). Since then policies were made without census which were ineffective, and almost question of representation in every sectors either economical or social and political context went unnoticed, affirmative action were not implemented in every section properly this affected inclusive growth and development of India. Without census how any policies and can be made with result oriented benefits without any scientific data. Now this problem has risen as lot a created a wide gap economically and socially between upper caste and lower caste.

Since independence of India; country was heavily depended on agriculture sector and vision of J.L.Nehru and Dr.B.R.Ambedkar for "Idea of India" further led development with balancing of public sector and private sector i.e. mixed economy. As the world at that time was divided into communist and capitalist bloc but India was moving with socialism (Nehru was inspired by USSR economy i.e. Five-Year Plan) and opted mixed economy to balance Indian economy with both public and private sector and Indian states were hold accountable for development of more public driven sector. So, India's economy was mainly agricultural and service based and one of fact that India was also a caste based country. After 76 year of independence there is still upper caste, dominant and middle caste, and schedule caste/tribes (dalits/adivasi) as well as discrimination and untouchability is practiced. The vision for India at that time was upliftment of lower caste and eradication of untouchibility on birth basis i.e. by caste. The second reason was India came out of colonialism of British so; they wanted to develop public sectors instead of private sector as they were aware of ills of capitalism so need of private economy was just to balance the economy with public sectors. Thus they wanted strong public and government institutions because it will also help to apply better public policies and affirmative action (reservations) benefits to dalits (untouchables) who were undersurface of society, with efforts to promote social justice and minimize caste inequities, challenges and issues related to discrimination and inequality endure. This would eventually lead to inclusive development with participation of all people in every sector both dalits and upper caste to make India develop faster; 'unity in diversity'. But is it enough; No, it is like a 'crutch to a lame person not the proper surgical treatment'. When Brahmins came in power during beginning of medieval period; the people who were almost treated as

untouchables for almost 1000 years whose history, culture, language and institutions were destroyed and divided into more than 1018 castes on basis of birth and occupation was to serve upper caste. The children of untouchables were born as slaves; no this was bigger than slavery as it was hierarchical (father is also untouchable so as son and so on…) to do rest odd jobs i.e. worst part of feudalism and subjugation. Hence dalits (SCs) and adivasi (STs/tribals) need more than affirmative action as they constitute 16.6% and 8.6% of population respectively. Fact is that combined public and government sector produces only 2% of Jobs where affirmative action can be implemented while 98% are private sector. While as brahmin due to cultural capital and superior in caste social structure they got educated in english early compared to other caste as shudras and untouchables were denied of education as per brahmin sacred scriptures parallelly British's East India Company was taking control over India. This gave brahmin an edge thus they became eligible to take control of majority of private sectors after independence, dalits and shudras got right to education after the independence so they were highly depended on government economic and social policy as well as public and government sectors. Still dalits and tribals are under-represented in almost all major sectors including government. Also dominance of lobby and certain caste group in private sectors has raised major concerns relating to question of 'inclusive representational development' of country as neglecting 30% means ¼ of population including women is definitely alarming situation and against the 'Idea of India' and democratic freedom if dalits are still discriminated every day. So the relating to concerns there is need to look for policy that overpower religious communalization which that gives strength to caste discrimination as the authority is given by brahmin from brahmincal scriptures there should be no doubt of single question that it should be banned or wrecked and strafed. Religious extremism and communalization must be separated and left for asphyxiation from politics and social context. Finally proportional representation and economic sharing must be provided with full devotion.

Literature Review

Mechanism of creation and caste foundation, it is difficult to find exact beginning of caste system as it did not emerge from a single source, but rather emerged through an intricate historical process. Experts from Dr. Ambedkar presentation in Dr. Goldenweizer's Anthropology Seminar at Columbia University i.e. "Caste in India – Their Mechanism, Genesis, and Development" which is now worldwide accepted theory. The observations and assessments continue to be useful in comprehending the caste system's complicated historical and social dimensions. Theory states that Population of India is a conglomeration of Aryans, Dravidians, Mongolians, and Scythians as well as morally, duty practice and action is diverse. Only the thing that binds Indian despite diversity, philosophically i.e. Indianess feeling is 'culture' (Robinson, 2021). The discern point is the primary cause of caste establishment is the superimposition of endogamy on exogamy and results e.g. customary law 'Sati' (imposed lifetime widowhood) and child marriage. Other important point is that a society's sub-division is a natural occurrence but when these groups became castes (by birth) resulted by replication, specified duties (hereditary), justification for religious faith and ex-communication i.e. 'Segregation in Society'. It was not challenged because of the fear of ostracism and rigidity of birth-based caste boundaries resulted in societal discrimination and inequity (Ahammed, 2019). Caste-based prejudice is maintained by rituals and social practices. While other factors like socio-economic and political cause was agricultural expansion and settled communities also results caste formation. This all was started by Brahmin later all groups followed the same way because society after getting away from teaching of Buddhism wanted something new to be followed. Ancient brahmanical legal

book Vedas was foundation also appreciated hierarchical social structures and well known Manusmriti was instrumental in codifying and defending caste-based inequality and hierarchy.

Looking at "Who Were The Untouchables And How Did They Become Untouchables".

The Untouchables were not a distinct race, but rather a subset of Indian civilization. According to historical timeline and Brahmanical text also there was no distinctive category of Untouchables. They did not come under four fold division of Varna system created by Brahmins (Deliege, 1993), but who were they. They were called as 'Avarnas' i.e. outside fourfold division of Varna system. Was it racial and occupational? Answer is no (Ambedkar, 1948) as it might be surprising but formally led consequences suggested it had different origin. Exact date to be mentioned than it was observed from text of Xuanzang around 6th Century A.D in reign of Buddhist King Harsha Vardhana but it not clearly mentioned about untouchables but it was the groups they were followers of monks reside with them outside village who also came in fold of untouchables along with monks. They were not shudras to get confused with as shudras were part of Varna system. Looking at cause, consider beef-eating as the source of Untouchability. Cow slaughter has been designated as an act of capital punishment by Brahmin and Hindu Kings who were present in some part of India. But before that according to Brahmin textbook Vedas and Manusmriti cows was killed for ritual practice and beef-eating was part of Brahmin culture (Kancha 2015). Buddhist teaching and monks practice were not part of killing or harming any animals or humans but Buddhists used to eat beef after death of cow not by killing. In terms of intellectual level Buddhists were far ahead of Brahmanism but in fight of supremacy Brahmins took decision to give up eating beef and propagated beef eating is impure this attracted large people groups. Based on sociological investigation and historical context, Untouchablity began out of the fight for domination and supremacy struggle between Buddhism and Brahmanism, which has so profoundly shaped Indian history. Also politically when kings with support of Brahmin who overthrown Buddhist Kings the law was introduced against monks who eat beef and beef eating was banned in some part of Indian continent as Hindu king was not having large dynasty like Buddhist kings it was only limited to certain parts. But beef eating was continued by monks in other parts where king was chosen by Buddhist Sangha.

Buddhists were only who were not part of Varna system, so actually untouchables of today are non-other than Buddhist monks of late ancient times historically (Ambedkar 1948). Political, economic and social cause were as, later after fully destruction of Buddhists Universities e.g. Nalanda, Vikramshila etc, Buddhists Kings lost battles due to both internal Brahmanical elected king war and Muslim invaders it was difficult to be in power as Buddhist Kings has to fight both the enemies. Social factors like monks stopped reaching lay people and followers and acceptance degraded as people become superstitious who came under influence of Brahmins (Karunatilaka 2013). Buddhist economical practice of earning were destroyed and captured as well as looted and further economic servitude, religious views, social isolation, and Buddhist vengeance were enough to rigid untouchablity. As Buddhism's influence diminished in India, Brahmanical Hinduism, with its severe caste order, began to reestablish itself. Buddhists were hounded by the Brahmanism establishment, which led to their demise (Ambedkar 1948). In today present time they are called as schedule caste constitutionally and dalit (broken people) as assertive and widely used, they constitute 22% and 10% schedule tribe i.e. 32% combined while in Bihar 19.68% and 1.68% respectively (Manya, 2023).

Further elaborating on "Who were shudras how they came under Varna system"
According to M.A.Sherring

It makes little difference whether the Shudras were Aryans, aboriginal inhabitants of India, or tribes formed by the merger of the two. They were placed in a class by themselves at an early age, and granted the fourth or last degree of rank, despite being a long way from the three superior castes. Even though they were not Aryans at the outset, through extensive intermarriage with the three Aryan Castes, they have become so Aryanized that, in some cases, as previously demonstrated, they have gained more than they have lost, and certain tribes now designated as Shudras are in reality more Brahmins and Kshatriyas than anything else.

However, today's Shudras are diverse group of castes sprung from diverse stock and are racially distinct from the ancient Shudras of Indo-Aryan society and had an extremely low social status as well as people who had no respect due to no civilization, no culture and no position. (Ambedkar, 1946). The focus of attention is not on the Shudras as a people, but on the legal system that subjects them to hardships and punishments. The pains and punishments system was most likely developed by the Brahmins to cope with the Shudras of Indo-Aryan civilization, who no longer exist as a distinct, independent, and recognizable population. However, bizarre as it may appear, the Code intended to deal with them has stayed in effect and is now enforced to all low-class Hindus who have no kinship with the original Shudras (Devy, 2023). Traditionally, Shudras worked in menial and service-oriented occupations like as agriculture, labour, and domestic service (Pais, 2021). Political changes, societal transformations, and economic transitions are examples of such variables. The Shudras were a Solar race Aryan community. There was a time when Aryan civilization only recognized three Varna: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas. The Shudras did not form their own Varna. In Indo-Aryan society, they belonged to the Kshatriyas Varna. The Shudra monarchs and the Brahmins had a constant feud in which the Brahmins were subjected to countless tyrannies and indignities. Because of their animosity for the Shudras as a result of their tyranny and oppression, the Brahmins refused to perform the Shudra Upanayana. As Upanayana (ritual) was denied, the Shudras, who were Kshatriyas, were socially degraded, fell below the level of the Vaishyas, and thus became the fourth Varna and thus it led rise of "Shudras" (Ambedkar, 1946).

Analyzing ways of "Eradication of Caste System"

After the arrival of the British, it was also observed from modern history even from thoughts of Periyar and Ambedkar, that the reformers among the high-caste Hindus were enlightened intellectuals who focused their efforts on ending forced child marriage, enforced widowhood, and other social injustices (Burton, 1998). However, they did not see the need to campaign for the abolition of castes and advancement of lower caste (shudras and untouchables), including lower caste females, nor did they have the courage to do so. In India, by saints political revolutions were preceded by social and religious reforms. However, during British administration, the issue of political independence took precedence over social reform, and therefore social reform remained neglected. E.g. Congress and Social Conference were two wings with the same goal and activity. Congress defined the weak spots in the political organization, while the Social Conference's role was to remove the weak points in the Hindu Society's social organization, but the Conference was taken over by political wings and so fell apart (Scales, 1998).

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Socialists must first combat the demonic forces of caste, whether before or after the revolution. Caste is a division of laborers rather than a division of labour. Caste, as an economic organization, is also a destructive institution (Ambedkar 1936). As one possible solution to the problem is promoting inter-caste marriage (Lohia R.M, 2009) and abolition of Priestly caste if not then through examination everyone despite different caste must pass exam to become priest not on heredity basis. Everyone who claims to be a Hindu must be eligible to become a priest (Veeramani, and Periyar). A priest should be a servant of the state, subject to disciplinary action by the state in matters of morals, beliefs, and worship, in addition to being subject to the regular law of the land like all other citizens. The number of priests should be controlled by law to meet the needs of the state. No ceremony performed by a priest who does not have a sanad (ritual) shall be considered valid in law, and it should be declared a crime to officiate as a priest without a sanad. Better suggestion is that untouchables who were "The Untouchables" must go back to their original religion of Buddha and must follow buddhist teaching and practice. If something stops then the underlying cause of preserving castes i.e. Brahmanical textbooks such as Vedas, Manusmriti shastras, and so on, hence dynamite should be applied to it and it must be destroyed from the root (Ambedkar 1936). According to Ambedkar, "Make every man and woman free from the thraldom of the 'Shastras', cleanse their minds of the toxic notions founded on the 'Shastras' and he or she will interdine and intermarry" and "The one who doesn't know history cannot create history" pointing towards untouchables and shudras. Thus, Ambedkar reconverted to former Buddhism on 14 October 1956 with more than 1 million follower is biggest mass conversion in history of world i.e. "The Great Conversion" also set twenty two vows (oaths) (Kulkarni, 2022) before anyone who want to become buddhist as he said previously in 1935 "I was born as Hindu but I will not die as Hindu" (Aakash, 2023) because he was aware of real history.

Caste, class, and race are three independent but interconnected social conceptions used to categorize and classify people within civilizations. Mentioning differences;
Caste is a social hierarchy structure that is prevalent in India and certain other South Asian countries. It classifies people based on their birth, family history, and inherited factors. Caste is frequently linked to work and social duties. Inheritance: Caste is often carried down through generations and inherited from one's parents. In traditional caste-based societies, changing one's caste is difficult. Caste systems are highly rigid and hierarchical, with little social mobility between castes. Geographical Concentration: Caste-based communities in India are frequently concentrated in distinct regions. Discrimination: Caste has historically been linked to inequality and social exclusion, notably against lower-caste people.
Class: Differentiation based on economic characteristics: Class is a social categorization based on economic characteristics such as income, wealth, education, and occupation. It represents a person's socioeconomic standing in society. Inheritance: While family heritage might influence class, it is not normally inherited in the same manner that caste is. It might alter over a person's lifespan due to things such as education and employment. Fluidity: Because social class is more fluid than caste, social mobility is stronger. Individuals can advance or fall in class based on their achievements and circumstances. The concept of social class is more universal and may be found in many different societies around the world. Discrimination: Class discrimination, often known as classism, can occur, however it is mainly due to socioeconomic discrepancies rather than inherent features.

Race is a social construct that classifies people based on physical qualities such as skin color, facial features, and hair type. It is frequently linked to shared ancestry, culture, or geographical origin. Race is not inherited in the same way that caste or statuses are. It is a

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social construct that has historically been used to classify and differentiate people based on perceived physical characteristics. While racial categories can be fluid in some ways, systematic racism and discrimination can limit people' chances based on their racial or ethnic heritage. Global Variation: Because race and racial categories are embedded in the historical and cultural environment of each location, the concept of race and racial categories vary greatly among cultures and locations. Discrimination: Racial discrimination, often known as racism, has been a major concern in many regions of the world. Individuals are treated unequally based on their racial or ethnic identity.

Research Methodology

This study used a documentary research method to conduct qualitative research. All documented data was gathered from related research reports, academic books and papers, as well as other international university papers and information. Throughout the data triangulation process, all obtained documentary data were subjected to content analysis, critical analysis, and logical analysis in order to achieve comprehensive study results and discussion, conclusion, and suggestions.

Results and Discussion

1) Impact on Individual Rights that is Human Rights by Caste System

Caste has a substantial impact on individual rights, particularly for Shudras (Other Backward Castes) and Untouchables (Schedule Caste/Tribe), and this frequently results in the restriction and even denial of some basic rights for individuals based on their caste or social position. This shows they were treated not even as humans who comprise around more than 500 million (Hoff, K. et al. (2011) and (UN News). According to Human Rights Watch; Mentioning few like (A) Right to Equality: Lower-caste individuals have historically been denied the right to equality due to social, economic, employment, housing, public service access and educational disparities with higher-caste individuals. (B) Right to Freedom: lower castes were restricted freedom of choice in many parts of life, such as marriage, profession, and social relationships as well as interactions even 'Right to Life was in peril. (C) Right to Dignity: Lower caste dignity was eroded and has been targeted by discriminatory and degrading practices, e.g. untouchability, depriving people of basic human dignity and respect as well as impacted serious psychological and emotional implications. (D) Right to Education: Due to social and economic prejudice, lower castes have had inadequate access to education. Denial of educational chances limits their right to education and impedes their social advancement as well as integration in society. (E) Right to Employment: In India, traditional jobs e.g. leather work (cobbler), sanitation works etc are connected with distinct castes. Lower caste face discrimination in employment based on caste identification has limited one's ability to work freely and pursue a career of one's choosing. (F) Right to Political Participation: The caste system has influenced political involvement and representation, as well as lower castes have faced impediments to political participation and holding positions of power that can influence their lower caste community and making policies which can help lower caste in upliftment. (G) Right to Social Mobility: Individuals from lower castes have had restricted social mobility due to the fixed caste system. Upward mobility opportunities have been limited, sustaining economic and social inequities. (H) Right to Security: People from lower caste are frequently victims of violence and discrimination. They have faced physical threats, particularly when questioning the established status quo or demanding social equality. (I) Right to Property: Discrimination

based on caste has impacted individuals' property rights, particularly land ownership. Caste issues have influenced access to land and control over resources. (J) Right to Marriage: Right to Marriage: The caste system has placed limits on inter-caste marriages, resulting in social and familial constraints that limit an individual's freedom to pick their life mate. There are several incidences of honor killings when two people from different castes marry. (K) Right to Access to Justice: Due to bias structure and social discrimination within the judicial system, justice has frequently been limited for lower-caste citizens. They may encounter difficulties reporting to police stations and getting remedies for caste-based violence and discrimination. (L) Right to Freedom of Religion: Historically, temples and religious institutions barred lower castes from participating in religious activities. Religious practices and prejudice within religious communities have been affected by the caste system.

2) Caste System Impact on Dalit Women

In India, the caste system has significant and interconnected effects on women, frequently aggravating the difficulties they encounter as a result of both gender and caste discrimination. . Savitribai Phule, Ambedkar, and Periyar, among many others, played crucial roles in social justice movements also "Hindu code bill" drafted by DR. B.R.Ambedkar plays a game changing role in their life. "I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved" (Ambedkar, 1927). Double discrimination occurs when women from lower castes face prejudice based on both their gender and caste. They have to cope with not only traditional patriarchal conventions, but also with the hierarchy within their own caste group. Due to economic constraints and societal discrimination, women from lower castes may have limited access to quality education. This lack of education can limit their possibilities and create poverty loops in pattern as well as fewer rights to land and property also 75% girls are primary school dropouts, which jeopardizes their economic security and independence. Early child marriages are common and these practices can have a negative impact on young girls' health, education, and overall well-being. Limited economic opportunities i.e. women from lower castes, for example, are frequently relegated to low-paying and demeaning employment, such as agricultural labour or manual scavenging. This economic exploitation has the potential to hinder their financial independence and mobility. Exploitation and violence are frequently more vulnerable to many sorts of violence, such as devadasi system, forced labor, domestic abuse and sexual harassment. Caste and gender discrimination can make it difficult for them to seek assistance or justice. Access to healthcare services during pregnancy and childbirth. Mostly receive insufficient or discriminatory healthcare, resulting in maternal and reproductive health inequities. Women's reproductive rights are affected, as is the freedom to accept a girl or male as a kid. They may have restricted access to family planning and healthcare services, limiting their ability to make educated reproductive health decisions. Access to political representation is difficult. Their ability to engage in decision-making processes may be limited if the political system does not effectively represent their interests and decision making policies to uplift their lifestyle. In terms of self respect and dignity; exclusion and social stigma and encounter humiliation and ostracism, this can undermine their sense of dignity and self-worth. Freedom of speech and limited voice within their families and communities. They may have little input in major decisions that affect their everyday lives which may not have positive result. So, poverty, illiteracy, and restricted access to healthcare are all at the nexus of much vulnerability. These intersecting circumstances have the potential to further marginalize them (HOSSAIN, 2016).

Hindu Code Bill (1955-56) granted rights to women i.e. Hindu personal laws are being reformed and modernized. The measure attempted to resolve several concerns including Hindu marriage, divorce, property rights, and succession. The law was met with strong opposition from conservative Hindus, particularly religious leaders and traditionalist groups. They said that the reforms violated Hindu traditions and beliefs. The Hindu Marriage Act, the Hindu Succession Act, the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, and the Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act were subsequently split into four different bills. (A) Marriage and Divorce: establishing monogamy as the norm, establishing a legal marriage age, and simplifying divorce procedures. It attempted to ensure equal rights for couples in marriage and divorce. (B) Inheritance and Property Rights: Hindu women's inheritance and property rights are governed by legislation. Its goal was to eliminate gender inequities and ensure that daughters received a proportionate share of their family's property. (C) Adoption, Guardianship and Succession: Streamlining legal procedures for adopting children and setting clear criteria for minor guardianship. Establish universal property succession regulations to ensure that property is divided evenly among successors, regardless of gender. (D) Hindu Law Codification: Successfully attempted to codify Hindu personal rules, offering a complete legal framework to replace the numerous and often contradictory customary practices existing in different parts of India (Ambedkar, 1947). It was a significant step forward in modernizing Hindu personal laws and ensuring more gender equality within the Hindu community. These reforms were seen as significant achievements in the early years of independent India, and they played an important role in creating the country's legal landscape (Kaushiki, 2023).

3) Verses from Brahmanical religious text advocates rigid caste system, discrimination, and untouchability

There is no doubt that brahmanical text advocated untouchability and discrimination against women, dalits (SC/ST) and shudras (OBC) even supports and uphold abusive castesim verses. It had dismantled human rights even the basic natural rights for human and they cannot posse's life of dignity. Placing Brahmin in top of social order by birth makes it rigid and no social mobility is present. Presenting some abusive verses from Vedas, Manusmriti (law book), Upanishads, Bhagavad Geeta different shastras and smritis and how it holds caste system with full rigidity. In Valmiki Ramayana 2.109. Verse 34 abuses even Buddha means sanskrit evolved later Pali and does not have exact date to be written decoding verse states that "The Buddha is a thief in the same way. Understand that the Tathagatas are atheists. They are the most hated men in the community. A wise person should shun atheists" (IIT Kanpur).

3.1) Vedas against shudras, untouchables and women

Purusha Sukta (Rigveda 10.90. Verse 12): According to the hymn, Purusha (Human) is divided into several sections, including Brahmins (priests) from his lips, Kshatriyas (warriors) from his arms, Vaishyas (merchants and farmers) from his thighs, and Shudras (servants) from his feet. This passage is frequently cited as an early allusion to socioeconomic differences. Rigveda 1.164. verse 45 refers to "Four Varna" (castes) and implies that each has a distinct role in society. Warnings to never breach caste laws and 'fear' considerations are added in the verses to keep people from deviating from their caste duties. Because caste duties stay constant throughout life, one should concentrate solely on his caste duties. Rigveda 10.85: verse 6 describes the Vedic concept of Varna, which can be seen as a broader division of humans into vocational categories. Rigveda 9.63, verse 5: This passage

refers to the "division of labour" among diverse groups within society, implying that numerous occupational groups coexisted and contributed to the community's well-being. Mandal 10 of the Rig Veda, verse 17. According to the narrative, Saranyu refused to have sex with Vivasvat and fled, but Vivasvat pursued her and raped her. Brahma Purana 4.42-43; Shiva Purana, UmaSamhita 5.35.32-34; Matsya Purana 11.34-37; and Brahmanda Purana 2.3.59.74-76 expound on the incident of Vivasvat raping his wife. "Saranyu, daughter of Tvastr, bore twins, Yama and Yami, to Vivasvat the sun," according to Nirukta 12.10. She fled, having substituted another lady of similar appearance and taking the form of a mare. He, Vivasvat, the sun, who had likewise taken on the form of a horse, pursued her and joined her. As a result, the Asvins were born. Manu was born from a similar-looking lady."

3.2) Upanishads make caste based slurs and abusive on lower caste

From, Chhandogya Upanishads 5.10.7, "Those whose conduct has been good here will soon be born as a Brahmana, a Kshatriyas, or a Vaishya." Those whose behaviour has been evil will soon be born in evil births, such as the birth of a dog, pig, or chandala (shudras)" (Srivastava, 2021).

3.3) Decoding Bhagavad Geeta verse against lower caste and women

The Bhagavad Geeta alone provides adequate reason for maintaining caste boundaries and injustice. The Bhagavad Geeta (verse 9:32) demeans women and declares that women were born from sinful wombs. Mankind is split into four groups (Varna) according to Bhagavad Gita verse 4:13. This means that generated castes cannot be modified because they are fixed at the time of creation. You are born into a caste and die as a member of that caste. Obscenity and disdain/hatred vary according to birth (Bhagavad Gita 9:32). The absoluteness of the caste system and how executing caste duties will be the ultimate importance in one's activities are discussed in Bhagavad Gita verses 3:4 and 3:5. You live and die to uphold and carry out your Vedic obligations. [Verse 3:5 refers to 'nature' attributes; read verse 4:13 and verse 18:41 next to it to see what quality it refers to, i.e. the activities assigned to different caste groups.] By maintaining such tight order, the Bhagavad Gita sustains the caste system's hierarchy, which cannot be altered and whose caste regulations must be followed at all costs. Verse 18:41-18:48 shows how society is divided into Varna and what obligations are assigned to each Varna. Varna is decided by his innate, inborn characteristics, according to the Bhagavad Gita (Barbara, 1986). By connecting innate features of distinct Varna, Gita provides the conceptual foundation for Fourfold Varna theory; (3:26 and 3:35),Verses 2:31–33,verses 3:35 and 2:31 to 33.Verses 1:40–1:43 use 'terror' to maintain caste strictness and that failing to complete caste obligations adequately is immoral and causes devastation in the family and society.1:43 declares that "sins of men who violate the family create disorder in society," 6:41, 6:45. Verse 5:18 is just as castesim as the rest and does nothing to promote social equality (Carl, 2019). The text is speaking in a spiritual sense, and one could argue that it encourages spiritual equality but not social equality. The verse may appear to advertise that the audience sees everything equally, which may appear to market the idea of an egalitarian society, but it does not indicate that society should be egalitarian. The text places "outcaste scavenger" underneath priests and animals when it says "and even an outcaste scavenger." Doesn't it suggest a hierarchical caste system to you? It most emphatically does. It is also vital to remember that looking at objects with "equal eye" does not imply 'equal status' or 'equal rank' in the Varna.

3.4) Manusmriti numerous Codes against the Shudras

Manu categorizes Hindus into four Varna, or castes. He not only categorizes Hindus into four Varna, but also ranks them. Manu, in addition to dictating rank and occupation, provides

Upper caste privileges and penalizes shudras. Brahma, the greatest creator, gave birth to the Brahmins from his mouth, the Kshatriyas from his shoulders and Vaishyas from his thighs, and the Shudras from his feet for the sake of humanity (Virdi, S.L. 2001). (Manu's code I-31,) God stated that a Shudras duty is to serve the upper Varna faithfully, without murmuring (Manu 1-91) . There are numerous Manu Smriti Codes against Shudras e.g. (Manu II, 31), Manu II, 32, (Manu 11-135), (Manu II2), (Manu III. 156), (Manu IV-78 to 81), (Manu IV, p. 61). In the company of the Shudras, he must never read the Vedas (Manu IV. 99), (Manu VIII-20 to 22), (Manu VIII. 20), (Manu VIII. 21), (Manu VIII-50, 56, and 59), (Manu VIII. 270), (Manu VIII. 271), (Manu VIII. 272), (Manu VIII. 374), (Manu VIII. 413), (ManuVIII-417 & X129), (Manu VIII. 417) (Kovena, 1987). All these verse are abusive; A Shudra was not to have any relationship with a lady of the higher classes, and Manu considered adultery committed by a Shudra with her to be a deadly offence. 24. (Manu XI.)1, 2, 3, 4, In terms of acquiring understanding and expertise, Manu's successors went far beyond him in their cruelty towards the Shudra for studying the Veda. For example, Katyayana states that if a Shudra overhears the Veda or attempts to say a Vedic term, the king shall chop his tongue in two and pour boiling molten lead into his ear (Burnale and Thind 2021 &2017). Men and women are not born equal, according to Manu's law book and the Brahmans' rigorous adherence to it. Individual merit and individual justice are not taken into account. If the individual obtains the advantage, it is not because of his or her own merit (Shashtri, 2011). The privilege is associated with class, and if he or she is fortunate enough to enjoy it, he or she is destined to be born in the privileged class. On the other hand, if a person is suffering in a class, it is because he is a member of that class. As a result, according to Manusmriti, the suffering of Shudras and women is due to the fact that they are members of their caste and gender, respectively. The 'Smriti' (law book) of Narda openly advocates slavery, but because Varna system (Manu's establishment of caste system) was important and deviously intertwined into religion, to subdue the Shudras through superstitions like opium to an addict, the Brahmans let the slaves die" (Ambedkar, Volume 1987).

4) **Affirmative action, legal changes, social movements, grassroots initiatives, and inclusive policy interventions are all tactics for advancing social justice and combating various forms of discrimination and inequality.**

The result of study on caste system focuses on eradication of caste from every layers of society. So when system becomes oppressive there is needed to make resistance fashionable. Affirmative action measures have been adopted in India through reservations in education, government jobs, and political representation for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs). These policies seek to create possibilities for historically marginalized caste groups while also promoting social fairness. Legal changes include the creation and implementation of legislation prohibiting caste discrimination. These laws are intended to preserve the rights and dignity of people of lower castes e.g. SC/ST Act. Dalit rights groups, founded by luminaries such as B.R. Ambedkar, campaign for the rights and dignity of Dalits (untouchables). They aim to end caste-based prejudice and advance social justice. Other Backward Classes (OBC)/Shudras movements strive to address their special concerns and push for affirmative action measures that benefit their communities. These movements seek to empower OBCs and close socioeconomic gaps. The Ambedkarite movement, inspired by B.R. Ambedkar's views and ideologies, focuses on social and political engagement to end caste prejudice and promote equality. It places a premium on education and empowerment as strategies of achieving social justice. Local grassroots organizations and initiatives seek to combat caste-based discrimination. To empower marginalized caste groups, they frequently engage in community development projects, awareness campaigns, and

education programmes. Measures aimed towards the socioeconomic development of marginalized castes are included in inclusive policies. These measures seek to enhance access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities while diminishing caste inequities. Movements and organizations work to prevent and remedy caste-based atrocities and violence against lower-caste people. They raise awareness, support victims, and advocate for justice in incidents of abuse and discrimination. Initiatives promoting inter-caste and inter-faith marriages challenge caste-based societal conventions and promote social integration. These endeavors aim to break down caste barriers and create social peace. Some organizations and efforts focus on cultural and educational programmes to challenge prejudices, develop understanding between castes, and foster a sense of unity and equality. The Indian government has adopted inclusive policy interventions and social programmes with the goal of improving the socioeconomic position of marginalized communities. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and scholarships for SC/ST students are two examples. Reserved seats in legislatures for SCs and STs to assure their political representation. Giving these communities a voice in decision-making processes improves social fairness. In the 1970s, the Dalit Panthers were a social and political movement. It attempted to combat caste-based discrimination and violence by focusing on subjects such as land reform and Dalit rights protection. The BSP is an Indian political party that primarily defends the interests of Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Kanshi Ram created it, and it has grown in popularity in numerous areas, particularly Uttar Pradesh and became national party. Education, healthcare, economic development, and social welfare may be the emphasis of programmes. Movements address the interlocking types of prejudice faced by Dalit women in particular. They advocate for gender equality and the rights of Dalit women. On April 14th, the birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar serves as a platform for supporting social justice and raising awareness about caste-based discrimination. Media sources, documentaries, and cultural projects can help raise awareness about caste discrimination and challenge preconceptions. In colleges and educational institutions, student-led movements frequently campaign for social justice and against caste-based discrimination and hold awareness campaigns, protests, and debates.

Data Analysis

According to a study from the Ministry of Home Affairs' National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), the atrocity cases recorded under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 in the years 2018-2021.
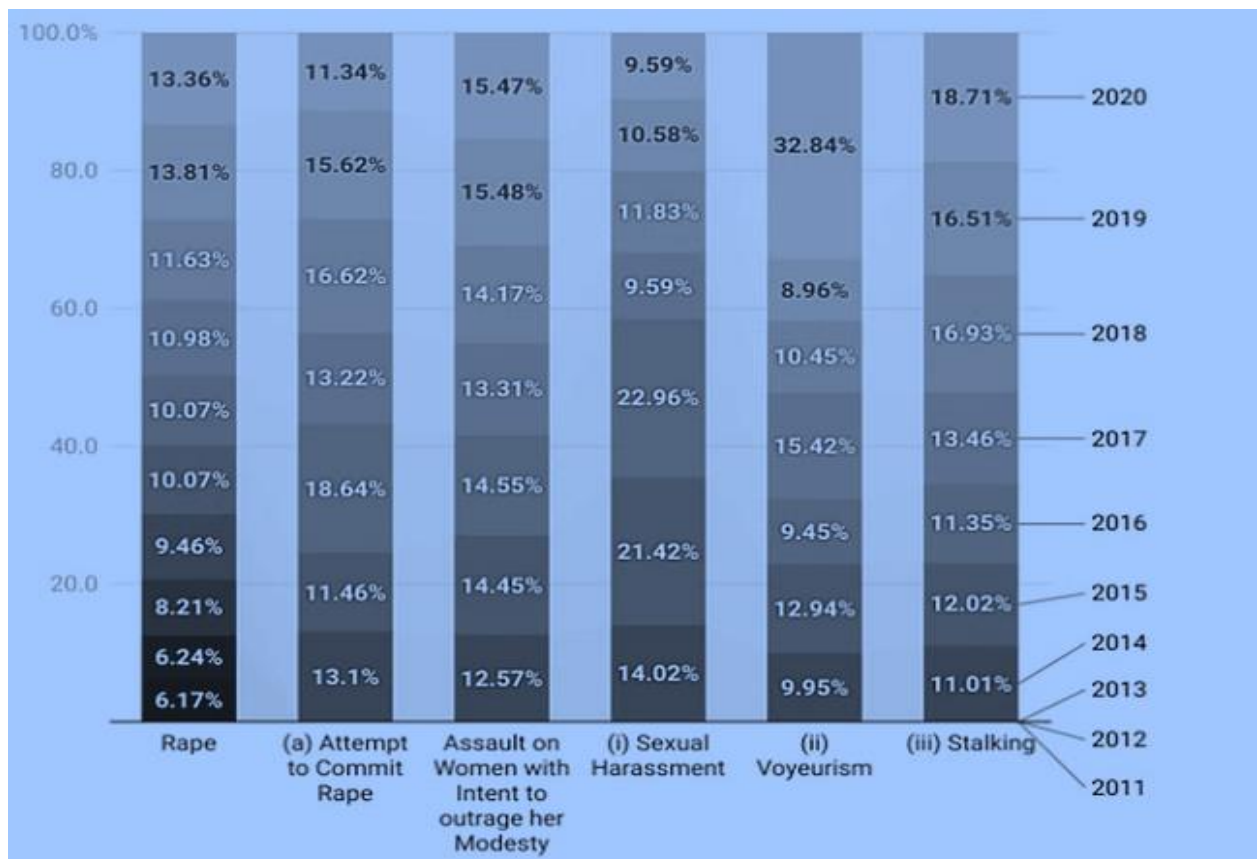
Year	Cases registered
2018	49064
2019	53515
2020	58538
2021	72000*

(* means Approx) with 1.2% rise. Source - National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)
Total 15 states list of India 2011-2020; Correlation between conviction and acquittals in crime against Dalits.
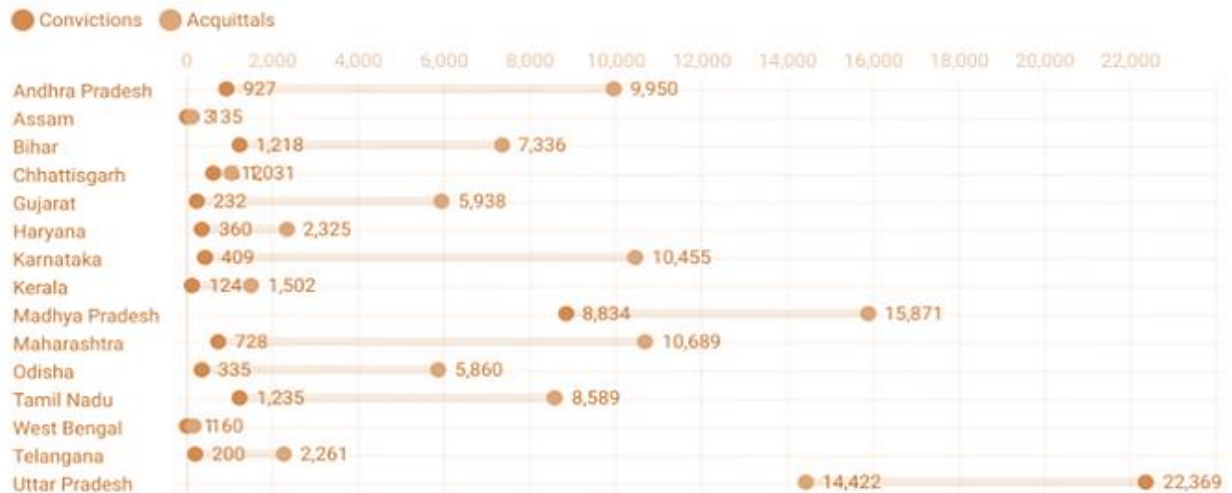
Source - National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)

**Crime Against Dalit Women in India 2011-2020**

Source - National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)

The data presented is based on the FIRs that have been registered. The reality on the ground is even worse. The number of crimes committed against dalits is increasing. The government must conduct a thorough investigation into the incident, involving activists, public representatives, and civil society." This community is subjected not just to the caste system, but also to institutional discrimination and social marginalization. On an average every 30 minutes a dalit girl is raped. Still untouchability is practiced on large scale impacting people

and their rights. Regardless of policies, anti-discrimination legislation, or social reform efforts.

Map 1: District–wise Map of the Share of Households Practicing Untouchability

Untouchability

% hh practicing
- 0%
- <5%
- 5-10%
- 10-20%
- 20-30%
- 30-40%
- 40-50%
- over 50%
- No data
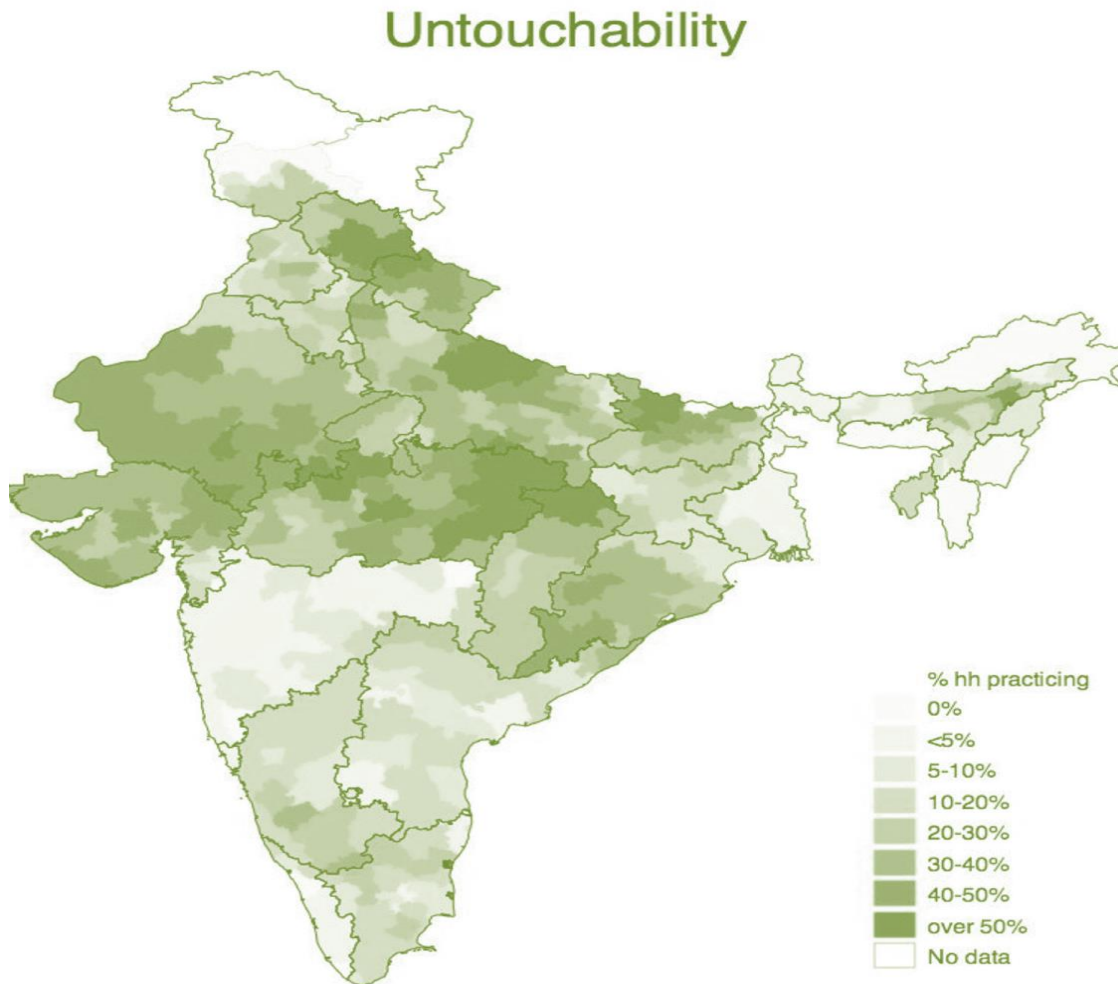
Conclusion

The research has investigated the multiple facets of caste-based discrimination and its ramifications for individuals and communities through a thorough examination of historical, cultural, and contemporary viewpoints. It is clear that custom practices of Brahmans later evolved into culture and religious form during 7th century later wards. Dismantling the Hindus/Brahmanical believe that caste system is a divinely ordained system as none of texts were created by divine means and UNESCO reports uncovers that the evidence of oldest script Rigveda of Brahmins have been dated 1464 C.E. The beginning of ancient archeological evidence does not reflect any mentions about caste and brahmanical caste order which is found in contemporary India. Significant impediment to the advancement of both people and the nation, and frequently regarded as a block to growth. The caste system's impact on human rights is not limited to India; it resonates with global issues on discrimination, social fairness, and human rights promotion. Caste system has many flaws only positive side is that who are in upper strata of system are benefitted with cultural power

and resources while it has negative impact as it affects 85% of Indian population. Social inequality, economic disparities, educational barriers, occupational restrictions, social divisions, political exploitation, inefficiency in resource allocation, **violation of human rights** discrimination, and violence are all examples of social inequalities. Impact on national identity due to a lack of social mobility and social exclusion. It's important to note that efforts have been made in independent India to address these issues. Affirmative action policies, such as reservations for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), have been implemented to promote equality, rights and welfare of individuals from marginalized castes and provide opportunities for historically disadvantaged groups. Additionally, various legislations and initiatives aim to combat caste-based discrimination and protect the rights of individuals regardless of their caste background. Dalits in modern institution discriminated e.g. after independence they started getting entry to public and government educational institutions at that time dalits were not available in large spaces in these fields but after education now they are rejected on basis of not found suitable this is modern way of discrimination and social exclusion. Constitution of Indian advocated in protections against caste-based discrimination also policies, anti-discrimination laws, and social reform movements played significant role. Reservations for women in local governance (panchayats/village) and various organizations have worked to empower women from lower castes and raise awareness about their rights. Achieving gender and caste equality requires comprehensive efforts to combat both forms of discrimination and promote social and economic empowerment for all women and 'The Hindu Code Bill' and the subsequent acts played a pivotal role in promoting gender equality and social justice within the Hindu community. The impact of the caste system on individual rights remains a complex and evolving issue in India. However, challenges persist in fully realizing these rights and eliminating caste-based discrimination and inequalities. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's commitment to these reforms underscored his dedication to advancing the rights and dignity of marginalized groups in India. Before any political revolution dalits must concern on socio-economic, religious and cultural revolution as it will work as foundation to gain sustainable political power. One of way to escape this rigid caste system is to embrace buddhism as it was successful attempt by Ambedkar in 1956 and people along with Ambedkar who reconverted to buddhism are most developed in terms of well being and educational literacy compared to dalits who are still following Brahmanical Dharma, according to IANS report 2017.

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Financial Literacy and Technological Innovation: Women's Micro-Businesses Adaptation in the Digital Ecosystem

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ABSTRACT

Economic development endeavors to enhance societal welfare. The micro-business sector is a fundamental pillar of the Indonesian economy, necessitating the government's prioritization in its developmental initiatives. Our findings show that factors such as adaptive learning, digital financial innovation, and financial literacy play pivotal roles in micro-business growth. It is essential to recognize and integrate adaptive learning, digital financial innovation, and financial literacy within the realm of micro-businesses. Financial Technology, often termed 'FinTech,' amalgamates financial services and information technology domains. Using the Structural Equation Model-Partial Least Square, this study surveyed 98 women-owned micro-enterprises that yield revenue by adopting technology-driven financial services. The financial sector in Indonesia has undergone a transformative phase due to swift technological advancements and growth. Such a paradigmatic shift presents consumers with the dual challenge of adapting to technological evolution and juxtaposing the potential advantages of these innovations against their inherent risks. As technological innovation gallops forward, society experiences varied rates of technology adoption. To facilitate this, this paper aims to study a form of literacy that capacitates individuals with adequate knowledge and offers straightforward assistance without imposing undue complexities, especially concerning the growth of women-owned micro-businesses when adopting new digital technology. This research focuses on integrating financial technology innovations within conventional and Islamic banking financial products. This study endeavors to ascertain the influence of financial inclusion and literacy on the micro-enterprises of Islamic bank clientele in Riau, East Java, and Jabodetabek, Indonesia.

Keywords: Financial Literacy, Digital Adaptive Learning, Women Micro-Business, Company Performance

INTRODUCTION

National economic development represents a concerted effort to achieve economic growth, aiming to enhance community income. Development is also interpreted as an initiative to bolster the capacities of the community for prospects, with the ultimate objective of attaining a superior standard of living (Sarfiah et al., 2019). Economic development remains a focal point of the government in realizing societal prosperity.

The acceleration of economic growth, pivotal for economic development, is significantly influenced by the financial sector's role (Adriani & Wiksuana, 2018). Movements in the financial sector closely intertwine with its financial systems and their inherent functions. The financial system is a principal aspect of economic movement, encompassing key stakeholders, mechanisms, products, and regulations pertinent to the system's operation. The economic system also offers flexibility for community members to engage in economic activities.

Accelerating economic growth in Indonesia requires reinforcement through optimizing micro-enterprises. Support in the form of facilitated access to capital, streamlined licensing, and other incentives can stimulate micro-enterprises productivity. A dearth of investment and an insufficient human resource pool emerge as predominant challenges confronting enhancing micro-enterprise productivity.

The volatile overall economic conditions and the escalating prevalence of micro-enterprises have unearthed research gaps in this study. This research is also designed to discern the impact of adaptive learning in digital financial innovations and financial literacy among Islamic Bank customers in Riau, East Java, and greater Jakarta.

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), especially the micro-sector, commonly face challenges accessing financing or other financial facilities due to consumers' limited understanding of financial products. According to surveys, women-owned MSMEs confront disproportionate barriers, exacerbating challenges in securing loans. WMSMEs tend to be smaller and less formalized. Those originating from underserved groups typically possess diminished asset levels, and when property assets are involved, they often aren't registered under their names. Banks generally perceive WMSMEs as higher risk and may overlook deserving women-owned businesses. SOFIA (2017) identified a higher propensity for Indonesian women to borrow from external financial system sources. Specifically, the study found women more likely to seek informal lending routes (12%) than men (9%). This is evidenced by Indonesia's scarcity of bank financing products that accommodate women's specific needs and challenges. Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are pivotal to the national economy (Sarfiah et al., 2019). The definition of micro-enterprises varies across different literature sources. One such source, Law No. 20 of 2008, classifies micro-enterprises based on wealth and business criteria as those having gross income below 50 million per year and net assets below 300 million per year. The World Bank defines micro-enterprises as businesses operated with a workforce of less than 30 people, with annual revenue and assets each typically less than US$3 million.

Digitization, defined as harnessing digital technology and data to transform business models, is pivotal for MSMEs to access contemporary financing. AFPI underscores that fintech lending leverages MSME digital technology and data pathways to mitigate loan risks for underserved MSMEs. Data and technology can recalibrate consumers previously deemed

high-risk into creditworthy entities. However, many micro and small entrepreneurs in Indonesia, including target regions, have yet to embrace digital technology for business. Adaptive learning in digital financial innovation is an initiative undertaken to eliminate various barriers to utilizing financial services for the wider community (Yanti, 2019). This effort aims to alleviate poverty by fostering economic growth through easy economic transaction access.

The limited financial access prevalent among numerous MSMEs also correlates with a deficit in financial literacy. Additionally, the adaptability factor towards digital innovations further contributes to a diminished understanding of financial product utilization. According to economic census data, fewer than 5% of micro and small businesses in some provinces maintain financial records. A lack of informed financial decision-making further exposes MSMEs to unscrupulous lenders.

While digital infrastructure remains a paramount challenge in specific regions, MSMEs in Indonesia necessitate enhanced access to digital and financial literacy resources to effectively participate in the digital economy. This encompasses foundational accounting and management knowledge, emphasizing financial risk management, enabling them to cultivate essential business management skills and heighten awareness of diverse financial schemes and options. A gender-responsive approach is essential to galvanize MSMEs to leverage these resources.

Meanwhile, financial literacy represents a process aimed at enhancing people's knowledge, skills, and trust in finance, hopefully improving their welfare through competent financial management (Septiani & Wuryani, 2020). Effective financial management requires a foundational understanding of financial concepts, enabling individuals to optimize their financial affairs. This knowledge includes discerning the real value versus the compound value of money, understanding compound interest concepts, recognizing and grasping the diversification of risks in financial activities, and various abilities to comprehend the time value of money and so forth.

In a Nicolini (2019) study, out of over 100 statistical analyses, financial literacy failed to significantly explain financial behavior only 17 times. This result underscores the relationship between financial literacy and people's financial behavior. Six of these 17 instances involved financial literacy measures based on correct answers to the "big 5" questions posed by Lusardi (2014). These findings support the hypothesis that sometimes the limited number of items and the broad content area examined by the Lusardi-Mitchell questions might miss capturing the existing relationship between financial literacy and financial behavior detected by alternative measures. Rather than critiquing the well-adopted measures, this outcome suggests a need, in some cases, to not constrain the importance of financial literacy in explaining one or more financial behaviors to the "big 5", especially when the measure finds no connections.

Another interesting result was a comparison between financial literacy measures on a zero to five scale, indicating that the "unbiased" financial literacy index—calculating the number of correct answers to questions analyzing topics unrelated to financial products and services ever used/owned by respondents and standardizing values on a zero to five scale—outperformed both the Lusardi-Mitchell index and the 5-specific index 14 times out of 30. In the remaining 16 cases, the 5-specific index showed the highest coefficient values 10 times, and only in 6 out of 30 cases did the Lusardi-Mitchell index best illustrate the relationship

between financial literacy and financial behavior. From these results, the hypothesis arises that the Lusardi-Mitchell questions—because they're based on knowledge of basic financial principles (e.g., compound interest, inflation, etc.) and limited in terms of item number—might not perfectly function in assessing the role of financial literacy in explaining financial behavior when that behavior pertains to specific content areas (e.g., savings, retirement planning, credit card usage, etc.).

Furthermore, research by Grohmann (2018) suggests that countries where most of the population follows Islam might have different financial literacy levels. This is particularly relevant for questions about interest and compound interest due to the prohibition of interest in Islamic law. Such questions may be less targeted in majority-Muslim nations, yet respondents might still have sound financial literacy regarding other financial topics.

Adopting a slightly different approach, Ejdys (2018) confirmed through structural equation modeling that the most influential factor shaping human attitudes is the perceived social impact received from usage. The study also affirmed that men are more positive toward technology than women. This aligns with Yoshino (2017)'s discovery that the primary determinants of financial literacy are education level, income, age, and employment status, and both financial literacy and general education level correlate positively and significantly with savings behavior and financial inclusion.

Financial literacy provides financial knowledge and skills, which can aid consumers in making financial decisions. A certain level of financial literacy is essential to employ digital financial products and manage risks properly. In connection with this, policymakers, managers, and practitioners must recognize the significance of financial literacy. They need to devise policies promoting financial literacy. There's a need to enhance citizens' financial literacy as part of the existing educational system to cultivate their financial awareness. Financial literacy programs should be accessible to every individual at various life stages. Even though there's an insignificant relationship between internet usage and financial inclusion, internet use, merging with digital financial products, plays a dual mediating role between financial literacy and adaptive learning in digital financial innovation. For the most part, internet usage can indirectly promote adaptive learning in digital financial innovation by acting based on the use of digital financial products. Indeed, access barriers might need to be addressed first before financial literacy and digital financial products can be effective. The internet is the optimal solution to address access issues. Lowering costs is crucial for enhancing access. Policymakers can implement policies ranging from low to zero cost in rural areas to encourage residents to utilize the internet (Shen et al., 2018).

Dalberg (2020) noted that while financial and digital initiatives are executed in Indonesia, the curricular scope is specific. The digital literacy program spearheaded by the Ministry of Communication and Informatics aims to educate the public about online fraud cases, cyberbullying, etc., and best practices for online safety. However, it does not encompass digital financial service (DFS) utilization scenarios. The SCORE program, orchestrated by ILO, SECO, and NORAD, aspires to amplify the productivity and capacity of SMEs through managerial and employee business training. There remains potential to launch programs amalgamating digital literacy with financial literacy to foster DFS adoption, particularly among micro and small entrepreneurs.

Hence, it is imperative to identify and evaluate the effectiveness of financial literacy and comprehend consumer adaptation to burgeoning digital financial products, especially

concerning Shariah financial products. This study aims to serve as a tool for identification relating to the necessity of adaptive learning in digital financial innovation in policies and regulations applicable to micro-businesses of Islamic Bank customers in Riau, East Java, and greater Jakarta, Indonesia. Furthermore, it seeks to understand the role of financial literacy for these micro-businesses. The research outcomes can also serve as insightful information for stakeholders concerning policy rejuvenation for micro-businesses in relevant regions.

Financial inclusion and financial literacy are two intertwined and inseparable concepts. Both financial inclusion and financial literacy have been shown to have a positive impact on micro-enterprises. With financial inclusion, the performance and growth of micro-enterprises improve (Sanistasya et al., 2019). This has a beneficial effect on economic growth, as micro-enterprises are a cornerstone of the Indonesian economy. Financial inclusion and literacy have been posited to enhance capital, increasing employment and sales in micro-enterprises (Ratnawati, 2020). Micro-enterprises can drive economic growth as they specialize products based on the diversity and uniqueness of a region, making them distinctive and different from one place to another (Shofawati, 2019). Programs focused on financial inclusion and literacy are carried out under the supervision and guidance of the Indonesian government, aiming to support equitable economic growth (Riwayati et al., 2020).

The research could contribute to a deeper understanding of the financial literacy levels among women entrepreneurs, particularly those operating micro-businesses. This could provide insights into where women may need more support or education to effectively manage their finances in a digital business environment. In addition, by examining how technological innovations affect women-led micro-businesses, the research may shed light on whether these innovations lead to increased business growth, efficiency, or market access. This could provide valuable information for policymakers and business support organizations looking to promote women's economic empowerment. The study might explore how gender disparities in accessing and using digital technologies impact women's micro-businesses. Such research can highlight the digital divide and provide recommendations on bridging it, ensuring women have equal opportunities to benefit from technological advancements. Findings from the research could have policy implications. For example, if the study identifies specific barriers hindering women's adaptation to the digital ecosystem, it could inform policy recommendations to remove these obstacles and create a more inclusive environment for female entrepreneurs. Apart from that, the research could offer practical insights and recommendations for women running micro-businesses on improving their financial literacy and effectively leveraging technological innovations to enhance their businesses. This guidance could be in workshops, training materials, or online resources. The study may contribute to the broader field of gender studies by examining how gender dynamics intersect with financial literacy and technology in the context of entrepreneurship. It could help advance our understanding of women entrepreneurs' unique challenges and opportunities. The research also could raise awareness about the importance of supporting women in micro-businesses and advocating for policies and programs promoting financial literacy and technology access for this demographic.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study pertains to a comprehensive survey conducted amongst 98 micro-business owners who are patrons of Sharia Banks located in Riau, East Java, and Greater Jakarta. The survey's primary focus encompasses the income levels, business growth, and knowledge of these micro-business operators regarding adaptive learning in digital financial innovations and

financial literacy.

We employed the Random Partial Least Square (PLS) methodology in our analysis. The least square method is a statistical technique designed to discern multiple response and explanatory variables concurrently. This method is particularly apt for conducting multiple regression analyses and addresses issues of multicollinearity in the variables considered. Furthermore, this method does not predicate its analyses on assumptions or conditions, rendering it a more accessible technique. The PLS can elucidate the interrelations between variables and can be harnessed to confirm existing theories. Employing the random PLS further eliminates the heteroskedasticity problem within the data set. The random PLS model can be articulated as follows:

$$Yit = a + ai + \delta t + X'it\beta + \varepsilon it$$

Where,
Y   = Dependent Variable
X   = Independent Variable
a   = intercept
β = Regression Coefficient
it   = Time Period

This study uses the PLS approach with consideration because bound variables are used more than one and analyzed directly using reflective indicators. PLS also does not require a large number of samples so that the samples in this study are still eligible for testing. In addition, PLS does not require research data to be normally distributed multivariately, nor is the model required to meet the goodness of fit.

Table 3 Cross Loading Test

Measurement Criteria	Information
R-Square (R^2)	Results R^2 0.67, 0.33, and 0.19 indicates that the model is robust, moderate and weak
F-Square atau Effect Size	The value of F indicates degree of influence Predictors of latent variables which is 0.02, (weak), 0.15 (medium), 0.35 (large).
Q-Square Predictive Relevance	Q^2 value of > 0 indicates that the model has predictive relevance, while $Q^2 < 0$ indicates that the model lacks predictive relevance

Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	A P Value of ≤ 0.05 indicates the model is acceptable and valid

It is discernible from the specified testing criteria that if the T-Statistic exceeds the T-table value, it can be concluded that there is a significant influence between the exogenous variable and the endogenous variable for each hypothesis employed in this research. Based on the classification of the path coefficients presented in the aforementioned table, the magnitude and significance level of the paths forming this research's hypotheses are evident. The population and sample of this research consist of female Sharia Bank Customer located in Greater Jakarta, Riau dan East Java, with the population (N) of 98 women-owned enterprises. The criteria of Micro enterprises are established for more than one year. That includes in the micro business category owned by women entrepreneurs. Micro enterprises are still actively carrying out business activities. It has a number of employees from 1 to 99 people based on criteria that have been set for micro-enterprises. The design of the research includes product knowledge in financing and related digital business applications, financial literacy, digital transaction experience, technology Adaptation, skill needed in operating digital finance apps and the importance of digital finance. The respondents constitute 91% of business actors are women aged 30-50 years 9% of business actors are women under 30 years old. The composition of Micro Enterprises is:

Table 4 The Respondents Data

Business Type	Respondent	Percentage
Street Vendors Food and Drink	58	81.0%
Service Business	10	3.6%
Retail Store	30	15.4%
Total	98	100%

For this research, an online questionnaire was disseminated, accumulating 98 responses. Subsequent analysis and data processing were executed on this collected data. It is discernible that 91% of business operators are females. The age bracket for most micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) operators falls between 30 and 50 years, with the predominant educational background being equivalent to high school.

The research delineates the characteristics of MSMEs across various categories. Data recapitulation reveals that a substantial majority, 59% of the small-business owners, primarily engage in the food and beverage sector; 10% belongs to the service industry and 31% the retail-business owners. On average, these businesses employ between 1 to 4 individuals and have been operational for a duration ranging between one to ten years.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 5 Construct Validity and Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted(AVE)	Note
X1	0.897	0.898	0.921	0.660	VALID
X2	0.922	0.922	0.935	0.616	VALID
Y	0.955	0.956	0.960	0.614	VALID

Source: Author Estimation Using SMART PLS

Testing of the First Hypothesis (H1)
The first hypothesis posits that Adaptive Learning in Digital Innovation (X1) has a positive and significant impact on MSME Performance (Y). The results indicate that the variable of adaptive learning in digital financial innovation (X1) yielded a T-statistic value of 3.168 (β=0.397) with a p-value of 0.001. Comparing this with the known T-table value of 1.985 and considering that the p-value is less than 0.05. It is proved that the adaptive learning variable in digital financial innovation (X1) has a direct and significant and has a positive influence on MSME Performance (Y). Therefore, the first hypothesis is accepted.

Testing of the Second Hypothesis (H2)
The second hypothesis states that Financial Literacy (X2) has a positive and significant effect on the Performance of MSMEs (Y). The results show that the Financial Literacy variable (X2) has a T-statistic value of 3.433 (β=0.287) with a p-value of 0.020. This demonstrates that the Financial Literacy variable (X2) has a positive and significant impact on MSME Performance (Y). Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the second hypothesis is accepted.

Testing of the Second Hypothesis (H3)
The third hypothesis states that Adaptive Learning to Digital Innovation (X1) has a positive and significant effect on the Financial Literacy (X2). The results show that the Financial Literacy variable (X2) has a T-statistic value of 15.016 (β=0.740) with a p-value of 0.000. This demonstrates that the Financial Literacy variable (X2) has a positive and significant impact on SME Performance (Y). Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the second hypothesis is accepted

Testing of the Second Hypothesis (4)
The fourth hypothesis states that Adaptive Learning to Digital Innovation (X1) has a positive and significant effect on the Performance of MSMEs (Y) mediated by the Financial Literacy (X2). The results show that the Financial Literacy variable (X2) has a T-statistic value of 2.399 (β=0.212) with a p-value of 0.000. This demonstrates that the Financial Literacy variable (X2) has a positive and significant impact on SME Performance (Y). Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the second hypothesis is accepted

The variable of Adaptive Learning in Digital Financial Innovation has a Positive and Significant Impact on SME Performance. Based on the results of the tests conducted using Smart-PLS software, it is evident that the first hypothesis (H1), which suggests that Adaptive Learning in Digital Financial Innovation (X1) has a positive and significant impact on SME Performance (Y), is accepted. The research findings indicate that the variable of Adaptive

Learning in Digital Financial Innovation (X1), represented by two dimensions: access to questions and well-being, has a positive and significant influence on SME Performance among female micro-entrepreneurs in Jabodetabek, East Java, and Riau. Higher financial literacy promotes better SME performance.
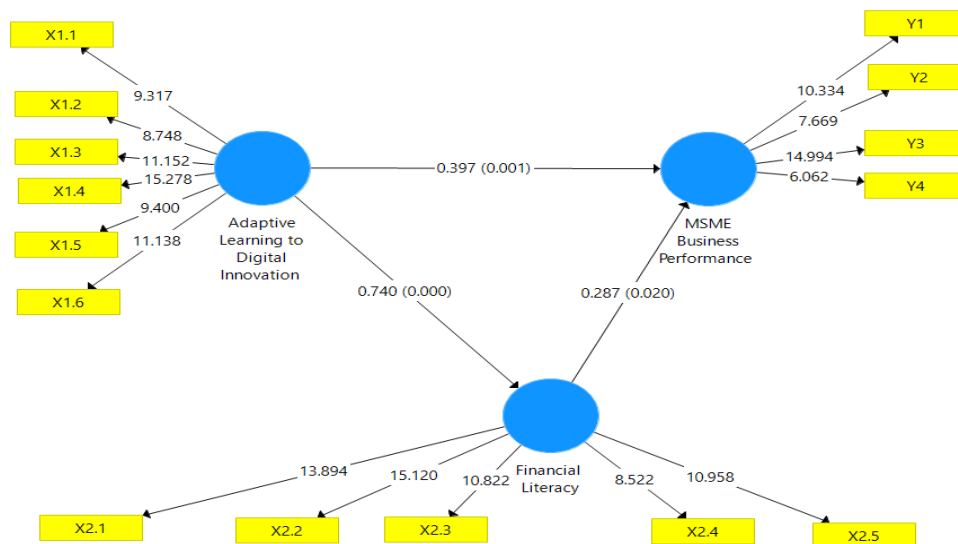

Figure 1 Structural Equation Model Diagram

Figure 1 shows that the adaptive learning variable of digital financial innovation (X1) significantly and positively influences Micro Business Performance (Y), so the first hypothesis is accepted.

This shows that the variable Financial Literacy (X2) positively and significantly affects Micro Business Performance (Y). Based on this, it can be concluded that the second hypothesis is accepted. Moreover, Intervening variables in the form of Financial Literacy also affect and strengthen adaptive learning variables of digital financial innovation.

Table 6 Relationship Between Variables

Effects Relationship	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Adaptive Learning to Digital Innovation -> Financial Literacy	0.740	0.748	0.049	15.016	0.000
Adaptive Learning to Digital Innovation -> MSME Business Performance	0.397	0.401	0.116	3.433	0.001
Financial Literacy -> MSME Business Performance	0.287	0.281	0.116	2.473	0.020
Adaptive Learning to Digital	0.212	0.21	0.088	2.399	0.017

Innovation -> Financial Literacy
-> MSME Business Performance

Source: Author Estimation Using SMART PLS

Moreover, from the model of fit, it shows that the model is quite robust with $R^2>0.70$ and NFI>0.90.

Table 7 Model of Fit

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.09	0.09
d_ULS	0.966	0.966
d_G	0.392	0.392
Chi-Square	151.705	151.705
NFI	0.991	0.991

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Financial Literacy	0.747	0.742
MSME Business Performance	0.708	0.795

Source: Author Estimation Using SMART PLS

In Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 82 of 2016, which outlines the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion, adaptive learning in digital financial innovation is one of the conditions where every member of society has access to various high-quality, smooth, secure, and timely formal financial services at affordable costs, tailored to their needs and capabilities.

As Anwar Prabu Mangkuenegara (2000:67) states, performance is the result of both the quality and quantity of work achieved by an employee who has fulfilled their responsibilities. Performance represents the outcome and function of individual or group tasks and activities within an organization, influenced by various factors, to achieve common objectives within a defined time period. The purpose of work itself is the execution of tasks and responsibilities assigned individually or collectively, contributing to shared responsibility within a group (Tika, 2012:21).

Previous research stated that adaptive learning in digital financial innovation can have a positive and significant impact on SME performance. This suggests that SME performance can be significantly improved when SME entrepreneurs enhance their financial inclusion. These findings align with the results obtained by researchers, indicating that adaptive learning in digital financial innovation has a positive and significant influence on SME performance.

Financial literacy has a positive impact on financial performance. Based on the results of testing using Smart-PLS software, it can be confirmed that the first hypothesis (H2), which posits that Financial Literacy (X2) has a positive and significant effect on SME performance (Y), is accepted. Research findings show that the Financial Literacy variable (X2), represented by three indicators: knowledge, behavior, and attitude dimensions, has a positive and significant influence on SME performance among female micro-entrepreneurs in Jabodetabek, East Java, and Riau. A higher and better understanding of financial literacy

promotes improved SME performance.

According to Hudson and Bush (Widiyati, 2017), financial literacy is the ability to comprehend financial conditions, financial concepts, and to transform knowledge into good behavior. Financial literacy can be defined as financial knowledge used by individuals to make decisions that can enhance economic well-being.

As Mangkunegara (2000:67) reiterates, performance is the result of both the quality and quantity of work achieved by an employee who fulfills their responsibilities. Performance represents the outcome and function of individual or group tasks and activities within an organization, influenced by various factors, with the aim of achieving common objectives within a defined time period. The purpose of work itself is the execution of tasks and responsibilities assigned individually or collectively, contributing to shared responsibility within a group (Tika, 2012:21).

There is a need for a strategic approach to improving performance, and one such approach involves having financial literacy, belief, and skills that can influence behavior and attitudes in enhancing decision-making and financial management to achieve well-being, as stated by (Ariwibawa, 2016). Research findings presented by Prakoso (2020) state that financial literacy significantly influences SME performance. These research results support the findings of researchers who state that financial literacy has a positive and significant impact on SME performance.

CONCLUSION

Adaptive learning of digital financial innovation has a positive and significant influence on the performance of MSMEs in micro enterprises in Jabodetabek, East Java and Riau. This means that the better adaptive learning of digital financial innovation carried out by micro entrepreneurs in Jabodetabek, East Java and Riau, for example by providing innovation in the use of MSME financial products and services, it will improve the good image of the MSME performance. A part from that, financial literacy has a positive and significant influence on the performance of MSMEs in women-owned micro-enterprises in Jabodetabek, East Java and Riau. This means that the better the understanding related to financial literacy, the better the image of the performance of a micro business. The next researcher is expected to develop a research model on MSME development through business sustainability and business performance improvement and use other variables that affect the development of MSMEs to explain other factors that can also affect MSME performance. Testing in the broader area needs to be carried out to determine the condition of MSMEs, considering that Indonesia is divided into several regions, so it is possible to find different variables that affect the sustainability conditions and performance of MSMEs. Expanding research on the effect of financial literacy on MSME performance through adaptive learning of digital financial innovation as a mediating variable with research samples not only in women-owned micro-enterprises in Jabodetabek, East Java, and Riau but also to cities or wider regions and not limited to women-owned micro-enterprises. In addition, research should be carried out with more respondents with varied characteristics to increase generalization and diversity in research results.

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The Influence of Extrinsic Rewards and Organizational Support on Knowledge Sharing Behavior among the Academic Members in Bangladesh – An Application of Theory of Reasoned Action

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to investigate the factors influencing the knowledge sharing behavior of academics in Bangladesh. The study employed the theory of reasoned action to examines the relationship between attitude, subjective norms and behavior of the academic members in sharing knowledge. The study examines whether or not academic members' attitudes on sharing knowledge are influenced by extrinsic rewards. In addition, the study investigates how organizational support enhances academic members' subjective norms in Bangladesh. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed among the faculty members in one public university in Bangladesh and 216 usable responses were returned. The study employed purposive sampling technique to collect data. Partial least square (PLS) analysis was utilized to analyze the data. The result of the study indicated that faculty member's attitudes and subjective norms have a positive influence on knowledge sharing behavior. The result also found that organizational support has a positive impact on subjective norms of the faculty members in Bangladesh in sharing knowledge with others. However, the result did not find any influence of extrinsic rewards on enhancing the attitudes of the faculty members in knowledge sharing. Future research should include the comparison between the faculty members of private and public university in knowledge sharing behavior. This study provides a more comprehensive understanding of factors influencing academic members' knowledge sharing behavior. The university management can therefore design an effective plan to support those aspects.

Keywords: Knowledge Sharing Behavior, Bangladesh, Extrinsic Rewards, Organizational Support, Theory of Reasoned Action

INTRODUCTION

For any organization to be competitive, knowledge sharing is the significant aspect to be considered (Riege, 2005; Grant, 1991, 1996; Spender 1996; Teece 2000). More specifically, knowledge is linked to knowledge workers. Knowledge workers are highly skilled and competent individuals who typically make crucial decisions and strategies for the success of the organization. Knowledge is innately present in individuals, and more particularly, in employees who produce, acknowledge, preserve, access, and use knowledge while doing their duties (Nonaka and Konno, 1998). Davenport and Prusak (1998) define knowledge as a blend of experiences, values, contextual information, and expert insights, originating and

applied by knowers. Although knowledge management (KM) has generally been considered in connection to for-profit businesses, it is crucial to remember that knowledge is essential to higher education institutions (HEIs). In that aspect, knowledge management is no longer considered a myth; rather, it is increasingly recognized as a crucial component that businesses, particularly Higher Education Institutes, must use in order to support an effective business environment. The creation and dissemination of knowledge is the endeavor of universities, and from an educational standpoint, knowledge sharing in the universities refers to the sharing of academics' existing and new knowledge through research and instruction between experts and students, which gives the institutions additional competitive advantages (Basu and Sengupta, 2007; Cheng et al., 2009a; Daud and Abdul Hamid, 2006; Kim and Ju, 2008; Omerzel et al., 2011; Sohail and Daud, 2009). Organizations can successfully encourage knowledge sharing not just by explicitly addressing it in their company strategy, but also by modifying employees' attitudes and behaviors to encourage willing and consistent information sharing (Jones et al., 2006; Alavi and Leidner, 2001). Embracing a culture of knowledge sharing allows employees to share their experiences and overcome obstacles on the job, which increases worker engagement and improves output.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The study investigates the following:
1. The factors that influence attitudes and subjective norms on knowledge sharing behavior among the faculty members in Bangladesh university.
2. The influence of extrinsic factors and organizational support on the attitudes and subjective norms among faculty members in Bangladesh university

LITERATURE REVIEW

Knowledge sharing in the organization
The success of an organization relies heavily on its employees who actively create, share, and utilize its knowledge. Knowledge sharing is the act of making existing knowledge available to others within an organization, enabling the leveraging of others' knowledge. In other way, it can be said that, knowledge sharing is the exchange of knowledge between individuals, converting it into a form that can be understood, absorbed, and utilized by others. Davenport (1997) distinguished sharing from reporting, stating that sharing is a voluntary act, involving conscious participation in knowledge exchange without compulsion. Hendriks (1999) posited that knowledge sharing involves a mutual relationship between two parties, one possessing the knowledge and the other acquiring it. Knowledge sharing fosters a connection between individuals and organizations by transferring personal knowledge to the organizational level, transforming it into economic and competitive value.

Theory of Reasoned Action
The theory of reasoned action was first developed by Ajzen and Fishbein in 1980. According to the theory, attitude of individual and subjective norms positive influence the intention which develop behaviors (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Attitude accounts for the sum of a person's beliefs about a behavior (Miller, 2005). Subjective norm is the perception of social pressure to engage in or refrain from an activity (Ajzen, 1991). Behavior intention is regarded as a combined effect of attitudes and subjective norm.

The term "subjective norms" describes how a person feels about being pressured by society to engage in or refrain from engaging in a particular behavior (Ajzen, 1991). According to the

theory, a subjective norm is a crucial element that can affect intention to engage in a particular behavior. As per the theory, attitudes are a collection of feelings and beliefs—whether favorable or negative—about the intention to engage in a behavior. According to Chennamaneni et al. (2012), attitudes and intention to share knowledge have a substantial positive link. Miller (2005) defined attitudes as the sum of a person's beliefs about a behavior, with specific weights given to each aspect of that behavior.
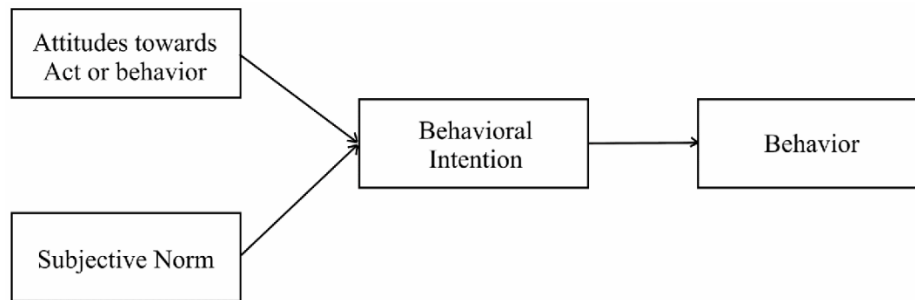

Figure 1: Theory of Reasoned Action

Extrinsic Rewards

Employees are motivated by recognition and rewards, and they enjoy tasks and activities when they receive them for completing them successfully (Constant et al., 1994; Jarvenpaa and Staples, 2001; Cameron and Pierce, 1997). Some scholars argued that incentives and rewards, have a significant impact on the intensity of knowledge-sharing (Chua, 2003; Kim, Suh and Hwang, 2003; Malhotra and Majchrzak, 2004; Lin, 2008, Cheng, 2002). However, O'Reilly and Pondy's 1980 study found that organizational members' likelihood of sharing information is positively correlated with rewards and negatively correlated with expected penalties. Additionally, they asserted that incentives foster rivalry among students, which lessens knowledge sharing objective. On the other hand, according to a study, incentives have a big impact on knowledge sharing among university faculty (Purwanti et al. 2010). In that aspect, financial or non-financial prizes are necessary to encourage academics and advance the knowledge sharing activity (Susanty - Wood, 2011).

Organizational Support

Ruggles, (1998) asserts that the organizational climate significantly impacts knowledge-sharing behavior. Organizational support is considered as the employee attitudes and behaviors toward their organizations and employment. Bock and Kim (2005) found that an organization's climate significantly influences knowledge sharing intentions, suggesting that a fair and trustworthy environment where they get the support increases the likelihood of knowledge sharing among employees. Organizational support is positively related to subjective norm. Self-efficacy theory suggests that individuals who believe they can handle difficult situations and receive provisional aids are more likely to exert effort, and organizational support enhances employees' self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977).

Proposed Hypothesis

H1: Extrinsic reward has a positive impact on the individual's attitude towards knowledge sharing
H2: The Organizational Support influence the subjective norms positively
H3: Individual's Attitude towards knowledge sharing has a positive impact on knowledge

sharing behavior

H4: Subjective norm has a positive impact on the individual's knowledge sharing behavior
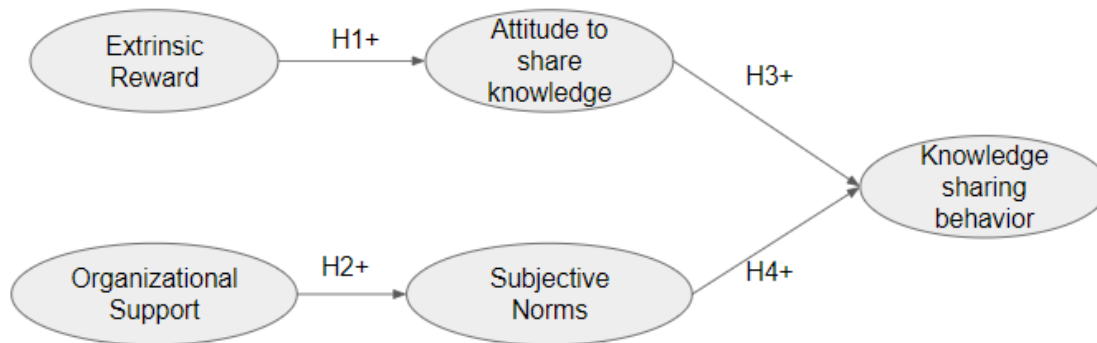
Proposed Model

Figure 2: Proposed conceptual model

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

To collect the data, an online survey was carried out in order to analyze the proposed hypotheses by operationalizing the factors related with the knowledge sharing behavior by the faculty members in Bangladesh. The empirical study was conducted to understand the relationship between the independent variables; extrinsic reward, organizational support, attitude to share knowledge and subjective norms and the dependent variable; knowledge sharing behavior. The questionnaire used in this study was adopted from the previous literature. demographic information like gender, age, gender, educational level, job positions and work experiences were also taken. To analyze the data, SmartPLS version 3.2.2 were used.

Data collection

Survey data was collected from the faculty members who are working in the Bangladeshi universities. Cross-sectional data was gathered using a Google form, and departmental approval was obtained prior to survey link distribution. Once the permission was granted, the link of the Google form was sent to the participants by email. Given that the faculty members use English as their medium of instructions, the survey was conducted in English language. Purposive sampling technique was used for data collection and faculty members who have a minimum of 6 months of work experience are considered for this study. A total number of 216 (n=216) faculty members from Bangladeshi universities participated in the survey. In order to ensure anonymity, no names, phone numbers, or email addresses were collected, and participants were made aware that they could withdraw from the survey at any moment if they so desired. Faculty members provided primary data, and no financial rewards were given out while the data was being collected.

Results

Demographic Information

Among the respondents (n=216), there were 103 (52.3%) male faculty members and 113 (47.7%) female faculty members. Mean age of the faculty members was 31.87 with a standard deviation (SD) of 6.481 and the maximum and minimum age group of the faculty members were 50 and 24 respectively. The majority of the faculty members were having Master's degree 167 (77.3%), followed by doctoral degree 28 (13.0%) and PhD candidates 21 (9.7%). Among the faculty members there were 108 (50%) lecturers, 10 (4.6%) senior lecturers, 59 (27.3%) assistant professor, 25 (11.6%) associate professors and 14 (6.5%) professors. In addition, work experience was also collected, and it was found that majority of the faculty members were having 1-3 years were 85 (39.4%), followed by 4-6 year were 71 (32.9%), 10 years and above were 39 (18.1%), less than 1 year were 18 (8.3%) and 7-10 years were 3 (1.4%). The data is shown in the table 1 below:

Table 1: Demographic information of the sample

Aspects	statistics
Gender	Male: 103 (52.3%)
	Female: 113 (47.7%)
Age (in years)	Mean: 31.87, SD: 6.481,
	Min 24, Max: 50
Education level	Master's Degree: 167 (77.3%)
	PhD Candidates: 21 (9.7%)
	Doctoral Degree: 28 (13.0%)
Experiences	Less than 1 year: 18 (8.3%)
	1-3 years: 85 (39.4%)
	4-6 years: 71 (32.9%)
	7-10 years: 3 (1.4%)
	10 years and above: 39 (18.1%)
Job positions	Lecturer: 108 (50%)
	Senior lecturer: 10 (4.6%)
	Assistant professor: 59 (27.3%)
	Associate professor: 25 (11.6%)
	Professor: 14 (6.5%)

Reliability and Validity

To test the reliability of the variables, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability was checked. To measure the internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha was checked and the accepted factor loading scale was 0.7. From the data it was observed that Cronbach's alpha of all the variables were 0.8, which means the internal consistency of the variables are acceptable. Composite reliability of each variable was also checked and the data revealed that majority of the variables are above 0.90 except subjective norms (0.890). This means that the constructs had excellent reliability in the present model. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was also checked to see the convergent and divergent validity and it was noticed that all the AVE is higher than 0.500. This supported the convergent validity factor.

Table 2: Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability of the variables

	Cronbach's	rho_A	Composite	Average	Variance

	Alpha		Reliability	Extracted (AVE)
Attitude	0.935	0.935	0.954	0.837
Extrinsic Reward	0.811	0.833	0.913	0.840
Knowledge Sharing Behavior	0.910	0.922	0.933	0.737
Organizational Support	0.903	0.915	0.925	0.673
Subjective Norms	0.837	0.846	0.890	0.670

Discriminant Validity & R-squared

In addition, the discriminant validity was measured through Fornell-Larcker criterion and cross-loading of the variables were checked. The data showed that each variable's range is from 0.819 to 0.916. From the data is can be said that discriminant validity was well established. The result is presented in the table 3 below:

Table 3: discriminant validity of the variables

	Attitude	Extrinsic Reward	Knowledge sharing behavior	Organizational support	Subjective norms
Attitude	**0.915**				
Extrinsic Reward	0.153	**0.916**			
Knowledge Sharing Behavior	0.652	0.267	**0.859**		
Organizational Support	0.537	0.388	0.577	**0.820**	
Subjective Norms	0.464	0.293	0.735	0.486	**0.819**

Structural Equation Model

The structural equation model was carried out to observe the association between the proposed hypotheses. From the analysis it was observed that extrinsic rewards and attitudes towards knowledge sharing was positively related ($\beta = 0.153$, p-value>0.102) but not statistically significant. This means hypothesis 1 is not supported. Organizational support had a positive impact on subject norms ($\beta = 0.486$, p-value < 0.000) and is statistically significant. This means that hypothesis 2 is supported. In addition, attitudes towards knowledge sharing were found a positive association with knowledge sharing behavior ($\beta = 0.396$, p value < 0.000) and it is also statistically significant. Furthermore, subjective norms had the strongest effect on knowledge sharing behavior ($\beta = 0.552$, p-value < 0.000) and they are statistically significant. Hypothesis 4 was supported also. The R-square and adjusted R-square of the all the association were checked for this model.

From the model it was observed that attitudes towards knowledge sharing and subjective norms were having the highest R-square (0.664) and adjusted R-square (0.660). This means 66.4 percent of attitudes of knowledge sharing and subjective norms of the faculty members for sharing their knowledge with others can be explained from this model and rest 33.6 percent can be other factors that were not considered in this model. The model further showed that organizational support and subjective norms can be explained 23.6% ($R^2 = 0.236$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.233$) and rest 76.4% can be some other factors that were not also considered in this study. The data were presented in the following tables 4 and 5.

Table 4: Hypotheses testing of the model

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	Hypothesis Results
Attitude -> Knowledge Sharing Behavior	0.396	8.684	0.000	Supported
Extrinsic Reward -> Attitude	0.153	1.638	0.102	Not Supported
Organizational Support -> Subjective Norms	0.486	6.791	0.000	Supported
Subjective Norms -> Knowledge Sharing Behavior	0.552	16.335	0.000	Supported

Table 5: R-square and Adjusted R-squared of the model

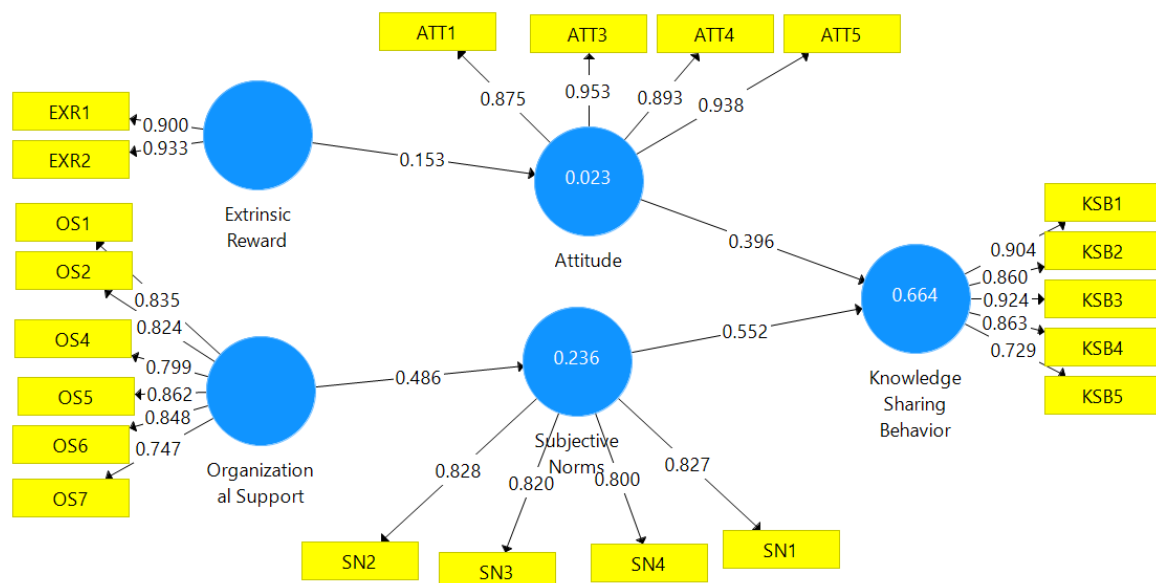|	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Attitude	0.023	0.019
Knowledge Sharing Behavior	0.664	0.660
Subjective Norms	0.236	0.233

Figure 3: SEM analysis of the model

Discussions

The study revealed that the positive causal relationship between attitudes, subjective norms, and knowledge sharing behavior is consistent with prior studies (Bock and Kim, 2002; Tohidinia and Mosakhani, 2010). It can be assumed that when faculty members are having a positive mindset and attitudes to understand the ultimate benefit of knowledge sharing with others, they have a higher tendency to share knowledge with others. On the other hand,

rewards merely serve as a catalyst for knowledge sharing rather than a long-lasting influence on a person's mindset, therefore rewards can only be useful during the knowledge management process's initial stages. Similarly, it can be mentioned that reward might increases competitiveness, and it might reduce knowledge sharing intentions among others. Bock and Kim (2005) found that expected rewards, like monetary incentives, negatively impact knowledge sharing behavior. Most importantly, an external reward system could enhance competitiveness in a climate, but it may decrease individuals' willingness to share knowledge. Organizational support is positively associated with subjective norms, which is also consistent with prior studies (Igbaria et al., 1996). In this aspect, it can be mentioned that, organizations must create the environment and support their employees where they feel motivated to exchange knowledge and comprehend the benefits of it. Through constant support, members feel accountable, and be more engaged in sharing the knowledge they gain through research works and other seminar or trainings.

Limitations of the study

Like other studies, this study has some limitations despite some supported hypotheses. Firstly, the study collected the data from two universities in Bangladesh. In that case, it cannot generalize the faculty members of the universities in Bangladesh. Secondly, a cross-sectional data was collected which is another limitation for this study. To understand the effect of extrinsic rewards impact, longitudinal studies would be good to understand the changes in the behaviors of the faculty members.

Future Research

Due to some limitations and unsupported hypothesis, future research can include the longitudinal study to understand the change in the behavior of the faculty members who are working in the universities. In addition, some other factors like peer support, employee performance, organizational climate and leadership factors can be included in the future studies. Furthermore, a cross-cultural study can be conducted to understand whether extrinsic rewards has any impact on faculty member's motivation in the universities or not.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the TRA, substantial influences on employees' attitudes toward information sharing are found, and these influences have a considerable impact on knowledge sharing intentions and behavior. The findings point to some managerial implications for managers looking to encourage sharing of knowledge in academic institutions. Managers should encourage employees to share knowledge with an open mind and offer helpful criticism to knowledge producers. Most importantly, it can be highlighted that when organizations support their employees in knowledge sharing behavior, they generally open the platform for innovation. Because, the members in the organizations are involved, feel valued and are encouraged to share knowledge with others.

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The Impact of Promotion and Advertisement towards the Brand Association and Brand Loyalty

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of sales promotion and advertisement on brand association and brand loyalty of Samsung smartphones. The core idea of this study is to verify the effect of monetary promotion, non-monetary promotion, perceived advertising, and individual attitude towards brand association and brand loyalty This research was carried out in Yangon, Myanmar by employing a simple random sampling method and questionnaires distributed to 244 respondents through Google form website. According to the Multiple Linear Regression analysis, results show that monetary promotion and individual attitude towards advertising significantly affect brand association while brand association significantly affects brand loyalty. Data were analyzed by using SPSS software. This study contributes to the literature by adding empirical evidence in terms of how consumers respond to sales promotion and advertising as well as further effects on brand association and brand loyalty.

Keywords: Sales promotion, advertisement, brand association, brand loyalty

INTRODUCTION

The living standard of people is getting better with the development of the market economy and smartphone users are increasing year by year. As a durable product, the smartphone has become a necessity in our life. With the accumulation of people's wealth, consumers tend to buy high-quality and durable products when they want to change for a new mobile phone. In the minds of consumers, good brand products represent high quality, so brands have a more important role in the market. Having brand advantage can occupy an advantageous position in the market competition.

Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd. is a South Korean multinational electronic company located in Suwan, South Korea. Their revenue accounted for 70% of the group's revenue in 2012(Klimes, 2019). More than 370,000 people are employed and a sales network in 80 countries has been accumulated (SHAMS, 2016). In 2020, Samsung Myanmar had a 14.52% share of the smartphone market in Myanmar while Apple had a 10.55% market share (Statcounter,2020). In order to maintain its market share in Myanmar, market strategies are needed such as conducting sales promotions and advertisements.

Previous studies have proven the effect of relationships between sales promotion and advertisement on brand association and brand loyalty (Etsy and Mohammad, 2020). In this

study, the effect of sales promotion and advertisement on brand associations and brand loyalty of Samsung smartphones have been examined. The prior study was carried out in South Jakarta, Indonesia. Therefore, this study contributes to the literature by adding empirical evidence to how people in Myanmar respond to sales promotions and advertisements offered by companies and the effects on creating brand associations and brand loyalty.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will briefly describe the variables used in this study based on the theories and previous studies. It is used as the rationalization for the hypothesis development and the structural model. The variables are monetary and non-monetary sales promotion, perceived advertising, brand associations, brand loyalty.

Sales promotion

Rowley (1998) stated that sales promotion is one of the five aspects of the promotional mix while the other four aspects are advertising, personal selling, direct marketing, and publicity or public relations. Sales promotion can be assumed in the form of product display, contest, voucher, free product, gift, discount price, and rebate (Tellis, 1998). All these tools are used to increase product sales in the short run (Kotler & Amstrong, 1997; Kotler & Amstrong, 2008) while sales promotion is proved to increase demand and positively affect consumer purchasing behavior (Greenleaf & Lehmann, 1995; Laroche, Kim, & Zhou, 1996; Thomas & Menon, 2007; Santini, Sampaio, Perin, & Vieira, 2015; Luxton & Brito, 2015). On the other hand, this variable proved to have positive and negative effects on brand equity. Monetary sales promotion such as deduction or coupons is demonstrated to negatively affect brand equity (Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000). This is because most consumers set the price as one indicator of product quality. Giving discounts or coupons will result in price reductions and decline the consumers' perceptions of product quality (Agarwal & Teas, 2002; DelVecchio, Henard, & Freling, 2006). Chu & Keh (2006); Palazón and Delgado-Ballester (2009); Buil et al. (2013) found that non-monetary sales promotion has the opposite effect in which the allocation of free products and gifts proves to increase the brand's product equity. According to the above explanations, the hypotheses that will be tested in this study are:
Hypothesis 1. The monetary promotion has a negative effect on brand association.
Hypothesis 2. The non-monetary promotion has a positive effect on brand association.

Advertising
Bovee (1992) studied that advertising is a form of non-personal marketing communication that gives information about products and services or ideas through various media such as newspapers, magazines, television, radio, outdoor advertising, or online media such as search results, blogs, or websites. Advertising is differentiated from public relations in that an advertiser usually pays for and has control over the message. It is adapted from personal selling in that the message is non-personal, i.e., not directed to a particular individual. Advertising is communicated through various mass media. Nettelhorst & Brannon (2012) analyzed the broader impact of these variables on attracting consumers' attention and affecting consumer attitudes towards products (Jeong & Jang, 2016; Shareef et al., 2017; Stroup & Branstetter, 2018). To examine the effect of advertising on brand equity, Buil et al. (2013) employed perceived advertising and individual attitudes towards advertising. Perceived advertising is the consumer's perception of how much advertising the company is doing. The more advertising applied, the more inheriting a brand in the minds of consumers.

In the meantime, the consumer's perception of the attributes and brand quality of products affects the individual attitudes towards advertising (Buil et al., 2013). According to the above explanations, the hypotheses that will be tested in this study are:

Hypothesis 3. Perceived advertising has a positive effect on brand association.

Hypothesis 4. Individual attitude towards advertising has a positive effect on brand association.

Brand associations and brand loyalty

The concept of brand loyalty was first suggested by Copeland in 1923. Many academics later placed forward the concept of brand loyalty from different points of view. Choong (1998) stated the brand loyalty of customers is the real buying behavior of customers, which also applies from a behavioral view to the research of brand loyalty. From the view of attitudinal allegiance, American scientist Day (1969) first pointed out that elements of brand loyalty attitude and behavior must be understood when researching brand loyalty. Many researchers consider brand loyalty to be the consumer choice for the particular product and buy purpose. Jacoby & Chestnut (1978) summarized the concept of brand loyalty put forward by many academics, pointed out that brand loyalty is created by the combined impact of psychological operations such as buy decision-making, post-purchase assessment, and so on. Jacoby (1978) examined that in a monopoly scenario, customers must choose to buy a certain product of goods or facilities or customers because of the comfort of buying a certain product and repeating the acquisition of such a repeated purchase conduct to evaluate brand loyalty is not advisable. Brand association and brand loyalty are elements of brand equity. These two variables are the two highest dimensions of brand equity (Aaker, 2009). Brand association is a collection of information and impressions attached to a consumer's memory of a particular brand (Aaker, 2009) while brand loyalty is the commitment of consumers to make a rational purchase of a particular brand of product or service without being affected by the influence of a competitor's brand (Oliver, 2014). Brand equity is a set of brand assets that can subtract the value provided by the products or services to companies and customers (Aaker, 2009). Brand association and brand loyalty have significantly affected brand equity (Yoo, et al., 2000). Yoo, et al (2000) also found out that brand association is also sometimes considered as brand awareness. The positive relationship between brand association and brand loyalty has been proven (Keller & Lehmann,2003; Pappu, Quester, & Cooksey,2005; & Buil et al., 2013). In addition, there is a positive relationship between sales promotion, advertisement, and brand equity (Valette-Florence et al., 2011; Buil et al., 2013; Boyland, & Halford, 2013). The results of prior studies indicate a positive relationship between sales promotion and advertising on brand equity. According to the above explanations, the hypothesis that will be tested in this study is:

Hypothesis 5. Brand association has a positive effect on brand loyalty.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sampling and measurements

Questionnaires with five-point Likert scales (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree) were distributed to 244 smartphone owners in Yangon, Myanmar. The samples are selected through a random sampling method and the questionnaires are distributed by using google forms. Sales promotions are segmented into monetary and non-monetary promotions following Buil et al. (2013). Monetary promotions consist of price discounts and cash backs while non-monetary promotions consist of free items and gifts. In addition, advertising is segmented

into perceived advertising and individual attitudes (Buil et al., 2013). Perceived advertising consists of varieties of online advertising and advertising media while individual attitudes consist of the capabilities of commercial TV smartphones to be recognized by consumers, the ability of the smartphone company to promote the advantages of the smartphones in television advertising, and the uniqueness of smartphone advertising. Brand association is measured through the credibility of Samsung company, the clear image of the type of person who uses the brand, whether the brand has a personality and is interesting. Finally, brand loyalty is measured through the willingness of consumers to buy Samsung smartphones, the brand as consumers' first choices, and the superiority of the brand compared to other brands, whether Samsung smartphones are the first consumer choice, whether consumer prefers Samsung smartphones to other brands (Keller & Lehmann, 2003; Pappu et al., 2005; Buil et al., 2013). The conceptual model is shown in Figure 1 below.
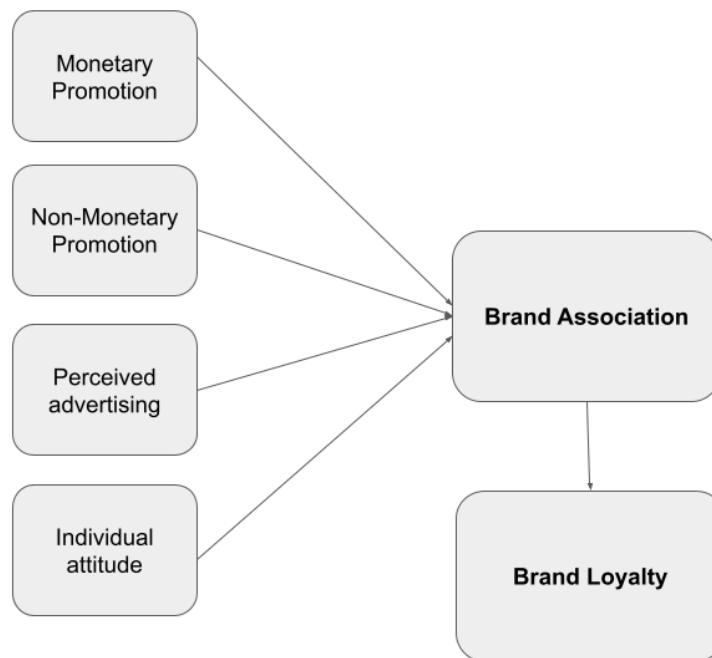

Figure 1. The conceptual model

DATA ANALYSIS

Based on analysis of demographic information from table 1, 34% (65) of respondents were males and 66% (124) were females. For respondents' age, 5% (10) of respondents were aged between 16-20 years old, 27% (50) were aged between 21-25 years old, 22% (41) were aged between 26-30 years old and 47% (88) were aged higher than 31 years old.

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	**65**	**34**
Female	**124**	**66**
Age		
16-20 years old	**10**	**5**
21-25 years old	**50**	**27**
26-30 years old	**41**	**22**
More than 31 years old	**88**	**47**
Total	**189**	**100**

Table 1. Demographic information of respondents

Statistical treatment of data

Table 2 shows the reliability of total factors analysis from the Cronbach coefficient alphas in each group of questionnaires lower than 0.60 would be questionable. Those factors close to 0.70 are acceptable, and those larger than 0.80 good (Sekaran, 2003). Thus, it could be concluded that all questions related in this study are relevant and reliable and applicable for research scales instruments. Referring to Laetitia Radder and Wei Huang (2007), the Cronbach's alphas of all factors were larger than 0.70.

The reliability analysis

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	NO. of items
Monetary Promotion	.716	5
Non-Monetary Promotion	.768	3
Perceived Advertising	.806	2
Individual Attitude towards Advertising	.768	3
Brand Association	.764	3
Brand Loyalty	.888	3

Table 2. Reliability Test with Cronbach's Alpha

Hypothesis testing

Table 3 shows the Multiple Linear Regression Analysis using the method with Brand Association as the dependent variable then monetary promotion, non-monetary promotion, perceived advertising, and individual attitude towards advertising as the independent variables. Referring to the figures shown in Table 3, the result that 41% (R^2) of the dependent variable, Brand Association, is indicated by the three independent variables at the 0.05 significance level.

From the table 3, the result shows that Monetary promotion (β = 0.233, p <0.05), Perceived

advertising (β = 0.33, p<0.05) and individual attitude towards advertising(β = 0.238, p <0.05) are the strongest significant variables with a positive relationship toward the brand associations. Thus, H_1 , H_3 and H_4 are supported. Besides, non-monetary promotion (β = 0.73, p>0.05) is not significant since the value of p is greater than 0.05. Therefore, H_2 is rejected.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.044	.263		3.968	.000
	MonetoryPromotion	.217	.074	.203	2.918	.004
	NonMonetoryPromotion	.063	.063	.073	.999	.319
	PerceivedAdvertising	.192	.068	.209	2.814	.005
	IndividualAttitudetowards Advertising	.321	.068	.333	4.709	.000

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.068	.262		4.073	.000
	MonetoryPromotion	.249	.067	.233	3.701	.000
	IndividualAttitudetowards Advertising	.319	.068	.330	4.672	.000
	PerceivedAdvertising	.218	.063	.238	3.471	.001

Table 3. Regression results-Factors affecting towards brand association.

Referring to the figures shown in Table 4, the result that 58% (R^2) of the dependent variable, Brand Loyalty, is indicated by the Brand Association as an independent variable at the 0.05 significance level. We can see that Brand Association has a strong positively affected Brand Loyalty with the result β = 0.584, p<0.05. Thus, hypothesis 5 is significantly supported.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.051	.365		.141	.888
	BrandAssociation	.892	.091	.584	9.849	.000

a. Dependent Variable: BrandLoyalty

Table 4. Regression results-Factors affecting towards brand loyalty

Hypothesis	Beta	Sig.	Results
Hypothesis 1. The monetary promotion has a negative effect on brand association	0.233	.000	supported

Hypothesis 2. The non-monetary promotion has a positive effect on brand association	0.073	.319	Not supported
Hypothesis 3. Perceived advertising has a positive effect on brand association	0.238	.001	supported
Hypothesis 4. Individual attitude towards advertising has a positive effect on brand association	0.330	.000	supported
Hypothesis 5. Brand association has a positive effect on brand loyalty	0.584	.000	supported

Table 5. Result of Hypotheses

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the analysis results, it is proved that monetary promotion and individual attitude towards advertising significantly affect brand association of Samsung smartphones. The result has supported Chu & Keh (2006), Palazón & Delgado-Ballester (2009), as well as Buil et al. (2013). In contrast, non-monetary promotion has no significant effect on brand association. Individual attitude towards advertising also has a positive effect on brand association of Samsung smartphones. The result has supported Buil et al. (2013) and Kotler & Keller (2007). There are three key factors to consider, namely 1) the quality of the advertised message, 2) the way the message is delivered, and 3) the frequency of the message delivered. To that end, a more qualified, creative, and attractive advertisement will influence consumers and brand association (Moorthy & Hawkins, 2005; Keller, Parameswaran, & Jacob, 2011). Perceived advertising including media and frequency of advertising also significantly affects brand association of Samsung smartphones. The empirical results also indicate that brand association has a positive effect on brand loyalty. The result has supported Keller & Lehmann (2003), Pappu et al. (2005), & Buil et al. (2013).

This study provides information to smartphone managers of the powerful effect of non-monetary promotions and individual attitudes in shaping brand associations that will ultimately shape consumer loyalty. The effect of promotion in the form of free items and gifts on consumer brand equity is relatively higher than on monetary promotions such as discounts, rebates, or coupons. In addition, the effect of ad quality and its creativity is higher than either the media employed, or the frequency of advertising given. The results of this study will be useful for managers in determining the appropriate type of promotions based on consumers' preferences.

The empirical results indicate that monetary promotion and individual attitude towards advertising significantly affect brand association. Moreover, Brand association significantly affects brand loyalty. Analysis indicated on gender and age group towards sales promotion and advertising for further research is strongly recommended to gain broader representation in each gender and age group.

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Loyalty and Organizational Behavior Revisited: An Inductive Study of Employer-Employee Loyalty in a Developing Asian Context

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines a generally under-researched area of CSR and business ethics, that of loyalty among co-workers in the contemporary business organization. Responsibilities towards loyalty constitute a recognized subject in the CSR and Ethics literature, both from employees towards their employers and also also employers towards their employees. To date, of the extant body of research, the vast majority concern the antecedents and consequences of loyalty from employees towards employers and how this may house significant productivity and reputational benefits. There has been far less attention devoted to the opposite concern i.e., loyalty from employers to employees – both in terms of the determinants and consequences. In addition, the empirical context for exploring employee loyalty has been mostly Anglo-European in scope. There is a marked paucity of research which looks at employer loyalty in non-Western – especially developing – economic and cultural contexts, and particularly in emerging Southeast Asia.

In this paper we seek to address this caveat through exploring employer loyalty towards organizational employees in the national context of Thailand. In contrast to the developed economies of Singapore, Japan and Korea, across developing Asian economies such as Thailand the weak formal regulatory environment combined with the harshness of the economy concerned makes such organizational environments very much an 'employer's world' where instances of unfair treatment of employees is common (though often unreported). It is within such a context that we examine the proposition that loyalty is a social duty that employers owe their employees based on the reciprocal nature of certain rights and duties within human relationships and an understanding of psychological contracts. Our particular focus is in unpacking the nature and extent of employer loyalty towards employees in the Thai context – one that is traditionally held to be culturally collectivist, high-context, relations-based and hierarchical. This stands in contrast to loyalty in within employer-employee relations in the West, typically seen as relatively individualist, egalitarian and low-context. To date such an approach and focus of research is both lacking and needed.

Given that loyalty is or should be a mutual expectation across hierarchical levels – rather than being unidirectional – we undertook a 'dyadic' approach i.e., looking at the perceptions and opinions of both managers and direct reports (superiors/owners and subordinates). We sourced our data from twenty-six semi-structured interviews conducted within eight Thai domestic companies across a range of industry sectors including hospitality, automotive, construction, facilities management, banking and consumer goods. Interviews were conducted both in Thai and English and ranged in duration from thirty to sixty minutes. Most interviews held in Thai were then transcribed and subjected to a translation-back translation process. Interviews in English were recorded using notes due to stated respondent unease

with being recorded. We analyzed our data using template techniques and multiple rounds of coding (open-coding, axial coding and depth coding) to uncover the main points of interest concerning type, extent of an implications of employer loyalty practice towards employee wellbeing, commitment, role and performance.

Data suggested that the nature and prevalence of employer loyalty was variable to a significant degree and that this in turn stemmed markedly from a cultural norm – not so much the dimensions of e.g., collectivism and high-context but instead from the indigenous construct of bunkhun (an influential and prevalent construct across Southeast Asia).In its influence, bunkhun denotes the norms and practices embodied in reciprocated favors among pre-existing interpersonal networks which tend to suffuse Thai business organizations. Our findings showed that the higher the degree of bunkhun in the individual-level employer-employee relationship, the higher and more personal the nature of the loyalty conferred. Conversely, where pre-existing bunkhun was low or non-existent the loyalty afforded by employers to employees was weak. We also found that the type of loyalty differed. Where bunkhun was elevated the trust conferred was more affective or emotional in nature and less rational or cognitive. Conversely, where bunkhun was low or absent, the loyalty found in the relationship was more cognitive and rational (centered on e.g., belief/trust in capability as opposed to goodwill).

Taken together our findings make a number of contributions to several inter-related bodies of research within the Asian business literature. To begin with, expand and refine how we understand the influence of indigenous culture constructs within Asian commercial enterprises – in this case on employer-employee loyalty in Thailand. Prior work which looks at the influence of culture tends to focus on dimensions garnered from the traditional 'national culture models', instanced by the frameworks of Hofstede, Hall, Trompenaars, Schwartz and the GLOBE project. However, these dimensions – while comparatively useful – do not afford the subtlety and depth of insight that indigenous culture constructs such as guanxi or – in our case – bunkhun do. By uncovering the role of bunkhun on employer loyalty we can open the black box on the variation in types and degrees of loyalty as displayed in our interview data. In so doing our findings add to the growing corpus of literature explaining how indigenous norms and values shape the workings of constructs such as loyalty and trust in emerging ASEAN. More widely, this then houses implications both for the theory and practice surrounding International HRM within the Asian context, particularly as concerns norms involved in recruitment, selection and appraisal – as well as employee motivation. Uncovering the influences on employer loyalty also informs how we understand the practice of CSR among emerging Asian-based corporations. Practically, this may be especially informative for incoming Western multinational corporations seeking to form joint venture partners and who wish to better understand how and why employee relations work in Asia. It would also enable them to better minor the on-the-ground implementation of their CSR and ethics policies as regards employee treatment.

The study concludes with a discussion of the limitations and directions for future research. This centre particularly on the need for cross-national ratification of our findings in other Asian contexts through wider sampling and collection measures. This would then help develop the theory nascent in this study and lend our understanding of employer-employee loyalty wider applicability.

Keywords: Employer loyalty; CSR; National culture; Bunkhun; International HRM; Thailand.