

Handbook of Research on Deconstructing Culture and Communication in the Global South

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Dedicated to our beloved family members and all in the struggle for a better world.

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Reflections on the African Print Media: Critical Analysis of the Ideology Question 1

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Samuel Akpe, Bingham University, Nigeria

This study set out to revisit some of the early newspapers in Africa and their relevance to anti-colonial struggle. It examined their audacious confrontation of the colonial masters, what guided their militant approach, and why such nationalistic tendencies are lacking in the post-independent journalism. The key objectives were to locate the influence of nationalistic ideology on the performance of the pre-independence newspapers. Anchored on the twin theories of agenda setting and social responsibility roles of the media, the study adopted the qualitative data collection method, with the library as its main source of data source. Findings showed that what is lacking in the modern African media are well articulated national ideologies from which the media could draw inspiration in their practices. The study recommends well-articulated national ideologies without which the media will have no foundation for their individual missions that would help reinvent the lost nationalistic zeal.

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Mass Media in Pakistan: Historical Evolution, Challenges, and Prospects 21

Muhammad Yousaf, University of Gujrat, Pakistan

This research study explores mass media's historical evolution, challenges, and prospects in Pakistan. The study delves into the role of media, highlighting the vibrant media landscape in Pakistan, which encompasses publications in Urdu, English, and regional languages. The print media in Pakistan is predominantly under private ownership, operating with minimal government intervention. In contrast, electronic media encompasses both state-run and privately-owned entities. Furthermore, this research identifies the challenges faced by mass media in Pakistan, including issues of censorship, ownership patterns, and the impact of digital transformation on media practices. It identifies the prospects for the future, considering emerging trends such as online news portals, social media platforms, and streaming services. By comprehensively examining the historical evolution, challenges, and prospects of mass media in Pakistan, this research provides valuable insights for policymakers, media professionals, and scholars seeking to understand and navigate the dynamics of media in the country.

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Aboriginal rights activist, poet, educator, and environmentalist Oodgeroo Noonuccal became the first Indigenous Australian to publish a collection of poetry. Noonuccal's work can be understood as "literary ethnobotany" that gives prominence to the plant-based cultural knowledge of Indigenous people. Her work expresses the idea of plants—and the multidimensional knowledge systems surrounding them—as embodied figures exerting material agencies in discourse with other beings and elements. This chapter reinterprets Noonuccal's poetry as literary ethnobotany that boldly asserts the vibrant materialities of the botanical world. In its emphasis on Indigenous Australian traditions of plants, her writing exemplifies biocultural activism in which native plants serve as potent reagents of cultural sovereignty for Indigenous Australians. Going beyond the dominant Western view of plants as mute objects of appropriation, Noonuccal's narratives of botanical life thus contribute to the revitalization of human-flora relations in Australia.

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The COVID-19 pandemic has presented various challenges for journalism and the media in the Global South. In many countries, media outlets are struggling to cover the pandemic due to limited resources, weak infrastructure, and the impact of government restrictions on freedom of expression. During the COVID-19 outbreak, the media must acquire and distribute correct information. This research examines the discursive creation of journalism during the COVID-19 conflict. The researcher analyzed discourses on the coronavirus pandemic from interviews with journalists and the Pakistani journalism trade press. In COVID-19, journalists discursively positioned themselves as responsible yet susceptible members of the communication ecology, not just because of the pandemic but also environmental factors that preceded it. The study concludes that health reporters in Pakistan can filter fake news during the COVID-19 pandemic by verifying information, fact-checking, using trusted sources, avoiding sensationalism, and collaborating with medical experts.

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The new internet and digital technologies have truly accelerated and improved media functions and operations in modern society. Like the developed nations, sub-Saharan African countries have benefitted immensely in adopting new media tools to generate, access, disseminate, store, and retrieve information. Since the basic function of the media is to inform the public, digital tools and various internet platforms

have exemplified this role by increasing the volume and spread of news information in today's network society. In fact, the current information era is one characterized by the inundated volume of data and flood of information. However, with such incredible overload of information, new problems have emerged; the anonymous nature of most of these internet platforms have permitted highly adulterated and unethical news contents to contaminate the digital space. Sadly, many credible news information compete or get mixed with the whirlpool of disinformation and news pollutants.

Chapter 6

Western Media and the Problem of the Other in Representational Communication: Rethinking the African Experience 80
Thaddeus Oparah, Madonna University, Nigeria

This is an essay in deconstruction that argues for the necessity of Western reevaluation of the I-Thou philosophy for better appreciation of Africa's position in the global arena. The reevaluation project must of necessity evolve a new media order to counter the traditional Western media and its narrative of the Global South with the assumption that in the I-Thou binary, the I must reasonably acknowledge and work for the benefit of the Thou for its own good or else the I finds itself in pernicious situation of self-destruction. This is based on the assumption that self-actualization is impossible without the Other because the foundation of existence was the reciprocated face-to-face relationships between living beings. As such, rather than a relationship of a violent hierarchy amongst the known binaries, where one of the two opposites governs the other, it is a project that calls for complementary relationship as a counter to "mimetic philopraxis," that is, "the unethical imitation of the life of non-Africans."

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Charu Ahluwalia, Chitrakoot School of Liberal Arts, Shoolini University, Solan, India
Purnima Bali, Chitrakoot School of Liberal Arts, Shoolini University, Solan, India

For centuries, classical myths have been celebrated as models of excellence. Initially, the study of myths was undertaken to understand culture by only being mindful of the fixed literal meaning of the text. In this context, the ancient myth of the Ramayan in India stood as a monolithic structure unquestioned since time immemorial. However, in modern times, when the deconstruction philosophy of Derrida rejects the idea of a fixed meaning as conveyed by a text, the latent meaning of the text arises to the surface. With the emergence of feminism, the unheard voices of canonical texts are brought to the limelight through the contemporary mode of mythic fiction. The mythic fictions undertaken for study—The Forest of Enchantments, Sita-Warrior of Mithila, and The Liberation of Sita—highlight myriad ways of deconstructing the character of Sita and other subaltern female characters who were initially construed under the androcentric dictates of the classical literary canon. Hence, feminist deconstruction of mythology by mythic fiction deconstructs age-old cultural axioms.

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Olugbenga Ebenezer Oloidi, Ekiti State University, Ado, Nigeria

The Yoruba people of Southern Nigeria are often believed to place much value on ethical cultural norms. It is observed that they do not depend only on the use of verbal communication in passing moral messages. As a matter of fact, it is averred that a Yoruba parent could make a child cry for doing wrong without necessarily saying a word or holding a cane. This shows the use of non-verbal communication

in the passage of moral values among the Yoruba people. Detaching the culture of the communicator from the communication seems implausible. Communication, culture, and morality are tripartite that are inseparably interwoven. This explains why the individual culture influences the way one communicates, either verbally or non-verbally. The crux of this chapter is to philosophically analyze verbal and non-verbal communications as the means of passing ethical values among the Yoruba. The methodology the chapter intends to employ shall be analytical. Juxtaposition will be made in the understanding of verbal and non-verbal communications in the passage of morals among the Yoruba people.

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The issue of identity alongside social integration is a matter for concern; hence, there is a need to view it through the lenses of “Zikora”. This study interrogates Adichie’s ability to demonstrate how immigrants navigate their way through new environments to attain cultural stability, transcultural citizenship, and new identity in the novel “Zikora” written by Chimamadna Ngozi Adichie. The chapter as a qualitative research is descriptive and the data for the study is selected from portions of “Zikora”. The theoretical frameworks of Harris and Michalik and Michalska-Suchanek underpin the study and findings clearly emphasize that language is made to communicate the thoughts and identity of people to readers. This study concludes that the cultural complexities of new environments compel people to embrace and adapt to new culture and reality.

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Traditional Art’s Survival in the Digital Era: Puppet Performance on YouTube 141
Ana Windarsih, National Research and Innovation Agency, Indonesia

Various aspects of life have changed since the COVID-19 pandemic, including the puppeteer artists. For performing artists, the policy of stay at home really hit them. But on the other hand it creates creativity and innovation in performances. The benefits of literature help reflect, express humanity without feeling patronized, and are invited not only to reproduce but to produce meaning. The aim of this study is to examine the puppeteer survival by YouTube platform during the pandemic. Data analysis was carried out using Adorno’s cultural industry theory. As a result, the digital transformation of puppeteers in puppet shows during the COVID-19 pandemic provide economic resilience and evoke solidarity.

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Some scholars place too much emphasis on the role of capitalists and their capital in the development of the culture industry, while others view ethnic music as a stable ethnic identity. This chapter discusses how technology influences the development of the ethnic pop music industry in Indonesia. At the onset of the culture industry, the high cost of music production and distribution technologies resulted in a

few producers dominating the market and limited options for listeners. Subsequently, advancements in technology decreased the cost of equipment, enabling Minang entrepreneurs and musicians to establish a thriving local music industry. The strong sense of cultural identity among Minang migrants outside West Sumatra has created a large market for this ethnic pop music. However, the relationship between music, identity, market, and business is constantly evolving, as the question of music as ethnic identity is often raised. Often, the success of musicians can lead to the acceptance of their music as ethnic music.

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In today's era, both worldwide and in China, the use of animation techniques for disseminating, displaying, and reproducing cultural heritage information is becoming increasingly common. This chapter aims to address two primary objectives. Firstly, it seeks to investigate the feasibility of utilizing animation as a medium of communication. Secondly, it aims to examine the distinctive communication characteristics and advantages of animation compared to other methods of media, such as pictures, text, and video, within the context of digitizing cultural heritage. This chapter will discuss and analyze the above questions and explore the applicability and inevitability of animation as a medium in the process of cultural heritage digitization from the perspective of three variables between communication science and animation arts—communication mission, communication ecology, and communication terminal—to provide interdisciplinary research ideas and foundation for the theoretical development of cultural heritage digitization, communication science, and animation.

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Gender Equality as a Cultural Requisite for Sustainable Development in Nigeria.....	187
<i>Hope Imuetinyan Iguodala-Cole, Bingham University, Nigeria</i>	
<i>Mageed Oshogwe Haruna, Federal University of Kashere, Nigeria</i>	

It is crucial to understand that development is an existent fact that demands the contribution of each gender in order to grasp gender roles factually and their significance in the defense of unassailable rights as well as how they affect them. This research examined gender issues in Nigeria and Africa in general and how they have affected development. A combination of the theory of recognition and structural functionalist theory was employed to examine gender concerns and how they might spur progress if well-managed. The researchers used secondary data sources to collect relevant information and used thematic analysis to analyse the data generated. The study shows that there are three categories of socially sanctioned moral rules that establish limits on how well individuals are accepted as members of society in contemporary cultures. The chapter recommends the need for men and women to view their positions as significant but not superior in order to attain sustainable development.

Chapter 14

Global Environmental Challenges and the Role of Colored Ecofeminists 207

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Qasim Shafique, The University of Faislabad, Pakistan

Aiming to uphold the ideal of ushering in the true equality between our fellow human beings and their symbiotic relationship with the nature/environment, the goal of this chapter is to rationalize that any activism directed towards women's liberation will achieve the fullest spectrum only when it involves and incorporates the environmental perspective on the decolonization of nature too. The false anthropocentric polarities between culture and nature and man and woman were engendered and proliferated by Western phallogocentric discourses that dichotomized nature and culture bracketing the former with the woman and latter with the man presenting it like an obvious and great truth. This chapter, therefore, deconstructing the myth of the false differences between the genders and the pallocentric nature/culture binary seeks to make a humanitarian claim that the ultimate liberation of women from the shackles of phallogo/anthropocentric is inextricably linked with the liberation of nature also.

Chapter 15

Celebrity Endorsement and Cultural Orientation as per the Indo-African Perspective 226

Jasmandeep Kaur, Ideal Insitute of Management and Technology, India

Kirandeep Bedi, Chandigarh University, Mohali, India

Ramanjeet Singh, ICFAI University, India

In many countries, celebrity endorsement is considered as the most premium form of advertisement where a renowned celebrity such as a popular actor/actress, singer, sports personality, etc. is made the brand ambassador. However, the consumer attitude towards celebrity endorsement is dependent on various cultural aspects. This chapter focuses on the different aspects of celebrity branding through the lenses of the culture and demography of two continents: Asia and Africa. The main focus of the chapter is on India from Asia and South Africa and Nigeria from Africa. In Asian countries like India, companies have been using famous celebrities like movie stars, singers, cricketers, etc. to endorse their brands as are much influenced by the long-term orientation. In African countries the most successful companies believe in establishing an affinity with the consumers by being "the brand of the people" and prefer local celebrities. Thus, the chapter sheds light on the role of culture on the effects of celebrity branding from Indo-African perspective.

Chapter 16

Conflict and Communication in the Global South: A Peace and War Journalism Perspective 247

Mehmood Ahmed, University of Gujrat, Pakistan

Mass media's content is the vital source of eventual changes in individuals' as well as community's preferences about foreign policy, public opinion, and relations among nations. Policymakers consult media content on public opinion, and the media are the people's major source of information on what policymakers are doing. The discourse in the communication scholarly society on how to influence and shape mass media content under situations of systematic violence and conflict keeps budding not just in geographical capacity, but also on the praxis and epistemological fronts. The practitioners of the paradigm of peace journalism, the theoretical base of this chapter, forward the idea of revisiting norms of conventional journalism that until now take side of violence and/or conflict and to develop new

norms that favour communal harmony and address common grounds. This chapter explores the trends, influences, and interplay of conflict and communication in the Global South with a particular reference to South Asia.

Chapter 17

Socio-Religious Norms of Pakistan: Understanding the Emotional Labour and the Dilemma of Stay-at-Home Women..... 271
Maira Qaddos, Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore, Pakistan

A huge percentage of females act as stay-at-home women in Pakistan. In this chapter, an attempt is made to explore how stay-at-home women are offering their contributions towards society and why their role is underestimated by their families and society. According to the socio-religious norms of Pakistani society, women are assigned the role of homemakers as their foremost responsibility is to take care of their husband and children. For understanding the region-based norms, various interpretations of rulings of Islam offered by highly acknowledged scholars are analyzed. Moreover, many stay-at-home women and their families are interviewed for understanding their schedules and duties and to get to know what their families think about their role. It is concluded that there is a need to educate the people about the gendered roles defined by their religion which doesn't restrict women from becoming a part of practical labor workforce but at the same time does not underestimate the role of stay-at-home women in shaping the society.

Chapter 18

Philosophical Mediation Between Patriarchal Theory and Feminism: A Reflection on Igbo Society 283
Umunakwe Onyinye Bruno, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Legal dissolutions of traditional rights phenomenon and the constitutional elevations of gender neutrality have stirred deep argument within contemporary societies. The cultural Igbo society takes the lead to insist that rights systems are inherent because nature assigned certain rights to each gender of which men have superior rights while rights accruable to women are limited, and inferior. This delineates systematically patriarchal rights which are thereof eternally proactive, culturally endorsed, ontologically certified, religiously approved, and politically acceptable. Recent events show that a manifestation of male dominance over women is the gross restriction of women's legitimate right to power and possession. It is on this premise that the study argues that though there are cultural evidence of gender roles and biological differences do not mean that a particular gender is superior, more powerful, or should enjoy higher rights than the other. The study tends to promote gender neutrality which is subjected to criticisms for further research.

Chapter 19

Social Media and Connective Mourning: Analysing the EndSARSMemorial2 Protests in Nigeria..... 296
Temple Uwalaka, University of Canberra, Australia

This chapter explores how Nigerians are using social media platforms such as Twitter to memorialise protesters who were killed during the 2020 #EndSARS protests in Nigeria. Data for this chapter is from tweets (N=67,678) from Twitter users scraped from the hashtags "#EndSARSMemorial2" and "LekkiMassacre." Results show that the most frequently tweeted words were "rest in peace," "heroes," "who gave the order," and "#EndSARSMemorial2." Findings also demonstrate that protesters used

social media platforms to display their anger, anguish, imprecating the authorities, and to rouse solidarity contagion which ignited mourning and memorial march for the fallen activists in Nigeria. The chapter shows that beyond the realm of mourning based on relatedness, there is an emerging world of connective mourning where mourners mourn those that they do not have ties to or are unrelated to but memorialised due to shared belief and connective repertoire.

Chapter 20

The Impact of Social Media Use: A Cross-Cultural Study of Youth in Cairo and Casablanca..... 318
Heba Elshahed, The American University in Cairo, Egypt

Digital media have generated a plethora of novel tools and milieus for youth to express and explore their identities, the most famous of which are social network sites (SNS). SNS have revolutionized how people interact and communicate; it is vital to comprehend how this virtual social phenomenon is impacting how we perceive and feel about others and ourselves. This chapter examines how a netizen youth is impacted by social media participation and exposure to visual content, which in turn has the potential to affect the individual's evaluation of self. This chapter aims to investigate youth's experiences of social media use to explore the effects of social comparison, as they integrate and respond to visual representations of identities found online. The study employs cross-cultural analysis between Egypt-Cairo and Morocco-Casablanca.

Chapter 21

Modeling the Impact of Social Media Influencers on Intention to Visit Ecotourism Destinations in the Global South 339

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Syed Hassan Raza, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Pakistan
Nilufer Pembecioglu, Istanbul University, Turkey
Umer Zaman, Woosong University, South Korea
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Social media influencers promote ecotourism by sharing their personal experiences, opinions, and recommendations about eco-friendly destinations with their followers. Moreover, social media influencers can encourage their followers to adopt eco-friendly travel practices, such as reducing their carbon footprint, using public transportation, and staying at eco-friendly accommodations. To investigate the influence of social media influencers on ecotourism, an online survey was conducted with 500 active social media users. The study's results showed that social media influencer expertise, credibility, and interactivity significantly influence the intentions to visit ecotourism sites. Therefore, it can be concluded that social media influencers are crucial in promoting ecotourism by using their large online following to generate interest in sustainable travel and raise awareness about environmental issues. Their efforts can increase demand for eco-friendly travel options and contribute to preserving the environment.

Chapter 22

Structured-Deliberative Gossip: A Theory in Understanding Patterns of Political Communication
in Society 360

Melchizedec Onobe, Bingham University, Nigeria

Desmond Onyemechi Okocha, Bingham University, Nigeria

Donatus A. Etukudo, Independent National Electoral Commission, Nigeria

Ideas and government policies, whatever they are, are ventilated on step-motherly ration and fanned as ‘gossip’, sometimes, to test their popularity or otherwise before they are implemented. Employing deduction from observation, and using longitudinal approach and literature, findings of this investigation reveal that governments in the Global South adopt this communication strategy as an inverted feedback mechanism for policies they are not certain will enjoy public acceptability. The exploratory study stretches the parameters of the usage of the tactics by interrogating earlier theories like grapevine, propaganda. The study lays a foundation of the operational principles and applicability of a new political communication theory, structured-deliberative gossip theory (or grapevine info-filter theory), especially on matters of plebiscites in the Global South.

Chapter 23

Media Attention and Offline Political Participation in Pakistan: The Mediating Role of Political
Interest and Online Political Participation 382

Ayesha Ijaz, University of Gujrat, Pakistan

Muhammad Yousaf, University of Gujrat, Pakistan

This chapter examines how media use affects political engagement and uses political interest, online political participation as mediators. This study employed a cross-sectional research design. Data for this study were gathered by considering internet media users. The researchers used a survey method to collect data. The survey questionnaire was disseminated by posting a link to the Google form on various social media platforms (including Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, etc.). Data were collected from 430 participants using convenient sampling from the general population of Pakistan. It was found that media consumption has a major impact on offline political involvement. Furthermore, it was concluded that online political engagement moderates the relationship between media attention and offline engagement. In the analysis, online political participation virtually perfectly mediates the relationship between media attention and offline political participation.

Chapter 24

Mediatization of Ubuntu: Towards a Philosophical Approach to Media Practice in Africa 399

Melchizedec Onobe, Bingham University, Nigeria

News, in the tradition of the West, is majorly individualized, leaning strongly towards personality responsibility cult. It stands aloof from the communalization that is the central ideology of African metaphysics. In other fields and spheres, Ubuntu has enjoyed a veiled renaissance as a pivotal theme of identity outlook that resonates with many traditions of reasoning in Africa. The media protocol in Africa has been outside that experimentation. The study is a philosophical interrogation of personality-

celebrity-prominence as a news marker/source, foist on Africa in contradistinction to Africa's pristine worldview. As a concept paper, this research functionalizes the applicability of Ubuntu in news practice in Africa, suggesting that determinant and validity like prominence with Western predisposition and cognition should be seen beyond the prism of celebrities. It holds that prominence, as subject of news source, should be broadened within the context of community testament as validation of communal personality rather than individual persons.

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Foreword

The Global South humanity in the current human age is confronted with the polemical feat to deeply reflect on the postcolonial conditions and the complexities which generate uncertainties and qualms about the decolonisation project in the 21st century. The media's role in today's world has greatly evolved, and it goes beyond mere dissemination of information to include fundamental functions of shaping people's cultural, linguistic, political and religious worldviews. It is the realisation of this essential place of the media that has drawn the attention of power to media operations across the world. However, the interest of power in media operations and the uncanny marriage between the two institutions have some serious implications in contemporary period of information. The chapters in this volume which is co-edited book by Drs Desmond Onyemечи Okocha, Muhammad Yousaf and Melchizedec J. Onobe engage with troubled discourses around cultural and communication practices which are profoundly entangled with notions of cultural freedoms, development, gender equity, human rights and governance, language ideologies, racial, religious, and media practices.

The *Handbook of Research on Deconstructing Culture and Communication in the Global South* comes at a critical moment when there is discernible increase in the realm of ideas about decolonisation and globalisation, which is coming from the Global South scholars who demand re-envisioning new sensibilities that promote re-conceptualisation of humanity. These debates and animated struggles are premised on a deeply felt quest to create a discursive construction of the Global South people and their existential experiences in current intricate spectres of local and global neoliberal imperialism as well as visible efforts to muzzle dissenting voices. Contributors to this Handbook explore manifold scopes relating to cultural, local needs of communication, opening of democratic spaces, and general humanitarian concerns in contemporary Global South. Apparently, these scholars push for an alternative decolonized world with conditions which reflect what Jonathan Sacks would qualify as the dignity of difference and the respect of human rights. Such a fully decolonized world which supports democracy, self-definition and human growth can only be produced through a constant struggle against hegemonic practices which limit expressive freedoms. Thus, the contributors in this volume deconstruct decolonisation myths and arraign Francis Fukuyama's utopian hypothesis about the end of history by exposing the presence of coloniality and cognitive empires, censorship in communication and media practices among other domains.

The value of intellectual contribution to the understanding of the previous snares of colonial matrixes of power in order to expound the present and imagine the future possibilities cannot be contested. I recognise great value in intellectual conversations about the existing challenges and prescriptive practices which hamper the Global South human emancipation. I also totally subscribe to Ndlovu-Gatsheni ideas that the daunting problem which scholars from the Global South seek to address has to do with 'a present' which is absent since what is unfolding in the current skewed modernity is a telling story of

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a dream deferred and the legacy of colonialism with its Cartesian logics which still linger on. The Us/Them frontiers and binary constructs continue to fracture humanity and hammer on possible collaborative trajectories which would bring positive transformation in human relations. The disenfranchisement of the people from the Global South on the basis of race is interjected and will continue to be condemned since it only generates falsified division and causes human suffering. This objectionable situation is exacerbated by neocolonialism practices by the local and global figures of authority. In other words, this is a subtle call on scholars from the Global South to participate in the perennial struggle which takes a multifaceted form and requires multi/interdisciplinary discursive approaches.

This co-edited handbook rounds off discussions with a call to the Global South to not simply swallow, hook-line-and-sinker, exogenous cultural and communication initiatives suggested to them. Global South's challenges may not be unique but solutions to these challenges must be context driven to inspire long-lasting successes. Rightly so, the author encourages the nations of these regions to look within to tackle development challenges, bearing in mind its unique socio-cultural, communication and economic circumstances. This is surely a good call on a good note!

Certainly, this volume offers important perceptions and opens up an essential discursive academic site to interrogate nuanced dimensions of human communication and the media existence in the present-day Global South. It is my hope that this handbook serves the purpose for which all the authors stived for. It is an honour to have been asked to write the foreword to this tremendously important book. I warmly applaud this intellectual endeavor which will benefit humanity from the Global South and beyond. It is the right time to rethink thinking itself and re-evaluate long-established norms and practices which obviously undermine human diversity and impinge on liberties.

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Preface

The Global South is an ideological bloc that infatuates much about where she is, wants to be, but importantly; who she is. The first enchantment along this all-drawn trajectory was a sly distortion of the psychological wellness of the individual's persona. A bipolarization of the identity of the people and their cultures created a feeling of a complex and a sense of otherness, resulting in self-rejection, self-pity and an imposed pauperization of their wealth-worth (Okocha, Onobe, & Alike, 2022).

The beguiled victims gradually became dissatisfied with their mirrored false double (personality) in the boisterous media and its tentacles in literature, surreptitiously implanted; although they wished they were the vanishing duplicate that were animated as tantalizing baits - well adorned manikins. That Elysian harbor progressively swelled into a center of gravity, attracting a global cultural exodus to the Americanization of all life good; the American dream. The enticement held out the promise, but only at a cost. The cumulative prerequisite cost is a subtle demand for repudiation of ideological nativity and subsequent engraftment into fringe socio-cultural shoot, invariably, an acquisition of a new culture-identity.

The frequent ingestion of a placebo, capsulation of a cherry modern life of the American dream, became a symbol of achievement for most in the bloc. A good number drifted off. The bait got emblemized into the economic, political and social fabric of most as the misty yardstick of diplomatic 'belonging' among the league of the axis of the flag. But America the ultimate is normatively what it is, a negotiated and scripted dream (Bjork, 2003; Onobe, 2022). As dissident inquiries and scholarship grew in number in the Global South, cognition that the promised 'space suit' to fly out of who one is into another that one desires was not a fit, but a strangled hold and a foot on the neck of the initiated. The eerie exhaustion that is now a refrain is, I can't breathe. (Sounds more like a poem)

The balance sheet of propelling realities in the phenomenal dynamics of globalization indicates that interminable fault lines, all along, beleaguer the group (all the constitute the Global South/ developing nations) because of the unnerving dilemma of exhibiting bipolarize condition in almost all spheres of its engagement (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2012). Some of the symptoms of the many malaise sparkles, under investigation, with evident vestige of imperial colonialism; others whiff of post-modernist scent, and then there are strains of mutative hybrids with no clear labels.

Over the bloc, the interpretation of realities in the region remains opaque and jaundiced undermining the Sphinxlike diplomatic dynamism regarding the history of its determinism - people in the Global South. The social apparatus, political and economic fixtures of interpreting the culture of the conquered ring of Southerners appears warped. Global North's fuddled experimentations, if that is what it is, and theories of wild reconstruction have, so far, not graduated the bloc from intermediate laboratory of merely otherings.

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The intelligentsia in the North made no contextual provision for people outside their clan, click, and culture to try their theories on. Many of the theoretical frames and of course the blue-print of practice have no models of fit originally in the Global South. If the bloc needs theories, should they not incubate some that will be customized to their peculiarity? Of course, they should, but in practical sense they have not. Wonky, skewwhiff theories and values have been stretched into the frame of issues in the Global South. The misfits could not be disguised, but its awkwardness has revealed a challenge.

Thus, the hemorrhaging bloc, its people, particularly Africans, are painted as pathologic addicts; accustomed beneficiaries of aids and hand-outs from ideological donors on fuzzy frames of cognition, graphs of standardization and value of grouping (Onobe, 2022). It makes the dilemma a double quicksand, requiring a strategic mapping of how best to advice on emancipation. It is the burden of this uphill task that steered the burden in us to put down a testament, a book with meta theoretical approach to the dialectical issues within this bound covers, variously sutured by empiricism—qualitative and quantitative—and combings through other textual, semiotic and narrative research methods.

Therefore, the first saddle, Chapter 1, takes a deep reflective look on the African print media by examining critical analysis of the Ideology question. It is a renaissance of storied pattern of early newspapers in Africa and their relevance to anti-colonial struggle. It examined their audacious confrontation of the colonial masters, what guided their militant approach and why such nationalistic tendencies are lacking in the post-independent journalism of this era. The paddle of the study showed that what is lacking in the modern African media are well-articulated national ideologies from which the media could draw inspiration in their practices.

Africa is not the only misconstrued and misjudged quarter. Chapter 2 reveals the complexity of other regions like mass media in Pakistan: historical evolution, challenges, and prospects. The case study exemplified the status of the media in the country and provides alternative spectacle different from the biased assessment of aerial commentators.

Chapter 3 presents literary ethnobotany in Aboriginal Australia by analyzing Oodgeroo Noonuccal's poetry as biocultural activism. It addresses environmental consciousness by opening a vista of analysis that shows that a symbiotic relationship between man and his environment is part of a cultural orientation of the early times. The chapter reinterprets Noonuccal's poetry as literary ethnobotany that boldly asserts the vibrant materialities of the botanical world. In its emphasis on Indigenous Australian traditions of plants, the author's writing exemplifies bio-cultural activism in which native plants serve as potent reagents of cultural sovereignty for Indigenous Australians. Going beyond the dominant Western view of plants as mute objects of appropriation, Noonuccal's narratives of botanical life thus contribute to the revitalization of human-flora relations in Australia.

Chapter 4 appraises the challenges and constructive role of journalism during COVID-19 in communication ecology of pandemic reporting in Global South. It digs up correlations between the health reporters' method of investigation in Pakistan and the prevalence of fake news during the COVID-19 pandemic. Elements like fact checking techniques, using trusted sources, avoiding sensationalism, and collaboration with medical experts presents a combined meta-approach to a social malaise; the kind of prescriptive mix that is rarely seen as panaceas.

Chapter 5 pays attention to the rise of news misinformation in digital era, evaluating the endless struggle between credible information and news pollutants in Nigeria. It elaborates on the emergent challenge of Internet and digital technologies, the anonymous nature of Internet platforms and the highly adulterated and unethical news contents that contaminates the digital space.

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Chapter 6 tackles, from the African experience, Western media and the problem of the othering in representational communication. It is an essay that focuses on deconstruction of stereotype, evolution of a new media order and argues for the necessity of Global North's reevaluation of the I-Thou philosophy to counter the traditional Western media and its narrative of the global South for better appreciation of Africa's position in the global arena.

This makes it imperative to consider how best, in Chapter 7, to demystifying mythology by deconstructing the Indian myth through modern mythic fiction. The article reawakens sage Indian culture dressed in modern expressionist perspective of subjects like feminism in the narrative uniqueness of Global South outlook. It appreciates age-old cultural axioms in the imbedded beauty and realism of alternative paradigm in the spectacle of philosophical symbolism.

Chapter 8 evaluates philosophical analysis of verbal and non-verbal communications in Yoruba ethical culture and provides salient highlights on the multi-dimensional utility of symbolic communication wealth-resource that exists like communal garden in the Yoruba language tradition. It makes a strong case for a holistic appreciation of communication, culture and morality seen as both unique and an inseparably interwoven tripartite cultural endowment of every society.

Chapter 9 delves into the rhetorical strategies in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Zikora*. it introduces the core concern of identity and how its handler, cultural specificity, interrelates to represent people, their civilization, adaptation and the implication of their socialization. It speaks to the acculturation dynamics of immigration and cultural tourism and the spangled issue of pop-cultural identity.

Deeper than that, Chapter 10 addresses traditional art's survival in the digital era through puppet performance on YouTube. The article, more than presenting the economic resilience of art's survival during the Covid-19 pandemic, foreshadows the matrix of puppets in African anthropology and cultivates its significant spotlight as a means of symbolic communication in times of triumphs and trouble.

Chapter 11 looks at the transformation of the ethnic pop music industry and the negotiation of cultural identity. It prods the question of the evolving relationship between music, identity, market, and business and the transformative implication of that on the nativity and ethnicity of music in Indonesia.

Chapter 12 provides analysis of communication characteristics of animation as a media in the protection and inheritance of cultural heritage. It is exploratory in jolting the question of the feasibility of utilizing animation as a medium of communication. It explores the vitals of animation as a medium in the process of cultural heritage digitization from the perspective of three variables between communication science and animation arts, namely: communication mission, communication ecology, and communication terminal.

Chapter 13 discusses gender equality as a cultural requisite for sustainable development in Nigeria. It examined gender issues in Nigeria and Africa in general and how they have affected development. The paper rests on the framework of dignity of the human kind and makes suggestions on suffrage rather than sentiments as a denominating gauge for sustainable development of Africa.

Chapter 14 stretches the gender conversation along the course of global environmental challenges and the role of colored ecofeminists. It rationalizes that any activism directed towards women's liberation will achieve the fullest spectrum only when it involves and incorporates the environmental perspective on the decolonization of nature too. It deepens the conversation to the philosophical depths of interrogating the anthropocentric polarities between culture and nature and man and woman, arguing that they were engendered and proliferated by Western phallogocentric discourses that dichotomized nature and culture.

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Chapter 15 is concerned with celebrity endorsement and cultural orientation as regards Indo-African perspective. It is an escort into the complex of how different cultures influence celebrity endorsement. In India, Nigeria and South Africa, celebrity endorsement picks from particular values that the celebrity decides to magnify.

Chapter 16 holds out conflict and communication in the Global South from a peace journalism perspective. The article advocates revisiting the norms of conventional journalism that, until now, takes side with violence and/or conflict; and puts down the gauntlet for new norms that favour communal harmony and addresses common grounds.

Chapter 17 forages into socio-religious norms of Pakistan through understanding the emotional labour and the dilemma of stay-at-home women. It ambitiously sets up an empirical methodology, sensitively grounded on parity of culturalism and populism in select literature to interrogate stereotype of the context of gendered dignity in labor. It is a regionalized, ethnocentric alternative approach to gender equality stream of dialectics, worth considering in the gender debate narrative; different from the liberal template of definition of labor and what work satisfaction should be.

Chapter 18 steams on philosophical mediation between patriarchal theory and feminism through a reflection on Igbo society. The article leans towards the intelligence of African jurisprudence in the civil debate on gender balance and argues that though there are cultural evidences of gender roles and biological differences among sexes in society, that does not translate to bias that a particular gender is superior, more powerful or should enjoy higher rights than the other. Its approach latches unto the traditional socio-cultural legacy of the African communal normative of gender balance in traditional society.

Chapter 19 looks at social media and connective mourning in Nigeria by analysing the ENDSARS memorial protests in Nigeria. It remonstrates on how African metaphysics wraps the living and the dead into one consciousness. The chapter elevates that traditional cognition to virtual degree to reveal the emerging communality of connective mourning where mourners mourn those that they do not have ties to or are unrelated to, but memorialised due to shared belief and connective repertoire to re-enforce the course for which they paid the ultimate price. It enlivens the Habemasian sphere with the uniqueness of Afrocentricity.

Chapter 20 expounds on the impact of social media use through a cross-cultural study of youth in Cairo and Casablanca. Employing cross-cultural analysis between Egypt-Cairo and Morocco-Casablanca, the article looks at the new communication fad among netizens focusing on the implication of the pop culture on social realism, cultural sufficiency and exchange and its overall impact on appraisal of life and development.

Chapter 21 addresses modeling the impact of social media influencers on intention to visit ecotourism destinations in the Global South. The chapter amplifies the idea that in the digital era, the value of personalities can have a geometrical effect on the eco system because of the evolution of referral and personality attraction. It challenges netizens to make places they have been to part of social interaction, as humans have become signage.

Chapter 22 features structured-deliberative gossip through a theory in understanding patterns of political communication in society. It lays a discursive foundation for political communication that sheaths rumours, executive falsehood and patterned propaganda as smokescreen for negotiation. It lays a foundation of the operational principles and applicability of a new political communication theory: Structured-Deliberative Gossip theory, (or Grapevine Info-Filter Theory) especially on matters of plebscites in the Global South.

Preface

Chapter 23 treats media attention and offline political participation in Pakistan through the mediating role of political interest and online political participation. The chapter examines how media use affects political engagement through political interest and online political participation in Pakistan.

Chapter 24 appraises the mediatization of Ubuntu. It operationalizes the Pan-African philosophical maxim in journalism and media practices by interrogating cliché journalistic value bequeathed to Africans. It reveals the layered misfits and prescribes a new paradigm, the Ubuntu reporting techniques and cognitive engagement rules for Global South journalists' reportage.

We think the chapters curiously speak to the condition of the Global South and the normative of its construction in a strategically deliberate tone. If the misfortune that befell the bloc was an accident, it appears it is an intelligently choreographed upset and so demands correspondingly marshaled, many-sided campaigns to plug the crater. It is precisely what the twenty-four chapters sort to do in organic style and dexterity.

One of the unique selling propositions of the well-researched contents of the book is that most of the authors demonstrated twin understanding of the culture and subject matter they each addressed, providing a symmetric deconstruction of the bloc and situating its dialogue in the context of the digital era. The book is a testament of deeply pensive imaginations that link the Global South philosophies, theories of imagination, narratives and bargains to the agenda of global negotiations. The issue of acculturation and identity has the seed of immortality and renewed relevance in the dynamics of evolution and unpredictability of relevance. Therein is the compelling weight of this book and the thoughts it espouses, hence a must read for those that need a broadened understanding of the bloc and how politics of placement, ratings and belonging could affect the future of globalization.

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Chapter 1

Reflections on the African Print Media: Critical Analysis of the Ideology Question

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ABSTRACT

This study set out to revisit some of the early newspapers in Africa and their relevance to anti-colonial struggle. It examined their audacious confrontation of the colonial masters, what guided their militant approach, and why such nationalistic tendencies are lacking in the post-independent journalism. The key objectives were to locate the influence of nationalistic ideology on the performance of the pre-independence newspapers. Anchored on the twin theories of agenda setting and social responsibility roles of the media, the study adopted the qualitative data collection method, with the library as its main source of data source. Findings showed that what is lacking in the modern African media are well-articulated national ideologies from which the media could draw inspiration in their practices. The study recommends well-articulated national ideologies without which the media will have no foundation for their individual missions that would help reinvent the lost nationalistic zeal.

INTRODUCTION

The vision behind African mass media, from the pre-independence era, was for the enthronement of liberal democracy. Suffocated by enslavement in their motherland, Africans were unanimous and focused on dismantling colonialism through political advocacy using the newspapers as platforms. Scotton (1978) quotes Erica Fiah, publisher of Tanganyika's *Kwetu*, which means "Our Home", as declaring in 1937 that "without our own paper, we are really non-entities—that fact is certain" (p. 1). Such a strong, principled

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statement led to the development of what Skjerdal (2012) calls “journalism for social change,” which he describes as “the first set of journalism ideology to challenge foreign-inspired colonial reporting” in Africa (p. 641). The emergence of this media trend followed academic and political exposures gained by such great nationalists and Pan-Africanists as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria, while studying abroad.

Africans conceptualised a mass media system to be owned by Africans and domiciled in Africa. The idea was in pursuit of not just the quest for political and economic emancipation, but “for equality of humanity and for recognition and representation” in governance (Nyamnjoh, 2015, p. 1). The principle of the African mass media ownership was, and still remains basically to protect the communal or indigenous political and economic interests of Africans. This they believe could only be done through the enthronement of liberal democracy with freedom of expression as one of the fundamental pillars. Nkrumah (1965) as recalled by Odhiambo (1991) believed that “the true African journalist” should equally be a political activist while the newspaper should be “a collective instrument of mobilisation” and principally, “a weapon for the overthrow of colonialism and imperialism,” a process that will culminate in “total African independence and unity” (p. 30).

The pre-independence African press therefore, in the opinion of Scotton (1978) provided an opportunity and served as an avenue for expressing specific grievances by Africans against the colonial masters, challenge unwanted but statutory social or political ways of life, “and helped to mobilise an African population in support of proposed new patterns” (p. 1). It is believed by Scotton who also cites Apter (1961) that these reasons informed the decision of early African political leaders to set up newspapers “despite the fact that the vast majority of their potential followers were illiterate” (p. 301). These constituted the ideology that drove the pre-independence mass media in Africa.

Ideology—a word usually attributed to highly opinionated political conservatives—has a slightly different meaning when it is used as a media terminology. It refers to the mission of a particular media organ beyond profit-making. It is the driving force of every serious-minded media operator and is often coined to reflect certain environmental expediencies media organisations face. Ideology defines the mission of the media, which in turn defines the editorial policy. While ideology sets the goals and objectives of the media, the editorial policy establishes the route, the style or the process through which the mission can be accomplished. Media ideology can be influenced by the ownership factor, source of funding, the national economy and political dynamics. In most cases, with negligible exceptions, it is the national ideology that sets the tone for individual media ideology.

What constitutes media ideology is the philosophical version of the mission statements. Gershon (2010) confirms that media ideologies help in sharpening peoples’ understanding of “communicative possibilities and the material limitations” of any medium, and their opinions of the media generally (p. 282). In developed political environments, media ideologies are reflections of the national belief and value systems. However, Ewusi-Mensah and Bani-Kwakye (2022) believe that the issue of ideology and its construction of the print media in Africa has received less research attention than expected. This is in spite of its important role in unveiling “the hidden ideological stance and viewpoints of media practitioners and political actors” (p. 592).

Two narratives will help explain this better. Nigeria’s *Guardian* newspaper has as its logo the ancient Egyptian symbol for conscience, while its motto reads: Conscience, Nurtured by Truth. This is inspired by a saying attributed to Uthman Dan Fodio that: “conscience is an open wound; only truth can heal it,” an indication that the newspaper stands for truthful reporting. Established in 1983 (The Guardian, n.d.), the *Guardian* says it stands for “balanced coverage of events, and of promoting the best interests

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of Nigeria” and does not owe allegiance to any religion, regional power or political party. The paper declares its primary commitment to be that of the integrity and sovereignty of Nigeria and Africa. The *Guardian*’s ideological bend is towards liberalism and the promise to, at all times, “uphold the need for justice, probity in public life.”

In 1984, just a year after *Guardian* entered the Nigerian media space, one of the most media-unfriendly military regimes in Nigerian history, headed by General Muhammadu Buhari, put the newspaper on trial. It was a test of its faith in reporting the truth and standing by it. Two *Guardian* reporters, Nduka Irabor and Tunde Thompson were arrested, detained, docked and imprisoned for writing a story on the overhaul of the Nigerian diplomatic missions. They were tried under Decree 4 of 1984, described by Uche (1991) as “the most dreaded, most repressive, and the last press law enacted in Nigeria” (p. 5). The law was meant to severely punish anyone who reported any story about any official of government which was claimed by the regime to be untrue. Placed under pressure, the *Guardian* demonstrated strict adherence to professional ethics by refusing to disclose the source of its report.

In Tanzania, between 2016 and 2017, two draconian laws, the Media Services Act and the Newspaper Act were enacted in a proven bid by government to intimidate and gag the mass media against reporting the truth, which those in power did not want reported. Officially, government said the laws were meant to check what it described as the excesses of the mass media in the country. These excesses were never defined within the law. Between 2016 and 2017, four newspapers—*Daima*, *Mawio*, *Mwanahalisi* and *Mseto* were extra-judicially barred under these laws by the country’s political leaders from publishing, for perceived offences. All of them remained barred for about six years before a new administration lifted the embargo. Amnesty International (2022) reports that the newspapers were barred because they published alleged cases of corruption and human rights abuses against government officials. Besides shutting down these newspapers, government also went ahead to arbitrarily “fine or suspend independent and critical media outlets” based on their ideology of publishing and exposing “allegations of corruption and human rights violations” or even normal reporting on general issues of governance which government found offensive.

As part of the onslaught against the print media in particular, on June 23, 2020, the government placed an indefinite ban on the publication of a newspaper called the *Tanzania Daima* both inside and outside the country. It accused the daily of “breaching the law and failing to uphold professional ethics” without citing in specific terms which laws the newspaper had breached or which aspect of the media content was in violation of the laws (Amnesty International 2022). Previously in 2017, that same newspaper had been shut down for 90 days on accusation of publishing false information to mislead and incite the people against the government. Amnesty recalls that another newspaper, *Uhuru*, was suspended from publication on August 11, 2021. It was accused of publishing “a false report” which claimed that the incumbent president was not going to seek re-election in 2025. A few weeks later, *Raia Mwema*, another newspaper was also suspended for 30 days on allegations of publishing “misleading” reports meant to incite violence in the country.

Studies indicate that what spurred these newspapers on, despite government’s insensitivity to their professional callings, was their individual ideologies, derived from the national Tanzanian ideology. Ramaprasad (2003, p.13) mentions three types of popular ideologies in Tanzania which include the dominant, the elite and the occupational ideologies. At the macro level, he states that occupational ideology remains the “society’s media-accepted philosophy” because it is derived from the libertarian media theory. The socialist ideology adopted at independence in Tanzania had left the mass media in the hands of government until the 1990s. This was when, across the African continent, there was what

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Ogola (2015) calls “adoption of political pluralism” such that even the media industry, once dominated by the state in terms of ownership, “was finally opened to private enterprise” (p. 93).

Ramaprasad (2003) indicates that with the adoption of “multi-party system and open market,” which marked the dwindling powers of socialism in the 1990s, Tanzania’s prevailing ideology “shifted from authoritarianism and socialism to participation and capitalism” (p. 14). This permitted private press ownership and most importantly, “a parallel change in journalistic ideology” from what was previously a state-compelled development journalism to where the press became “a vehicle for public information and government criticism.” This indicates that while government-controlled media still sustained an “authoritarian/socialist press ideology,” which claimed unification of the country, the private press operated the “participatory/liberal journalistic ideology,” with focus on supporting political pluralism and serving as watch dogs of the society by criticizing and holding government accountable. They refused to bend the rules despite severe arm-twisting by the government.

The above anecdotal accounts constitute examples of ideologically-driven media practice across two climes—one under democracy and the other under a military dictatorship. While the mentioned Tanzanian newspapers were propelled by certain national ideologies to pursue truth and hold government accountable, the *Guardian* was pushed on by certain corporate ideological convictions and ethical consciousness. These contrasting scenarios are examined in this chapter with the objectives of establishing the influence of nationalistic ideology on the performance of the mass media in the struggle for independence, why the post-independence press in Africa are not as impacting as the pre-independence media, and the place of ideology in the reinvention of media influence in Africa. In all of these, attention will be on the newspapers since the traditional broadcast media—radio and television—had little or no visibility during the era covered by this study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This chapter focuses on the strength and waning influences of African media with emphasis on the newspapers published during and after the colonial era. Having in mind that the pre-independence media focused mainly on liberation of Africans from the colonial masters, this study aims at:

1. Establishing the influence of nationalistic ideology on the performance of the African print media in the struggle for independence.
2. Analysing why the post-independence press in Africa are not as impacting as the pre-independence media.
3. Examining the place of ideological pursuit in the reinvention of media influence in Africa.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Two relevant theories were chosen to anchor this study: the social responsibility and agenda-setting theories.

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Social Responsibility Theory

Arising from the Robert Hutchins' Commission inaugurated by *Time* magazine publisher, Henry Luce in 1942, the coming of the Social Responsibility Theory was meant to ease the way and make media performance more people-oriented. The Hutchins group, also known as the Commission on Freedom of the Press (Bates, 2018, p. 4784), was meant to study and recommend ways which could stop the threats posed by political leaders to press freedom guaranteed under what is usually called the First Amendment (Blevins, 1997). At that time, it was believed that media freedoms "were being increasingly threatened by the rise of totalitarian regimes throughout the world" (Gupta, 2015).

Blevins (1997) discloses that after meeting for 17 times and interviewing 58 witnesses, the Commission submitted its report on March 26, 1947. It recommended that newspapers should provide: truthful, comprehensive account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning; serve as a forum for the exchange of comment and criticisms; become a means of projecting the opinions and attitudes of the groups in a society to one another; and create ways of reaching every member of the society by the currents of information, thought, and feeling which the press supplies (Blevins, 1997). Although the recommendations were instantly criticised by the media and publishers, it formed the foundation upon which, in 1956, Siebert, Peterson and Schramm developed a formal Social Responsibility Theory of the press (Gupta, 2015).

McQuail (2005), cited by Gupta (2015), states the major functions of the media under the SRT to include the fact that irrespective of ownership, the media owe the public certain obligations which can only be met through professional standards of truth, accuracy, objectivity and balance. To make this possible, he adds that the media should be self-regulating within the permits of the law. In addition to avoiding "offensive content," the media should be pluralistic and true reflections of the diversity of individual societies through accommodation of different "points of view and rights of reply." He emphasises the issues of accountability, liability and responsibility, which are the hallmarks of the SRT.

The question that comes to mind based on these demands is whether African media, before and after political independence in different countries and under different legal, political, economic and social systems, have applied this theory in the execution of their functions. This is one of the inquiries that guides this analysis on African print media and the place of ideologies in media operations during and after independence in Africa.

Agenda Setting Theory of the Press

This theory concerns the deliberate prioritisation of certain issues in the media in an attempt to influence the thinking of the public both in discussion and in accepting such issues as important and necessary—and even truthful. Propounded by McCombs and Shaw in 1972, the theory discusses how the mass media can affect the political behaviour of audiences, specifically voting decisions through colouration of certain events above others (Matsaganis and Payne: 2005, p.382). Under this theory, it is assumed that the mass media have the capacity to influence and shape public opinion in terms of decision-making since they are rated to hold the audience captive to its contents.

This assumed role of the mass media has come under interrogations by media scholars. One of the questions has been the issue of who really sets the agenda? Zain (2014) questions whether the mass media do follow the demands of the audience or they simply force their perceptions on the people. Zain cites some scholars' opinions to the effect that whatever comes out of the mass media could be the opinion

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and even agenda of politicians acting in self-interest. He believes that to some degree, the press does “follow the demands of the public” before setting the agenda and there are also some variables that can “mitigate the effects” of such agenda on the audience.

Shaw (1979) argues that though the mass media are persuasive in nature, people naturally “tend to include or exclude from their cognitions” whatever the media “include or exclude” from their messages (p. 96). This implies that it is unacceptable that whatever the media project is totally acceptable by the audience except, in most cases, when such media contents align with the audiences’ previous perceptions or beliefs. This is because people are likely to accept media contents that align with their ideological beliefs. Winneg, Butler, Golde, Miller and Hie (2018) confirm that consumers have the tendency to “selectively expose themselves to media” and the contents with which they can align with (p. 809).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Emergence of the Media in Pre-Independence Africa

A panoramic view of the print media in Africa shows that its first newspaper was established by the French government in Mauritius in 1773. The newspaper had a long tongue-twisting name: *Annonces, Affiches et Avis Divers pour les Colonies des Isles de France et de Bourbon*. First published as a French weekly on January 13, 1773, by one Nicolas Lambert (Sawe, 2013), its contents were mainly local announcements and notices for the colonies. Sawe mentions the second oldest newspaper to be the legendary weekly *Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser*. Published by the British colonialists, in English and Dutch, the newspaper hit the newsstands on August 16, 1800 and was shut down in 1929. It was a weekly government mouthpiece. From this point onward, other newspapers, especially those published in West Africa, which will be analysed soon, came into being. Sawe (2013) states that the 1824 *South African Commercial Advertiser* was heralded as “the first independent newspaper in South Africa.” It is said to have suffered a lot of intimidation, but still remained “a powerful voice for the democracy of the Cape Colony.”

Looking back, it is obvious that the British, the French, the Portuguese and others who invaded Africa had different motives. While some came with the Bible, others came with the sword, but it was those with the Bible—the missionaries—who started the first newspaper in Nigeria called *Iwe Irohin fun Awon Ara Egba ati Yoruba*, translated: *Newspaper for the Egba and Yoruba* (Maringues, 2013, p.185). The paper, published by the Reverend Henry Townsend, made its debut on December 3, 1859. It was however not the first newspaper in West Africa. Even before its arrival, Maringues notes that some West African countries, like Sierra Leone (1801), Ghana (1822) and Liberia (1826) had started publishing.

Iwe Irohin’s ideology or what was perceived as a mission statement was captured in a letter by Rev. Townsend to a European friend in 1860. He disclosed: “My objective is to get the people to read, i.e., to beget the habit of seeking information by reading” (Maringues, 2013, p.185). Though it went down in 1867, its emergence had marked the coming on board of other newspapers, mainly those devoted to political activism. Maringues states that though newspapers published by churches continued to emerge, the politically-minded ones founded by Africans made their appearances in Lagos between 1880 and 1920. These publications provided opportunity for those opposed to colonialism to be heard. They included the *Lagos Times*, *African Challenger*, *Lagos Observer*, *Lagos Echo* and the *Lagos Weekly Record* published in 1890 by John Payne Jackson.

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Newspapers owned by Africans in the pre-independence era generally tailored their visions towards liberation of the people from the shackles of colonialism. It was a collective belief, the pursuit of which was ideological. Politically-minded and unapologetically nationalistic, they were operated as weapons of liberation. The general aim was to inform the people and spread ideas aimed at mobilising participation towards liberating the indigenes from the control and manipulations of the colonial lords. Such newspapers in West Africa included the *Royal Gazette* and *Sierra Leone Advertiser* established in 1801 (Mano, 2010, p. 2). There was also the *Liberia Herald* established in 1820 by Charles Force and the *Royal Gold Coast Gazette*, which he also published in 1822 in Ghana.

While the press in the West African sub-region was mainly established by the colonised Africans, the missionaries and political leaders, its counterparts in other parts of Africa were, in the majority, established by the colonial settlers. In the Anglophone Central and Southern Africa, newspapers were published mainly by the European settlers (Mano, 2010, p. 2). *Cape Argus* newspaper was founded in 1857. In the old East African region, the first newspaper to be established was the *East African Standard*. Initially called the *African Standard*, it was established in 1902 in Mombasa, Kenya, by a rich Asian merchant of Indian origin, A. M. Jeevanjee (Britannica, n.d.). The paper, which still exists till today, started as a weekly. In 1910, aside from going daily, *African Standard* moved to Nairobi, after it was acquired by the British.

Mano (2010) states that unlike its Anglophone counterpart, the French colonialists, from the onset, discouraged the establishment and publication of newspapers in its colonies by the indigenes (pp. 2-3). Citing Bourgault (1995), Mano discloses that it was only in the 1930s that citizens who were considered to be friendly with the French colonial masters “were allowed to publish in the colonies.” Even then, the so-called publications, owned by Africans, were forced to serve the interest of the white settlers. These included the *Le Reveil du Senegalais*, *Le Petit Senegalais*, and *L’Union Africaine*. *Le Gri Negre* and *La Phare du Dahomey*, published in Benin Republic.

In Northern Africa, Egypt had the first printing press introduced in the country in 1828 (Badr, 2022, p. 63). With this, Egypt had its first newspaper called *al-Waqi’a al-Misriya*, which later metamorphosed into *Al-Ahram*, in 1875. Britannica (n. d) states that *Al-Ahram* was founded by two Lebanese Christian brothers, Salīm and Bishārah Taqlā. It went daily in 1881. As it grew in editorial strength and political importance, because of its objectivity and authoritative investigative stories, the colonial government started applying censorship against it. At independence, the Egyptian government took over the paper after the nationalisation of colonial assets in 1960.

From the reflections so far, Africans developed an early interest in establishment, ownership and management of newspapers. Zaghلامي (2016) reveals that the invaders had, in a bid to establish “political, social, economic and cultural systems” among Africans set up newspapers, which they turned into propaganda machines to convince and influence the peoples’ minds and hearts. So, the newspaper became one principal instrument of “seduction and dissemination of the colonial culture and information” (p. 159).

Reactions from Africans were swift. Having attained appreciable level of literacy, they also used the media to fight back. They did not just fight back, they set goals—clear targets. It was a war of printed words, not of swords. Twumasi (1974) notes that newspapers owned by Africans made undeniable contributions to the development of nationalism across Africa (p. 499). This marked the beginning of the struggle for independence. This chapter examines the role played by the nationalistic ideology of the media in the struggle against colonialism by Africans.

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Media, Ideology, and the Struggle for Independence

Back in 1784, an American, Thomas Jefferson—the man who scripted the document for the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America in 1776—was appointed the country’s minister to France. While on this assignment, Jefferson was in constant touch with his friend and political associate, Edward Carrington, through letters. In one of the letters written on January 19, 1787, he declared that given an opportunity, to have a government instead of newspapers or having newspapers in place of government, he would surely opt for the print media (Merriam, 1902, pp. 35-36).

That was a metaphorically loaded statement declaring deep confidence in the media. This declaration confirms the inherent powers of the media and public opinion. The mass media, states Wei (2012), while serving as sources of communication or interaction between the governed and the rulers, also influence decisions and create a connectivity that is beyond words. It was the strategic utilisation of the powers of newspapers and magazines that facilitated the achievement of independence for several African nations. In the pre-independence era, almost every journalist or publisher was equally a politician. Twumasi (1974) states that African newspaper editors were frequently and unapologetically identified with political organisations. There was a growing nationalistic consciousness among them (p. 499).

African politicians found in the newspapers an avenue to ventilate their built-up aspirations. Their anti-colonial protests, mobilisation and strategies were planned and executed on the pages of newspapers. Omu (1968) states that African-owned newspapers greatly rivalled the colonial government in the pre-independence days. Africans saw the media as the most effective and even constitutional weapon for expressing grievances and influencing events in the colonies. Omu recalls that the newspapers became the “guardians of their rights and liberties.” The media did not only convey their grievances, they also interpreted their “ideals and aspirations” (p. 279).

Enemugwem (2009) reveals that one of the most viable and nationalistic newspapers in West Africa, *The Lagos Weekly Record* (1891-1930), was very critical of the colonial government in the then Southern Nigeria—something that initiated checks and balances in the colonial administration. Printing only 500 copies a week, the newspaper “initiated protest marches and petitions against the government,” in 1908 based on the introduction of water rate in Lagos area. Largely “feared by government,” one of its greatest war cries was for the “Africanization of the civil service” to create “opportunity for the army of unemployed Africans” (Enemugwem, 2009, pp. 109-110).

This chapter observes that the driving force for each of these media organs was the belief system they adopted at the beginning; known as ideology. This refers to the dominant values in any enterprise—either politics, economy, or the social system. Okunna and Omenugha (2008) citing McQuail (2000), define ideology as certain organised belief or “sets of values that is disseminated or reinforced by communication” (p. 81). According to them, within the Marxist community, the media are fully involved in the process of either disseminating or reinforcing ideologies. Orugbani (2010) states that ideology comprises a “body of ideas, views, theories and aims” which constitute the political, social and economic programme of an entity (p. 585). As a theoretical and practical mirror for viewing the society, ideology, according to Dukor (2009, p. 27), is what gives the political, economic and social direction to government and policy formulators. Within the media environment, an ideology is the mission statement, the goal or the propelling vision which every activity of the media organisation is tailored.

In the pre-independence Africa, media organisations were ideologically organised. There was always something to expect. The slogans of the papers were not mere chants. They were deeply philosophical in many respects. Stories were published based on ideological slant—the struggle for independence.

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Every ideology was based on local aspirations, be it political, moral, social or economic. The common ground for every medium was the push towards decolonisation. Media contents were driven by a sense of nationalism that forced open the doors of freedom from the chains of colonialism. They imbibed Kwame Nkrumah's maxim of "seek ye first the political kingdom and all other things would be added onto you" (Domatob, 1988, p. 79).

Nationalistic Ideology of the Pre-Independence Newspapers in Africa

A brief examination of some pre-independent newspapers in Africa shows how a combination of nationalistic spirit and ideological push helped in achieving the aspirations of the people.

In West Africa and Nigeria in particular, one outstanding newspaper devoted to this struggle was the *West African Pilot* founded by Dr Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe. Though known for publishing the *Pilot*, Azikiwe actually owned a chain of newspapers which he used in fighting colonialism (Saidu, Mohamed and Mahjoub, 2020, p. 415). Each of these newspapers had different slogans which were reflections of their ideological drives.

Founded in 1937, the *West African Pilot* had as its slogan, Dante Alighieri's enduring thoughts: "Show the light and the people will find their way" (Azikiwe, 1970, p. 290). In its maiden editorial, the paper metaphorically called itself "the man who holds the light" and leads the way to the liberty of the people of Africa. The paper believed that Africans needed true leadership to "find their way to their destination with ease." Azikiwe states that the first editorial entitled: *The Curtain Rises*, revealed in full the ideology of the paper, which included "the quest for social justice... a better Nigeria and a more glorious future for West Africa."

In addition to the *Pilot*, Azikiwe opened other newspapers across Nigeria with clearly stated ideology captured in the mission statements. In *My Odyssey*, Azikiwe recalls that on February 8, 1940, he opened the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian* in Port Harcourt with the motto: "That universal brotherhood shall become a reality." *The Nigerian Spokesman* in Onitsha screamed: "That man shall not be a wolf to man." The *Southern Nigeria Defender* in Warri had as its mission statement: "That man's inhumanity to man shall cease." *Daily Comet* came with a promise that: "Truth, liberty and justice shall flourish." The *Eastern Sentinel* in Enugu aimed at ensuring "That democracy shall continue," while the *Nigerian Monitor*, published in Uyo on October 1, 1960 had as its focus: "That Nigerian unity may survive" (Azikiwe, 1970, p. 302).

In the North African region, Morocco published its first newspaper in 1820. It was called the *African Liberal*. Ten years later, in 1830, Algeria had its first newspaper called *l'Estafette de Sidi Ferrudj*. Another newspaper came in 1847, called *The Al Moubashir* (Zaghlami, 2016, p. 160). Newspapers in North Africa were first established by the colonialists; particularly the French. In the 1930s, indigenes began to assert themselves with the rise of nationalist press advocating "reforms, democratic rights and independence." Zaghlami (2016) states that the demands encountered severe French opposition with the banning of indigenous journalism through closure of newspaper houses (p. 160).

North African alternative newspapers which challenged colonialism emerged in Morocco in 1944 with *Al Alam* (The World) and *l'Opinion* (Errai). Tunisia published *Al Raid Al Tunisia*, an Arabic language newspaper aimed at communicating with the locals on the hardships brought upon them by the French colonialists. The focus of the paper was freedom from the colonialists. Algeria took its turn in 1954 with the publication of *Al Moudjahid* (The Fighter) and *Alger Republican*. These newspapers, published in the Maghreb region (Ibahrine, 2008), all had something in common—unmistakeable ideological com-

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mitment and connectivity. Their focus was the emancipation of the colonies from the iron-grips of the colonial masters.

Zaghlami (2016) states that the emergence of the Muslim and nationalist press marked the beginning of advocacy for more political reforms despite of the “fierce opposition, repression severe measures” mounted by the French which included closing down the newspapers and punishing journalists (p. 161). But driven by the desire for political independence and economic liberty, what Zaghlami calls clandestine journalism emerged in the 1950s. It was characterised by “a strong and deeply rooted movement of liberation” with an ideological focus on the advancement “of the cause of independence and the recovery of the national sovereignty.” Private newspapers started gaining strength in Morocco in 1944 with a focus on achieving independence in 1956. What Zaghlami (2016) refers to as Algerian revolution started receiving media attention and gathering momentum in 1954 with the launch of “the first Algerian nationalist newspaper, *Al Moudjahid* (The Fighter)” with the aim of liberating the country from colonialism (p. 161). In Tunisia, *Al Raid Al Tunisia* embarked on mobilisation of the local populations with its Arabic contents informing them of the need for freedom from the French domination. Each of these countries was ideologically connected in their media contents and the pursuit of their vision.

In the East African region, earlier governed by the British, there are certain countries whose pre-independence print media, according to Scotton (1978) “have largely been ignored by scholars” (p. 1). Citing Hatchen (1971), he reveals that while generally “contributing little to the independence movement,” the press in East Africa, during the pre-independence era, concentrated more on “subversive attacks” on the colonial government while engaging in “irresponsible publications” (p. 202). However, despite every criticism, Scotton states that the African press in these areas, especially in Kenya and Uganda, helped largely in spreading “social and political ideas” and mobilising African population during the pre-independence era.

Kenya in particular fought for its independence using indigenously-owned newspapers. Kimega (2007) states that by the 1920s, certain Africans had mastered the ways of the white settlers and were ready to confront them using the media. Three things formed the ideological focus of African media at the time: an end to discrimination in employment; restoration of the lands seized by the settlers; and participation in elections. Kimega mentions newspapers such as *Tangazo*, *Samachar*, *Indian Boys* and *East African Chronicle* as leading the agitation. He states that “the struggle for equality” collectively accounted for the mission of the Kenyan press at that time; and that the ideological drive of these papers shifted from racial equality to the struggle for independence after the Second World War. Freedom fighters such as Jomo Kenyatta and James Gichuru used their papers: *Muigwithania* and *African Leader* to mobilise the people against colonialism. A political group called KANU had *Sauti ya Mwafrika*, Paul Ngei owned *Uhuru wa Mwafrika*, *Bildad Kaggia* and *Afrika Mpya*. There were also newspapers like *Taifa*, the *Daily Nation*, *Sunday Nation* and *Taifa Leo*.

Still in East Africa, Uganda first saw what could be called its “first newspaper in the early 1900s” when it was brought to the country by missionaries, according to Isoba (1980), cited by Cohen and McIntyre (2020, p. 649). However, studies by these scholars reveal that Uganda’s premier indigenous privately-published commercial newspaper called *The Uganda Herald*, surfaced in 1912. Celebrated by the indigenes, it is reported to have been “widely read” when compared with the other newspapers published by the missionary, with heavy focus on religious news. Cohen and McIntyre (2020, p. 649) however recall that critical journalism, which ideologically focused more on the liberation of the country, was published in Uganda in 1920. Called *Sekanyolya*, it was said to have heavily criticized both the local and the colonial government. Things came to a point based on the strength of these newspapers, when

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in 1949, a certain political misunderstanding resulted in riots, and the colonial regime put the blames squarely on the newspapers because of their mass mobilisation. Another newspaper called *Uganda Argus*, which was later taken over by government and rechristened *New Vision*, was published in 1955 (Cohen and McIntyre, 2020, p. 651).

In Southern Africa, in particular, South Africa had a strong ideological press in the pre-independence era. Ginwala (1973) cites an unnamed South African editor as saying that editing a newspaper in pre-independence South Africa was like “walking blindfold through a minefield” (p. 28). Ginwala names South Africa as the cradle of African newspapers and cites 1884 as earliest date when the first indigenous newspaper by John Tengo Jabavu, called *Imvo Zabantsundu*, was published. It was followed in 1904 by *Ilanga Lase Natal*, published by John Dube of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) and Walter Rubusana’s *Izwi la Bantu*. SANNC also published *Tsala ea Batho* in Kimberley; *Messenger Moruma* in Bloemfontein and *The Native Advocate* in Pretoria. There were also *Umlomo wa Bantu*, *African Shield*, and *Ikwezi le Afrika*.

These newspapers were set up largely to mobilise opposition and crush the white ruling class in the country. In 1921, *Umteteli wa Bantu* was established with a mission of guiding African opinions along the “right lines” and in 1931, Bantu Press was established, to bring together three newspapers—*Imvo Zabantsundu*, *Ilanga lase Natal* and *Mochochonono*. It was determined that the newspapers shall always, ideologically, guide and counsel the Bantu people on crucial issues (Ginwala, 1973, p. 30).

It is interesting to note that every newspaper published at this time in South Africa was meant to mobilise opinions towards, or in favour of certain tribes and groups. While they generally spoke for what Ginwala (1973) calls “African aspirations” (p. 21), they focused more on group interests. There were groups like the Coloured and Indian political organisations that had newspapers of their own to project and protect their interests. Another interest group was the African Peoples Organisation that used the newspapers to campaign strongly against the South Africa Act of 1909, “which restricted the franchise and did not allow Black members to sit in the House of Assembly or Senate” (Ginwala, 1973, p. 21). It is also reported that in 1903, Mahatma Gandhi published a newspaper called the *Indian Opinion*, which was used mainly to publicise tribal grievances against the South African leadership and mobilise the people to join the passive resistance movements mainly in the Transvaal and Natal. This implies that every newspaper came with a mission, which constituted their major driving force.

In Zimbabwe, the earliest newspapers were owned and controlled by the settlers. Moyo and Chabwinja (2018) recall that the first newspapers to be published in Zimbabwe, then known as Southern Rhodesia, were *The Mashonaland*, *Zambezi Times* and *The Rhodesian Herald*, founded in 1891 (p. 58). They were owned by the human force behind imperialism in South Africa, Cecil John Rhodes, and were published by a South African company Argus Press. Moyo (2003) recalls that *The Bulawayo Chronicle* was established in 1894, while *The Sunday Mail* and *The Sunday News* came on board in Southern Rhodesia in 1934 and 1935 (p. 1). Citing studies by Windrich (1981), Moyo and Chabwinja (2018) state that the newspapers were ideologically “designed to promote the cause of the white settler colonialism and their business interests in South Africa” (p. 59). They were also published to “sustain colonial imperialist system and to serve their narrow interests,” which implies that the interests of the indigenous populations were not considered. This created room for the rise of indigenous press.

However, the rise of black politics signalled by the agitation for independence across Africa in the 1950s, created rooms for the emergence of African press in Zimbabwe. By this time, certain political leaders, like Joshua Nkomo, with the advantage of missionary-sponsored education, saw the need for avenues to articulate their views and equally mobilise the black population for the emancipation struggle

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(Moyo, 2003, p. 5). Several newspapers, including *The Bantu Mirror*, *The African Daily News*, *The African Parade* and the *Moto*, emerged on the scene.

Moto was owned by the Roman Catholic Church. Moyo however states that these papers were not truly African in all aspects because they were funded and controlled by the white liberals with huge business interests and not to end of colonialism, with the exception of *The African Daily News*, founded in 1956 and banned in 1964. Certain interest groups also set up newspapers. They included *The Recorder* which defended teachers' interests, and *The Harvester* which targeted the farmers. *Moto*, published by the Roman Catholic Church, was among ideologically-driven black papers, followed in the 1960s by *The African Daily News* and *The African Parade* bought over by certain Canadian publishing group that were considered to be more liberal and committed towards emancipation of the people (Moyo, 2003, p. 5).

Colonial and indigenous newspapers in the Central African Republic during the pre-independence era were not entirely different from those published in other African countries. In Angola, both the colonial masters, the Portuguese, and the liberation agitators or colonised Angolans represented by the vocal Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), understood the importance of the mass media in a political struggle and applied them, but with different ideologies (Mateus, 2004, p. 65).

In Cameroon, Tatchou (2022) citing Wete (1986) discloses that the early days of the mass media were marked by two approaches, which were the mixed or shared ownership "between the colonial administration and the missionaries and the utilitarian purposes of the newspapers" (p. 111). He explains that the newspapers operated by the missionaries were meant to complement their evangelical work while those owned by the colonial masters were used to spread information on administrative policies, regulations, appointments and transfers.

Cameroon hardly enjoyed private newspapers presence during the various phases of colonialism. Studies by Makwen (2022) reports that when Cameroon served as a German protectorate between 1884 and 1916, only the German newspapers existed, including those in local languages (p. 72). Following the arrival of the European in 1916, the rules were relaxed but nothing impactful emerged as indigenous newspapers were still lacking. It was only in 1944 that "a highly politicized opinion press emerged which began to address the issue of independence."

Makwen (1922) mentions the newspapers to include *L'Union*, *L'Écho du Cameroun*, *Ma patrie le Kamerun*, and *La Voix du Cameroun*, all published by a political party called Union of the Populations of Cameroon (UPC) (p. 72). These papers did not attempt to hide their political prejudices and opinions, and those who wrote for the papers were not journalists, but those with love of letters like editors, lawyers, teachers etc. These writers used their ability to put actions down with words for propaganda favouring their political beliefs and flourishing their actions. From this point onward, whatever indigenous newspapers existed in Cameroon were directly operated by politicians and had no professional journalists managing them. They existed strictly for political purposes as they "did not attempt to hide their political prejudices and opinion, and those writing were not journalists" (Makwen, 2022, p. 72).

African Media and Ideology in the Post-Independence Era

After a tempestuous pre-independence era, African media stormed into the post-independence life with huge expectations from the audience. They were expected to apply the same critical approach towards ensuring that the indigenous leaders do not over-step their bounds. With the independence achieved, the social responsibility theory of the media was in practice across the world. Questions were and are still being asked whether the post-independence African newspapers have applied the tenets of this doctrine

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in serving the people. Has the professional tempo, witnessed during the pre-independence era, been sustained, or has something gone wrong somewhere? Why have they not been able to set the political, economic and social agenda for African leaders who succeeded the settlers?

Gicheru (2014) quoting Mazrui (1975) reveals that part of the problems lie in the fact that some editors and publishers of the pre-independence newspapers became political leaders of their respective countries at independence, in different capacities (p. 12). She mentions Nkrumah of Ghana who published the *Evening News*, Kenyatta of Kenya who owned *Mwigwithania*, Azikiwe of Nigeria who started the *West African Pilot*, Tanzania's Julius Nyerere who published *Uhuru* and Herbert Macaulay of Nigeria who bankrolled the *Lagos Daily News*. They all saw their newspapers as vehicles for mobilisation of the citizens towards independence. Perhaps, as expected, according to Gicheru, the same editors and publishers, on assumption of political powers, turned the newspapers into "instrument of state authority whose role was to provide propaganda."

Ocitti (1999) paints pictures of what happened to indigenous press in certain countries after independence. In the West African country called Ghana, he states that the influential *Daily and Sunday Graphic* newspapers were bought over by government as "official mouthpieces" of the ruling party. Tanganyikan government did the same with the *Tanganyika Standard*. It was transformed into "what journalists like to call a lap-dog press." In Zambia, the new government acquired the *Central African Mail*, previously privately-owned, renamed it the *Zambian Mail*. The *Times of Zambia* also suffered the same fate without a name change.

It became clear that those who enjoyed press freedom or fought for it under colonial rule, deliberately introduced and entrenched what Gicheru (2014) calls tough media controls and censorship in the new governments (p. 12). Some of these governments took over the hitherto privately-owned newspapers in a bid to ensure that such newspapers were not used to criticise them. Thus, the once fire-spitting private newspapers either became "integral part of the nation-building programmes" or were forced to fold up.

However, Conroy-Krutz (2020) studied a survey by Afrobarometer, which gauged public opinion among 45,000 people in 34 African countries to determine whether stiff media laws and government high-handedness were responsible for low-performance of the media (p. 97). The survey, which analysed instances of intimidation and choking press legislations, lasted between 2016 and 2018. The result showed that specifically, about 60 percent of the population said freedom of the press to report, investigate or criticise government was either greater than what it was some years back (43%) or about the same (17%). Only 32 percent of those surveyed said that media freedoms were on the decline. The outcome of this survey counters the previous assumption that legal constraints have affected media performance.

So, if it is not government repression of freedom, what else is responsible for the perceived low-level performance of the media or the death of nationalistic media ideology? Serwornoo (2021) slightly disagrees with this conclusion. He states that post-colonial press freedom was even more repressive in some African countries than during the colonial era (p. 24). Citing Jones-Quartey (1974), Serwornoo reveals that while Ghana had about 40 newspapers between 1931 and 1956, shortly after independence in 1957, the country had only 11 of such newspapers remaining. Others had been suffocated out of existence. Guy Berger of the Rhodes University School of Journalism and Media Studies in South Africa blames the limitations, both in quantity and quality, on insufficient-trained professionals (Karikari, 2010). Other media scholars believe that lack of national infrastructure and poor economic atmosphere across Africa are responsible for the low-quality media contents (Adum et al., 2015, p. 3). They equally blame the situation on what they describe as lack of "ideological diversity."

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Other studies indicate that the post-independence press in Africa lacked the nationalistic ideologies which greatly influenced their performances in the pre-independence era. Serwornoo (2021) states that “the relationship between ideology of a country and its portrayal in the media” has attracted a lot of scholarly interests; but regrets that while some scholars have developed interest in analysing media contents, they seem to have overlooked the “more deeply-rooted questions pertaining to their sources” (p. 3). This implies that media content is a reflection of the dominant issues and belief system of its environment, and when such dominant belief system does not exist, it becomes impossible for media organisations to approach issues from nationalistic point of view. Instead of national goals, the media (Lere, 2009, p. 427), have become so biased, especially in their reportage of political, ethnic and religious matters. Serwornoo agrees with Gruley and Duvall (2012, p. 41) that whatever constitutes the media frames which we see in the news, have their foundations in several influences.

Frehiwo (2016), while reviewing the success story of Ghana under Kwame Nkrumah, states that “ideology is an elusive aspect of every nation which operates from a set of ideas” (p. 129). The principles and morals captured in it also guide government in domestic and international interactions. It is principally through the media that ideology is transferred from the ruling class to the citizens. Citing Nkrumah’s *Class Struggle in Africa* (1970), she states further that the ideology of a country is total because it completely embraces the life of a people while manifesting itself in other aspects of their lives. Frehiwo cites Nkrumah as stating that every ideology has a philosophical statement which the mass media sell to the people as slogans.

Minnie (2007) asked a question that is still reverberating: what obstacles hinder media development in Africa, and how can they be addressed? She believes that “media development in Africa ultimately requires ideological change through citizen-led promotion of freedom of speech” (p. 115). What she has not stated in her analysis is whether such ideological change is required at the national level or by individual media organisations, or both. But Calabrese and Burke (1992) in a study, state that the media play significant role in “punctuating and influencing” the lives of every American and that they represent the American identity in several ways—mainly by propagating the American dream. This implies that the American media ideologies are reflections of the American ideologies (p. 152). Poepsel (n.d.) observes that it is the media contents that “give shape and structure to society.”

The argument which is not the focus of this study is whether each African country has an ideology on which the media can base their missions. Ukpe (2018) affirms that a country like Nigeria has ideologies but that these are only interpreted based on the mood of each leader and are usually “translated through the party’s views on economic, social and cultural policies.” However, Sil (1993) counters this assertion stating that since its independence in 1960, Nigeria has yet to apply or follow “any systematic ideology uniformly,” except what he calls “etatism” (p. 47). The reason for a formal national ideology, state Okunna and Omenugha (2008), is that each country’s mass media would be greatly guided in the performance of their duties as social agents (p. 81). Such national ideologies could evolve around economic, political and cultural processes. Their argument is on the need for a formally articulated and integration of non-generalist ideologies which the mass media would adopt. Jensen (2018) reveals that any talk about media ideology could be scary since most journalists believe they are non-ideological. He defines ideology as a set of “social attitudes, political beliefs, and moral values that shape one’s interpretation of the world” (p. 223).

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CONCLUSION

This chapter reveals that loss of nationalistic ideology by African newspapers at independence was not totally unexpected. The signs were already there even before control of political powers moved from the settlers to the indigenes. The implication is that the post-independence media in many African countries lost the previously ideologically-propelled nationalistic steam as soon as each of the countries settled into its new-found freedom from the colonial masters.

It is clear from studies that across-the-lines fighting among the various political interests in different countries in Africa did not just happen after these countries gained independence. Prior to the attainment of independence, some political leaders who owned media houses in some of these countries had lost focus and got distracted from facing their common enemies—the colonial masters—to biting or attacking each other as they struggled for a share of the national cake in their different countries. They allowed their selfish personal ambitions to override their collective patriotic interests as they started scheming for after-independence personal gains instead of collective profits. This ushered in avoidable media confrontations as parties, regional interests and personal ambitions clash. Thus, what hitherto existed as national newspapers with national ideologies ceased immediately after independence. They went regional and clannish while trying to protect the interests of individual political parties and tribes ethnicity where the owners of such newspapers came from. Newspapers were turned into weapons of war as owners sought to crush each other to reach their individual goals.

The outcome of these inter-tribal and inter-party political supremacy combat was a complete loss of previously existing ideologically-defined sense of nationhood and common visions, and the fast emergence of personal, ethnic, political and religious values and beliefs that lacked national identities. The once ideologically-controlled newspapers that rattled the colonial lords to their knees through perfect mobilisation of the indigenes against enslavement by the colonial masters, turned their attention against each other as they abandoned their common ideologies and embraced tribal visions and goals. They failed woefully in accommodating and investing their pre-independence powers in new ideologies and instead went solo in pursuit of individual goals and interests. They could no longer coordinate and present themselves as agents of national identity or nationhood by planting seeds of oneness or unification. Since most of the newspapers were owned and published by politicians who were in most cases unprincipled and selfish, the professional operators of the newspapers unavoidably joined these politicians to engage in tribal political interests.

This chapter observes that the question on the impact of African press in the pre-independence era has been well-answered by history. Though newspapers were first established by the settlers, the indigenes were not left out as they discovered the undeniable usefulness of the medium in mobilising support for their course. Every pre-independence indigenously-owned newspaper had one ideological focus—the fight against colonial domination. Unfortunately, this drive died suddenly after independence. Most of the mass media in Africa today are no longer driven and guided by such indigenous ideological direction. From the expert opinions examined in this chapter, the blame lies centrally on lack of national ideologies by individual African nations.

The conclusion therefore is that in the absence of national or macrocosmic ideologies from which individual media organisations can draw their microcosmic visions, beliefs and values, African media are left with no choice than to operate along unacceptable individual guidelines that promote personal, ethnic or party supremacy rather than nationhood. This is because individual media ideologies, as are applicable in other climes, are true reflections of what drives the larger society. A country that lacks

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well-articulated policy direction that are beyond personal, tribal and party beliefs, will surely leave the citizens fumbling in darkness. National ideologies are planned to serve as the compass and guideposts not just for the individual citizens, but equally for its media organisations. This is what is lacking in Africa and requires a reinvention.

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Chapter 2

Mass Media in Pakistan: Historical Evolution, Challenges, and Prospects

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ABSTRACT

This research study explores mass media's historical evolution, challenges, and prospects in Pakistan. The study delves into the role of media, highlighting the vibrant media landscape in Pakistan, which encompasses publications in Urdu, English, and regional languages. The print media in Pakistan is predominantly under private ownership, operating with minimal government intervention. In contrast, electronic media encompasses both state-run and privately-owned entities. Furthermore, this research identifies the challenges faced by mass media in Pakistan, including issues of censorship, ownership patterns, and the impact of digital transformation on media practices. It identifies the prospects for the future, considering emerging trends such as online news portals, social media platforms, and streaming services. By comprehensively examining the historical evolution, challenges, and prospects of mass media in Pakistan, this research provides valuable insights for policymakers, media professionals, and scholars seeking to understand and navigate the dynamics of media in the country.

INTRODUCTION

We live in media-saturated societies wherein media mediates our realities about the social world. In the contemporary mediated world, media exercise a substantial influence on every aspect of human lives. Media shapes our understanding of the nations (Ji et al., 2016), frame conflicts (Lee & Maslog, 2005; Yousaf et al., 2020), build consensus on social issues (Yousaf, 2018), and define the attributes of terrorism issue (Yousaf et al., 2023). Explicating this role of media, Leonard Pitts pointed out that “in a world where media sets the public agenda and drive the dialogue, those things media ignore may as well not exist” (Pitts, 2011, p. A13). At a broader level, mass communication serves an essential function in

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our societies. A long time ago, Lasswell (1948) identified three essential and broad-level functions of mass communication in a society:

1. **Surveillance Function:** This function of mass media is to observe society closely and continuously to inform as well as warn about threatening actions to the mass audience vis-à-vis mass communication. Surveillance can be of two categories:
 - a. **Instrumental Surveillance:** The transmission of information that is useful and helpful in everyday life. We call it instrumental surveillance. For instance; news about films playing at the local theaters, stock market prices, new products, fashion ideas, new recipes, and Forthcoming dramas are all examples of instrumental surveillance.
 - b. **Beware/Warning Surveillance:** Warning or beware surveillance occurs when the media warns us about forthcoming threats. For instance; Hurricanes, Erupting volcanoes, depressed economic conditions, Increasing inflation, or Military attack Terrorism. Magazines, movies, newspapers, radio, televisions and the internet are the main sources for finding out what's going around us. Society relies on mass communication for news and information about our daily lives.
2. **The Correlational Function:** This function of mass communication investigates the correlation of different societal groups in society. Put differently, mass media vis-à-vis mass communication creates a consensus which is another vital function of mass communication. This function brings diversified segments of society close together regarding the definition of important issues in society. This function relates to how the media's selection of certain news and its interpretation affects the public's understanding of these issues and consequently their response to these issues (Yousaf, 2018). For instance, media framing of political issues, political figures, events, and public policy influences people's attitudes toward them corresponding to consensus.
3. **Transmission of Cultural Heritage:** This function of mass media denotes how media transfers cultural heritage from one generation to another generation and enhances individuals' consciousness toward cultural trends in society. Mass media create awareness about our cultural heritage and act as a bridge between different generations.
4. **Entertainment:** The fourth function of mass communication as proposed by Charles R. Wright, encompasses the entertainment function (Wright, 1974). This function has both positive and negative effects on individuals and society. While the quality of content is frequently criticized for its perceived inadequacies, it is important to recognize the benefits it offers, such as enabling individuals to engage with novel experiences, evoking emotional responses, and facilitating leisure activities.

In this the same way, the media observe issues from the environment and bring them to the public consciousness. As a result, the issues that reach public consciousness become significant and consequently exhibit more potential to influence public opinion. Therefore, mass communication informs us about the important issues of the day. Mass communication is a broad societal-level process for mediating realities. In this regard, renowned communication theorist, McQuail (1987) noted that mass communication is a broad societal-level process of mediating realities. Mass media unites scattered individuals in a shared experience and develops the "collective self-consciousness" of society. He further pointed out, "While each individual or group does have a unique world or perception and experience, a precondition of

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organized social life is a degree of common perception of reality and the mass media contribute to this perhaps more than other institutions on a daily, continuous basis, even if the impact is very gradual and not consciously felt” (pp. 51-52). In a similar fashion, we are what we read, listen and watch (Williams, 2003). Put differently, media content influences our attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors.

Historical Evolution of Mass Media in Pakistan

The journey of mass media can be traced back to ancient civilizations, where early forms of communication, such as cave paintings, hieroglyphics, and oral traditions, served as the precursors to written language and the dissemination of information. With the invention of the printing press in the 15th century, mass media took a significant leap forward, enabling the mass production and distribution of books, newspapers, and pamphlets (Lee, 2009). This breakthrough democratized access to knowledge and paved the way for the dissemination of ideas and information on a larger scale. The subsequent development of the telegraph, telephone, radio, television, and the internet further revolutionized mass media, expanding its reach and enabling real-time communication across vast distances. The evolution of mass media has not only impacted the way information is disseminated but has also influenced the dynamics of society, politics, culture, and the public’s attitudes toward various issues and objects. Understanding the historical trajectory of mass media is essential for comprehending its present state and anticipating its future developments.

The historical evolution of mass media in the Indian subcontinent has been a fascinating journey, deeply intertwined with the region’s rich cultural and socio-political tapestry. The subcontinent has a long tradition of communication and information dissemination, dating back to ancient times, when storytelling, oral traditions, and manuscript culture played pivotal roles in sharing knowledge and narratives. With the arrival of the printing press in the 16th century, mass media took root in the subcontinent, with the establishment of printing presses and the publication of newspapers and books in various languages. The 19th and 20th centuries witnessed significant milestones in the evolution of mass media, including the emergence of vernacular newspapers, the growth of press freedom movements, and the proliferation of print media as a platform for social and political activism (Hussain, 2010). The advent of radio and later television brought new dimensions to mass media, enabling the dissemination of news, entertainment, and cultural programming to a wider audience. This explicates that mass media are as relevant to our lives as they were in their golden eras (Chaffee & Metzger, 2001).

Historically, the evolution of mass media in Pakistan dates back to British Indian rule. During this period, there were several newspapers. These newspapers promoted a communalistic or partition agenda, especially for Muslims of the subcontinent. During this colonial period, several Urdu-language newspapers were established that served the Muslim community. The first Urdu newspaper, *Jam-i-Jahan Numa* founded by Harihar Dutta in 1822 in Kolkata (then Calcutta), was published in 1836, setting the stage for the growth of print media. “*Delhi Urdu Akhbar*” published in Delhi, India in 1837 AD was the first daily Urdu language newspaper. Moulvi Muhammad Baqir was its first editor. The other renowned Urdu language newspapers included the *Aligarh Akhbar*, the *Sadiq-ul-Akhbar*, and the *Zamindar* (Niazi, 1987). The print media in the colonial period was mainly privately owned, however, the government could control it through advertisements and regulations. Urdu press kept local readers in the loop and functioned as a watchdog of colonial manipulations and fittingly executed its responsibilities which includes motivation, information, education, and affecting the behavior of the masses (Nawaz, 1983).

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Considering this emergence of print media as a threat, the Press Act of 1823 came to suppress the Urdu press. The law was named as Press & Publication Ordinance (PPO). This law made life tough for the means of mass communication, especially the Urdu Press. Several renowned journalists; owners and editors, among whom are distinguished journalists such as Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, Maulana Muhammad Ali Johar and Maulana Hasrat Mohani were punished under this ordinance. These people faced the ferocious laws of the British Government and they did journalism courageously. This brave stance of Journalism in the history of Print Media of the Sub-continent is known as Militant Journalism.

The Muslim Militant press exerted a substantial influence in the struggle for independence from British colonial rule. This press supported the interests of the Indian Muslim community. However, the passing of the Lahore Resolution in 1940, advocated the establishment of a separate Muslim state within India. With this objective, the Muslim militant press assumed a more assertive stance, actively endorsing the Pakistan Movement. Numerous newspapers openly advocated for the creation of Pakistan and contributed to the mobilization of public sentiment in favor of this cause. Among these publications, Dawn, an English-language newspaper founded by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, emerged as a prominent representative of the Muslims in the subcontinent, advocating for an independent Pakistan. Similarly, notable Muslim newspapers during this era included the Zamindar, the Daily Jang, and the Pakistan Times, all of which continued their publication following the formation of Pakistan (Iqbal, 2011).

Following the attainment of independence, Pakistan lacked a structured mass communication system, with only a limited number of functional radio stations. The Peshawar radio station, established in 1927 under the agriculture department, primarily served as a means to provide instructions to farmers. Despite the expectation that the print media would witness a transformative shift after the establishment of Pakistan, the prevailing challenges, such as the refugee crisis and inadequate infrastructure hindered the functioning of the print media in the nascent country. Many newspapers that had operated in Delhi before independence relocated to Karachi, while those in Lahore continued their normal operations. 'Imroz, one of' a publication that emerged in Pakistan, quickly garnered a reputation by assembling a talented team, including prominent figures such as Abdullah Malik, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, and Chragh Hassan Hasrat. Two independent news agencies, Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) and Pakistan Press International (PPI), operating in the country were taken over by the Martial Law Government. Furthermore, the Ayub government imposed restrictions on international news agencies. These agencies were a chief source of news and reports to radio stations and local newspapers. As a result, the government gained complete control over all news resources, and effectively abolished press freedom.

Press Freedom in Pakistan

Until 1957, media in Pakistan enjoyed relative freedom, with only 60 registered cases across the country resulting in actions against newspapers (Niazi, 1987). General Muhammad Ayub Khan assumed the presidency and imposed the first martial law in the country. The rise of Ayub Khan corresponded with the takeover of Progressive Papers Ltd., such that during his era, newspapers faced significant challenges as their longstanding focus on politics, dating back to the Indo-Pak events of 1857, was abruptly hindered (Niazi, 1987). This required newspapers to explore alternative topics and introduce various supplements such as sports supplements, women's supplements, and south supplements to maintain readers' interest. Consequently, the focus shifted toward social life and issues. 'Imroz,' pioneering this approach, hired a female reporter and began publishing articles addressing women's problems under the title "Khaton ki Nazar Main," becoming the first newspaper to introduce such content (Khurshid, 1964).

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Inspired by 'Imroz,' newspapers like Mashriq and Kohistan from Lahore also initiated women's pages. Furthermore, feature writing is transformed by incorporating pictures alongside the written content. To captivate readers, some newspapers started publishing sensational content resulting in glamorous journalism trends in the country. This trend adversely affected magazines exclusively dedicated to films, causing them to gradually fade away as newspapers offered a diverse range of film-related content and assumed leadership in this area (Khurshid, 1964). Additionally, newspapers began exploring weekly and episodic features that covered social and cultural aspects. The advent of television had a significant impact on newspaper readership, as poets and writers, who previously contributed to newspapers without financial gain, shifted their focus to television where they received monetary compensation for their work. Consequently, their contributions to newspapers dwindled, resulting in a decline in readership.

Periodical journalism also witnessed a decline as newspapers started publishing different supplements containing content catering to various age groups, consolidating diverse material within a single newspaper. The prominence of political news was gradually replaced by official statements from government ministers, not only highlighting government policies but also providing a sense of security for newspapers by aligning with the government's perspective. Even today, newspapers continue to present government ministers' statements, which raises concerns about the quality of journalism. The presence of an editorial page offers a designated space for subjective opinions. Therefore, official statements should not dominate the majority of newspaper content, as it undermines the objective nature of journalism. Presently, there are 707 periodicals in the country. 439 daily, 84 weekly, 19 fortnightlies, 160 monthlies, 2 Quarterlies and 3 are in the other category (PBS, 2017, p. 383). Urdu is the national language of the country whereas, English is the official language. To elaborate succinctly, the Urdu and English media are the two most influential forms of mass media that make mass communication possible. English newspapers are considered to be elite media in Pakistan and readers of English papers are considered to be westernized and inclined towards liberal ideas and thoughts. They control the policy-making process in the country (Rahman & Eijaz, 2014, p. 284). In contrast, the readers of Urdu newspapers are considered to be more religiously inclined and socio-politically conservative (Shoeb, 2008). Therefore, English and Urdu media cultivate two classes within one society that are culturally, educationally, religiously and politically quite different from each other.

Print media has long been a significant part of Pakistani society. In contrast, television (TV) and broadcast media in Pakistan emerged from the shadows of the government's monopoly (Nadadur, 2007). However, it has been noted that during the past several years, the quantity of print media items has declined in Pakistan's media sector. The competition between the big press businesses has not been impacted by this. The broadcast media is completely reversing the trend. The "first to report" phenomenon has had the audience's attention for a longer time.

Newspapers and Mass Communication

Newspapers are the most significant source of news for the public. There are several definitions of newspapers given by various scholars. One of the most renowned definitions of newspapers is given by Allen which is most often used by modern newspaper historians. Allen (1930) noted that "a real newspaper should be published periodically, mechanically reproduced, and available to the public at large". The content published in the newspapers has diversity, caters general public and is systematically organized. Newspapers serve several social functions in society. They perform the function of surveillance, a correlation between different segments of society, cultural transmission, provide entertainment, and

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shape public opinion on several political, cultural, religious, and economic issues of the day (Martin, 2003). The newspaper industry is privately owned in Pakistan, and publishes both in English, Urdu and regional languages. Dawn newspaper, the most credible and widely read English newspaper in Pakistan, was brought out as a weekly on October 19, 1941, with Mahmud Hussain as its first editor. Under the editorship of Pothan Joseph, it became a daily newspaper on October 12, 1942 (Niazi, 1987).

Figure 1. Front page of Dawn on Quaid-i-Azam's death on September 11, 1948



Dawn is the most-read newspaper and exercises influence on public opinion regarding national, regional and international issues. Another influential English newspaper was The Pakistan Times which was founded on February 4, 1947 by the he renowned socialist poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Mazhar Ali Khan remained its editor. It was considered a progressive newspaper with disparaging criticism of the government on several issues. The newspaper faced rigorous pre-censorship under the military regime of Ayub Khan. The newspaper ceased publication in the year 1996.

The third influential newspaper of the English language was The Civil and Military Gazette. It was a daily English-language newspaper published in Lahore, Pakistan (formerly India) from 1872 until 1972. It was a leading newspaper of its time and played an important role in shaping public opinion during the British Raj. It was initially known as the Lahore Civil and Military Gazette. It was later renamed the Civil and Military Gazette and became the most popular English newspaper in the region. It covered a wide range of topics including politics, sports, culture, and social issues. During the Pakistan move-

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ment, the Civil and Military Gazette along with Dawn and The Pakistan Times played a significant role in promoting the idea of a separate Muslim state. It was also a strong advocate for the rights of the Indian Muslim community. After the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the paper continued to be published in Lahore as a leading newspaper in Pakistan. However, it faced financial difficulties in the 1960s and eventually ceased publication in 1972 (Niazi, 1987).

Figure 2. Front page of the newspaper published on January 31, 1948



The other English newspapers that started after the creation of Pakistan include The News International, The Nation, Daily Times, Pakistan Observer and Pakistan Today. The News International was launched on February 11, 1991. It is the sister newspaper of The Jang, the most circulated Urdu Daily in Pakistan (Yousaf et al., 2023). 'The Nation' was published by the Nawa-i-Waqt Group of Publications which also published Nawa-i-Waqt, an Urdu-language daily newspaper. On the other hand, Daily Times was launched on April 9, 2002, and is published by Media Times Ltd. Pakistan Observer was launched on 1 November 1988 from Islamabad. Pakistan Today was launched on 8 October 2006 from Lahore by veteran journalist Arif Nizami and is owned by Nawa Media Corporation. Business Recorder is a financial newspaper. It was launched on 27 April 1965 by veteran journalist Muhamamd Ahmed Zuberi.

In respect of the Urdu language newspapers, the leading publications include The Jang, Nawa-i-Waqt, Express, Dunya, Nai Baat, Khabrain, Daily Pakistan, Ausaf, Mashriq, and Jasarat. According to a recent survey, The Jang is widely read, followed by Nawa-i-Waqt, Dunya, and Express. On the other hand, among English-language newspapers, The Dawn holds the top spot in terms of readership, followed by *The News International*, *The Nation* and *The Express Tribune* (Yousaf et al., 2023). Several regional

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newspapers in different languages including Sindhi, Punjabi, Pashto, Balochi, and others languages strive to address the diverse ethnic communities' interests in politics, culture, economics and entertainment.

Role of Magazines in Mass Communication

Like newspapers, magazines are also considered to be the oldest medium of mass communication. Magazines possess a distinctive prose style that is characterized by its stylistic flair. They offer in-depth coverage, analysis, and criticism of various events and issues, with a primary focus on enlightening and entertaining their readers. Tulloch (2000) recognizes magazines as “the main source of the innovations in the publishing industry that created the modern popular press” (p. 139), whereas Conboy (2004) noted that magazines are so important that they have the ability to influence the mainstream journalism. Magazines cover a wide range of issues in the forms of articles, stories, interviews, essays, product reviews, features, and survey reports. These publications are subject-specific and are detailed descriptions, analyses and criticism. Magazines are either weekly, fortnightly, or monthly and several types are popular in Pakistan. Some of the most well-known magazines in Pakistan are briefly reviewed here;

General Interest Magazines: This type of magazine caters to the needs of the general population including the interests of all segments of the population. These types of magazines enjoy large circulation. Some well-known examples of this category of magazines include *Zindagi* (زندگی, a weekly published in Lahore, Urdu Digest (ٹیس جی ایڈ وڈرا) a monthly Urdu magazine published from Lahore and *Quomi Digest* is a monthly Urdu language magazine. On the other hand, *Family* is women oriented weekly Urdu magazine published from Lahore by the Nawa-i-Waqt group. In contrast, *Akhbar-e-Jahan* (سراج رابخا) is Pakistan's largest circulated and famous weekly magazine published by Independent Media Corporation that also owns *The Jang Urdu Newspaper*. All these magazines follow the style of the world-famous *Reader Digest* magazine.

News Magazines: This type of magazine covers news, and current affairs and provides an insight on different national and international political events. For instance, *Herald* was a monthly English-language magazine focused on politics and current affairs. It was published by the Dawn Media Group from 1970 to 2019. It ceased publication in 2019. Similarly, *Newsline* another monthly English news magazine ceased its publication in 2019 citing financial constraints.

Women's Magazine: Women's magazines cater to the interests of women. For example, *Dosheeza Digest* is a family and fiction-orientated magazine published in Karachi. It is published monthly. Likewise, *Family Magazine* is a weekly magazine published by Nawa-i-Waqt. Moreover, *Tehzeeb-e-Niswan* (سوسن بی نیت) was an Islamic weekly magazine for women. It was considered one of the earlier works on women's rights in Islam. It ceased its publication in 1949.

Children's Magazines: This type of magazine presents children's drawings, reviews of books, pictures, poems, short stories, cartoons and other stuff of their interest. For instance, *Phool* magazine (نی زگی می لوھپ) is a monthly magazine for children published by the Nawa-i-Waqt group of publications. *Taleem-o-Tarbiat* (تیبرت و می لعت) is a children's Urdu-language magazine published by Ferozsons. *Young*, a magazine for children's world is published by Dawn Group.

Fashion Magazine: This type of magazine has high photo journalism quality. They focus on new and innovative trends in society. Their circulation is high among the elite class compared to the masses.

Magazines are also considered a form of mass media aimed at surveillance, correlation among different segments of society, cultural transmission, and entertainment function. However, among these four functions, entertainment, cultural transmission and correlation among different segments of society are

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significant functions. Magazines present in-depth analysis and criticism of cultural, political, economic, sports and showbiz personalities. To summarize, magazines target a group of readers, develop a bond of trust with their readers, foster community-like interactions for their readers, and focus on the wider society (Holmes & Nice, 2011, p. 7).

Radio and Mass Communication

Besides newspapers, radio was considered to be the most reliable and authentic source of news, information and entertainment before the pre-partition era. At the creation of Pakistan, there were only three radio stations. These state-owned radio stations included a radio station at Peshawar that was established in the British era in 1935; a radio station at Lahore that came into being in 1937 and a Dhaka radio station that was established in 1939. The then East Pakistan with its capital at Dhaka became Bangladesh in 1971. Radio evolved slowly and gradually in Pakistan and became the chief source of modernizing the communication channels of mass media. At present, there are twenty-three state-owned radio stations in the country (Hussain, 2012). Of these 23 radio stations, six are in Punjab province, four in Sindh, four in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, four in Baluchistan, three in Gilgit-Baltistan and two in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. In addition, FM broadcasting started in Pakistan during the period of 1994. Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) launched its first FM Radio as 'FM Gold' in 1994 (Naz, 2008). At present, Radio Pakistan has about 40 FM stations operating throughout the country. According to Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (hereafter PEMRA), the authority authorized to issue licenses to FM radios and televisions in the country, 138 FM Radio licenses were granted, out of which 114 licenses were commercial whereas 24 were non-commercial. Amongst the 114 commercial licenses, 94 are operational while 20 are still non-operational. However, out of 24 non-commercial licenses, 21 are operational. This shows a growing pattern in Private FM licenses over the years in Pakistan (PEMRA, 2010). Moreover, the private broadcasting companies operate about 175 commercial privately owned FM stations. Out of these 175 FM stations, the licenses of 21 stand canceled. Moreover, 60 campus-based university FM stations are non-commercial and serve the needs of the educational community ranging from information, awareness, and training to the students besides providing entertainment to communities residing in the universities (PEMRA, 2023a).

Television as a Source of Mass Communication

Television is a powerful medium of mass communication in Pakistan. Pakistan Television dominated the media landscape of Pakistan from the early 60s until the 1990s providing news, current affairs and entertainment. Pakistan Television (PTV) was established on November 26, 1964, and was the sole television channel in the country until the 1990s. Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV) is the national public service broadcaster of Pakistan. It is owned by the Government of Pakistan. PTV operates multiple channels, including PTV Home, PTV News, PTV Sports, PTV World, PTV Bolan and PTV National. PTV Home is a general entertainment channel that broadcasts a range of programs, including drama serials, talk shows, game shows, and news. PTV News is a 24-hour news channel that provides news and current affairs coverage from Pakistan and around the world. PTV Sports is a dedicated sports channel that covers local and international sporting events, including cricket, football, hockey, and others. PTV World is an English-language channel that provides news and current affairs coverage from Pakistan and around the world in the English language. To keep Baluch audiences updated and informed, PTV Bolan

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broadcasts in the Balochi language and covers news, current affairs, and cultural programming from the Baluchistan province. Likewise, PTV National is also a regional channel that broadcasts in the Punjabi language and covers news, current affairs, and cultural programming from the Punjab province to cater to diverse Punjabi-speaking audiences (Naz et al., 2009-2010). PTV is considered one of the oldest and most prominent broadcasters that significantly contributed to developing the collective consciousness of society.

In addition to PTV, Pakistan has several privately owned news television channels that provide 24-hour news coverage in different languages, including Urdu, English, and regional languages. Citizens have access to 74 television and 122 FM radio stations owned and run by private entrepreneurs in Pakistan (Rasul & McDowell, 2012). In this diverse and media-rich environment, a wide array of content is made available to cater to the diverse needs and preferences of the public. The leading Television channel includes Geo News, ARY News, Dunya News, Express News, Dawn News, Samaa TV, 92 News HD, Abb Takk News, News One, Aaj News, Capital TV, GNN News, Hum News, Public News, City 42 News 24, Khyber News (Pashto), and KTN News (Sindhi). According to PEMRA, the authority certified to issue and regulate licenses to television stations, there are 138 television channels in the country (PEMRA, 2023b). These news channels cover a wide range of topics, including politics, current affairs, sports, entertainment, education and business, among others resulting in diverse opinions on different issues.

Political Economy of Mass Media

The political economy of communication investigates how the production, distribution, and communication resources are operated in a society (Mosco, 2008). To put it more succinctly, “communication is not only limited to the transmission of ideas or information as suggested by the transmission model of (Shannon & Weaver, 1949) or Lasswell model of communication (Lasswell, 1948). In contrast, it is the social production of meaning for readers, listeners and viewers (Mosco, 2009). From a political economy perspective, the Pakistani mass media market is dominated by several media conglomerates. These media conglomerates are privately owned and they control the major part of the information, news, and entertainment content. Content diversity which is key for cultivating diverse opinions, attitudes, and behaviors in society is compromised to accommodate the interests of the advertisers compared to serving the society at larger (Golding & Murdock, 1997). In Pakistan, the policies of the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority have resulted in the concentration of ownership wherein few media conglomerates control information, news, current affairs and entertainment diminishing the readers, listeners and viewers’ content consumption choices (Rasul & McDowell, 2012). Some of them are briefly discussed in the subsequent section.

Independent Media Corporation: It is a Pakistani media conglomerate and a subsidiary of a Dubai-based Company. This group is Pakistan’s largest group of newspaper and the publisher of the Urdu language newspaper the *Daily Jang*. (گنج), *The News International*, *Mag Weekly*, Geo News and Geo Sports. This group generates the largest revenue among media companies in Pakistan.

Waqt Media Group: This group publishes *Nawa-i-Waqt* newspaper in Urdu, *The Nation* newspaper in English, *Nida-i-Millat*, a family magazine, and the monthly children’s magazine, *Phool*. This group generates the second-largest advertising revenue in the country.

Pakistan Herald Publications: The Herald Publications also known as Dawn Media Group publishes Dawn, the largest English newspaper of Pakistan, which is considered the most credible English newspaper in the country and enjoys widespread influence among policymaking circles. In addition,

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it publishes *The Star*, Pakistan's most popular evening newspaper, *Herald*, a current affairs monthly magazine in English, *Spider*, a monthly Internet magazine and *Aurora*, a marketing and advertising bi-monthly magazine, and *Young World*, a children's monthly magazine. Moreover, this group owns Dawn News, a 24-hour news channel, broadcasting in English from 2007–2010, but since 2010 in Urdu language and FM *City FM 89*, a music radio channel

Century Publications (Lakson Group): This group publishes *Daily Express*, the Urdu newspaper. Express News, a 24-hour news channel, Express Entertainment and The Express Tribune, an English newspaper which is published in partnership with The International Herald Tribune - an affiliate of The New York Times.

National Communication Services (NCS) Pvt: This group owns Daily Dunya, an Urdu newspaper. It also owns Dunya News TV, a satellite news television channel offering live current affairs transmission on diverse topics such as politics, religion, culture, business and social issues. In a similar vein, Lahore News is dedicated to catering to the informational, educational, and entertainment needs of the Lahore metropolitan city. Mian Amer Mahmood, a Pakistani businessman and politician who is the founder of the Punjab Group of Colleges is the owner of this group.

City News Network: This group is owned by journalist Mohsin Naqvi. This group owns City 42 News. This is Lahore-based television to meet the needs of Pakistan's second-largest metropolitan city with a population of over 12 million citizens. In a similar vein, City 41 is another city-based news channel. It provides information, news and current affairs programs for the residents of Faisalabad, a city in Punjab, Pakistan. Moreover, 24 News is a current affairs-based News Channel launched in 2015 from Lahore. Another sister channel of City 42 includes the Rohi Channel. It is a Multan-based news channel launched on May 27, 2017. It meets the information, political, cultural and educational needs of Southern Punjab people.

Galaxy Broadcasting Network: This group is owned by a famous wealthy Mian family based in the third largest city of Pakistan, Faisalabad. Galaxy Broadcasting Network owns 92 News TV channels and '92 Roznama, a daily Urdu-language newspaper. 92 News also runs the 92 News UK Beam service in the United Kingdom.

Online Media

In recent decades, the digital revolution has brought about a paradigm shift, with the rise of online news portals, social media platforms, and streaming services, further transforming the media landscape in the subcontinent. The historical evolution of mass media in the subcontinent reflects both continuity and change, shaping public opinion, influencing social movements, and providing a platform for diverse voices to be heard.

Online media outlets, such as Dawn, The Express Tribune, Express News and Geo, are popular among the country's urban population. Additionally, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have become widely utilized by both journalists and citizens alike for sharing news updates and expressing opinions. However, it is important to note that the government has occasionally resorted to social media platform blocking, citing reasons of national security as a justification for such actions. These instances highlight the complex relationship between the government, the online media landscape, and freedom of expression in Pakistan.

Challenges to Media Industry

Pakistan's mass media landscape is diverse, with a wide range of print, broadcast, and online media outlets serving the country's population of over 200 million people. However, the media industry in Pakistan faces several challenges. The challenges faced in the realm of media include issues related to media freedom, encompassing government censorship, influence from powerful entities, and threats to the safety of journalists. Press freedom has never been unpredictable in Pakistan throughout the turbulent press history of Pakistan during military and civilian rule (Niazi, 1987). The press has faced threats, economic pressure and pressure groups violence (Siraj, 2009). In addition, Siraj and Hussain (2017) exploring the journalists' autonomy concluded that journalists at higher positions in the media hierarchy enjoy more autonomy compared to those who are at the lower level. Journalists in lower hierarchical positions often encounter a range of challenges, including comparatively lower salaries, the constant pressure of meeting deadlines, and the added burden of political and pressure group influences. These factors can significantly impact their work environment and professional experiences. Firstly, Media conglomerates in Pakistan always fight for media freedom ignoring the violation of the media code of ethics by several journalists in the name of media freedom (Yousaf & Rahman, 2014). This trend has gained momentum with the boom of electronic media and the emergence of news media. Secondly, the media in Pakistan has had trouble finding its voice. The country's press organizations were held in check by a succession of dictatorial administrations. Government censors often screened every news story before publication in the middle of the 1980s, with offensive articles being left off the final product. Writing between the lines became a skill for editors and reporters (Pintak & Nazir, 2013). One of the biggest challenges is censorship by the government and powerful interest groups, particularly on topics related to religion, security, and the military. Journalists and media outlets often face government censorship, restrictive laws, and intimidation tactics that undermine their ability to report objectively and independently. Journalists and media workers also face threats to their safety, with attacks, abductions, and assassinations being a common occurrence. In addition, the media industry in Pakistan is plagued by low salaries, job insecurity, and lack of professional training opportunities (Adnan et al., 2019). One of the main causes of the low standard of journalism in Urdu journalism is poor educational standards. The educational system has to change. The lack of an appropriate media platform results in a poor grasp of delicate subjects (Safdar et al., 2019).

CONCLUSION

This study is an attempt to shed light on the historical evolution, challenges, and prospects of mass media in Pakistan tracing its origins and growth as a powerful medium of communication in the subcontinent. The role of the Urdu press in the independence movement was pivotal, as it played a crucial role in mobilizing public opinion, spreading nationalist ideologies, and fostering a sense of unity among the masses. The essay has highlighted the gradual progression of mass media in Pakistan, from the introduction of print media in the colonial era to the advent of radio and television broadcasting. Each phase brought its own set of challenges and opportunities, shaping the media landscape and its impact on society. The paper has also emphasized the crucial role of mass media in shaping public opinion, disseminating information, and fostering a sense of collective identity. Mass media has played a vital role in informing the public about important events, providing a platform for diverse voices, and influencing social and

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political discourse. The study has also highlighted the challenges faced by the media industry, including limited media freedom, safety concerns for journalists, political and pressure group influences, lack of professional standards, economic sustainability, and restricted access to information. These challenges have, to varying degrees, hindered the media's ability to function independently, report objectively, and deliver unbiased and reliable news to the public.

Despite these challenges, there are prospects for positive change. With advancements in digital technology and the rise of social media platforms, mass media in Pakistan has the potential to reach larger audiences, engage with the public in new ways, and foster greater transparency and accountability. The government, media organizations, civil society, and individuals must work together to protect and promote media freedom, enhance professional standards, provide adequate training and resources for journalists, and ensure the sustainability of the media industry. By acknowledging the challenges, embracing the prospects, and fostering a supportive environment, Pakistan can continue to nurture a vibrant and responsible mass media that informs, empowers, and reflects the diverse voices of its population. Thus, it will unite scattered individuals in a shared experience and develop the "collective self-consciousness" of society.

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Chapter 3

Literary Ethnobotany in Aboriginal Australia: Oodgeroo Noonuccal's Poetry as Biocultural Activism

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ABSTRACT

Aboriginal rights activist, poet, educator, and environmentalist Oodgeroo Noonuccal became the first Indigenous Australian to publish a collection of poetry. Noonuccal's work can be understood as "literary ethnobotany" that gives prominence to the plant-based cultural knowledge of Indigenous people. Her work expresses the idea of plants—and the multidimensional knowledge systems surrounding them—as embodied figures exerting material agencies in discourse with other beings and elements. This chapter reinterprets Noonuccal's poetry as literary ethnobotany that boldly asserts the vibrant materialities of the botanical world. In its emphasis on Indigenous Australian traditions of plants, her writing exemplifies biocultural activism in which native plants serve as potent reagents of cultural sovereignty for Indigenous Australians. Going beyond the dominant Western view of plants as mute objects of appropriation, Noonuccal's narratives of botanical life thus contribute to the revitalization of human-flora relations in Australia.

All eyes turned, men and women, all
Had smiles for Nona.
And what did the women see? They saw
The white head-band above her forehead,
The gay little feather-tuft in her hair
Fixed with gum, and how she wore it.
They saw the necklet of red berries

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And the plaited and painted reed arm-band
Jarri had made her.

-from "Nona," *My People* (2008, pp. 34, ll. 38-16, first edition, 1970)

INTRODUCTION

According to the United Nations, there are 370–500 million Indigenous people in the world belonging to 5,000 distinct cultural groups across 90 countries. Although they live in nearly every region of the planet—from Australia to the Arctic—about 70% are found in Asia. What's more, their traditional homelands contain up to 80% of the planet's imperiled biodiversity (UNESCO, 2019). The exigent environmental issues of the present—climate change, biodiversity loss, water contamination, and myriad others—are particularly acute for Indigenous communities who rely on imperiled ecosystems for their livelihoods. While they constitute only 5 percent of the global population, Indigenous people represent 15 percent of the world's poor and 33% of the world's critically poor (Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions, 2013, p. 3). In the contemporary context, Indigenous people's traditions of biodiversity conservation reflect significant inequalities in global knowledge production and dissemination in which Western societies continue to reinforce the legitimacy of their own cultural ideas, values, and frameworks. North-South asymmetries are especially evident, for instance, in the practice of bioprospecting involving "the characterization of living organisms (e.g., plant species) in respect to the presence of commercially valuable chemical compounds" (Skirycz et al., 2016, p. 783). This chapter's aim, then, is to investigate the ways in which Indigenous literary expression provides an agent of biocultural sovereignty. More specifically, the chapter focuses on local plant-based cultural knowledge production, preservation, and dissemination through a close reading of the poetry of Indigenous Australian writer-activist Oodgeroo Noonuccal.

With the release of *We Are Going* (1964) and *The Dawn Is At Hand* (1992), Aboriginal rights activist, poet, educator, and environmentalist Oodgeroo Noonuccal (1920–93), née Kathleen Jean Mary Ruska, became the first Indigenous Australian to publish book-length collections of poetry. In "Nona," excerpted above, references to resin, berries, and reeds signify the combined literary-ethnobotanical dimensions of her work vis-à-vis the beautification of the female body through the application of plant materials. When read in conjunction with her prose writing, Noonuccal's poetry can be understood as an expression of *literary ethnobotany* that gives prominence to the plant-based cultural knowledge of the Indigenous communities of coastal Queensland. As a case in point from the prose narrative *The Rainbow Serpent* (1988, p. 20), authored with her son Kabul, Noonuccal speaks of the Dreaming—a time known as Alcheringa among Aboriginal people—and the actions of the benevolent Creation Ancestor Biambi: "The pine trees, they burst into flower. That's his way of telling us it's time to hunt the big mullet fish." Botanical wisdom such as the human-pine-mullet interrelationship encodes the idea of plants—and the multidimensional knowledge systems surrounding them—as embodied figures exerting material agencies in discourse with other beings and elements. The material vitality (flowering) of the plant (pine tree) signifies the maturation of other beings (mullet), signalling the appropriate time for particular human activities (fishing) to take place. This chapter reinterprets Noonuccal's poetry as an expression of literary ethnobotany that boldly asserts the vibrant materialities of botanical life. In its emphasis on reclaiming Indigenous Australian traditions of plants, furthermore, Noonuccal's literary ethnobotany exemplifies the idea of biocultural activism. Her work affirms that, in their material bearing within the landscape,

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native plants serve as potent reagents of biocultural sovereignty. Going beyond the dominant Western view of plants as mute materials to be appropriated by imperialist practices such as bioprospecting, Noonuccal's narratives of botanical life contribute to the revitalization of human-flora interactions and traditional ecological knowledge systems in Australia.¹

Oodgeroo Noonuccal remains one of Australia's most influential Indigenous poets, writers, and campaigners. Wiradjuri author Anita Heiss and Koori poet Peter Minter (2008, p. 40) characterize Noonuccal as "the grandmother of Aboriginal poetry [who] travelled widely overseas, representing Aboriginal writing and culture." Heiss further observes:

When her poetry collection *We Are Going* was first published in 1964 it began a new phase in communication and relations between black and white Australia. It met with great sympathy and understanding on the part of the white community, running through seven editions and selling 500 copies on one day alone, which is remarkable for any book of poetry in Australia at any time before or since. (Heiss, 2006, p. 180)

Building on Heiss' assertion, this chapter maintains that an integral element of this "new phase in communication and relations" has been an enlarged understanding of the material significance of native plants in Aboriginal cultures. The "remarkable" social function of Noonuccal's poetry entailed the dissemination of cultural knowledge of plants in narrative form. Prior to Noonuccal's first publications in the 1960s, print-based narratives of the botanical knowledge of Aboriginal people were largely restricted to the domain of ethnographic documentation, as evident in the writings of economic botanist Joseph Maiden (1889, 1904) and dentist Thomas Campbell (1939) as well as European observations of Aboriginal plant usage beginning in the late-eighteenth century (Clarke, 2003). Nonetheless, the literary-ethnobotanical interplay at work in Noonuccal's writing has not previously been acknowledged by researchers in either literary or ethnobotanical studies in Australia. This chapter, accordingly, contributes to critical readings of Noonuccal's work by placing emphasis on her narrativization of the material interconnectivities between plants, people, and ecologies in Indigenous traditions. These interconnectivities, in turn, form the basis of her work's narrativity, as theorized from the perspectives of new materialism.

New materialism highlights the intrinsic interconnectivity between beings and elements. This wide-ranging theoretical approach emphasizes *material narrativity* (the ways in which matter, including animate and inanimate forms, is storied); *transcorporeal subjectivity* (a mode of subjectivity shared between human and other-than-human bodies); and *distributive agency* (a mode of agency enacted between and across individuals). Here, *agency* refers to the capacity of a being or object for intention or self-directedness in dynamic response to its environment. Emerging from the "material turn" in the humanities and social sciences (Lettow, 2017), material ecocriticism is an intellectual-activist shift toward ecosocial transformation through critical processes of reinterpreting and re-engaging the world's materialities. For ecocritics Serenella Iovino and Serpil Oppermann, material ecocriticism centres on the potentialities of storied matter: "the world's material phenomena are knots in a vast network of agencies, which can be 'read' and interpreted as forming narratives, stories" (Iovino & Oppermann, 2014, pp. 1-2). Plant-focused material ecocriticism attends to the narrative agencies of plants and reads human-flora interactions at manifold scales. From this critical stance, the "material-discursive" affectivities of plant life complicate notions of human preeminence and disrupt anthropocentric processes of meaning-making (Oppermann, 2018, pp. 11, 13). Adopting the material turn in literary and cultural studies, literary ethnobotany reveals the "interlaced stories of natures and cultures congealing at multiple scales" (Oppermann, 2018, p. 15). As an approach to Indigenous creative expression, literary ethnobotany aims to decolonize and dewesternize Aboriginal Australian poetry and dominant critical reading methods (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). Accord-

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ingly, this chapter examines Noonuccal's poetry as biocultural and ethnobotanical expression before investigating three prominent themes in her work: traditions of cultivating and sheltering; knowledge of increase and death; and narratives of healing and recovery.

Biography of a Poet: Noonuccal's Literary Activism as Biocultural

Born in 1920 in Bulimba, a suburb of Brisbane, Queensland, Oodgeroo Noonuccal (or Oodgeroo of the Noonuccal, née Kathleen Ruska and also known formerly as Kath Walker) was the first Aboriginal Australian to publish a book of poetry, *We Are Going* (1964), and later became a prominent activist, spokesperson, and educator (Abbey, 2021). Noonuccal's childhood home was One Mile on North Stradbroke Island, or Minjerribah, located in south-east Queensland about fifty kilometres from Brisbane (Abbey, 2021, para. 2). One Mile is a thirty-hectare (seventy-five-acre) community established in 1941 after the closure of Myora Springs, the site of the forcible resettlement of the Aboriginal families of Minjerribah in 1892 (Moore, 2015, para. 9). Her heritage consisted of Noonuccal (the Traditional Owners of Minjerribah) from her father as well as inland Aboriginal and Scottish ancestries from her mother. Her father, Edward Ruska, of the Noonuccal, campaigned for improved conditions, including increased wages, for local Aboriginal laborers, leaving a strong and enduring impression on his daughter. Often in collaboration with the celebrated Australian poet Judith Wright (1915–2000), with whom she had a lifelong friendship, Noonuccal dedicated herself to land rights. The cross-cultural friendship between Wright and Noonuccal began around 1963, shortly before Wright endorsed the publication of Noonuccal's first poetry collection (Walker, 1964). Both women benefitted considerably from their professional and personal association. Noonuccal was nurtured in her literary growth while Wright received firsthand knowledge of Aboriginal values—including Indigenous understandings of plants and other non-human life forms—that would, according to Huggan and Tiffin (2010, pp. 93–94), “challenge her own white-settler privilege [and allow her] to posit an ecological alternative to what she sees, in more general terms, as a destructively technocratic world.”

The release of *We Are Going* coincided with the emergence of the Aboriginal civil rights movement characterized by successions of protests across Australia in the lead up to the 1967 referendum, which granted the Australian government the power to implement policies in the interest of Aboriginal communities (Rooney, 2009, p. 61; Shoemaker, 2004, pp. 181–182). Although initially receiving a mixed reception by predominantly non-Indigenous literary critics, the collection would help transform perceptions and widen understandings of Aboriginal cultures among non-Indigenous Australians as the text circulated in literary-activist circles (Rooney, 2009, p. 64). The poem “Aboriginal Charter of Rights,” as a case in point, is an “energetic and rousing manifesto” (Brewster, 1994, p. 94). Noonuccal wrote the poem to present in 1962 at the fifth Annual General Meeting of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, or FCAATSI (Heiss, 2006, p. 181). Noonuccal's prominent social activism, however, preceded this demonstrably political era in twentieth-century Australian history. In the 1940s, she embraced the Communist Party for its opposition to White Australia doctrine catalyzed by the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901. This set of policies privileged immigrants from English-speaking countries, upholding the value of white Australian society broadly while promulgating discriminatory attitudes toward Asian, Pacific Island, and Aboriginal people (Tickner, 1994, p. 148). Although Noonuccal ran unsuccessfully for political office in Queensland in 1969 and 1983, she remained committed to the struggle for Aboriginal land rights, protesting the 1988 Australian Bicentenary—celebrating 200 years since the arrival of the First Fleet—by shedding her Europeanized name, Kath Walker, and adopting

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the ancestral designation, Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Tickner, 1994, p. 149). Noonuccal was also a founding member of FCAATSI and served as an Executive Member of the Queensland chapter of the Aboriginal Advancement League, established in 1957 (Walker, 1964, p. 5).

In later years, Noonuccal devoted herself less to direct political interventions. Instead, she embraced the shelter of her homeland—Minjerribah—dedicating herself to environmental and cultural education (Jose, 1994). As a central feature of her activism in the 1970s, Noonuccal founded the Noonuccal-Nughie Education and Cultural Centre at Moongalba (meaning “sitting down place” in Jandai, the local Indigenous language) on North Stradbroke Island. The work of this coastal nature sanctuary focused on enabling the general public to learn more about traditional Aboriginal wildcrafting practices and sustainable interactions with the land. Judith Wright (1991, p. 7) viewed Moongalba as a refuge from modern techno-industrial Australian society, “away from the hostile and critical eyes of white people, in a place Aborigines can feel is their own. The far-off lights of Brisbane are muted by the trees, and people can be themselves.” From Wright’s perspective, the native trees of Moongalba—*Eucalyptus*, *Corymbia*, *Allocasuarina*, and others—provide a first layer of defense against the sensory depredations of industrialized Australian society. With a common emphasis on coastal Queensland habitats, Wright and Noonuccal shared a commitment to ecological justice and the sustainable use of Australia’s natural resources. Moongalba epitomized these concerns through Wright and Noonuccal’s development of a “pragmatic idealism” marked by a devotion to engaging the public in realizing conservation goals (Huggan & Tiffin, 2010, p. 88). Noonuccal’s public charisma—her unique leadership skills, educational focus, and “performative” capability (Shoemaker, 1994)—contributed significantly to their mutual vision. Moongalba concretized both authors’ biocultural “idealism”—to invoke Huggan and Tiffin’s term—by offering a place for Indigenous and non-Indigenous visitors to experience the land directly, apart from the urbanized constraints of the Brisbane metropole.

Following the publication of *We Are Going* (1964), Noonuccal released two more poetry collections, including *The Dawn is at Hand* (1992, originally 1966) and *My People* (2008, originally 1970), as well as the illustrated narratives *Father Sky and Mother Earth* (2021, originally 1971), *Stradbroke Dreamtime* (1982, originally 1972), *The Rainbow Serpent* (1988, with Kabul Oodgeroo Noonuccal), and *Australian Legends and Landscapes* (1990). In 1986, Noonuccal made her acting debut as Eva, a camp Elder, in *The Fringe Dwellers*, widely regarded as the first Australian film to feature Aboriginal actors in major roles (Beresford, 1986). Corresponding to her return to Minjerribah, her later work consists largely of prose about her homeland and the cultural narratives of the Noonuccal people (Brewster, 1994, p. 92). Literary critics maintain that Noonuccal’s early poetic style capitalizes on the “ironic resources of elegy,” subverting “white assumptions of Aboriginal confusion and defeatism” (Huggan & Tiffin, 2010, p. 94). Composed and delivered as performance underpinned by Indigenous storytelling traditions, her poetry represents what Huggan and Tiffin (2010, p. 95) conceptualize as “*counter-mimicry* [italics original],” or “an ironic version, which is also an inversion, of the white ventriloquism of Aboriginal loss.” Noonuccal’s performative poetry juxtaposes the pastoral genre and Aboriginal Australian orality, hence exposing the ongoing impacts of Anglo-European colonization on plants and other non-human life forms. As Brewster (1994, p. 93) observes, “storytelling and song are oral modes and traces of orality inform the different genres Noonuccal used.”

Noonuccal preferred traditional rhyme patterns, direct phraseology, uncomplicated lineation, and accessible diction that tends to incorporate and ironize bureaucratic jargon. In this way, her performative poetry facilitated rapport between Noonuccal and her audiences, raising greater public awareness of the social and environmental inequities facing Aboriginal people including with respect to plants. On the

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subject of her work, the critic and novelist Mudrooroo (1994) proposed the term *poetemics*—hybridizing poetry and polemics—to stress that her message, rather than her aesthetic, is integral to appreciating her writing. For Mudrooroo (1994, p. 58), the dominant characterization of Noonuccal’s early work as “protest poetry” is an oversimplification that ignores her commitment to expressing complex political, cultural, and environmental messages: “In such verse there may be a deliberate repudiation of aesthetic concerns in order to produce an alienation effect.” A distinguishing element of the “alienation effect” identified by Mudrooroo is the dispossession of Aboriginal people from their homelands including from biodiverse communities. In contrast to Mudrooroo and other critics, however, this chapter offers a reading of the plant-related knowledge and discourses embedded in Noonuccal’s poetry. Her poetry’s narrativization of ancestral relationships to plants represents a compelling refusal of the techno-industrial paradigm that tends to fracture biocultural relations to land and disrupt long-standing human-plant networks.

Noonuccal’s Literary Activism as Ethnobotanical

And when the wild hop
trees bloom, that’s his way
to tell us the oysters are fat
on the shores of our great
sea spirit, Quandamooka. (Noonuccal & Noonuccal, 1988, p. 21)

In the late 1980s, Kath Walker began publicly using the traditional name Oodgeroo Noonuccal—translated as “paperbark tree of the Noonuccal people”—as a linguistic expression of protest against the Australian Bicentenary celebrating two-hundred years of British colonization. In 1988, with her son Vivian Walker, she wrote the script for the performance *Rainbow Serpent Theatre*, produced at the World Expo 88 in Brisbane, under her newly-chosen name Oodgeroo (Abbey, 2021). Although her patrilineal totem was the carpet snake (Noonuccal, 1990, p. 15), she adopted the paperbark as her appellation later in life in order to assert the significance of the tree to Noonuccal culture while countering the erosion of Indigenous Australian names for plants and other life forms. She writes, “My responsibility is to protect, wherever and whenever I can, my sisters the paperbark trees” (Noonuccal, 1990, p. 8). In Aboriginal societies, totemism protects species from overhunting or overharvesting, ensuring respectful and sustainable human interactions with ecosystems over time (Noonuccal & Noonuccal, 1988, p. 40). In this sacred context, the poem “Ballad of the Totems” opens by lyricizing the totemic association between her father and the snake:

My father was Noonuccal man and kept old tribal way,
His totem was the Carpet Snake, whom none must ever slay;
But mother was of Peewee clan, and loudly she expressed
The daring view that carpet snakes were nothing but a pest. (Noonuccal, 2008, p. 24, ll. 1-4, originally 1966)

Whereas her father conferred a pet snake an honored place in her household, her mother—from a different totemic background—continually resisted the presence of the reptile in Noonuccal’s childhood home on Minjerribah (Walker, 1978b, mins 17:36-19:33).

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In her story “The Beginning of Life” from *Stradbroke Dreamtime*, Noonuccal explains the totemic system further:

So the tribes knew themselves by their own totems: the kangaroo, the emu, the carpet snake, and many, many more. And in order that none should starve, [the Rainbow Serpent] ruled that no man should eat of his own totem, but only of other totems. In this way there was food for all. (Noonuccal, 1982, p. 45)

In addition to animal totems, however, Indigenous Australians also acknowledge plants and other non-humans as totemically significant. Sissy Pettit, Deputy Chairperson of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council, clarifies that, when an animal or plant totem dies, “our connection with the spirit is compromised. The spirit and totem are as one and once our totem dies, a bit of our spirit dies as well” (qtd. in Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council, 2020, p. 33). The name “Noonuccal,” therefore, signifies the complex ancestral relations between the paperbark tree, Indigenous people, and the spirit realm. Her name, moreover, connects her spiritually to Vivian, also known as Kabul Oodgeroo Noonuccal, who passed away in 1991, two years before her own death. In this way, the biocultural enmeshments of the paperbark are summoned with each utterance of the names of the poet and her son.

The idea of “literary ethnobotany”—that is, of ethnobotanical knowledge encoded in literary works—presents a nuanced means to understand Indigenous Australian material ecologies of paperbark trees (*Melaleuca* spp.) as totems as well as tools, fibers, food, beverages, and medicines. Indeed, in some Aboriginal cultures, the paperbark fulfills all of these roles as a versatile spiritual and material agent. Indigenous languages, such as Jandai of North Stradbroke Island, employ a broad spectrum of appellations for these culturally-prominent trees. Economic botanist Joseph Maiden (1904, p. 92) recorded the names *numbah* for the species in the languages of southern New South Wales and *belbowrie* among the people of the Gloucester area of the state. His book *The Forest Flora of New South Wales* (1904) enumerates some of the diverse designations for *M. quinquenervia* throughout its coastal Australian distribution:

It bears a number of aboriginal names in Queensland. They are quoted by Mr. Bailey [botanist Frederick Bailey] as follows:— ‘Mor-ngi’, Palmer River (Roth); ‘Kyenbooree’, Mackay (Nugent); ‘Bichuma’ Forest Hill (Macartney); ‘Atchoourgoo’, Mitchell River (Palmer); ‘Oodgeroo’, Stradbroke Island (Watkins), to which may be added ‘Bethar’, Port Curtis (Hedley). (Maiden, 1904, p. 92)

Aboriginal Australians manufacture bandages, burial coverings, clothing, cradle liners, mats, menstrual pads, pouches, shelter roofs, toilet tissue, and water containers from this resilient tree (Clarke, 2007, pp. 106, 116). The Enindilyakwa and Rirratjingu people of Arnhem Land, for instance, use *Melaleuca* wood to construct tools (Specht, 2006, p. 66). Leaves from paperbark varieties are processed into a medicine to treat colds and coughs (Clarke, 2007, p. 104). The Bundjalong of the north coast of New South Wales exploit the bactericidal and fungicidal characteristics of *Melaleuca* foliage to alleviate numerous ailments (Jones, 2006, p. 203). In the tropics, people have been known to suck the nectar from paperbark blossoms or steep them in water to produce a bush beverage (Clarke, 2007, p. 79). In reciprocal exchange with the species, as prescribed by Law and the Dreaming, Aboriginal communities maintain healthy populations of paperbarks and other trees through long-term cultivation paradigms centering on periodic landscape firing (see, for example, Pascoe, 2014).

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Published in *Stradbroke Dreaming*, the Creation narrative “Oodgeroo (Paperbark-tree)” features a lone woman, wandering the land during an age known as the New Dreaming, who asks Biامي, the Good Spirit, for assistance locating her tribe. Biامي instructs the woman to request bark from the paperbark trees. The trees recognize the woman’s strong ethical character and commit to helping her: “The paperbark-trees loved this woman who had lost her tribe, and they gave her their bark. They knew she was not greedy and would not take more than she needed” (Noonuccal, 1982, p. 56). The woman places their bark in her dillybag—a traditional Indigenous bag made from plant fibers—and, following Biامي’s advice, she adds to her bag the charred sticks from the extinguished fires of her tribe. Biامي then advises the woman to move the sticks rhythmically across the bark sheets to produce a graphic record of the stories of all the tribes of the Old Dreaming. The paperbarks, in response, adopt the woman as a member of their society: “And when next the paperbark-trees filled the air with the scent of their sweet, honey-smelling flowers, they took her into their tribe as one of their own” (Noonuccal, 1982, p. 56). The narrative of the paperbark tree demonstrates the porosity between Indigenous people and native plants, underscoring the ways in which humans and other-than-humans are “interlocked in networks that produce undeniable signifying forces” (Iovino & Oppermann, 2014, p. 2).

Likewise, in the story of the silky oak (*Grevillea robusta*), the hunter Tuggan-Tuggan falls in love with a beautiful, though unhappy, tree who “wished she had a cloak to cover her trembling leaves to keep them warm” (Noonuccal, 1982, p. 58). Banished from his tribe and missing his boomerang, the hunter continues searching the world for a cloak but to no avail. Recognizing Tuggan-Tuggan’s devotion to the tree, Biامي returns the lost boomerang but, by this time, the protagonist has become severely weakened. With his final breath, Tuggan-Tuggan hurls the boomerang suddenly into the silky oak. The tool shatters into a thousand fragments, forming the golden cloak of flowers that is the defining visual characteristic of the species today. In addition to ancestral narratives of paperbarks, silky oaks, cotton trees, red mangroves, banksias, lawyer vines, bloodwood gums, and black beans, as featured in her prose, Noonuccal’s direct childhood experiences of plants informed her practice of literary ethnobotany. Writing autobiographically in *Stradbroke Dreamtime*, for example, she remembers “ferns and flowers growing in abundance” on Minjerribah, an island habitat of “flowering pines, wattles and gums” (Noonuccal, 1982, p. 7). Nonetheless, by the 1970s, Stradbroke was in crisis as the “trees and flowers are being pushed aside and left to die” (Noonuccal, 1982, p. 7). Engendered during her childhood on Minjerribah, Noonuccal’s conservation ethic suffuses *The Rainbow Serpent* as she calls out “those who see no colour, who will not feel the beauty of this land—who wish only to destroy the mother and themselves” (Noonuccal & Noonuccal, 1988, p. 25). In a comparable tone of urgency, she brings urgent attention to the pollution of mangrove ecosystems in *Father Sky and Mother Earth* (Noonuccal, 2021).

Traditions of Cultivating and Sheltering in Noonuccal’s Poetry

Noonuccal’s poetry engages plant materialities through references to traditional practices of cultivating and sheltering. Indigenous technology is the subject of “No More Boomerang” from *The Dawn Is At Hand* (Walker, 1992, pp. 54-56, originally 1966). The melodic poem narrates themes of biocultural imperative while sharply critiquing the peripheralization of traditional Indigenous technologies by their modern equivalents (Farrell, 2015, pp. 162, 165–166). Noonuccal positions various plant-derived technologies (boomerangs, spears, firesticks, message sticks, gunya shelters, woomera spear throwers, and waddy hunting clubs) in opposition to their mechanized—and culturally-disruptive—analogue (electricity, bungalows, television, cinema, atomic energy, and the infrastructure of settler society generally).

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Structurally, the poem comprises thirteen quatrains, each based on an ABCB rhyme scheme with short lines of four to six syllables. Stylistically, Noonuccal employs anaphoric repetition for dramatic impact. The poem's singsong tenor, however, belies an undercurrent of deep-seated cultural pathos. Noonuccal's application of counter-mimicry, nevertheless, suggests the enduring resilience of botanically-based technologies in comparison to the inevitable decline of their ecologically-insidious substitutes. The first two quatrains read:

No more boomerang
No more spear;
Now all civilized —
Colour bar and beer.

No more corroboree,
Gay dance and din.
Now we got movies,
And pay to go in. (Walker, 1992, p. 54, ll. 1–8)

In these stanzas, the passive consumption of Western goods (alcohol, television, movies) displaces the conscientious use of ancestral technologies (boomerangs, spears, corroborees). Monetized structures of labor, implicated with industrial capitalism, supersede social systems based on convivial forms of exchange between people, plants, and others.

“No More Boomerang” invokes various forms of traditional technology in which the materiality of the botanical world mediates practices of cultivation. A specific case is *firestick burning* or *firestick farming*. The archaeologist Rhys Jones devised these two terms in the 1960s to denote the dynamic management of ecological communities by Aboriginal people through processes of burning designed to encourage the growth of particular species of animals, plants, and pollinators (Jones, 1969). In this vein, “No More Boomerang” continues with:

No more firesticks
That made the whites scoff.
Now all electric,
And no better off. (Walker, 1992, p. 55, ll. 29–32)

More recent ethnoecological studies call into question the actual extent of environmental impacts precipitated by Aboriginal fire regimes, destabilizing the widely-accepted notion that intensive burning triggered the decline of late Pleistocene flora and fauna approximately 11,000 years ago (Bird et al., 2008). In contrast, the Indigenous technology of patch-mosaic firing—involving local-scale, temporally-distributed burns, in conjunction with the hunting of small game—facilitated the maintenance of plant communities over time. Notwithstanding the directedness of the practice, colonial commentators crudely characterized firestick farming as indiscriminate, disorganized, and—reinforcing racialized discourses—barbaric. In the 1790s, for example, the Scottish botanist Archibald Menzies “scoffs”—to re-invoke Noonuccal's verb—in his journal over the “busy capricious disposition of the natives who are fond of kindling frequent fires round their huts,” as quoted by Sylvia Hallam in her seminal archaeobotanical study *Fire and Hearth* (1975, p. 17). Noonuccal's quatrain, furthermore, underscores concerns of environmental

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and social justice arising from the erosion of human-plant traditions. The electrical resources required for heating, lighting, and cooking—relatively young technologies that have supplanted firestick farming—are unevenly distributed throughout Australian society. Notwithstanding the substantial national revenue derived from the land through the resources sector, access to adequate water, sewerage, and utility services remains a serious problem for Indigenous Australians (Australian Government, 2008, p. 13).

“No More Boomerang” concludes with the following quatrains:

No more message-sticks;
Lubras and lads
Got television now,
Mostly ads.

Lay down the woomera,
Lay down the waddy.
Now we got atom-bomb,
End *everybody*. (Walker, 1992, p. 56, ll. 45–52, italics original)

The performative use of the verb “got” hinges on a semantic slippage in which the possession—the “getting”—of nuclear energy brings about the erosion of freedoms, the jeopardization of biocultural wellbeing and the disintegration of a viable future for both humankind and land. This steady accretion of meaning in the poem’s concluding stanzas reaches a crescendo graphically with the italicization of “every” in the final line. Put differently, “got atom-bomb” connotes authoritative control over Indigenous and non-Indigenous lives through modern fear-inducing technological formations such as atomic armaments. Noonuccal’s narrativization of nuclear technology as perilous deftly inverts—and parodizes—the perceptions of Menzies and other colonial chroniclers who regarded Indigenous landscape firing regimes as devoid of a rational basis or, even worse, who denied Aboriginal Australians the capacity for technology. In this context, the critic Mudrooroo observes the absence of similes, metaphors, and other Western poetic figurations in “No More Boomerang.” Contrastingly, “the poem proceeds by invoking oppositions between the old ways of life of the Aboriginal people and the newly-arrived civilised ways [...] her style is proverbial, or aphoristic instead of image-based” (Mudrooroo, 1994, p. 61).

The elegiac “Then and Now” from *We Are Going* (1964) provides a further example of Noonuccal’s thematization of displaced human-plant traditions. Comprising three stanzas and adopting an irregular rhyme scheme, the poem takes place in a more explicitly urban setting than evident in “No More Boomerang.” The opening stanza generates a tension between the cultural reverie of the poet-flâneur and the alienation induced by “rushing car, / By grinding tram and hissing train” (Walker, 1992, p. 125, ll. 3–4). Invoked partly to characterize the urban infrastructure as a pestilence, the modifier “teeming” remains ambiguous and contradictory in the poem. While the Aboriginal speaker experiences isolation, the place *teems*—but with what? Mechanical noises? The offspring of colonizers? Unattainable visions of Country (capital “C”) now displaced by a country (lower case “c”)? The poem’s friction between Dreaming/dreaming and native plantscape/urban edifice intensifies in the second stanza:

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I have seen corroboree
Where that factory belches smoke;
Here where they have memorial park
One time lubras dug for yams. (Walker, 1992, p. 125, ll. 7–10)

In her use of “lubra,” an Aboriginal term appropriated by imperialist society to denigrate Aboriginal woman, Noonuccal restores Indigenous language to its original signification by purging pejorative colonialist connotations.

In “Then and Now,” Noonuccal invokes the Indigenous tradition of yam harvesting. It is well-documented that Aboriginal Australian women traditionally gathered *yams*—a term including a variety of plants with starchy underground tubers—as a valuable economic complement to hunting large game (Kohen, 1995, p. 106). In the Western Australian context, Sylvia Hallam (1975, p. 12) argued that “gathering yams (*Dioscorea*) was anything but a random process, whether in northern Australia or further south; it was certainly not a matter of digging out a root here and there, but of regularly returning to extensively used tracts.” From Noonuccal’s perspective, the harvesting of yams is a traditional plant-based economy increasingly attenuated by:

Offices now, neon lights now,
Bank and shop and advertisement now,
Traffic and trade of the busy town. (Walker, 1992, p. 125, ll. 15–17)

The poem’s third stanza opens with a compelling example of intertextuality with the line “No more woomera, no more boomerang” (Walker, 1992, p. 125, l. 18), drawn from the collection’s titular poem “No More Boomerang,” discussed previously. What’s more, the image of “clocks hurrying crowds to toil” signifies the disjunction between Aboriginal and Western temporalities (Walker, 1992, p. 125, l. 21). Rather than a linear phenomenon advancing in predictable increments from past to present to future—and measured solely in mechanical terms—time is a cyclical, iterative process integrating the rhythms of culture and Country while reflecting plant processes such as flowering, fruiting, and seeding (Janca & Bullen, 2003).

Concern for the preservation of human-plant traditions in the wake of Australian settlerism coalesces in “Nona,” a poem originally appearing in *The Dawn Is at Hand*. Reprinted in *My People*, “Nona” interestingly comes just before the poem “The Food Gatherers” (Noonuccal, 2008, p. 35). The child protagonist, Nona, emerges from her mother’s gunyah—a shelter made of natural materials—“Naked like the rest, and like the rest / Unconscious of her body” (Noonuccal, 2008, p. 34, ll. 5-6). The young girl is festooned with the gifts of the land and delights in the generous provisions of plants. More specifically, the narrative draws attention to the intergenerational transmission of botanical knowledge, especially from mother to daughter for the purpose of beautification through the use of gum resin, red berries, and reeds. Yet, in another sense, the poem elucidates the interlinked abuses of female and plant bodies. In contrast to the women, the men “had no eye for the red berries, / They did not look at these things at all” (Noonuccal, 2008, p. 34, ll. 20-21). That the men “had no eye” for the visual allure of the local flora implies that their attention was focused elsewhere, presumably towards Nona’s vulnerable unclothed body. This perverse gaze signifies that the men—“Ah, the men” (l. 17)—have lost their moral bearing. More broadly, the narrative elucidates the struggle of women against the patriarchal defilement of the botanical order and the disruption of intimate human-plant exchanges.

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Knowledge of Increase and Death in Noonuccal's Poetry

Noonuccal's literary ethnobotany further engages plant materialities through allusions to narratives of increase and death in Aboriginal societies. The tension between plant-based traditions—Aboriginal and Anglo-Australian, oral and written, elegiac pastoral and ironic counter-defeatist—is evident in “We Are Going” as:

Notice of estate agent reads:

‘Rubbish May Be Tipped Here’.

Now it half covers the traces of the old bora ring.

They sit and are confused,

they cannot say their thoughts:

‘We are strangers here now,

but the white tribe are the strangers’.

We belong here, we are of the old ways.

We are the corroboree and the bora ground. (Walker, 1992, p. 107, ll. 8-16)

In this excerpt, Noonuccal refers to a bora ring, a circular site typically comprising two or three rings serving as a location for initiations, corroborees (festive meetings), increase ceremonies, dispute resolution, and other cultural activities (Strong, 2016). Aboriginal groups selected bora sites for their sacred links to waterbodies, mountains, animals, or plants, especially scarred trees, associated with Dreaming narratives. The Aboriginal people of Queensland, for instance, constructed ceremonial platforms known as a *kakka*—meaning “something wonderful”—from small wattle trees (*Acacia* spp.) dug up with roots intact and positioned upside down (Strong, 2016, p. 865). *Stradbroke Dreaming* (1982) discloses the arboreal dimensions of the bora rings, or *burr-nong*, of the Indigenous people of the Brisbane area:

In the last ring, the boys' Burr-Nong, the elders erect a platform made out of the upturned roots of a wattle-tree. When the final lesson is over in this third ring, the elders climb onto the platform and the young men take hold of the trunk of the tree and shake the old men down onto the ground. This is a symbolic gesture which means 'Down with the old and up with the new hunters'. (Noonuccal, 1982, p. 50)

Accordingly, much of Noonuccal's literary ethnobotany focuses on the interstices between people, plants, vitality, and decline. Poems such as “Tree Grave,” published originally in *We Are Going*, relate the material vibrancy of plants to cultural practices surrounding life (e.g., initiation ceremonies) and death (e.g., funeral rites). Yet, other poems—notably the elegy “Municipal Gum”—concern the deterioration and mortality of the plant world. This multifacetedness of human-botanical entanglement—the co-implicated lives and deaths of humans and plants—underscores the significance of care for non-humans approached not merely as material objects to be exploited but as vibrant beings, in the new materialist sense.

Noonuccal's “Tree Grave” narrates the usage of swamp oak (*Casuarina glauca*) for funeral ceremonies and, in the final stanza, calls attention to the acoustic phenomenon known historically throughout Australia as “sheoak whispers” (Ryan, 2015, pp. 6-8). From a literary-ethnobotanical standpoint, the poem is noteworthy for its recognition of the material-spiritual ecology connecting the deceased person, the sheoak tree, and the wetland habitat. In Australia, the vernacular name “sheoak” refers to members of

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the genera *Casuarina* and *Allocasuarina*. As such, the swamp oak at the center ground of Noonuccal's narrative is a species of sheoak. The three-stanza poem opens:

When our lost one left us
For the Shadow Land,
In bark we bound him. (Noonuccal, 2008, p. 6, ll. 1-3)

In melodic diction alternating between rhymed and unrhymed lines, Noonuccal invokes the burial tree ceremony documented by ethnobotanical chroniclers in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in Australia. Anthropologist and collector Lindsay Black noted the pervasiveness of burial trees among the Kamilaroi and Wiradjuri people of inland New South Wales. Black (1941, p. 13) defined *taphoglyphs* as "all trees found at burial grounds." These carved trees accompanied the graves of doctors, leaders, warriors, and other culturally-prominent individuals. A grave sometimes included an extensive ceremonial mound known as a *tumulus*. Black provided an account of seven burial trees surrounding a funeral ground at Warren, NSW, used for chiefs killed in battle and other respected community members. As the anthropologist observed, "the dead in this case were all buried in a sitting position, and after the ceremonies were over a large heap of wood was placed on the grave" (Black, 1941, p. 23). Elsewhere in Black's account, the gravesite of a tribal physician, who died while attending to a headman, was marked by four trees positioned according to the cardinal points.

In narrating the ritual of wrapping the esteemed hunter in bark and entombing his body *within* a swamp oak, Noonuccal recuperates an ethnoarboreal tradition. This poetic recovery, in turn, counter-veils the utilitarian reduction of native Australian trees to fungible commodities merely in service to human needs. In other words, from an Aboriginal point of view, trees are complex agents at work within processes of human illness, death, and mourning. The taphoglyph symbolizes the funeral site yet also *becomes* the grave in a vibrant material sense, insofar as the corpse of the beloved is interred within the tree's body. As apparent in other instances of literary ethnobotany in Aboriginal poetry, a pronounced feeling of human-plant intermateriality pervades "Tree Grave." As a further example, in "Tribal Justice," originally published in *The Dawn at Hand*, the protagonist Boola's transgressions of traditional law and disrespect of Elders precipitate a terrible drought:

A camp moves when death comes, and they made haste to go,
No wailing for dead Boola, no tree-grave would he know;
They left him on the ground there for carrion kite and crow. (Noonuccal, 2008, p. 49, ll. 34-36)

In Noonuccal's cautionary tale against the pitfalls of hubris, the dignity of a tree burial is denied to Boola whose actions uphold selfish individualism over tribal cohesion. In contrast, dominant Western perceptions of sheoaks and other trees—for instance, as aesthetic objects to be manicured or raw materials to be exploited—fail to recognize the multisensory nuances of human-tree relationships as well as the textured imbrications between ancestors, the afterlife, and arboreal life.

Noonuccal lyricizes other facets of the burial ceremony, specifically through the idea of sheoak whispers in which the voice of the deceased person transforms into the susurrations of the wind through the tree's needle-like foliage. In the Noongar language of the Southwest region of Western Australia, sheoak is known as *gulli* or *kwela* where *kwel* refers to "name." Noongar Cultural Custodians acknowledge the sheoak as the tree of naming—a percipient arboreal persona who remembers the names of everything and

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everyone, alive and deceased, animate and inanimate, and vocalizes those names perpetually through its whispers. As expounded by Noongar Elder Noel Nannup in conversation with botanist Steven Hooper, “Kwel is the tree of names. It knows every person who’s ever lived and inhabited this area through the DNA of their skin and hair” (Nannup & Hopper, 2016, mins. 24:49–25:03). For Nannup, trees and other plants are “what connects you to Country. They’re part of the totemic system. They’re part of you, you’re part of them” (Nannup & Hopper, 2016, mins. 10:37–10:46). Nannup calls further attention to the sacred material imbrications between people, culture, trees, and ecology:

As we live in a place, walk through it, follow the songlines, we shed our skin. The skin falls into the soil because [Southwest Australia has] the most nutrient-deficient soil on the planet. [The soil] replaces that nutrient deficiency through fungi favored by several of our trees, particularly sheoaks. Because we shed our skin, the mycorrhizae underneath them take it up. Our DNA is in those trees. That’s the connection. That means it’s the tree of names. In the wind, if you tune in, you’ll hear the voice of every person who’s ever lived. (Nannup, 2016, mins. 4:56–5:35)

Within the context of Noongar cosmogony, Nannup poetically narrates the complex diffusion of intergenerational wisdom between humans and sheoaks. The shedding of skin and the uptake of DNA through the rhizosphere are catalyzed by the everyday act of walking on the land. From a Noongar standpoint, the sheoak preserves the memory of all beings who are alive and who have passed.

In addition to relating trees to the afterlife, Noonuccal’s literary ethnobotany narrativizes the decline and death of trees themselves as living personae undergoing transformation. First appearing in *The Dawn Is at Hand*, “Municipal Gum” is an elegy addressed to an urban gum tree. In fact, Noonuccal described the work as her first published poem dealing with environmental conservation (Walker, 1978a, mins. 29:00–30:04). The poem’s inclusion in a collection titled *My People* gestures toward a conception shared among Aboriginal cultures of trees and other botanical beings as encompassed within a network of human-non-human kin relations—or what anthropologists describe as a “kincentric ecology” (Salmón, 2000). In the poem, settler colonialism abrades against the gum’s material vitality in the denatured plantscape:

Gumtree in the city street,
Hard bitumen around your feet,
Rather you should be
In the cool world of leafy forest halls. (Noonuccal, 2008, p. 45, ll. 1-4)

The poem’s narrator expresses empathic identification with the gum by interweaving human and arboreal materialities in images such as “your feet.” Later in the poem, the tree appears “castrated, broken, a thing wronged” with a “hung head” and “listless mien,” signifying the gum’s “hopelessness” (Noonuccal, 2008, p. 45, ll. 8, 10, 11). Rather than a story burdened by affective fallacy, the poem maintains a lucid literary-ethnobotanical focus, expressing intricate traditional relations between trees and people in Indigenous worldviews. These longstanding plant-human entanglements, however, have been compromised by Anglo-Australian culture’s relentless ordering of the plantscape. Although a “fellow citizen,” the gum remains an outlier estranged from Country. The final three lines unambiguously disclose the trauma held in common by native trees and Indigenous Australians:

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Set in your black grass of bitumen—
O fellow citizen,
What have they done to us? (Noonuccal, 2008, p. 45, ll. 14-16)

Echoing the sentiment of Noonuccal's poem, Noongar Elder Ted Wilkes (1998, p. 45) laments that "the trees in the forest in the southwest of Australia have gone through exactly the same thing that Aboriginal people have gone through—annihilation, dispossession." Noonuccal's literary ethnobotany reminds readers that the bodies of trees and people—the materialities of our lives and deaths—are always interinvolved.

Narratives of Recovery and Healing in Noonuccal's Poetry

Thus far, this chapter has maintained that an aim of Noonuccal's literary ethnobotany is to countervail the erosion of traditional botanical knowledge. Toward this vision, poems such as "Municipal Gum" shed light on the myriad ways in which Australian settlerism—through voracious land clearance and avaricious development—continues to deplete the ecological fundament necessary for plants and other beings to survive. For Aboriginal people across Australia, plants are vivacious mediators of identity-formation and catalysts of community cohesion as well as agents of physical and psychological health, particularly for women and children. In many Indigenous Australian societies, women are the guardians of everyday herbal wisdom. Among the Kutjunga people of Western Australia, for instance, children are known to accompany women to harvest and process bush medicines for "household healing" (Oliver, 2013, p. 6). Balladong-Whadjuk herbalist Vivienne Hansen (2010, p. 111) emphasizes that "different language groups each have their own individual knowledge of bush medicine based on where they live in Australia." For generations, Elders have conveyed knowledge of medicinal plants through their stories and experiences, yet "when our old people pass, and knowledge has not been handed down or passed on, we lose that knowledge" (Hansen, 2010, p. 111). In this context of biocultural conservation, Noonuccal's literary ethnobotany contributes to the dissemination of botanical knowledge by engaging restorative plant materialities through narratives of recovery and healing.

The interconnectedness between Aboriginal people, plants, and healing is lyricized in "Jarri's Love Song," originally published in *The Dawn Is at Hand*. The song-poem narrates the protagonist Jarri's all-consuming passion for his betrothed, Nona. As he expresses his love:

Jarri sat with legs out
Thudding a hollow log with waddy
To make rhythm, he raised voice
To the yelling chant of the good song-men. (Noonuccal, 2008, p. 54, ll. 11-14).

A waddy—or nulla nulla—is a multipurpose wooden club for hunting, fire-making, and hand-to-hand combat. The "thudding" of the log with the waddy acoustically signals the tactile bond between Jarri and the tree from which the implements are made. In the Northern Territory, as a case in point, the Arrernte people use endemic Birdsville wattle (*Acacia peuce*) to construct waddy clubs (Commonwealth of Australia, 2020). In Noonuccal's poem, the log and waddy mediate the expression of sound and, by extension, emotion, as Jarri serenades Nona. The ethnobiological lyrics of Jarri's song comprise the poem's second half:

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Gootchi he got bark canoe
But I ... got ... Nona.
Yarrawan sleep with hunting-dog
But I got Nona.
Kaa got pitcheri, Gwabba got drone-pipe,
Mullawa he got three boomerangs and two dingoes,
Walla got possum-rug keep him warm,
But I ... got ... Nona. (Noonuccal, 2008, p. 55, ll. 27-34).

In his recitation, Jarri alludes to *pitcheri* or *pituri*, pronounced “pitch-ery,” and known to botanists as *Duboisia hopwoodii*. Native to the Simpson Desert, west of the Mulligan River of south-west Queensland, the tall shrub has been dried, mixed with ash and chewed traditionally for its stimulating psychoactive effects (Keogh, 2011, p. 199). More than four times more potent than tobacco, the species contains poisonous levels of the alkaloids nicotine and nornicotine, so must be handled with care and respect (Keogh, 2011, p. 199; Watson, 1983, p. 481).

Exchanged as a currency and processed during rituals, *pitcheri* enhanced endurance, alleviated stress, increased adrenaline, suppressed hunger, and produced euphoria (Watson, 1983, p. 483). Particularly high in nicotine, the young regrowth of *D. hopwoodii* was sought widely for making *pitcheri* medicine. As ethnopharmacologist Pamela Watson (1983, p. 483) observes, Aboriginal people “developed an extensive knowledge of nicotine and applied this knowledge to the skillful exploitation of locally occurring plants, producing an item of great economic and social importance for consumption over a much larger region.” In 1878, botanist-explorer Ferdinand von Mueller documented the considerable lengths to which Aboriginal people would go to acquire high-quality *pitcheri*:

I am not certain whether the [people] of all districts in which the Pituri grows are really aware of its stimulating power. Those living near the Barcoo [River in western Queensland] travel many days' journey to obtain this to them precious foliage, which is carried always about by them broken into small fragments and tied up in little bags... [Aboriginal people] use the Duboisia to excite their courage in warfare; a large dose infuriates them. (qtd. in Curl, 1878, pp. 412-413)

In narrativizing medicinal flora through the song-poem—notably via this allusion to Kaa’s *pitcheri*—Noonuccal helps to reclaim the sacred botanical knowledge co-opted and subsequently broadcast globally without Aboriginal permission by Anglo-European chroniclers such as von Mueller. Jarri’s lyrics, moreover, de-commodify the world of healing flora by situating the plant as an agential subject within a network of interinvolved beings (dog, dingo, possum) and objects (canoe, boomerang, rug).

Noonuccal’s work suggests that restoring dialogue with the botanical domain necessitates embracing the materialities inherently shared between people and flora. The recuperation of cultural vitality and personal wellbeing is the subject of “?” from *The Dawn Is At Hand*. In the poem, discourse with arboreal life facilitates individual and societal healing through the silent wisdom of trees. The narrative opens with the stanzas:

Hello tree;
Talk to me.
I’m sick

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And lonely.
Are you old?
Trunk so cold.
What secrets
Do you hold? (Walker, 1992, p. 83, ll. 1-8)

Seeking insight into the human condition, the speaker approaches the tree longingly. She reaches out to touch the cold bark, projecting her imagination into the enigmatic world of the tree and asking what secrets it silently sequesters. The tree, nonetheless, remains inscrutable, causing the speaker to grow impatient, as signalled textually by the capitalization of words. She then understands that the tree's language is a visual semiotics rather than a system of audible signals. The tree is positioned expressively within its habitat like the bold, curious, and isolated question mark of the poem's title; its bodily presence *is* its language. In wordless wisdom, the tree-being enables the speaker to realize that the source of discord and malaise is not external but lies within the human herself:

Silent tree
Let me see
Your answers.
ANSWER ME. (Walker, 1992, p. 83, ll. 13-16)

Noonuccal's work reveals that the unique wisdom of plants resides in their capacity to interpolate their knowing—their epistemologies—into our frameworks. The bodily articulations of trees mirror back to us our own strivings and foibles, imparting important lessons about human relations to other forms of life. In this way, Noonuccal's "?" emphasizes the idea that all matter is "'storied matter'. It is a material 'mesh' of meanings, properties, and processes" (Iovino & Oppermann, 2014, pp. 1-2). Approached from a new materialist stance, Noonuccal's arboreal writings echo themes also evident in Jack Davis' poems on Southwest Australian trees.

CONCLUSION

This was nardoo-gathering season
But now little nardoo. Too long dry,
Grass all brown, birds not breeding,
Creeks not running, clouds gone long time. (From "Community Rain Song," *The Dawn Is at Hand*,
Walker, 1992, p. 87, ll. 5-8, first edition, 1966)

Referenced by Noonuccal in "Community Rain Song," cited above, nardoo (*Marsilea* spp.) is a perennial fern growing throughout Australia in seasonally-wet habitats (Thieret, 1956). The word *nardoo* derives from the Indigenous languages of South Australia and New South Wales; in the Kamilaroi language of northern NSW, for instance, the fern is known as *nhaadu*. Although eaten widely by Aboriginal Australians, the plant must be carefully processed by pulverizing and rinsing the sporocarps, or spore-bearing capsules. For approximately 60,000 years, Indigenous ethnobotanical systems have maintained intergenerational knowledge of harvesting, processing, and consuming nardoo (Clarke, 2008,

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pp. 128–133). Noonuccal’s poem summons the enduring cultural legacy of nardoo harvesting within the setting of an increase ceremony. Requiring damp conditions, the wetland species has been stifled by the “long dry,” leaving little for the people to collect even though “This was nardoo-gathering season.” The ceremony entails incantations “Not understood now but faithfully repeated, / Lost rain-words from ancestral times” (Walker, 1992, p. 87, ll. 16-17). Noonuccal hence interweaves the materialities of nardoo, grass, birds, creeks, clouds, and people with the language—the “Lost rain-words”—of longstanding ethnobotanical assemblages. In the poem, the nardoo exerts its material narrativity within ancestral human-plant networks activated by the reciprocity at the center of the increase ceremony. As such, the species becomes an agent within botanical-cultural networks generating “undeniable signifying forces” (Iovino & Oppermann, 2014, p. 2).

Noonuccal’s literary ethnobotany of nardoo, gum trees, pitcheri, and other plants vitalizes Indigenous ecological knowledge systems by emphasizing the materialities of flora. In her poetry, plant materiality expresses *botanical wisdom*—an idea encompassing, on the one hand, the knowledge and experiences that humans have of plants and, on the other, the embodied forms of wisdom endemic to plants and transmitted to humans through increase ceremonies, totemic associations, everyday interactions, and other means. In *Radical Botany* (2020, p. 38), a study of plants and speculative fiction, literary critics Natania Meeker and Antónia Szabari contend that “plants are animate on their own terms, but they also serve to reanimate and rehabilitate human bodies in ways that confirm their kinship with us. They remain both mysterious to us and powerful over us.” In this light, Noonuccal’s poetry discloses how plants “reanimate and rehabilitate” humankind while remaining both mysterious and accessible. Underlying Noonuccal’s literary ethnobotany, furthermore, is a biocultural ethics grounded in traditional law and narratives ensuring the flourishing of plants in the long term. Her ethical imperative, in part, involves conveying botanical knowledge to diverse audiences, engendering awareness of the relationships of plants and people. Speaking about “Stone Age” from *We Are Going*, Noonuccal explains that the poem represents an attempt:

To educate the white man, and I think the time has come when all the black races of the world must now become the educators, the teachers, and to explain to the white just what harm has been done and to try and stop it. And this is my talk to the white man. (Walker, 1978b, mins. 9:54–10:23)

Applying a literary ethnobotany approach to Noonuccal’s poetry reveals that an integral aspect of speaking back to the dominant culture is asserting the importance of native Australian flora as vibrant beings, with inherent forms of wisdom emerging from the biocultural complex of the land.

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ENDNOTE

- ¹ Sociologist Fran M. Collyer (2021) argues that factors of imperialism, politics, economics, and geography support the inclusion of Australia in the Global South.

Chapter 4

The Challenges and Constructive Role of Journalism During COVID-19 in Communication Ecology of Pandemic Reporting in the Global South

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented various challenges for journalism and the media in the Global South. In many countries, media outlets are struggling to cover the pandemic due to limited resources, weak infrastructure, and the impact of government restrictions on freedom of expression. During the COVID-19 outbreak, the media must acquire and distribute correct information. This research examines the discursive creation of journalism during the COVID-19 conflict. The researcher analyzed discourses on the coronavirus pandemic from interviews with journalists and the Pakistani journalism trade press. In COVID-19, journalists discursively positioned themselves as responsible yet susceptible members of the communication ecology, not just because of the pandemic but also environmental factors that preceded it. The study concludes that health reporters in Pakistan can filter fake news during the COVID-19 pandemic by verifying information, fact-checking, using trusted sources, avoiding sensationalism, and collaborating with medical experts.

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INTRODUCTION

This is subject especially vital amid a public health crisis such as the COVID-19 epidemic, when journalists are expected to communicate information of significance to the public (Adams, 2021; Cox, 2020). The journalists' responsibility is to educate the public about critical issues that affect them. Normal communication ecosystems include news organisation, and therefore it is reasonable to assume that journalists and news organisation are operating inside a COVID-19 communication ecology during the COVID-19 pandemic (Yousaf et al., 2022). Journalists act as a resource for those working in the environmental field, while also juggling their struggles with the situation (O'Keeffe et al., 2021). According to a leading newspaper-based journalist interviewed for this research in May 2021, to be a journalist during COVID-19 was to "stump for the truth and to stump for critical thinking and to attempt to explain the value of those things," among other things. An Associated Press journalist described having a personal responsibility to connect people with the resources they needed to stay healthy, particularly given that people "didn't feel COVID-19 was a real threat—they felt that the media, the government, and the healthcare system were all conspiring to make this a bigger deal than it should have been" at the start of the pandemic (Adams, 2021).

It is necessary to have a thorough grasp of the communication process and the context in which it takes place before it can be examined (Trifonova Price & Antonova, 2022). When it comes to spreading information about crises and disasters, journalists operate as a part of a larger ecosystem in which journalism impacts and is impacted by the natural world. In order to get a better understanding of communication ecologies, researchers often isolate certain activities and investigate how they are connected to other processes and data (Libert, Cam & Domingo, 2022). The instability of social media, the fluctuation of information, and the urge to verify information regarding hazards, health, and crises all serve as focal point for a conversation about communication and its implications (Lough & McIntyre, 2021). In this sense, communication ecologies offer a forum for discussing more general topics. It may be difficult for conventional resource-constrained journalists to navigate the limits of modern journalistic methods (such as data journalism, social media analysis, predictive journalism, and relocated data) when faced with these conditions (Jin et al., 2022; Raza et al., 2021).

Journalists' discussions about covering COVID-19 are influenced by the broader public debate outside the media realm (Perreault & Perreault, 2021; Raza et al., 2021). When the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, this study examined how journalists formed their ecological links using discursive means (concerning sources and their communities, information, and personal networks). The way journalists understood their roles regarding crisis information within the ecosystem was also examined. In a discursive posture of vulnerability inside the communication ecology, journalists working during COVID-19 positioned themselves in a vulnerable position within the communication ecology. We argue that this was done despite their responsibility to foster connections. Thus, journalists found it difficult to cover activities during the pandemic since it accentuated flaws within the ecosystem for some time before the outbreak.

COVID-19 ECOLOGY OF COMMUNICATION

Individuals utilize disaster communication ecological resources and information before, during, and after a crisis. "A potentially traumatic incident that is collectively experienced has an acute commencement and is time-limited," according to current COVID-19 situation (Liu, 2020). However, the communication

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resources employed in a catastrophe or crisis scenario may be different from those used in other situations (Liu et al., 2021). Groups or individuals rely on communication ecologies to accomplish a purpose, defined as “the networks of communication linkages on which they rely to achieve a goal” (Liu et al., 2021). Communication ecologies are goal-specific; so, distinct ecologies are likely to arise for various objectives. COVID-19 communication ecology conceptualizations are similar to disaster communication ecology conceptualizations (Brian Houston et al., 2021), in that individuals are likely to construct a COVID-19 communication ecology to cope with the threat and negative impact of a COVID-19 pandemic. In the context of a communication ecosystem, communication resources are included to the degree that they are useful in achieving the appropriate aim or objectives (Tagliacozzo et al., 2021).

Specific to the COVID-19 communication ecology, people may seek and exchange information about the pandemic while also gaining and providing assistance for those infected (Raza et al., 2023). Individuals may operate as consumers and information producers in today’s communication and media ecosystem, which is called communication ecology (Brian Houston et al., 2021). To learn about the COVID-19 pandemic, a person may utilize social media sites such as Twitter to share their own COVID-19 experiences and ideas with others. Individuals may benefit from, and contribute to the communication ecosystem in this way (Fontaine et al., 2018).

In a communication ecosystem, the communication resources that might be included are diverse and can include interpersonal, organizational, and mediated sources of information and communication (Tagliacozzo et al., 2021). COVID-19 communication resources may thus include family and friends, neighborhood and community groups, news organisation, and government institutions. Understanding how people communicate to achieve their goals is made easier when using a communication ecology approach. A comprehensive framework called communication ecology aims to understand how people communicate and how they get information (Quandt & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2021). However, it is important to remember that the communication tools used in a crisis or catastrophe may differ from those in non-crisis settings. Literature suggests that journalistic relationships may resemble those in non-crisis situations when a crisis or tragedy strikes, but they may also show differences due to the crisis’ demands (Bernadas & Ilagan, 2020; Libert et al., 2022). Face-to-face interviews may be challenging for journalists working in COVID-19 settings. The journalism industry is a unique and specialized subgroup within the larger COVID-19 communication ecosystem (Bernadas & Ilagan, 2020). The ability of journalists to effectively transmit information depends on their skill level and the overall structure of the media environment. This approach is robust and realistic because it considers how people frequently use various sources to obtain the required information and support Schäfer & Painter, 2021). Much of the research on public health emergency communication focuses on discrete communication messages (for example, specific emergency warning messages) or individual communication forms (for example, television, social media, organizational communications) to improve understanding of communication during crises. While this work is valuable and necessary, taking broader perspectives on the communicative environment is beneficial to acquire a complete picture of human communication during collective crises.

PANDEMIC REPORTING

COVID-19, according to van Antwerpen et al. (2022) did not only create new challenges for journalists to deal with, but it also aggravated existing concerns and widened “the blind spots in our job,” according to a study commentary published in the early phases of the epidemic. Consider the difficulty of reporting

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crises and suffering while simultaneously going through the same thing oneself. The role of journalists to serve as fact-checkers and information relaxers for the general public cannot be overstated. Journalists contribute to the COVID-19 communication ecosystem in various ways, including official, professional, informal, and personal communication (Nee & Santana, 2021).

Media have a role in disaster and crisis communication from administrative authorities and professionals to members of the public. Journalism's facilitative role aids disaster and crisis communications (Cushion & Carbis, 2022). According to their impressions of the needs of their target audiences, journalists conceive and execute their tasks in line with those perceptions. As previously stated by Dobson-Lohman and Potcovaru (2020), journalists operate in a storyteller role when covering dangerous actors, an enrichment role when attempting to serve a particular community comprehensively, and a disseminator role to maintain objectivity in a volatile cultural space. It is the goal of the journalist in the facilitative role, according to Tong (2017), to "monitor or observe" the environment in search of "valuable information on events, circumstances, trends, and threats," and the task is completed in response to a perceived need for cooperation. The facilitative function is founded on the notion that journalists have a duty to society and, in times of crisis, may be able to assist the public in making decisions about important issues (Bernadas & Ilagan, 2020).

The Pandemic as a Challenge for Journalism

The pandemic's developments did not occur in a vacuum; rather, they coincided with broader global economic, political, and technological changes that impacted the media in particular (Mellado et al., 2021). In terms of technology, there are many of them, such as the long-term trends toward online working and mobile reporting that have already been established and the growing importance of a diverse range of social media platforms for finding and disseminating news. Experts have examined disruptions in news output even though most studies on news coverage of global health crises have focused on media depictions of such events (Zhang & Liu, 2021). Atri et al. (2021) claim that challenges and constraints in reporting and tensions and contradictions impact journalistic activity in this environment. Recent studies (Mellado et al., 2021) have examined the complexity of creating health news and the changing role perspectives of journalists when covering public health situations (Kim, 2022). However, more focus should be placed on journalistic techniques in times of global health crisis, especially when difficult decisions, roadblocks to work processes, and conflicts of interest are evident (Ndlovu & Sibanda, 2021).

During the COVID-19 epidemic, the globe was confronted with a social, economic, and health crisis on a scale never before seen. This worldwide epidemic impacted not only the day-to-day operations of media organizations, but also their organizational structure and the personal lives of its personnel. According to Kim (2022), home-based telework in the worst pandemic scenarios was an extraordinary circumstance created to mitigate the impacts of decreased production activity due to the health-related measures enforced by the respective national health authorities. The COVID-19 incident revealed that the media organisation was able to respond in record speed to guarantee its personnel's safety while maintaining the continuation of their critical operation as information providers.

There is currently a scarcity of scientific understanding regarding corporate restructuring, notwithstanding earlier study on media crises and disruption, which recognizes the relevance of company restructuring (Moon, 2021). In addition, since journalists are not often recognized as drivers of organizational change, there has been little study into how CEOs influence decision-making during times of crisis or adversity

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(Liu et al., 2021). Using this research, we want to provide light on how management handled the newly established virtual newsrooms and dealt with the instability caused by COVID-19.

According to one criticism of crisis journalism practice, in the past, the media has failed to recognize crises as opportunities to establish themselves as vital to the problem and open up new dialogues and methods (Jones, 2021). The very essence of a crisis is to upend established social norms. Uncertainty, second-guessing, and the desire to influence the result are common feelings during a crisis, especially as the issue gets more and more daunting (Jones, 2021). Some editorial norms become more liberal amid a crisis, allowing for debates that would not otherwise occur, reflecting the layers of metamorphosis journalism has undergone throughout history (Overgaard, 2021). However, there is no advantage of hindsight in the case of a pandemic since there is no precedence for the COVID-19 environment. As a result, we are left with the following questions:

Research Question 1: How can journalists discursively locate themselves in the COVID-19 communication ecology regarding reporting the COVID-19 pandemic?

Research Question 2: How do journalists develop their connection with COVID-19 crisis information?

RESEARCH METHOD

The present study utilized a qualitative methodology to conduct comprehensive interviews with a sample of eight employed journalists in Pakistan. The research comprises a sample of health journalists who were selected through the purposive sampling method. A record of health-beat reporters employed by prominent national media outlets was initially upheld. The journalists were contacted through various communication channels, including telephone and email. An in-depth interview was conducted with a cohort of eight journalists who readily volunteered to partake in the study. A query filter pertaining to the reporting encounter was incorporated to address the COVID-19 outbreak. The confidentiality of the participants was guaranteed, and the data utilization followed the ethical principles of the research. A questionnaire with a semi-structured format was developed to gain an understanding of the journalistic practices that were employed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Interviews were conducted between 20 and 30 minutes, featuring a formal discourse on journalistic practices amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

RESULTS

Journalism in the COVID-19 Era Is Vulnerable

Research Question 1. Researchers found that journalists were vulnerable within the COVID-19 communications environment while attempting to answer the first RQ. In the eyes of journalists, the epidemic revealed the precarious character of journalism, which was under attack from both insiders and the market. Disruption in this area threatened journalists' capacity for service to the public.

Interviewees highlighted their obligation to disclose knowledge that might save the lives of their readers and those they care about. For example, informant No. 3, reported that "COVID-19 pandemic has posed numerous challenges for health reporters across the globe, and Pakistan is no exception. While

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journalists play a vital role in disseminating accurate and timely information about the pandemic, they also face several difficulties, such as inadequate training and a lack of resources.”

Informant no 6 highlighted these challenges: “One of the significant challenges that health reporters face in Pakistan is the lack of training to work in crises. Many journalists in the country do not have the necessary skills or knowledge to report on public health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, they may struggle to accurately report on the latest developments and provide the public with essential information.”

Moreover, Pakistan’s health reporters (informants Nos. 2, 4 and 7) highlighted obstacles in accessing reliable sources and information. For instance, one informant, No. 4, narrated that “the government may restrict access to information, and health officials may be hesitant to share information with journalists, fearing it may lead to panic or misinformation.” Besides, two informants (3 and 7) also emphasized that “the pandemic has significantly strained the country’s healthcare system, and reporters may face difficulties accessing hospitals and medical facilities. They may also be at risk of contracting the virus while reporting from the field, which can further hinder their ability to report on the pandemic.”

Therefore, the emphasis was on the difficulty of covering a pandemic and delivering appropriate coverage for the community despite the journalist’s lack of previous expertise in crisis reporting in Pakistan. During the interview, the writer discussed his personal worries about the community and how those concerns influenced his reporting of the problems.

Journalists Filtering Fake News

Research Question 2: Journalists’ interaction with information during the epidemic was intrinsically tricky. The pandemic’s hurdles, the spread of disinformation, and the need to carefully sort information needed the same discernment as past crises. Journalists had to work harder to establish that information disseminated was reliable. The health reporters explained that “one of the biggest challenges health reporters face during the COVID-19 pandemic is the spread of misinformation and fake news. Misinformation can spread quickly on social media and other platforms, leading to panic and confusion among the public. Health reporters play a vital role in combating fake news by providing accurate and timely information to the public.”

All of this indicates that, while journalists placed a high value on collaborating with medical experts, they perceived that this collaborative work was fraught with dangers, including the dangers of misinformation, the dangers of having their work ignored as a result of their perceived lack of credibility, and, more specifically, the dangers of having their work perceived as biased. In summary, health reporters in Pakistan face several challenges when reporting on the COVID-19 pandemic, including inadequate training, inadequate access to steadfast sources, and difficulties accessing medical facilities. These challenges highlight the need for greater support and resources for journalists to ensure they can provide accurate and timely information to the public during a crisis.

DISCUSSION

The market pressure had significant economic implications that rendered journalists vulnerable. This was particularly evident given that many were grappling with the effect of epidemic on their communities, families, and professional lives. The notion that journalists can serve as both mediators for verification

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and facilitators for public discourse is fraught with difficulties due to their unique access to information, skills, capabilities, and motivations, the intended goals may not always align with the outcomes. The current epidemic appears to have created a disparity between the level of understanding of journalism and its practical implementation.

As a result of the proliferation of misinformation, our research indicates that journalists perceived their association with information sources as intrinsically challenging during the pandemic. Zhang and Liu (2021) have elucidated that conducting effective journalism during periods of crisis can be challenging due to the possibility of the ecosystem exacerbating issues rather than uncovering them through conventional modes of expression. The statement suggests that journalists and journalism encompass a diverse range of public concerns, including providing precise information and considering enduring issues, such as the financial viability of the news and media industry, for the benefit of society at large. Imperative language is crucial during a pandemic to effectively communicate accurate information to the public and overcome the difficulties of reporting in such circumstances. This is particularly important given the heightened stress and anxiety levels among individuals concerned about the disease's long-term effects. In October 2021, despite lifting quarantine orders in several states, there remained a lack of uniformity in the messaging regarding social distancing, mask-wearing, susceptibility to the disease, and long-term effects among various health agencies. This inconsistency can be attributed to the novelty of the outbreak and the relatively recent emergence of pertinent information. It is a common practice among journalists to emphasize the importance of adhering to scientific principles in their work, much like how scientists and medical professionals approach the study and treatment of illnesses. This metaphor alludes to the notion that journalists hold a crucial function during times of crisis by effectively and comprehensibly communicating information to the general public.

In recent years, there has been an increased discourse on emotional labor as a crucial aspect of contemporary journalism due to the growing tendency of journalists to engage more actively with their audiences through online platforms. As per the findings of studies conducted on audience engagement, emotionally invested individuals are more prone to retaining factual information and exhibiting proactive behavior in response to pertinent news stories than those lacking emotional involvement. During a situation such as the COVID-19 outbreak, the reporting of pandemics serves a significant function in facilitating communication between institutions and the general public. In addition to impeding the expression of journalistic autonomy, the facilitative role embodies the journalists' aspiration to contend with a surfeit of information emanating from diverse origins, thereby engendering discord. To discharge this responsibility during a pandemic, it is imperative to acknowledge that certain long-standing conventions or protocols may need to be set aside to acquire and authenticate pertinent information.

Journalists' endeavor to be proactive and imaginative seems to be a means of dealing with the lack of consistent and clear information in today's media environment. While their adaptability and inventiveness are admirable, they are overshadowed by the restricted resources journalists already had before the epidemic. Perhaps the epidemic circumstances serve to demonstrate that these obstacles are genuine and that they have been hurting the process of journalism in a variety of ways for quite some time.

CONCLUSION

Various discussions need to be investigated comprehensively and emphasized in the future. It is still early in the pandemic's progression, and journalists are still grappling with the day-to-day problems of

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covering the disaster. Despite the early introduction of vaccinations, there is no end to the pandemic as at the time of writing, nor an end to its impacts on the media business, journalism, and journalists. The COVID-19 communication ecology offers a forum for dissecting how journalists do their jobs and think about their jobs; the journalism industry may become more flexible or altered to adapt to the present and future communication environments (Bernadas & Ilagan, 2020). Journalists must maintain consistency and adapt to shifting public expectations while moderating personal convictions and fears about the virus in the disaster communication ecosystem. However, the demands that media fills in a crisis conflict with journalism practices, and maybe this study offers the very antidote for how journalists might best lessen the crisis while remaining rooted in the norms and ethics of the profession.

The present study has put forth recommendations for health journalists in Pakistan to effectively counter the spread of misinformation, including adopting various techniques such as information authentication. Health journalists must corroborate data from various sources before disseminating it through publication or broadcast. One can ensure the accuracy of information by utilizing dependable sources such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the Pakistan Ministry of Health, and other reputable health organizations. Similarly, verifying factual accuracy is paramount, and journalists must receive appropriate training. As an illustration, individuals may employ fact-checking instruments to authenticate the precision of data. Hence, it is recommended that media entities arrange training sessions for their health journalists to equip them with the necessary skills to utilize online platforms such as Snopes, FactCheck.org, and PolitiFact to verify the accuracy of information. The study also indicated that health journalists should rely on credible sources and establish close partnerships with specialists.

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Chapter 5

The Rise of News Misinformation in the Digital Era: An Endless Struggle Between Credible Information and News Pollutants in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The new internet and digital technologies have truly accelerated and improved media functions and operations in modern society. Like the developed nations, sub-Saharan African countries have benefitted immensely in adopting new media tools to generate, access, disseminate, store, and retrieve information. Since the basic function of the media is to inform the public, digital tools and various internet platforms have exemplified this role by increasing the volume and spread of news information in today's network society. In fact, the current information era is one characterized by the inundated volume of data and flood of information. However, with such incredible overload of information, new problems have emerged; the anonymous nature of most of these internet platforms have permitted highly adulterated and unethical news contents to contaminate the digital space. Sadly, many credible news information compete or get mixed with the whirlpool of disinformation and news pollutants.

INTRODUCTION

One of the fundamental traditional functions of the mass media is to inform and educate the public. This responsibility predominates every other functions, and or are rather subsumed other this primary goal. The mass media performs this role by disseminating and distributing news and reporting other issues that may help individuals make sense of what is going on around them. The society makes use of media

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messages and rely heavily on the information and reports to understand the events happening around them and to make informed decisions based on media influence.

In view of this lofty function, the media set agenda, offers authentic and timely facts and opinions about various events and occurrences to their various audience as objective and balanced as possible, in order to remove biases and prejudice from such reports. News and current affairs are the products of media analysis and reportage. Media is considered as the “mirror” of modern society; as a matter of fact, the media shapes our lives.

In today’s society, media plays a vital role as the purveyor of information. This function is exemplified by dedicating the various channels, from television, radio, newspapers and new media platforms as viable sources where people can get diverse streams of information on daily basis. Therefore, the media possess the exclusive power to select issues and events in the world we know about; they decide what constitute news, they filter and frame issues, they contextualize the problem, they set the agenda, and create (Paul and Rai, 2021).

As a corollary to the sentiment expressed above, the media performs the agenda setting function, which means that the media through such efforts possesses the ability to reorder the world. In effect, the popular aphorism “who plays the piper, dictates the tune” comes to fruition. The media is thus seen as altering the thinking of the members of the society by what they publish and report. Agenda setting therefore explains the ability of the media to influence public awareness of issues as opposed to any predetermined knowledge they might have held previously (Orewere 2006). That is, the media usually salient issues that will stir people’s feelings and emotions. They present different realities to the members of the public in various channels and get people to think about them in the way they have been presented (Yarosan and Asemah in Asemah, 2011).

The information role of the media has also assigned a unique responsibility to the media which is the “gatekeeping” role. This function has directly vested the media with the role of determining what should be made known to the public and what should not. In effect, the media is then seen as being in control of messages and information that are circulated in the society. They determine access to news and information (Asemah, 2011).

On the basis of this, the media interprets information presented about any event or occurrence in order to influence people’s attitude, feeling and opinions regarding the story. This explains the position of Dominik (2008), that the mass media do not only present facts and information, they also provide additional details by interpreting significant events so that people will make meaning on the consequences of the event.

Recently, new technologies have ushered in the proliferation and prevalence of social media in almost every facet of human lives, and these have made the consumption of news and information extremely convenient to the users of such technology. The ease with which information, alerts, and warnings can be broadcast to millions of people in a very short amount of time, has made social media a brilliant platform for information diffusion, especially for time-sensitive situations, and important events that maybe be occurring in great distances. The popularity of online news consumption has grown due to the fact that a considerable number of individuals across the world use social media as a source of news (Shearer and Matsu, 2018; Nami Sumida and Mitchell, 2019),

The emergence of what Van Dijck (2013) termed “platformed sociality” enabled by the decentralized infrastructure of the internet and easy-to-use applications since the 2000s have made user participation more convenient. However, this decentralization is beginning to spell new challenges to credible news. The situation is largely described and misinformation, disinformation or fake news. In whatever context

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this or perspective this may be conceptualized, misinformation is fast becoming the scourge in online space. These new information misnomers have continued to erode and even pollute credible news and information; even some studies have established that they travel faster than credible news (Grant, 2018; Langin, 2018).

Because of the veracity of social media, people are just a click away from any and every information that is available on the internet. There are various forms of the new media that help to inform, educate and entertain our society (Nity and Singh, 2018). However, misinformation has been said to be constituted by fake news disinformation, over sensationalism and other exaggerated news intended to mislead online users and to get high traffic to such site or become trendy. Compounding the problem is the explosion of online information. Viewing and producing blogs, videos, tweets and other units of information called memes have become so cheap and easy that the information marketplace is inundated with polluted materials.

The glut of information has generated intense competition for people's attention. As Nobel Prize-winning economist and psychologist Herbert A. Simon noted, "what information consumes is rather obvious: it consumes the attention of its recipients." One of the first consequences of the so-called attention economy is the loss of high-quality information (Spano, 2020). By extension, this situation is also called information disorder; which consists of different forms like satire, false connection, and misrepresentation of facts; imposter content, manipulated content, fabricated content, and memes. There are many reasons for sharing fake news on social media. Some people spread it for political, ideological, or business interests, some also spread it for fun although they do it with an intention. However, again, granting that some people have an ulterior motive, they share fake news without verifying its authenticity. The motive varies from person to person as some of them think that sharing information before others gives them a sense of pride, while others think they must let people know about the importance of news and some share it for fun (Deca, 2021).

False information is news, stories or hoaxes created to deliberately misinform or deceive readers. Usually, these stories are created to either influence people's views, push a political agenda or cause confusion and can often be a profitable business for online publishers. False information deceive people by looking like trusted websites or using similar names and web addresses of reputable news organizations. (Webwise, nd). Some stories may have a nugget of truth, but lack contextualizing details. They may not include any verifiable facts or sources. Some stories may include basic verifiable facts, but are written using language that is deliberately inflammatory, leaves out pertinent details or only presents one viewpoint.

Consequently, the whole world, more specifically Nigeria, has been heavily polluted with false information in its various manifestations; whether as fake news, outright falsehood, disinformation, propaganda or carefully edited/subjective news information on various social media platforms. To this end, this chapter will deal with the various ways news pollutants manifest in Nigeria's cyber space and attempt to proffer practical solutions to the menace.

News Misinformation: Concept and Context

In a broad sense, misinformation can assume many meanings. Hence, this concept highlights three disambiguation: misinformation, disinformation and malinformation (Burbules, 1997; Walker, 2019; Wardle, 2018; Derakhshan, 2017, 2018; Baines; Elliott, 2020). To be specific, Floridi, (2007 p. 40) states that "information encapsulates truth, and that false information fails to qualify as information at all."

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The term “misinformation” is related to a number of others. The concepts are distinguishable in the light of their inherent features and manifestations. For instance, with respect to spam (many receivers), rumour (confirmed or unverified), and fake news (in the guise of news) are relatively easier to discern, disinformation is the most similar or perplexing phrase. Misinformation and disinformation both refer to false or inaccurate information, but a key difference between the two is whether the information was deliberately created to mislead. Disinformation typically refers to cases where this was done intentionally, whereas misinformation more often refers to cases where it was not. In our discussion, we use the term “misinformation” to refer to any erroneous or incorrect information that is disseminated on social media (Wu, et al., 2019).

With the advancement of Internet technology and social media platforms, false information that was once shared through word-of-mouth is now quickly spread via these platforms and exhibits the traits of fission dissemination, quick propagation, a broad range of effect, and profound impact. In addition to alarming the people and endangering their physical and mental health, the widespread dissemination of rumours and incorrect information on social media platforms poses severe problems for government and the stability of the social order (Lazer, et al., 2018).

The idea of “information epidemic” has been more widely known as a result of the harmful nature of disinformation. Because it is very challenging to determine whether a piece of information is accurate or not, the dissemination of corrupt information permeates everyone’s life, and it has the potential to disrupt and destabilize the recipient(s) on physiological and psychological level (Caulfield, 2020).

Various Manifestations of Misinformation on Social Media

Misinformation on social media has become a significant issue in Nigeria, with various forms of false or misleading information being disseminated online. This misinformation can take many forms, including fake news, conspiracy theories, and propaganda. In this section, we will explore the various manifestations of misinformation on social media in Nigeria and the impact they have on society.

One manifestation of misinformation on social media in Nigeria is the proliferation of fake news. Fake news refers to false or misleading information presented as if it were real news. In Nigeria, fake news has been used to spread misinformation about various topics, including politics, health, and social issues. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, fake news about the virus and its treatment circulated widely on social media in Nigeria. This misinformation not only led to confusion and fear among the public but also hindered the efforts of authorities to provide accurate and timely information about the pandemic (Adediran et al., 2020).

Another manifestation of misinformation on social media in Nigeria is the spread of conspiracy theories. Conspiracy theories are baseless and often far-fetched explanations for events or phenomena that are presented as true (Kalweit, 2018). In Nigeria, conspiracy theories about various issues, such as government corruption and election rigging, have been widely disseminated on social media (Okolie, 2019). These conspiracy theories can have serious consequences, as they can fuel mistrust and undermine confidence in institutions and authorities (Kalweit, 2018).

Propaganda is another form of misinformation that has been prevalent on social media in Nigeria. Propaganda refers to the use of biased or misleading information to promote a particular ideology or agenda (Pleijter et al., 2019). In Nigeria, propaganda has been used by various groups to promote their agendas and influence public opinion. For example, during the 2019 general election, propaganda was widely used on social media either to promote certain candidates, or smear their opponents (Okolie, 2019).

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These forms of misinformation has serious consequences which may lead to confusion, fear, and mistrust among the public. It is important for authorities and individuals to be aware of the threat misinformation poses on social media and to take steps to verify the accuracy of the information they encounter online.

The Rise of Misinformation and Fake News in Nigeria

The phrase “fake news” is made up of two simple words; ‘fake’– meaning, something not genuine, but meant to be taken as genuine; and ‘news’- meaning, information about current event. Therefore, one can literarily say that, fake news is information/news that is not genuine which is presented as credible news, and is expected to be believed as being genuine. According McGonagle (2017), fake news is information that has been deliberately fabricated and disseminated with the intention to deceive and mislead others into believing falsehoods or doubting verifiable facts. In this regard, to the information professional, fake news and hoaxes is disinformation that is presented as, or is likely to be perceived as news.

A type of yellow journalism or propaganda that consists of deliberate disinformation or hoaxes spread via traditional media or online social media. In the same vein, Alawode, et al., (2018) view fake news as news articles that are intentionally and verifiably false and could mislead readers. The authors explained that, fake news includes false information that can be verified as such, created with dishonest intention to mislead readers. So far, the core deducible elements of fake news are the ‘untruthfulness’ of news content and the intent to deceive or mislead. Therefore, a false content that is created in error and circulated without the intention of misleading the consumers may be dismissible since no human system is immune to mistakes.

Sanusi, et al. (2015) in their study titled: ‘Changing roles in the Nigerian media industry: A study of multimedia journalism’ concluded that the emergence of the internet and its associated applications have redefined the practice of journalism. Traditional journalists are no longer the only sources of information because the current digital society permits some form of collaboration between the public in searching the environment for pertinent information. This can be the cause of the spread of fake news in the media.

The credibility accorded the online newspaper is therefore threatened as Thiel (1998) wrote that “a recent study conducted by a Georgetown graduate student Josephine Ferrigno found that while 80 percent of 60 random newspaper readers surveyed found The New York Times to be credible, slightly less than half found The New York Times Online (which contains the same articles as the newspaper) to be credible.”

Allcott and Gentzkow (2017) claim that there are a number of reasons misinformation and disinformation have become commonplace today. To begin with, the structural restraints and barriers to establish a functional media system have been decreased as a result of the ease of creating websites which comes with monetized and sponsored contents. The conventional barriers in traditional system prevent fraudulent reporting because mass media outlets are deterred from doing so as a matter of obligation and ethical responsibility.

Social media is rife with numerous false stories and misinformation which are mainly circulated to incite fear, anxiety, suspicion, and disunity across ethnic groups in Nigeria. A recent statement credited to Alhaji Gidado Siddiki, the leader of the Miyetti Allah Group, with a bold headline South East will boil any moment from now because of their stubbornness where he was alleged to have said that, “since they (the south easterners) are claiming to be stubborn, and had refused to give them their land in peace, it will be taken by force and entire south east will be raided and taken over by the herdsmen (Siddiki,

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2019). Expectedly, the news turned out to be what Claire Wardle described as “false connection” (when headlines or captions do not support the content).

When the Ebola virus first appeared in Lagos State in 2014, the city’s medical staff had to deal with the proliferation of false information about its prevention and treatment. A piece of false information that claimed salt water consumption and bathing may stop the spread of Ebola went viral. Nigerians started combining the phrases “Ebola,” “salt,” “water,” and “drinking” in tweets from 2014 on August 4, according to Symplur, a business that monitors health disinformation on Twitter. Two deaths were reported in Jos, the capital of Plateau State, four days later (Bakare, 2020).

Another major instance of fake news which dominated Nigeria’s media space was the rumoured death of President Muhammadu Buhari shortly after he began a health leave to the United Kingdom on January 19, 2017. So audacious were the masterminds that they cloned Metro newspaper of the UK or Huffington Post of US announcing in the spoofs that President Buhari has died in London. While “Metro” reported the “death” of the Nigerian president, “Huffington Post” alleged that he was caught “committing suicide”. The same picture of Buhari was used on both stories which had the same lines repeated in them (Akpuke and Omar, 2020).

In Nigeria and everywhere around the world, the negative impacts of fake news is growing so much so that some scholars fear that, the phenomenon may be the foundation of the next world war. The issues surrounding fake news became a major preoccupation of the United Nations (UN) in the early days of the organization with the onset of the cold war. The problem was framed in terms of the threats posed to friendly relations between peoples and states by the systematic diffusion of deliberately false or distorted reports (McGonagle, 2017) Back in 2013, the World Economic Forum’s Global Risk Report warned that misinformation could spark “digital wildfires” in our hyper-connected world (World Economic Forum, 2013)

Unarguably, fake news and its various manifestations have become social phenomena that is prominently promoting insecurity in Nigeria. Therefore, any sincere effort by the information professionals at tackling insecurity in the country must include strategies for curbing the menace of fake news comprehensively (Madu and Ajayi, 2019).

Why Misinformation Is a Common Phenomenon on Nigeria’s Cyber Space

In today’s digital age, it is easier than ever to come in contact with misinformation on social media. With the proliferation of social media platforms and the widespread use of smartphones, anyone with an internet connection can access and share information online. This has made it easier for misinformation to spread quickly and widely, leading to significant consequences for society.

One factor that contributes to the ease with which misinformation spreads on social media is the lack of gatekeepers. Unlike traditional media, such as newspapers and TV, social media does not have the same level of editorial oversight. This means that anyone can create and share content on social media, regardless of whether it is accurate or not. This lack of gatekeeping makes it easier for misinformation to proliferate on social media such that it becomes difficult for users to distinguish between credible and false information (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017).

Another factor that contributes to the ease of encountering misinformation on social media is the prevalence of echo chambers. An echo chamber is a virtual space where like-minded individuals come together and share information that confirms their pre-existing beliefs and biases. On social media, users are often presented with content that aligns with their interests and beliefs, leading to the creation

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of echo chambers. These echo chambers create a distorted view of reality and make it more difficult for users to encounter diverse perspectives and accurate information (Davies, 2018).

The use of algorithms by social media platforms is another factor that contributes to the ease of encountering misinformation. Social media algorithms are designed to present users with content that they are likely to engage with and share. This can lead to the creation of filter bubbles which presents users with a narrow range of content as they are less likely to encounter diverse perspectives. The creation of filter bubbles make it easier for misinformation to spread, as users may be less likely to encounter counterarguments or alternative viewpoints (Gillespie, 2018).

In addition to the factors mentioned above, the use of social media for political campaigns can also contribute to the ease of encountering misinformation. Political campaigns often use social media to reach and mobilize voters, and this involves the dissemination of false or misleading information. It has been established that during election periods social media can be used to spread fake news and propaganda in an attempt to influence voter opinion (Woolley & Howard, 2018). This demonstrates how easy it is to encounter misinformation on social media in the context of political campaigns.

Finally, the use of bots and automated accounts also contributes to the ease of encountering misinformation on social media. Artificial intelligence or social media bots are automated accounts that are programmed to perform specific tasks, such as posting content or engaging with users. These bots are prone to common errors that intensify the spread of misinformation on social media; i.e. posting false or misleading content or amplifying the reach of certain messages (Bessi & Ferrara, 2016).

The consequence of the unprofessional nature of most news contents generated online, the attendant lack of gatekeepers, the accuracy and integrity of some news information online have been grossly eroded and have left much to be desired when compared with the traditional news sources and news filtering procedures.

How Credible News and Media Professionals Are Caught in the Crossfire of Misinformation

The journalism industry is undergoing significant changes. More than ever before in human history, new digital platforms have impacted the practices and scope of journalism, enabling unique forms of communication and a wider global audience. However, the spread of false information, misinformation, outright falsehood and hoaxes have severely corrupted news contents and how people interpret and consume information, especially on social media. On websites and new media platforms, the circulation of false information has reached alarming proportions, which currently poses significant threat to credibility and journalism ethics (Inobemh, et al., 2020).

A number of alternative media outlets have recently emerged and have been found to frequently disseminate untrue or strongly biased contents due to the low cost of publishing information online and the extensive reach of social media platforms. A significant portion of the mainstream media may be ideologically and politically entangled in the whole spectrum of misinformation even though they may not willfully spread misinformation because they have long been trusted sources of information. On the other hand, “alternative media” has grown in popularity, and such media outlets frequently publish incorrect stories, viewpoints presented as facts, and even extremely divisive conspiracy theories (Shu, et al. 2020; Starbird, 2017).

The contemporary digital society is one classified with inundated online activities andun information sharing. Sadly, traditional news sources and credible news have been caught in the web of misin-

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formation, which may not be intentional but manifest as a result of *misreporting*; a situation where an online journalist can publish stories that are less credible unintentionally (this could be due to haste or unavailability of sources). Although, when this occurs, the online news outlets may issue a retraction or correction on the basis of accountability.

Social media platforms are filled with polarized contents that are highly emotional and inflammatory. These kinds of information typically lack evidence and are tweaked to appeal to emotion and pre-existing attitudes to manipulate the audience's understanding of an event or issue (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017; Digital Resource Center, 2017; Howard et al., 2017). Many people share picture, videos, links, feeds, and other multimedia contents that are highly subjective, overly sensationalized and unverified to stir the emotions of unsuspecting users.

These events have greatly affected the credibility and put the integrity of traditional news sources to the test, particularly as most online news channels are commercially driven. The work of Okoro and Emmanuel (2019, p.11) revealed the sentiments of some experts in this regard. "We already understand the biased posture of the mainstream media; we are tired of their one-dimensional reportage social media provide alternative truth to the lies, façade and propaganda that the mainstream media inundate members of the public with". Another expert was quoted saying...*for long, media in Nigeria are anti-people and have since lost their credibility*. There seem to be a perceived mistrust and loss of credibility with the Nigerian media system in some quarters because of perceived compromise where the media is seen as being overzealous, and smeared with irresponsible partisanship and recklessness (Olayiwola 1991, cited in Okoro and Emmanuel, 2019).

The battle with news pollutants may continue for a very long time. This is because some scholars have indicated that misinformation and fake news mostly ride on newsworthy events that make them look like they meet the traditional news criteria. This may be the reason Yariv Tsfati, et al, (2020) asserted that creators of fake news intuitively or deliberately write their stories in ways that match mainstream journalists' news values. This means that the battle will be a little tough to be won.

Possible Solutions to Dissipate the Effect of Misinformation in Nigeria

- a. Fair policy to regulate and monitor news information that are posted on any digital platform in Nigeria
- b. Regular sensitization and social media literacy training for social media users in order to forestall the spread and sharing of news misinformation
- c. Punitive measure should be handed to any website, blog sites or forum that publishes or accommodate comments and opinions bearing news misinformation.
- d. Regular post and involvement of conventional news media editors to counter and clarify popular or trending news misinformation that makes its way out to the public
- e. Public naming and shaming of websites and social media accounts that constantly popularize materials bearing news misinformation in Nigeria

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Chapter 6

Western Media and the Problem of the Other in Representational Communication: Rethinking the African Experience

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ABSTRACT

This is an essay in deconstruction that argues for the necessity of Western reevaluation of the I-Thou philosophy for better appreciation of Africa's position in the global arena. The reevaluation project must of necessity evolve a new media order to counter the traditional Western media and its narrative of the Global South with the assumption that in the I-Thou binary, the I must reasonably acknowledge and work for the benefit of the Thou for its own good or else the I finds itself in pernicious situation of self-destruction. This is based on the assumption that self-actualization is impossible without the Other because the foundation of existence was the reciprocated face-to-face relationships between living beings. As such, rather than a relationship of a violent hierarchy amongst the known binaries, where one of the two opposites governs the other, it is a project that calls for complementary relationship as a counter to "mimetic philopraxis," that is, "the unethical imitation of the life of non-Africans."

INTRODUCTION

One of the objections of the theory of representation in philosophy is the possibility of knowing with certainty that the objects of our perception are the same as the real objects the perceptions represent. This follows the claim that what is available to us is only the knowledge of the representations of our perceptions. Representationalism (the Representative Theory of Perception) is a philosophical theory which presents the world we see in conscious experience as not the real world itself, but merely a miniature virtual-reality replica of that world in an internal representation. As such, we know only our ideas

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or interpretations of objects in the world, since we are prevented to have direct, first-hand knowledge of existing reality by a barrier (or veil of perception) that exists between the mind and the existing world. It is this that necessitates the need to interrogate the Western media in her representational project of Africa. This project dovetails into the *I-Thou* dichotomous relationship.

The *I-Thou* relationship is an existential relationship that ideally would have placed both the *I* and the *Thou* in an equal and reciprocal order. However, a perversion of the *I-Thou* results to an *I-It* relationship which tends to place the *I* in a superior position over the *Thou*. Historically, this has defined the relationship that obtains between the West and the Others, in this case the global South. It is a relationship not prefaced by a peaceful coexistence, but one of a violent hierarchy where the first of the binary arrogates to itself the authority to govern the other as evidenced in violent colonial incursion into Africa. It is only common knowledge that the West's failure to understand the practical implication(s) of *I-Thou* relationship in her dealing with Africa, risks obliterating its own progress as a direct consequence of undermining Africa through its (mis)representational project.

This is an essay in deconstruction, which argues for the necessity of Western reevaluation of the *I-Thou* philosophy for the better appreciation of Africa's position in the global arena. Africa and Africans are therefore questing for, and "unequivocally advocate a new trajectory that reimagines prevailing narratives of Africa and its positioning in new academic fields such as media and communication" (Mano and Milto, 2015, p. 2). This is to say that the reevaluation project, must of necessity, evolve a new media order to counter the traditional Western media and its delusional narrative of the global South with the assumption that in the *I-Thou* binary, the *I* must reasonably acknowledge and work for the benefit of the *Thou* for its own good and vice versa, else, the *I* finds itself in pernicious situation of self-destruction. Rod Chavis appositely relates the West's continued existence to its quest for material wealth of Africa, such that "without access to certain raw materials from Africa, Western industrial capacity would wither much like a "raisin in the sun" (Chavis, 1998). This is on the assumption that self-actualization is impossible without the other as can be testified by Livinas (1969, 2016), in his belief that the foundation of existence was the reciprocated face-to-face relationships between living beings. As such, rather than a relationship of a violent hierarchy amongst the known binaries, where one of the two opposites governs the other, it is a project that calls for complementary relationship as a counter to Ramose's (1999) "mimetic philopraxis", that is, "the unethical imitation of the life of non-Africans" (p. 9).

Existing literatures have tried to address the relationship problem between the global North and her Southern other as one that bothers on economic and political advantage and strength of the former over the later. Intrinsic in such relationship is a representational project where the *I* creates a self-obligated image to represent the *Thou* in language alien to the *Thou*. However, a gap exists in the failure of most analysts to understand this relational attitude from the existential point of view. The paper argues that the *I-Thou* existence/relationship, though one of necessity, needs no representation. It is this gap that this essay tries to address from an existentialist point of view.

Theorizing Representation

The concept of representation bears varied meanings that cut across mathematical, scientific, political, and legal discourses. But being conscious of the focus of this essay, we only restrict our understanding of representation to a concept of it having direct bearing to the media and to a certain extent, politics. The online *Oxford English Dictionary* in conceiving representation presents it as "an image, likeness, or reproduction in some manner of a thing"; as "standing for, or in place of, some other thing or person..."

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In these definitions, representation functions through its ability to resemble something else thereby bringing representation to the status of an object as captured by the definition of Hanna Pitkin (1967) in the sense of “a making present again”; “a presenting of something not present” (pp. 8, 71). In this sense, representation becomes a medium since it stands between ‘the real’ or object being represented and the perceiver. From a realistic point of view, representation is usually more and easily accessible to be communicable across wide range of perceivers/spectators. This, results from its ability to be reproduced, mimicked and/or copied. The Romans had the word *repraesentare*, from which the English “representation”, a derivative of old French emerged. It literally stands for making manifest (present) of something previously absent. It less or never applied to human beings acting or standing in for others, or to any political institutions connoting people standing for others. However, with time, representation came to assume the meaning, as summarized by Pitkin (1967), “popular representation, and to be linked with the idea of self-government, of every man’s right to have a say in what happens to him” (p. 3).

Hall (1997) conceives one of the socio-cultural significances of representation to be a means of communication and social interaction. It is such that as a basic communicational need, its absence renders human interaction a near nullity. Hall sees representation as the medium or channel through which meaning production can be possible. He assumes that things (objects and people) do not possess stable (universal) and true meanings in themselves; on the contrary, meanings bear significant hermeneutical status; they are made possible by human beings, as participants in a culture, with the ability to make things mean or have a particular signification (p. 19). Clearly, for Hall, representation involves understanding how language, as a cultural instrument of knowledge production, works to produce and circulate meanings. This bestows on representation the status of a process or channel or medium through which these meanings are both created and elevated to the level of object (*‘thingification’* of representation). In a passage depicting the stress on difference, he presents representation as phenomenon with much complexity in its effort to deal with ‘difference’. In such a manner, it deals with feelings, attitudes and emotions as well as mobilizes fears, and anxieties inexplicable in a “simple, common-sense way” (p. 226).

Mai Vukcevic, in an online article, identifies an immediate problem here. It is a set of political problems and questions which representations bring to the table such as the “privileging of the original or authentic presentation over the mediating re-presentation or reproduction”. A different but related problem is the “ways in which democratic citizens can be marginalized by representative institutions”. This may be the reason for Plato’s disillusionment over representation as a reliable epistemic cum aesthetic principle. From the “Allegory of the Cave”, it became obvious that Plato’s distrust for (media) representations (mimesis) apparently originates from his belief that representations make possible an illusionary world away from the ‘real existences’; from realities that cohere in ideas. From this Platonian point of view, this becomes a problem as it is a depiction of representations as media because of their ability to intervene between the knower and reality, creating, in the process, illusions which divert the knower away from the real. This is because, for him, mimesis is far removed from truth, and since it appeals to an inferior part of the soul, it “thereby helps to subvert the rule of intellect and reason” (Janaway, 2013, p. 5). Unlike Plato, Aristotle bears a favourable disposition towards representation. He viewed representations differently by arguing for the necessity of representations as resulting from the necessity of mimesis as human imbued natural tendency. So, for Aristotle, representation is sine qua non for the existentiality of humanity and its method of learning. Still contra-Platonic view of representation, Aristotle does not shy away from viewing representation as a medium or channel through which humans apprehend ‘the real.’ So, for Plato, while image making and imitation are resemblances of perversions (*Sophist* 228c, 267c), Aristotle rather takes them to be natural propensities that aid learning (*Poetics* 1448b13, 1448b8).

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From the political perspective, it is often argued that the contemporary popularity of the concept of representation has depended largely upon its link with the ideas of democracy, liberty and justice (Pitkin, 1967, p. 2). The “ways in which democratic citizens can be marginalized by representative institutions”, was given a considerable rumination by Iris Marion Young in her discussion of the difficulties arising from one person representing many. It is the same concern that led to Pitkin (1967) to think of a difference between “sham and real representative institutions” (p. 2). These views may not be unconnected with the sentiment that all governments have propaganda as instrument of manipulation of their subjects. So, Young (1999) is bothered about the ambivalence that political representative institutions can throw up: it can be inclusive and exclusive at the same time. This can be possible as it can consider the opinions, perspectives and interests of some citizens at the detriment of marginalizing those of the others. Such ambivalence draws from Young’s (2000) insistence that there has always been a separation between representatives and those they represent, as such no person can “stand for and speak as a plurality of other persons” (p. 127). But Hall (1997) seemed to provide a response to this Youngian concern. Thus, in his political thought of representation, he isolates four stages that can result in effective practice of the politics of representation. In the first instance is the need to reduce internal conflicts. Second, creating a mutual consensus; third, reach public space; and fourth, the results of the various previous stages (pp. 20-21). In this sense, therefore, there is a remarkable difference between representation politics and identity politics. Identity politics can be a part of the politics of representation, while politics of representation does not necessarily become part of politics of identity. It is in this sense that Guttman (2003) defines identity groups as “politically significant associations of people who are identified with one or more shared social markers, such as gender, race, class, ethnicity, nationality, religion, disability and sexual orientation” (p. 9). Conceived as such, the social markers serve primarily, on the one hand, to unite people with one another and on the other hand, to potentially stimulate them into action. Their political significance is obvious in helping to shape people’s needs, interests and interactions with the society.

Thus, the realm of identity politics is often within the context of majoritarian politics; it is the platform through which the majority intimidates the minority groups. On the other hand, the politics of representation seems to offer minority groups space to showcase their culture, leaving the practical political implications as merely secondary or incidental. In other words, the main orientation of identity politics is political power, while the politics of representation is culture. How a group relates to the other is what is x-rayed in the next section through the exploration of the existentiality of the I and the Thou.

The Existentiality of the I-Thou

Most of the contemporary problems of human and societal relationships arise as a result of either ignorance of or unsympathetic disregard for the views of the “Other”. In buttressing this claim, Ofelia Schuttle (1985) deploys the idea of philosophy to shred the dominatorial impulse of some against others. For him, philosophy cannot serve this purpose if it is to be worthy of its name. He therefore claims,

If philosophy is the love of wisdom, then its function cannot be merely to reproduce the discourse and assumptions of the established powers. On the contrary, its function is to penetrate through to the other side and to create favorable conditions for the Other to come forward and express concerns, cares, disquietudes, and aspirations. In this process of recognizing and respecting the oppressed Other, the legitimacy of the Other’s discourse must first be established. (p. 143)

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Then, Walter Kaufmann (1970) set the tune of the discourse in his “Prologue” to Martin Buber’s *I and You*, in which he proposes the existence of many modes of I and You. Buber (1937) believes the attitude of man in this regard is twofold in accordance with the two primary word combinations he can speak. The primary words are not single words but word pairs or binaries: I-Thou, and another of such primary word being I-It. These are allusions to man such that the I of man is also twofold. But basically, the I of the primary word I-Thou is different from that in the primary word I-It (p. 3). The later constitutes “two relationships: that in which I recognize It as an object, especially of experience and use, and that in which I respond with my whole being to You” (Kaufmann, 1970, part II). For Buber (1937), the primary words have no ability to stand alone as they cannot make any meaning, rather, they “intimate relations”. “Primary words do not describe something that might exist independently of them, but being spoken they bring about existence” (p. 3). Going further, Buber denies the existence of I taken in isolation from the primary word I-Thou and I-It.

Martin Buber, a German philosopher, is known for his philosophy of dialogue contained in his book *Ich und Du* (I and Thou/You). Part of the thesis of Buber’s work bothers on a new way of looking at communication between individuals as rooted not on the individual or others but on the relationships and the relational attitudes between two beings considered all subjects. So he claims “there is a radical difference between a man’s attitude to other men and his attitude to things. The attitude to other men is a relation between persons, to things is only a connection with objects” (Buber, 1937, p. vi). In such personal relationship, one subject *I* confronts another subject *Thou*. The *I* and the *Thou* are markedly subjects.

For him, humans conceive the world in an ‘either or’ manner and so his relational attitudes dealt specifically about the two types of speaking and interacting, aptly captured in two primal binaries: *I-Thou* on the one hand, and *I-It* on the other. These binaries are encapsulations of his religious existentialism which centres on the distinction between direct, mutual relations and indirect, utilitarian relations. On the one hand, he calls the direct, mutual relationship the “*I-Thou*” relationship or dialogue. It is a relationship in which each person of the binary confirms the other as bearing unique value(s). The indirect, utilitarian relations, on the other hand, he designates as the “*I-It*” relationship, or monologue. Unlike the *I-Thou* relationship, *I-It* is a relationship where each member of the binary knows and uses the other(s) but does not really see or value them for what they are. For Buber, in the *I-Thou* relationship, an interpersonal encounter contains a potential that far exceeds two separate people in conversation. This potential is brought to the fore when two people actively and authentically engage each other in the here and now and truly “show up” to one another. Through this encounter, a new relational dimension “the between” comes to be. At the instance of “the between” dimension, the relationship exceeds the individual contributions of those involved (See Buber, 2002, p. 81).

The distinguishing characteristics of the *I-Thou* relationship include mutuality, directness, presentness, intensity and ineffability. In describing “the between” Buber takes it to be a “leap into the experience of the other while simultaneously being transparent, present and accessible” (Martin and Cowan, 2019). So, the meeting between *I* and *Thou*, becomes for Buber the most vital part of human experience since it is in relationship that our full humanity can be realized. A meeting between the *I* and the *Thou* translates to the acknowledgement of the uniqueness and separateness of the other without obscuring the shared “relatedness” or “common humanness”.

Similarly, Gabriel Marcel highlights two major ways by which the self and the other are brought towards a measure of intersubjective relationships. These are *disponibilité* and *indisponibilité*, translated variously as “availability” and “unavailability” or, as “disposability” and “non-disposability”. As a way of grounding the meaning of these concepts in English language, they could further mean for Marcel

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“handiness” and “unhandiness”. Handiness and unhandiness refer to the availability or otherwise of one’s “resources” – material, emotional, intellectual and spiritual. Essentially, therefore, *disponibilité* captures the measure at which one is available to someone else; the state of having one’s resources at hand to offer the other (Treanor, 2021). *Indisponibilité* connotes the opposite of *disponibilité* and it means being unavailable. It can manifest itself in several ways; but Marcel alleges it “is invariably rooted in some measure of alienation” (Marcel, 1995, p. 40). A typical example being pride which for Marcel, translates to believing in oneself as being self-sufficient (p. 32), a form of absolute self-reliance. It is such that, according to Marcel (1995),

The proud man is cut off from a certain kind of communion with his fellow men, which pride, acting as a principle of destruction tends to break down. Indeed, this destructiveness can be equally well directed against the self; pride is in no way incompatible with self-hate. (p. 32)

The *indisponible*’s sense of reductionism is very high as it tends to reduce others to “‘examples’ or ‘cases’ of genus ‘other person’ rather than being encountered *qua* other as unique individuals” (Trenor, 2021). So, in this scenario, an *indisponibilité* (unavailable) becomes a person preoccupied with the self as an object, marked by self-centeredness without the possibility of engaging with others as subjects (Marcel, 1965, pp. 74, 78), where a ‘Thou’ (other) is encountered as a ‘He’ or ‘She’, or even as an ‘It’. The risk Marcel aims to highlight here is that any attempt at reducing the ‘Thou’ as any of these pronouns, amounts to further reduction of the Thou to mere nature, only animated as object to work in some particular ways and not in others. Further, a treatment of the other as a ‘He’ or ‘She’ in place of ‘Thou’, incapacitates the ‘I’ as the ‘I’ becomes incapable of seeing the ‘I-self’ as a Thou, for in deprecating the *other* the I effectively deprecates the I-self. On the contrary, a treatment of the other as ‘Thou’, results in apprehending it *qua* freedom. Such apprehension *qua* freedom elevates the Thou above mere nature to being also freedom (Marcel, 1949, pp. 106, 107). So, *disponibilité* (one who is disposable or available) opens the horizon of the person to different experiences of her place in the world, providing the ground for the acknowledgement of her interdependence with other people. “It should be obvious at once that a being of this sort is not an autonomous whole, ... self-contained; on the contrary such a being is open and exposed, as unlike as can be to a compact impenetrable mass” (Marcel, 1951, p. 145). The next two sections of this essay x-ray how the Western media has tried to obliterate the African other through its project of representation.

The Western Media and Representation of African Realities

Graham Chapman, et.al. (1997), have forcefully argued the impossibility of the emergence of a common world-view on environmental issues in a world of unequal communication access.

Graham Chapman, Kevall Kumar, Caroline Fraser and Ivor Gaber (Eds.) *Environmentalism and the mass media: The North-South divide* (London: Routledge, 1997).

Stuart Hall (1997) in his conception of representation identifies three prongs to it: (1) reflective representations, (2) intentional representations, and (3) constructionist representations. Reflective representation is language or various symbols that reflect meaning. Intentional representation is how language or symbols embody the personal purpose of the speaker. While the constructionist representation is how meaning is reconstructed ‘in’ and ‘through’ language (p. 15). The constructionist representational type dovetails to the Standard Analysis of knowledge in the Western epistemological project, otherwise called

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propositional knowledge (Williams, 2001). Propositional knowledge happens to be the most problematic and controversial sub-category of knowledge information. It is generally represented as information in written or oral propositional (sentential) format considered to be knowledge and therefore believed as well to be true. Ironically, however, no individual recipient of this information is in a position to test or verify the truth or validity of its assumptions taken to be self-evident.

Juxtapose this to what the Western society ‘learns’, believes and disseminates about Africa in the course of a lifetime, it becomes evidently clear what is taken as ‘knowledge product’ by the West consists of information they will never ever be in a position to confirm in a firsthand or direct manner. It only consists of, according to Hallen and Wiredu, “what they ‘find out’ from a history book, ‘see’ via the evening news on television, or ‘confirm’ about a natural law on the basis of one elementary experiment in a high school physics laboratory — all could be (and sometimes are) subject to error, distortion or outright fabrication” (p. 10; cf. Chapman, et.al., 1997, p. 4). As a way of illustration, Chapman, et.al., (1997), have argued that the concepts “development economics and developing nations” are concepts specifically coined not for the North as epitomized by Britain, but for the “South case studies and how to ‘improve things’—by bringing sanitation, education, health, etc. to the mass of the world’s population who do not have the same standards of living as the North” (p. 5). So, propositional knowledge essentially harbours the attribute and character of a *secondhand* and assumed information which merely had to be *accepted as true* on the strength of its ‘agreement’ with common-sense or due to simple ‘correspondence’ and/or ‘coherence’ with the very limited amount of information that people are able to test and confirm in a firsthand or direct manner. Yet as an epistemological project, to define the level of coherence or correspondence, has not stopped being problematic in Western epistemology. Such problematic remains a veritable intellectual concern and discomfort for Western philosophers about the weak evidential basis of much of the information that are calibrated as true knowledge in their culture concerning the Global South. Despite this, such beliefs are still worshipped because they remain the basis upon which the material and immaterial products and resources of the Global South are effectively plundered.

The distinction made in *Wikipedia* about the difference between global North and South is quite unsettling. It is to the extent that in a power game, the North is a power base and has all it takes to put the South under its firm grip and control. Inter alia it holds:

The two groups are often defined in terms of their differing levels of wealth, economic development, income inequality, democracy, and political and economic freedom, as defined by freedom indices. States that are generally seen as part of the Global North tend to be wealthier and less unequal; they are developed countries, which export technologically advanced manufactured products. Southern states are generally poorer developing countries with younger, more fragile democracies heavily dependent on primary sector exports, and they frequently share a history of past colonialism by Northern states.

The convergence of the northern countries in their dominance over the south has been seen “to produce an intolerable social order” (Oglesby, 1969, p. 90).

The above underscores the intricate connection between political discourse, its media representations, and language ideologies, where our attitudes to, beliefs about, and values relating to language and languages are significantly influenced by reference to them in print and audio-visual media. Adrian Blackledge (2010), in agreement with Bourdieu (2000), alleges that “the universal point-of-view is established in constant *méconnaissances* or misrecognitions, which produce the view that minority languages other than English are harmful to a cohesive [British] society” (p. 143). This betrays a standardized official

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racial view point since racism can be seen as ascription of negative attributes to others than oneself with the aim of creating and perpetuating a sense of inequality. For T. A. van Dijk (2002), the television news majorly bears the role of shaping the way the majority group thinks about minority groups: “not only for ordinary citizens but also for the elites themselves, the mass media are today the primary source of ‘ethnic’ knowledge and opinion in society” (152), in utter disregard for pluriversality¹ in knowledge. This is corroborated by the report of the *Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia*, which reported considerable rapid growth of anti-Muslim prejudice manifestly witnessed in the media, public policy, education and law (The Runnymede Trust, 1997). Here there is a problem of reduction (representation) of the Muslim group using a number of cultural practices as different from the majority British group. This led to the allegation that ‘Islam’ and ‘the West’ are often contrasted in oppositional discourse in public reports (Blackledge, 2010, p. 145). For Richardson (2004),

Muslims are identified as ‘Other’ by virtue of characteristics which they are presumed or perceived to lack: in other words, their ‘lack’ of ‘Britishness’ divides ‘Them’ from ‘Us’. The second method of division is an explicit split, where Islam and/or Muslims are identified as the ‘Other’ by virtue of values or characteristics which they are perceived to have: in short, their ‘Islamic-ness’ is used to divide ‘Them’ from ‘Us’. (p. 113)

Similarly, cultural practices of Africans are racialized in the same way as racializing Islamic and Muslim practices amongst the West. How does this happen? Blackledge (2010) argues it is through a process of re-contextualization. Through this process, social events far from being merely repeated, are rather transformed, possibly through addition or deletion of new elements (p. 147). For Blackledge following Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999), this process involves “the suppression and filtering of some meaning potentials of a discourse, it is also a process which may expand meaning potential, through additions to, and elaborations upon, the previous text” (Blackledge, 2010, p. 147). Parenti (1989) provides very lucid instantiation of this which can be likened to Western cultural imperial project. He asserts:

Along with capital penetration of the Third World there is an increasing cultural penetration. The Ford Foundation and other foundations help maintain Third World universities that produce scholarship supportive of a US ideological perspective. American textbooks, academic programs and courses, American news columnists, news reports and features, American comic strips and comic books, American movies, television shows, magazines, music, fashions, and consumer products inundate Latin America, Asia, and Africa. (p. 60)

It is to this extent that David Cameron, a former British Prime Minister, once argued that the presence and visibility of languages other than English creates social division, brings about resentment and suspicion, and undermines national unity and British identity. By this, Cameron (2007), perhaps, for fear of cultural contestation, discountenances multiculturalism and multilingualism as part of the nature of his society. These constituted part of his “five Berlin walls of division that we must tear down”. His view consonants with the position of Tony Blair, another British Prime Minister, who perceives the core unifying British value to be the English language. For Blair (2006), six elements in policy to underscore the need for integration are necessary, among which are the guarantee for “visiting preachers to have a proper command of English”, and “a requirement to pass an English language test before permanent residency would be granted to those seeking leave to remain in the UK”. For these and others, it is a

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given that English language “binds us together as a single group in a way that a multiplicity of community languages cannot” (Blacklege, 2010, p. 150). The Western quest for a unified language becomes the *raison d’être* for the creation of language vacuum that becomes the fate of Africa. This vacuum can only be filled by Western conceptual scheme as can be seen in the next section of this paper.

However, Scott (2015) has denied the claim of misrepresentation, categorizing it only as a myth that is not based on sufficient data. In his words, “it is a myth that we know how Africa is covered in the US and UK media . . . [because] the comprehensiveness of existing research has been maintained through certain citation practices and interpretations of evidence” (p. 193). But in a 2018 response to Scott’s disavowal, Nothias counters by arguing that though instances of change in how Africa is represented in Western media abound, there, however, are in existence empirical evidences that suggest continuity in the framing and discussion of African contexts, despite attempts at improved representativeness. He based his claim from analysis of news presentation of Africa in foreign print media (Nothias, 2018, p. 1153). Perhaps a typical example of Nothias claim can be the American based *New York Times* (2017) reportage of Donald Trump, a former President of America’s contemptuous remark about Nigeria and Nigerians. Trump outrageously observed that “once immigrants from Nigeria had seen the U.S., they would never ‘go back to their huts’ in Africa”. And to cap it all, in an April 2018 immigration meeting, he disparagingly categorized some African countries as “shithole countries” (Mano and Milton, 2021, p. 4). Trump and his ilk were simply short of restating Curtin’s (1964) claim of the existence of no other civilized nation of any other complexion than white. So, Scott’s assumption that research on misrecognition and misrepresentation of Africa translates to a myth, is frontally inappropriate and far from fizzling out, as it is undermined by the leaders of the so-called free societies of the West (see Cameron, 2007; Blair, 2006) exhibiting queer racist characters and/or utterances about Africa.

Western Media and the Creation of Language Lacuna in Africa

UNESCO in a 2010 book, *Why and how Africa should invest in African languages and multilingual education* expressed dismay at the fact that it is only in African continent that the majority of children start school using a foreign [colonial] language” and for “governance” (p. 4). It is the same sentiment shared by Ali Mazrui (Key Note Address 22-27 April 1996) and Thiong’o, to the extent that they see language from the point of view of its emancipatory character if used to advance the cause of the marginalized and the oppressed. While on the side of UNESCO, its disappointment is based on the fact that language remains a veritable means of communicating and producing meaning in a culture. Language work through representations, while meaning springs up in relation to all the different moments or practices in a “cultural circuit”, that is, “in the construction of identity and the market of difference, in the production and consumption, as well as in the regulation of social conduct” (Hall, 1997, p. 4). So, culture evidently pervades all spheres of human society and existentiality aside human biological (genetic) formulations. This helps in building up and sustaining a common life world which becomes a marker of identity. “‘Language’ therefore provides one general model of how culture and representation work, especially in what has come to be known as the semiotic approach – semiotics being the study or ‘science of signs’ and their general role as vehicles of meaning in culture” (Hall, 1997, p. 6.). Language, according to Oswell (2006) is “coextensive with its community of [its] speakers” (p. 18).

So, Africa’s lack of language of expression constitutes a wide lacuna consciously crafted and sustained to serve a particular goal. It can only be filled if there is a new vista to dispense knowledge which must also include language appropriate that can enable the inculcation of wisdom and values of the African

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world into the minds of Africans (Langmia, 2021, p. 65). This position thrives on the assumption of an impossibility of societal advancement and development outside its very language because learning in a foreign language is unable to address peculiar existential problems of such society. Foreign languages definitely fall short of capturing and reflecting peculiar African realities as would local languages. In a very succinct view, Kwasi Prah (1988) claims, the ‘missing link’ in African development has always been the absence of African languages. Corroborating this position, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018), advised the rest of the world on the need for epistemic equity and as such not to suppress Africa’s epistemic potency, (which must include language perception across all new media platforms) in the ever-emerging global village. Or better still, the West must desist from thinking that any other epistemic paradigm other than its own, is short of providing adequate knowledge information necessary for societal growth and progress. This was the focus of the intervention of the Rwandan President, Paul Kagame (2022), in a wrongly impressionistic and biased interview of a BBC correspondence to the extent that African values are perceived by the West as non-values and so, Africa needs to move forward if only she can embrace Western values. For Ndlovu-Gatsheni, globalizing African knowledge can be only imperative. But this may be most difficult to achieve if there is no determined effort to address the incursion of the Western media that constantly mediate and inundate Africa with images and sounds that are purely western specifics. For this, many media scholars (Asante 2013; Mazrui 2009; de Beer and Saliba 2000; Park and Curran 2000; Carey 1992) have, taking a cue from Okot p’ Bitek’s poem “Song of Lawino”, bemoaned the pervasive and devastating influence of western media on Africa. For them, such presence has successfully stymied the growth and development of local African life as a whole, including African media progress. Parenti (1989) unequivocally substantiates this concern as he avers “most of the news published in the Third World is from US media sources” as such, “the average Third World nation is better informed about US viewpoints and concerns than about those of neighboring countries or of its own backlands” (p. 60). One does not need to go too far to understand this. A simple example of football support and enthusiasm brings this idea home. Thus, hardly do you see African football enthusiasts discuss, or express the slightest support for African football club sides as many Africans are fanatical about Western football club sides. This is no thanks to both international and local media that project these Western teams right into the bedroom of almost all Africans. This is a scenario the *New York Times* of 13 January, 1982, underscored when it reports that in a 1982 polls taken in Mexico, 85 percent of the children interviewed recognized the trademark of a distinctly American brand of potato chips (snack food), against 65 percent who managed to identify Mexico’s national emblem (Parenti, 1989, p. 60). The concern, here, bothers on the almost complete embrace of and quest for modernization of Africa using completely Western value systems epitomized by the Euro-American standard of valuation. It is such that Chavis appositely describes as a project of “Western Media moguls, who can find only the negative when Africa is the subject, create Africa’s world image almost entirely to serve their capitalistic greed while simultaneously denigrating the continent’s global image” (Chavis, 1998), including the marginalization and silencing of African epistemological prowess.

Ironically, to ‘meet’ the demands for modernization, Africa only mimics the West in almost everything western: architecture, education, infrastructure, economic and political systems, culture, social status, class and value systems. The colonial incursion into African continent eminently created epistemic trajectories that showcase inferiority in the African cognitive project. It is to the extent that African universities and institutions relish in developing academic contents devoid of African knowledge systems and contents, theories and praxis; a pointer to the obvious claim of Parenti (1989), of the West’s control of the ideational and material environment of Africa. As such, social mimicry of the Western-styled life,

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far from resulting in the acquisition of better socio-cultural life or enhanced African culture, depicts, on the contrary, a socio-cultural and cognitive depravity of the African. The consequence is, as Chapman, et.al., (1997), have noted, the impossibility of the emergence of a common world-view (on environmental issues) in a world of unequal communication access. Langmia (2021) notes that “that surreptitious vicious experiment was to absolve them from knowing and respecting anything African” following their reduction to mere “passive participants in world affairs” (p. 84; cf. Parenti, 1989, p. 60). It is to this that Langmia (2021) has nostalgically observed:

All African countries are now independent. If independence means subservience to the erstwhile colonial masters to achieve full sovereignty and restore dignity to Africans, then we are doomed. (p. 88)

The Western dominatorial project of the Global South has partly been successful following the imposition of western language as the vehicle for all educational pursuits and the thrust of the Western media instrument of cultural dislocation.² With nostalgia one recalls Bright Chimezie, a Nigerian highlife musician, who lamented in one of his tracks “Because of English...”, his predicament as a pupil in a Nigerian school as he was mercilessly punished (flogged) for speaking his mother language (Igbo) in preference for English language. The context of Chimezie’s predicament was enunciated by Okere (1997) who stressed on the colonial conspiracy, not only to vehemently refuse to learn and speak Igbo language, but legislated against using it as a language of instruction in schools (p. 17). This Chimezian experience cuts through other Southern societies, especially Africa. So, the elementary school pupil in Africa is disconnected and/or dislocated from his local culture through imposition of foreign languages that alienate him from his basal community. The trio of Lebakeng, Phalane and Dalindjebo (2006), have implicated educational institutions, especially higher educational institutions, in Africa as complicit in the perpetuation of epistemic injustice of the West on Africa. For them, “higher education institutional cultures continue to privilege western symbols, rituals and behaviours imposed as a result of epistemicide” (p. 70). This is the basis of Parenti’s (1989) claim of increased Western cultural alongside capital penetration of the Third World as “the Ford Foundation and other foundations help maintain Third World universities that produce scholarship supportive of a US ideological perspective” (p. 60).

A leeway to such suffocating epistemic project results in Langmia’s (2021) proposal for “media decolonization”. Langmia’s proposal is a variant of Ngugi’s (1988) call for decolonization that would clean up the mental hemisphere of Africans and that of Kwasi Wiredu who advocated for mental decolonization of Africans. For Langmia, this process would involve utilizing local languages to neutralize western domineering languages of English, French and Portuguese in the continent of Africa. This is necessitated by the assumption that “language is the vehicle of culture and culture is the mores of a people” but more so as “African electronic media systems are the offshoots of ontological, and to a much larger extent, the axiological tenets of the west, thereby making African communication a pseudo-western system devoid of African culture” (p. 81). This leads to the continent of Africa being suffused with imported finished goods and services, all of which incapable of addressing Africa’s indigenous communication needs and life/existential situations. This is a way of restoring the cultural status of Africa and other societies with similar experiences as Africa. But this is only a prong to the quest for restoration; there is also need for economic and political freedom necessary for the completion of the restoration circle. But a pertinent question remains Africa’s preparedness to address the latter.

Here, the Hegelian master-slave dialectic finds profound expression. It is now common knowledge that the west did not only colonize Africa as a way of imposing political and economic control, they,

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in addition, wanted assimilation in all spheres of African life. Africa, ironically, sustained this western mastery over her slavish status as “African media organizations import finished products, including program materials from Europe, America and China, for wider dissemination on the continent in their original western languages” (Langmia, 2021, p. 81). To situate this, Ali Mazrui (2009) bemoans Africa’s patronage of western tastes, consumption patterns, promotion of urbanization and embrace of capitalist greed, without commensurate western skills, production techniques, industrialization, and discipline, respectively (p. 21). For Langmia, the danger “to continuously consume western digital communication gadgets in colonial languages without interrogating our minds and challenging western manufacturers to involve Africa and African languages in the process is nightmarish” (p. 82) and leaves Africa at the mercy of the west as “he who feeds you controls you” (Akomolafe, 2014, p. 66). Mazrui has unequivocally hinged the problem of collective dependence, and colonization of our minds on our consumption patterns, which have led to creating pseudo-western states in Africa. The result is the adaptation and assimilation by Africa and Africans of the “erstwhile communicative patterns by westernizing African communications patterns and systems” (p. 83). These are indicative of what DuBois (1989) and Fanon (1967, 1986), have, respectively, described as Africans suffering from “double” and “triple” consciousnesses. The state of affairs herein narrated necessitate the need for a new order which the next section of this paper addresses. It is an order that calls for new mode of expression for the African.

The Quest for a New Media Order in Africa

Media and communication are vital instruments to societal progress: politics, culture, economies, and indeed entire life process. The fact of media and communication implies authenticating the ways in which communication between persons is effected as well as giving good account of the impact of media and its ancillary organs, e.g., technology, on the society. It equally implies investigation of the influence of people, communities and institutions on the media and how the media influences social relations. In this vain, it becomes a near impossibility to distance media and communication in the constitution of power relations as well as in the exercise of power. The extent of the power and influence of the media is appositely captured by Mano and Milton (2021) in their introductory essay to the *Routledge Handbook of African Media and Communication Studies*. For them, media and political powers constitute a combined force in shaping and directing geopolitical contestations that shape “politics, culture and knowledge in the academy”. It is in this process that they can be “implicated in specific agendas that can result in the marginalization of those without power” (p. 1). So, the media adequately aids in the “understanding centers of power that must be questioned and challenged” (p. 1). To drive this home, Colin Chasi (2021) went as far as alluding to the effect of the media on the human society as violent. “The communication that expresses human modes of existence in the world is fundamentally violent; it is about warfare in various guises and modalities” (p. 55). However, some thinkers have theorized on the rootedness of human communication in the humans’ “unique ability to use and respond to linguistic signs in ways that induce cooperation” (Chasi, 2021, p. 55; cf. Burke 1969, 43; Tomasello 2010). This is the *raison d’être* of the I-Thou theory.

The I-thou, I-It, *disponibilité* and *indisponibilité* metaphors, introduce, on the one hand, a cooperational link that act in ways that benefit all (the self and the other), as well as a violent streak that denies the uniqueness of the existentiality and historicity of both the self and the other. The former is the sense through which communication facilitates the common attainment of shared values, meaning, cooperation, organization and harmony, resulting from the disposition of the One to see the Other as an equal

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partner in the project of human realization. The latter, on the other hand, is pictured by Chasi (2021) following Burke (1969) as they conceptualize the difficulty in any attempt at “co-substantially act together” as inherently marked by “identification and conflict”. And since in communication, the “human substances” tend to be separate and distinct, any attempt at fusion for the purpose of co-substantiation would result in “violent contestations for space, autonomy and integrity” with the aim of “colonizing or otherwise manufacturing conceptual grounds on which meanings and cultures are shared and formed” (Chasi, 2021, p. 55, cf. Burke 1969, 19–23).

Thus, these metaphors summarize the relationship between the global North and its Southern other; the North assiduously works to alter the existential states of being of the South as intended recipients of the meaning of their communication. It has been argued that this does not only come with a tinge of violence deployed essentially to manipulate people and nature, but also with the aim of obstructing the full maximization of potentials by individual humans. The instrument with which this was achieved was first, the supplanting of African or alternative epistemology, hence the colonial epistemicide. Colonial epistemicide upstaged the African cultural paradigm, as such, disavows African culture as a heritage to be shaped and molded. This is validated by the infamous right of conquest; a right through which “Western colonizers appropriated the sole, unilateral right to define and delimit the meaning of social experience, social knowledge and social truth for indigenous Africans” (Lebakeng, Phalane and Dalindjebo (2006), p. 71; cf. Ramose, 2002b; Lebakeng, 2004; Kagame, 2022).

As a counter, Asante (2007), has proposed a theory of “Afrocentricity”. It is a theory through which “Africans seek, from agency, to assert subject place within the context of African history” and experience (p. 16). For him, it is “a theory of agency, that is, the idea that African people must be viewed and view themselves as agents rather than spectators to historical revolution and change” (p. 17) in their own society. Implied in this theory are the identity consciousness of Africans and the centrality of all that relates to Africa. In the categorization of Mazama (2003), it is a “paradigm” since it is a project in deconstruction and reconstruction through rereading and reinterpreting of African realities and experience. In this sense, the role of the media would include “to mirror Africa’s socio-historical, anthropological and geo-political nature” (Langmia, 2021, p. 87). On this basis, the indigenous African epistemology, hitherto, thought inconceivable and whatever knowledge emanating from indigenous Africans considered defective, inferior and in need of being developed and refined following Western epistemic paradigm becomes sine qua non for Africa and her Western other. This will give impetus to “the fact that knowledge is legitimately constituted and become dominant knowledge through a social process rather than because it is” (Lebakeng, Phalane and Dalindjebo (2006, p. 72). And also a motivation to the realization that there exist varied rather than one unique way to successful knowledge creation, transmission and dissemination by different peoples of the world (Keto 2003). This is the foundation for Ramose’s call for non-racialized world order. For Ramose, “humanity is one and remains one as there is no superior or inferior race amongst humans. His antagonism to “multiracialism” – as against “non-racialism” – and his Africanist philosophy is fuelled by the inherent absurdity of “race” as a societal ideal” (Oparah, 2023). He harped on the need to eliminating racism because he strongly believes that human beings constitute only one race and never races, as such, racism dehumanizes the human person. Ramose’s position follows from the fact that “racial categories are social constructs imposed upon biological patterns by the human imagination and through human discourse [as such] their boundaries and meaning are subject to on-going change and re-definition” (Blackledge, 2010, p. 144). In this realization, Thabo Mbeki, a former South African President, has been quoted to have urged “Africans to resist globalization by establishing and advancing development frameworks and agendas that make Africa a sturdy competitor and not a

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dependent in the global world economy” (Mawere & Mubaya, 2016, p. 206). Perhaps, Mbeki’s call may not be unconnected with globalization being a Western instrument of subjugation that is anti-African, counterproductive and devoid of justice. The question of justice is the focus of ‘ubuntu’ philosophy of Ramose Mogobe. Ubuntu displays an unwavering commitment to questions of justice, politics, ethics, and truth. Thus, African Philosophy through Ubuntu, underscores the understanding of concepts such as justice and law through Ubuntu philosophy, and how the humanity of both the colonizer and the colonized is endangered through colonialism and racism.

So, the new media order in Africa should be one anchored on justice, freedom, truth and fairness to all concerned. It is a philosophy modeled after the existential I-Thou relationship marked by reasonable sense of mutuality, directness, presentness, intensity and ineffability. It would acknowledge of the uniqueness and separateness of the other without obscuring the shared “relatedness” or “common humanness”.

CONCLUSION

In the existential relation between the West and her African other, how is the latter portrayed and represented? The background to the study we have done here is following the distortion of the African image by the way she is represented in the western media. The pictures of Africa portrayed in such media representations are images of a continent, and her people reduced to mere nonentity; a society highly infested with different kinds of diseases, war, famine, poverty, savagery, despotism, animism, primitivism, and so on. These are pictures, though subliminal, that carry connotations of the absence of anything good, perennially problematic and unworthy, inherently deplorable, black, foreboding, loathsome, sub-human, etc. (see Chabal, 2005, p. 1). Thus, the Western media, often times, essentializes misrepresentation of inanities about Africa and it is the misrepresentation which Western scholars and others project as the true state of Africa. The portrayal bears a political undertone which bellies a high sense of dishonesty, deceit and conceit. It goes to the heart of a concern shared by Ramose (1999) to the extent that “in the bottomless depths of learning and the limitless horizon of knowledge, the African appears, at best only as an afterthought: a footnote with no significant relevance to the main body of text” (p. 2). As such, it is almost impossible for the western media to represent, even the minutest Africa’s strategic usefulness to the so-called industrialized societies of the west, call it the global North and Africa’s “indispensability and relevance to world development, global technology, and the wealth of nations”. This is considering that most Western advancement is predicated on her pillage of African resources, albeit involuntarily. Fear is that without easy and free access to certain raw materials from Africa, and underrepresentation of Africa in her relationship to the West, it will be difficult and possibly, impossible to sustain Western industrial capability, capacity and economy. The Western media representations of the continent, betray a persistent power imbalance at the symbolic and communicational level determined by the Northern players and institutions, such as multinational corporations, power groups, financial/business investors, and indeed governments, whose interests are often simultaneously intertwined with a singularity of purpose. So, an intentionally distorted image of Africa becomes truly imperative, especially “in order to conform with the shared requirements and strategies of foreign, commercial and cultural policies and at the same time concealing Africa’s role (especially its economic one)” (Mezzana). This is the rationale for misrepresentation of Africa in the Western media and to which Mano and Milton (2021) allege that media and communication are highly “implicated in the manifestation of power in Africa, from the precolonial through to the contemporary era” (p. 2). So, it is a critique of how the Western

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media has undermined the African contributions to the world progress as deliberately ignored and consciously misrepresented by the Western media. Such has resulted in a violent relationship as witnessed in colonial incursion into Africa.

But the West's failure to understand the practical implication(s) of *I-Thou* relationship in her dealing with Africa is a pointer to a possible obliteration of its own progress as a direct consequence of undermining Africa through its (mis)representational project. Such possibility is very much around with the phenomenon of de-dollarization of the world, where formally less privileged societies (including societies of the global South), are competing for space through economic and financial trajectories (see Hirst and Tokatlian, 2023; Abdelati, 2006). Perhaps, de-dollarization can be seen as the first step towards cultural and hegemonic emancipation of the global South. This accounts for the essay's argument for the necessity of Western reevaluation of the *I-Thou* philosophy for its continued existential imperative as well as for a better appreciation of Africa's position in the global arena. There can be no other quest for Africa and Africans than for a new trajectory that replaces prevailing narratives about Africa and at the same time, makes for an inclusive multipolar world order.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ Pluriversality contrasts with and critiques universality. Universality packages knowledge as a project common to all and sundry. However, evidence has shown that underneath universal claim to knowledge is the exclusion of the less privileged components of the ‘universe’ from the so-call universal knowledge claim. It is this that has necessitated the call for “fundamental disruption of conventional hierarchies of knowledge production” (Mano and Milton, 2021, p. 4; see also Amin 1989; Jansen 1995; Ramose 1997; 1999; Nabudere 2002).
- ² From the authority of the *New York Times* (December 25, 26, and 27, 1977), it is gathered that the CIA alone owns outright over 200 newspapers, magazines, wire services, and publishing houses that operate in countries throughout the world.

Chapter 7

Demystifying Mythology: Deconstructing the Indian Myth Through Modern Mythic Fiction

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ABSTRACT

For centuries, classical myths have been celebrated as models of excellence. Initially, the study of myths was undertaken to understand culture by only being mindful of the fixed literal meaning of the text. In this context, the ancient myth of the Ramayan in India stood as a monolithic structure unquestioned since time immemorial. However, in modern times, when the deconstruction philosophy of Derrida rejects the idea of a fixed meaning as conveyed by a text, the latent meaning of the text arises to the surface. With the emergence of feminism, the unheard voices of canonical texts are brought to the limelight through the contemporary mode of mythic fiction. The mythic fictions undertaken for study—The Forest of Enchantments, Sita-Warrior of Mithila, and The Liberation of Sita—highlight myriad ways of deconstructing the character of Sita and other subaltern female characters who were initially construed under the androcentric dictates of the classical literary canon. Hence, feminist deconstruction of mythology by mythic fiction deconstructs age-old cultural axioms.

INTRODUCTION

It is a common faith that myths shape society and social behaviour. It is believed that apart from setting a moral set of laws they also offer a religious experience. A collection of myths creates mythology and when fiction is loosely based on mythology and uses mythological archetypes, it then assumes the shape of mythic fiction. Fiction provides its magical elements from myths to the contemporary world and provides a new experience to the readers through mythic fiction. In modern times, myths are rarely

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acknowledged in their original form; instead, they are interpreted, re-interpreted, de-codified, and modified to become acceptable to modern readers. The present study deals with the concept of deconstructing the Indian myth of Ramayan through mythic fiction in the Indian context.

Myth Embeds in a Culture

Plato was the first to use the word ‘mythologia’ for collecting, making, and studying cultural myths. Myth is inherently related to varied cultures and humans of the world. Myths are presently known to us by the quality that they had transcended from oral tradition to written form. The rational study of myth was favoured by Enlightenment philosophy in the West in the 18th century. For Jung, myth and religion have traditionally worked in tandem. Religion has preserved myth, and myth has sustained religion. The heart of religion for Jung is neither belief nor practice, but experience and myth which provide the best entrée to the experience of God, which means the unconscious (Segal, 1999, p. 90). Jung propounds that myths are encrypted. Myths use symbols that are indirect and are a medium for conveying archetypes. His theory of archetypes states that almost identical images occur in myths across the world and the human psyche rests upon certain inherited motifs called archetypes. He calls archetypes ‘mythological motifs’ and ‘mythologems’ which are found within many myths. Archetypes are universal themes that appear irrespective of space, time, or person. So, myth is a symbolic demonstration of archetypes and every myth is replete with archetypes.

For Northrop Frye, mythology is the underlying structure present in a text. He differs from Jung on the concept of an archetype because for him it is a recurring pattern and he does not emphasize the collective unconscious. According to him, archetypes are symbols that occur repetitively in literature like that of a hero, mother and creator which symbolize universal human experience. According to Frye, the classic works go back to these archetypes, and this is what distinguishes a great work from an average one. The function of archetypal criticism is to identify these archetypes because they give a deeper meaning to the text. In his *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), Frye also defines ‘ideology’ as a ‘structure of social authority’ which imposes its version of traditional mythology. He states, “An ideology starts by providing its own version to form and enforce a social contract. An ideology is thus applied mythology, and its adaptation of myths are ones that, when we are inside an ideological structure, we must believe, or say we believe” (Dobson, 2005, p.3). Ideology lays trust in acceptable choices only while other perspectives are denounced as unacceptable. Frye believes in the supremacy of mythology over ideology because archetypal myth is the only constant while ideology dispels with time.

Roland Barthe, in *Mythologies* (1957), states that the purpose of a myth is to change history into nature. While ancients perceive myths as fables of gods and heroes, to Barthe myths are connected with the ideologies of that time. Myth is a potent tool that can inverse or transform ideologies to define a society. According to Barthe, myth transforms social and historical fundamentals into natural and universal truths. To him, myth is a comprehensive metaphor that helps to identify the self in culture.

Myths in India

“Myth functions as the self-image of a given culture, the medium through which its social assumptions are expressed” (Thapar, 1992, p.140). So, in India, religion and myths are interwoven as one fabric of society. The Hindu religion is a repository of stories and myths with a collection of stories as old as 3000 years. The major source of Hindu mythology comes from the Vedic texts, the earliest known

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document being the Rig Veda dating back to the 12th century BC. It consists of around 1000 hymns dedicated to gods. The myths are a part of epics like the Ramayan and the Mahabharata, the Puranas, and regional literature like Tamil Periya Puranam, Naalayira Divya Prabandham, Mangal Kavya of Bengal, Panchatantra, and Hitopadesha. Though the myths may not be factually correct, yet the Hindus do not segregate myths and ordinary experiences of life. In Hindu mythology, the gods and the demons dive into real-life experiences. The actual date of the compilation of myths is debatable because according to *Hindu Myths*, "...the myths do not have dates; since the Epics and Purāṇas represent an oral tradition that was constantly revised over a period of several thousand years..." (Doniger, 1975, p.12). The Hindu myths have several versions which stand in contradiction with one another and thus remain untied to a particular version. In Hindu culture, the significance of a myth lies in its ability to help an individual locate his identity within a culture or society. For someone outside the community, these myths remain untrue but for someone who is a part of the culture, myths bring him back to his roots.

Indian Myth to Mythic Fiction

In India, the myths of the past have found a new facade through Indian mythic fiction where the ancient myths are under an umbrella of a spectrum of studies that encompass even the unheard characters who remained muted in the ancient myths. Mythic fiction is literature that is rooted in the themes and symbols of ancient myths, legends or folklore but with a new interpretation. In contemporary times, myths are seldom accepted in their original form which was essentially governed by powerful monolithic hegemony of hierarchical structures and so they must be reinterpreted and modified to become acceptable to modern readers. In the twentieth century, several Indian writers used myths with the reinterpretation of ancient texts. In this period, the earliest writings that dwell upon mythology come from R. K. Narayan's *The Ramayana* (1972) and Irawati Karve's *Yuganta: The End of an Epoch* (1968). The tradition was later enriched by Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* (1989) along with the recent addition of *The Puffin Mahabharata* by Namita Gokhale in 2009. Works of Ashok K. Banker, Devdutt Pattanaik, Nilanjan P. Choudhuri, Anand Neelkantan, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Volga and Amish Tripathi evolve a new discourse in Indian mythic fiction. New styles and techniques are invented by these writers and ancient myths are used in modern times by relying upon history, philosophy, psychology and various other literary theories. André Lefevere in his essay, "Mother Courage's Cucumbers: Text, System and Refraction in a Theory of Literature", defines 'refraction' in literature which refers to the adaptation of an ancient text to suit the requisition of new readers and this alters the way the reader reads the text. Hence, mythic fiction is a refraction where the source text is altered and refracted to suit young Indian English readers. This in turn deconstructs the past and creates a new ideology. When studied in a contemporary real-life situation, mythic fiction demystifies the past through its modern and rational aspects. Once the ancient myths are demystified, the underlying conflict suspends on the surface of the narrative. Therefore, mythic fiction is a genre that is both traditional and modern. It is modern enough to break the orthodox ideology of the past and re-interpret the ancient texts to bring forth the hidden and muted agendas of the narrative.

Hence, mythic fiction reiterates the Derridean axiom that meaning is flexible. Mythic fiction 'deconstructs' to demolish hierarchical positions that bestow privilege to one over the other so as to bring a plurality of meaning. "The deconstruction of Derrida is to end the hegemony of the determined meaning" (Yegen & Abuken, 2014, p. 54). So, the deconstruction is not a destruction but a breaking of the chain of the hierarchy so that preconceived beliefs can break away leading to new knowledge. Similarly, mythic fiction also deconstructs the ancient myths so as to break free from the patriarchal discourse of

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the canonical texts. In India, the ancient myth of the Ramayan deals with the arduous journey of King Ram in search of his abducted wife Sita, and in this process, the character of Ram is eulogized while Sita is left in a limbo of oblivion. However, Indian mythic fictions like *The Forest of Enchantments* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, *Sita-Warrior of Mithila* by Amish Tripathi and *The Liberation of Sita* by Volga are contemporary works that dwell upon the feminist theory to deconstruct the ancient myth of the Ramayan so as to reconstruct a dissenting Sitayan that can manifest a feminist re-interpretation of mythical women.

Before moving further, let us first acquaint ourselves with the concept of feminism and its entwinement with Indian mythic fiction.

FEMINISM

Milestones in Feminism

The meaning of the word feminism can be formulated as a theory that struggles to assert that women must have the same, equal, social, economic and political rights and opportunities as men. However, the origin of the term cannot be traced through a single source as it is located in countless traditions. The earliest origin of the French word ‘féminisme’ and its derivatives are ambiguous. Charles Fourier, a utopian socialist and French philosopher was accredited with the term ‘féminisme’ in 1837.

The debates on women’s rights reached a climax in the first women’s rights convention held in July 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York with around 300 members. The first wave emphasized women’s enfranchisement and the provision of basic civil rights to women. Though the emphasis was laid on the educational and political rights of the upper class yet feminists failed to make a connection with the lower class. Mary Wollstonecraft’s *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* in 1792 is considered to be the first feminist text to unite the cry of middle-class women. She emphasized proper education and critical thinking as the major goals of the feminist agenda. She believed that only these two rights would help them to become sensible and spiritual. “Wollstonecraft rejects Rousseau’s idea that men and women think differently. In this, she establishes a central liberal feminist position: reason is the same in all persons. When women do reason differently or incorrectly; it is due to lack of training” (Donovan, 1996, p. 10).

Scholar Estelle Freedman compares first and second-wave feminism. “The first wave focused on rights such as suffrage, whereas the second wave was largely concerned with other issues of equality such as ending discrimination” (Freedman, 2003, p.464). The slogan ‘personal is political’ sums up the philosophy of second-wave feminism which demands an extension of feminism to better social and cultural opportunities and the right to reproduction and sexuality. An outburst of feminist theoretical writing was initiated with Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* (1949). Her work is a detailed study of women’s repression and is a fundamental area for the study of contemporary feminism. ‘One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman’ explains her focus on the social construct of woman as the ‘Other’.

In 1970, in Kate Millett’s *Sexual Politics*, “Sexuality becomes a tool through which stereotyping of the female - as prostitutes, virgin, unchaste women or sexual anorexic- achieve patriarchal domination” (Nayar, 2002, p.88). She argues that sex is not simply a biological act but has its political facet as well. Men take over women in bed and prolong to do so in all spheres of life. In 1970, feminist theoretical writing found a new spin with Germaine Greer’s *The Female Eunuch*. She states that the tradition represses women sexually to such a large degree that she becomes a castrated object and thus grows into

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a female eunuch. She purports that in reality men hate women but the women fail to realize this and in turn start hating themselves.

By the 1970s the term sisterhood remained an important feature of second-wave feminism as well. The concept negates any vertical or hierarchical power structures within the feminist movement and thus treats all women equally on a horizontal plane. Bell Hooks reinstates her faith in sisterhood by stating, “We are taught that women are ‘natural’ enemies, that solidarity will never exist between us because we cannot, should not and do not bond with one another. We have learned these lessons well. We must unlearn them if we are to build a sustained feminist movement. We must learn to live and work in solidarity. We must learn the true meaning and value of Sisterhood” (Hooks, 1986, p.127). So, sisterhood is a stepping stone to building a stronger female circle that encompasses all female experiences but the worth of a woman is evaluated in context to her bonding with men in her life. So, when a woman confides in another woman then it is considered a diminishing agent in a man-woman relationship. Thus, since childhood, a woman is taught that her greatest enemy is none other than her gender. Keeping this in mind, women must align together, eradicate differences and work for a common cause of feminism. Bell Hooks stresses that the bond of sisterhood makes women ‘enriched’. However, this bonding is due to shared experiences of victimization at the hands of patriarchy.

In 1975, Hélène Cixous, under the influence of the Deconstruction theory of Derrida, published her famous article “The Laugh of the Medusa” which was a critique of ‘logocentrism’ and ‘phallogocentrism’. She calls for an acknowledgement of ‘universal bisexuality’ and is well recognized for her concept of ‘écriture féminine’. This diversity between man-woman extends into an intellectual climate that leads the feminist arena from modernity to post-modernity.

Indian Feminism and the Rise of Mythic Fiction

In India, the women’s movement was a reaction against age-old conventions like child marriage, enforced widowhood, polygamy, the dowry system, sati, and the purdah system. In pre-independent India, the women’s feminist movement started as social reform. In the first period, between 1850 and 1915, the educated elite adopted the Western concept of liberty, equality, and fraternity into Indian culture. In the second phase of Indian feminism (1915-1947), Mahatma Gandhi integrated women into the Civil Disobedience Movement. He advocated women’s franchises. The production of salt was a symbolic gesture to connect politics with the kitchen. After the independence of India, Article 15(3) made special provisions for women along with upholding their right to vote and complete equality. Various other amendments were made to the Constitution. Years later, the first Indian feminist journal in 1978 under Madhu Kishwar and Ruth Vanita called *Manushi: A Journal about Women and Society* was established to give voice to women through literature. The first Indian feminist publishing house Kali for Women along with the Women’s Studies Centre voiced against patriarchal social structure at the grass root level. A major contribution to Indian feminism through literature is attributed to the works of Kamala Das, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Bharti Mukherjee, Kamala Markandya, Ruth Jhabwala, Nayan Tara Sehgal, and Arundhati Roy along with postcolonial theorists like Gayatri Spivak and Chandra Talpade Mohanty. Under the feminist influence, one of the most pronounced timeless epics of India, the Ramayan, is reinterpreted by contemporary mythic fiction writers. Devdutt Pattanaik, concerning Indian mythology, sees waves of transformation from the first phase of ‘commentaries’, to ‘retelling in regional languages’, to ‘translation by Europeans’, to ‘retranslation by Indians’, to present the fifth wave of ‘reframing’. Rather than seeing a singular authentic message one must appreciate the plurality of ideas in a postmodern

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world and revisit these texts in a sceptical and critical light. So, contemporary writers place Sita at the centre of their work because she was misunderstood and marginalized in canonical texts. Writers of mythic fiction make the ancient text more accessible and relatable to a modern reader by humanizing the characters that were otherwise deified or defiled in the canonical versions. Through their feminist stance, they put Sita at the heart of the story while trying to reinterpret the pluralities and potentials of a woman in a world that privileges men. Mythology has chiefly remained concentrated on patriarchy and women were muted, neglected spectators in the ancient versions. So, the writers celebrate womanhood and provide a logical road to explore the underlying emotions of contemporary women through Sita.

The study further highlights the feminist agendas hidden in select mythic fiction i.e. *The Forest of Enchantments* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, *Sita-Warrior of Mithila* by Amish Tripathi and *The Liberation of Sita* by Volga. So, Indian mythic fiction writers like Amish Tripathi, Chitra Banerjee and Volga re-invent the stereotypical image of Sita to suit the sensibilities of the modern world. We find that the texts under study are bildungsroman texts that mirror the character of Sita from a feminist perspective and through such texts one can find a voice for other subaltern female characters as well. So, let us first try to decipher the term subaltern because it is pertinent for a better comprehension of the topic under study.

Subaltern in India

The term was first adopted by an Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci, to refer to a class that has no voice in the power structure. He borrowed the term from an army rank and applied it to the peasants. Such people struggle for representation against hegemonic rule. However, this leads to the creation of two categories; the marginalized and the subaltern. Marginalized is that group (women) who are required to speak the language of their oppressor (patriarchy). But in this process, she withholds her voice as an act of resistance and does not speak. So, her silence is her vengeance. The Subaltern, on the other hand, is not allowed to speak at all but in retaliation, she attempts to speak but remains unheard.

In India, the concept of subaltern shot to prominence with Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1985). According to Spivak, the female is the subaltern whose voice 'cannot be heard or read'. Also, Gayatri Spivak genders the subaltern and creates a new space for the gendered subaltern. Her subaltern is a woman but she is a double subaltern due to her gender and her position in society. Gayatri Spivak refers to a subaltern as that who is away from the centre, in the periphery and is unheard and muted.

Taking a cue from Spivak, Indian mythic fiction writers decide to give voice to the subaltern so that she can speak. They believe that the act of 'spoken to' or 'spoken with' will not suffice the desire of voicing the voiceless. So, there is a need for the subaltern to speak for themselves.

DECONSTRUCTING SITA AND HER SISTERS THROUGH MYTHIC FICTION

The Forest of the Enchantments

In *On Hinduism*, "The female sex... has never found favour with any of the world's religions, or with their priests and prophets" (Doniger, 2013, p. 259). This brings an idea to the forefront that no woman character has found a voice in any Indian mythological texts ever. This brings in a need to deconstruct the character of mythical women, especially Sita. Chitra Banerjee tries to do so through *The Forest of Enchantments* which transports Sita into a world that is an inverted version of Ayodhya. The patriarchal

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dictates of Ayodhya no longer govern the forest. The Panchbati forest refers not only to a geographical zone but also to a time zone where Sita can seek her yearnings without barricading her spirit. This forest is full of wild charms which attract the nature-loving Child, Sita. The forest creates a non-aligned space where gender dichotomies do not exist. Sita feels happiest in the forest of Panchbati because the forest gives her freedom; freedom to be in unison with nature and freedom of plurality and possibilities. The forest with its bewitching unspoiled beauty, with its golden deer, with a desire for childbearing, with starvation for female companionship, all represent the hidden fancies of Sita. Thus, the forest of enchantments denotes the deep recesses of a woman's heart that are inaccessible to the outside world. It is that place where all gender-related attributes, desires, fancies, and fallacies fade away to create a neuter zone where emotions are not prefixed to gender but are aligned with a human heart. This finds resonance with post-feminism where deep recesses of the heart are explored, unlike the unexplored woman's heart in canonical texts.

During the banishment days at Panchbati, Sita has eyes for a golden deer. According to ancient versions of the Ramayan, the golden-spotted deer is a representation of Maya. It refers to distractions that Sita indulges in and repents of later. It symbolizes the natural human affinity for the glitter of the world. Sita asked for the deer against the wishes of her husband and this was a reason enough for her to get punished. So, in the classical versions of the Ramayan, the demand for the deer against patriarchal consent leads to female victimization. However, according to some regional versions of the Ramayan, Sita has no avarice for the golden charms. In one of the Bengali versions, Sita wants to keep the deer as her pet. This highlights the benevolent nature of Sita and her proximity to nature making her an ecofeminist.

In *The Forest of Enchantments*, the deer is portrayed as a soft and gentle spirit of the woods for Sita and ironically, Ram doubts this deer because a women's proximity to nature is not shared by a man. The deer is bereft of any fear in the serene forest around just like Sita who also finds the forest of Panchbati a place of natural enchantments because Sita as an ecofeminist, she examines a connection between women and nature. However, these enchantments of the forest for Sita are viewed as distractions by the patriarchal world as Ram is sceptical of the deer in the same way he is unsure of Sita. This event finds repercussions when Ram calls for Agni pariksha of Sita so that she can prove her chastity.

Also, for Sita, this deer in the forest arouses a plethora of motherly passions which were latent till Sita says, "My need for the deer grew like an ache, an addiction. It merged with my hunger for a baby" (Divakaruni, 2019, p.156). The ache of loneliness and desire to cuddle a baby are ignited at the sight of the golden deer. This desire was still hidden from Ram who is oblivious to such female longings. The deer in a way is trying to remind Sita that her biological clock is ticking away and her seeds of fertility are quickly degenerating. It is nature, in the form of deer, reminding Sita of her biological obligations. Sita chooses to identify her inner hunger through the deer irrespective of the fact that the forest may not be a very comfortable place to procreate. Since Ram is not ready for procreation in the forest, he is not enchanted by the deer. "You don't understand! I cried. How could he? He wasn't a woman. Time didn't press on him as heavily. His body wasn't made to harbor another life" (141). Nancy Chodorow, a psychoanalytic feminist, in *The Reproduction of Mothering* (1978) states that the maternal instincts in a woman are shaped by her relationship with her mother. Because of the biological familiarity between the daughter and mother, the daughter is subtly trained to assume the role of a mother in the future. Hence, it is natural for Sita to long for motherhood. "Heterosexual women seek men to fulfill their desire for physical and emotional union. Because men cannot satisfy women's emotional needs, women turn to children to recreate the emotional triangle they once experienced as children themselves" (Segura &

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Pierce, 1993, p. 68). So, in the absence of any emotional bond with Ram at Panchbati, Sita longs for a child; a child whom she foresees in a deer.

Due to cultural differences and childhood experiences, a man circumvents the obligations of a relationship and remains inadequate to fulfill the emotional and psychological needs of a woman. One can see that Ram ignores the emotional upsurge within Sita. Also, Sita is a child of nature, or in contemporary terms, an ecofeminist who understands the subtle hints that nature bestows on her through the deer but Ram fails to find a connection with nature and so cannot recognize the real meaning of the golden deer. This patriarchal apathy of Ram for both Sita and nature is explainable in mythic fiction through an ecofeminist theory because "For ecofeminists, the domination of women and nature is rooted in ideology. To overcome this, one needs to reconstruct and reconceptualize the underlying patriarchal values and structural relations of one's culture and promote equality, non-violence, non-hierarchical forms of organization to bring about new social forms" (Rao, 2012, p.126). The emotive aspect of Sita has remained buried for the past centuries. Readers were never let into the labyrinth of a woman's poignant heart but surely contemporary mythic fiction triumphs in doing so.

Sita - Warrior of Mithila

The cover page of the novel, *Sita: Warrior of Mithila*, displays a lean, well-built woman who is ready to attack when she is surrounded by several men. The woman is wearing no jewels except for a few beads, anklets and a dhoti which is very unlikely for a princess. Her alertness and dexterity are easily visible when she springs up in the air and with a lathi in hand is ready to batter her enemies. Her muscular build and braided hair augment her warrior persona, an image unseen in the ancient epic. Her unrevealed face leaves room for the readers to strongly see for themselves the things that they would like to cherish in her; a fighter, a princess, a wife or a woman? Therefore, the absence of the face relocates the focus of the reader from her physical appearance to the internal potency of the character, the ambience around her, and other belongings that shape her spirit. The faceless warrior seems to be defending Dharma like an avatar whose countenance remains concealed from the world till ripe time befalls.

Amish Tripathi uses the unconventional warrior image of Sita to symbolize feminist empowerment. With the advent of feminism even male writers, through the medium of mythic fiction, start to challenge the androcentric representation of women. Though an outsider to the woman's heart, male writers like Amish Tripathi try to break female stereotypes through the feminist character portrayal of Sita. Reading about a strong female character who has roots in the past surely generates a counter-narrative to the existing patriarchal discourse.

It is pertinent to understand why the warrior image of Sita is essential to the text. Sita, in her androgynous entity, tries to disclose something cloaked. This can be correlated with the concept of 'animus' as defined by Carl Jung. He purported that the human psyche is essentially androgynous where animus is the unconscious masculine side of a woman and anima is the unconscious feminine side of a man. In a woman, an overwhelmed or displaced animus exhibits loud, forceful and controlling behaviour. However, due to cultural, social, political or parental pressures, the animus remains suppressed. Carl Jung believed that bringing these repressed memories to the conscious can help positively define the personality. "The animus in fact is extremely important in the psychological development of women, enabling her to extend her consciousness, and through the capacity for objective, independent thought, allowing her to reclaim territories of her psyche previously unconscious and in the possession of extrinsic authority" (Baratharajan, 2020, pp. 234-35). So, in the text, the warrior strength of Sita is a symbol of her animus

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which helps in defining her character more conspicuously. She epitomizes an amalgamation of the conscious and the unconscious leading to a completely self-developed personality. She is physically strong, takes righteous decisions to save her kingdom, can influence her subjects through her oratory skills, and believes in the upliftment of her subjects irrespective of caste. This is reflective of the animus growth of Sita from physicality to spirituality. Therefore, the warrior traits of Sita are justifiable not only from a feminist but also from a psychological point of view which were unexploited in the ancient version.

In Indian culture, “Patriarchy was established via Brahmanization/Sanskritization, wherein most of the spiritual disciplines were ascetic and life-denying. It relegated the female to the position of a devotee. It used mythological weaponry and religious licence to transform culture and induce a societal and sexual shift away from the strong position that women had originally occupied” (Imhasly-Gandhy, 2009, p.71). Hence, this substantiates the matrilineal kinship of Sunaina with the subjects of her kingdom as depicted by Amish Tripathi in his book. Sunaina, the mother of Sita, was not only a compliant wife of Janak but also a controlling ruler and a strong influence on Sita. Sita derives her potency from her mother and thus she rises in the form of a feminist power in the novel who works beyond the realms of patriarchal dictates.

The rise of Sita as an able administrator of Mithila, especially after the death of her mother can be construed under the ideas of Nancy Chodorow, a psychoanalytic feminist. Nancy Chodorow, in her essay “Family Structure and Feminine Personality”, highlights the idea that in terms of socialization, mother-son relationship is referred to implicitly. In this context, she believes that a mother-daughter relationship remains withdrawn because the father plays an important role in contrast to a mother in the Freudian world. She critiques the Freudian concept of ‘penis envy’ and ‘castration complex’ as misogynist in nature because it makes men psychologically superior to women as a woman lacks a penis. Chodorow believes that a mother has a more important relationship with her daughter because she recognizes her daughter as herself based on gender. So, a mother is more likely to identify herself with a daughter than with her son. The mother does not consider her daughter as a separate entity but as ‘narcissist extensions’ of herself. Daughters become ‘physical vehicles for their mothers’ achievement of ‘auto erotic gratification’. This attachment to the mother shapes the psyche of a daughter who in turn wants to emulate her mother. “Women’s universal mothering role has effects both on the development of masculine and feminine personality and on the relative status of the sexes” (Chodorow, 2012, p.66). So, the masculine traits of Sita can also be identified with the mothering role of Sunaina. Sunaina, an efficient administrator, strategist and ruler, shaped the psyche of Sita so that she could emulate her footsteps. In the text, Sunaina is a stronger ruler in comparison to the complacent and philosophical Janak and thus her character is an inversion of the pacifist mother archetype. However, motherhood is a feminine experience and we tend to associate a pacifist and nurturing mother archetype as the only acceptable mode of the mother archetype. This is because maternal commitments do not get along with martial endeavors as a mother cannot aspire to be fierce or warrior-like according to social structures. But at times, when violence is the only solution to salvage her child or family from a crisis, the passive mother turns into a protector and an avenger. In “Challenging the Pacifist Mother Archetype” it is further explained as, “The warrior-mother in the role of instigator does not want to see her children butchered. Rather, she hopes that they will reveal their superior nature, conquer the children of lesser mothers, and claim the rewards of victory to which she has believed them entitled since birth” (French, 2001, p.60). So, one cannot deny the warrior-mother archetype because the intuitive instinct of a mother goes out to naturally protect her child. This warrior-mother archetype is exhibited through Sunaina because in the absence of an authoritative king when the kingdom is under threat from neighboring kingdoms, she steps out to save her child and her kingdom.

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Such mothers live through their children so that they can anticipate the success they once dreamt of. In such a matriarchal setup, “Finally, a daughter’s identification with her mother in this kind of setting is with that of a strong woman with clear control over important spheres of life, whose sense of self-esteem can reflect this. Acceptance of her gender identity involves positive valuation of herself, and not an admission of inferiority” (Chodorow, 2012, p. 63). So, Sita who grew up in a matriarchal setting rejects the frail feminine order and takes control of the situation just like her mother. She has no inferiority complex as she is nurtured by a strong mother. So, the mother-like qualities in Sita help her in stepping into the shoes of Sunaina. Hence, Sita is the future Sunaina of Mithila.

Indian mythic fiction writers like Amish Tripathi re-invent the stereotypical image of Sita to suit the sensibilities of the modern world. In the text, Sita is unconventionally foretold to be the next Vishnu, one of the Hindu trinity gods. So, she is assumed to be the next Vishnu avatar in human form because he is a blend of courage, intelligence, beauty, rationality and strength of character. “Sita will be the Vishnu. The Vishnu will rise during my reign. The time has come. This country needs a leader. We cannot allow our beloved India to suffer endlessly” (Tripathi, 2018, pp. 72-73). She is no less than the venerated image of Ram as well. So, Sita is set up as a forerunner for the title of Vishnuhood. Thus, the novel revolves around the attainment of this title where both Ram and Sita are juxtaposed as contenders for it. We find that the text is a bildungsroman text that mirrors the character of Sita. Amish Tripathi makes sure that the title of the text features the name Sita so that *Sita-Warrior of Mithila* reflects a novel of formation of the life of Sita. Hence, the writer convincingly represents Sita as a major character and a warrior to counter the canonical discourse of Indian women as weak, docile, timid and auxiliary characters of ancient epics.

The Liberation of Sita

The term sisterhood remains an important feature of the second wave of feminism and according to Morgan, it provides a sense of union and purpose by showcasing camaraderie among feminists. The bond between Sita and other female characters like Ahalya in *The Liberation of Sita*, makes them share an emotional bond of sakhi or sisterhood. The Western concept of sisterhood finds its mirror image in India in the Sakhi tradition. The word ‘Sakhi’ is derived from the Sanskrit word Sakshi which means a witness to an event. This relationship among sakhi solely rests on mutual respect and affection, unlike the hierarchical structures of love in a traditional man-woman marriage. Sakhi tradition is a vow of lifelong companionship devoid of any patriarchal standards of conduct. On amalgamation of the Western concept of sisterhood and the Indian concept of Sakhi tradition, we can deduce that women all around the globe are entwined through a common thread of sister love. The concept is utilized in Indian mythic fiction to let a woman speak her heart out to another woman. In the context of the retelling of the Ramayan, a feminist version may succeed in lending a voice to the chief character of Sita. But, if we value the comforts of elite woman Sita, and ignore the discomforts of subaltern women, then we fail in actuating the concept of sisterhood. So, inter-caste, inter-faith and inter-race solidarity is required at the end of the sisters to create an ideal feminist space. This bond was never unearthed in the ancient versions.

An all-comprehensive sisterhood is visible in the work, *The Liberation of Sita* by Volga. In *The Liberation of Sita*, Volga’s Sita dwells upon the centuries-long silence of Ahalya. All along the ancient versions of the Ramayan, Ahalya remains ‘unsaid’. But, according to Pierre Macherey, a French deconstructionist, it is the unsaid/silence/absence that shapes any piece of work. He says, “The speech of the book comes from a certain silence, a matter which it endows with form, a ground on which it traces a figure. Thus, the book is not self-sufficient; it is necessarily accompanied by a *certain absence*, without which

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it would not exist. A knowledge of the book must include a consideration of this absence” (Macherey, 2006, p. 95). Though silence has nothing to speak yet it informs us of the real significance. Silence is not a refusal to say but refers to what cannot be said. So, the silence/absence/unsaid is the real essence of a text. It is the onus of the readers/critics to decipher this silence. This new interpretation leads to new interrogation because now the attention gets diverted from speech to silence.

This is where Volga's Sita enters as an enquiring, inquisitive critic of ancient text as she dwells upon the silence of the Ahalya through their bond of feminist sisterhood. She agrees with Macherey that “Speech eventually has nothing more to tell us: we investigate the silence, for it is the silence that is doing the speaking” (96). Volga's Sita poses a labyrinth of questions that are proposed due to the deafening silence of Ahalya. It is through this silence that the unconscious mind of Ahalya is revealed. Sita reads the silence of Ahalya as a struggle against a dominant ideology. Ahalya provokes Sita to think when she says, “Aren't many women in this world wrongly accused, Sita?” (Volga, 2016, p.25). Ahalya further explains that a woman is under inquisition because a man considers her his property

Feeling a strange, affectionate bond of sisterhood Ahalya feels surprised at her willingness to confess her silenced thoughts to Sita. Ahalya admits that her silence was a response to the distrust that Sage Gautama showed when he enquired about the truth and untruth of Ahalya's guilt. An act of enquiry itself is the first step to distrusting a wife. She confided that she remained silent because if she argued for her innocence then people would have pity on her. She believed that no one, including sage Gautama, has the authority to judge her. She says, “Society gave him that authority. I didn't. Till I give it, no one can have that authority over me” (Volga, 2016, p. 28).

In the canonical texts, the silence of Ahalya is assumed to be a sign of innocence and very conveniently, no one asks Ahalya any questions because her virtuous image suits the working of an androcentric society. This image made it easier for Ram to forgive a guiltless person rather than liberate someone who was truly guilty. Had Ahalya been guilty of agreeing to consensual sex, would it have been easier for Rama to liberate the wretched soul? But conveniently no one asked Ahalya these questions and her silence was never deciphered.

Another character Surpanakha, a deformed creature (as per social construct) has a heart that understands form or beauty. So, Surpanakha has a hideous facade but a tender heart that found peace in nature. Sita, daughter of mother earth, immediately finds a connection with nature-loving Surpanakha. The connection also extends to the point that both women were rejected by the same man, the love of their life. After the rejection of Surpanakha by Ram and her defacement at the hands of Lakshmana, she became a stormy sea of grief. But she understood the real meaning of beauty. To understand the unison between form (beauty) and formlessness (hideousness), Surpanakha took shelter in nature. Nature in turn healed her and made her realize the true meaning of beauty. A beauty that is not extrinsic, but intrinsic.

Beauty and hideousness play an important role under social standards and these social standards are in turn governed by religion. Religion governs life, marriage and death because people need it as their guiding light. In the Hindu religion, a Brahmin holds the supreme authority to legislate and interfere with the lives of common men. Control over marriage/sex means control over lineage or human species and in turn control over politics, power and culture. So, marriage is regulated by arguments of Brahmins who lay down certain codes to be followed to lead a blissful life ahead. It is here that the concept of beauty is predominantly highlighted in *The Laws of Manu* or *Manav Dharmashastra*. Wendy Doniger quotes Manu to represent how irrational standards of beauty of a woman were essential requirements for a happy marriage. Wendy in *On Hinduism* quotes: “...A man should not marry a girl who is a redhead or has an extra limb or is sickly or has no body hair or too much body hair or talks too much or is sallow; or who

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is named after a constellation, a tree, a river, or who has a low-caste name, or is named after a mountain, a bird, a snake, or has a menial or frightening name. He should marry a woman who does not lack any part of her body and who has a pleasant name, who walks like a goose or an elephant, whose body hair or hair on the head is fine, whose teeth are not big and who has delicate limbs” (Doniger, 2013, p. 262-63)

So, as per social standards of patriarchy, a man finds external beauty desirable and a woman is expected to be beautiful for a marital alliance with a man. Surpanakha who neither has a pleasant name nor looks is categorized as unfit for a marital alliance with Ram in the ancient Ramayan. In canonical epics, external beauty remains an important criterion for character evaluation as well. Beauty also becomes a vehicle to control the sexuality of a woman and hence a mode of justification of violence against her as in the case of the disfigurement of Surpanakha. A man’s authority over a woman is legitimized by Manu when he says, “A girl, a young woman, or even an old woman, should not do anything independently, even in her own house. In childhood a woman should be under her father’s control, in youth under her husband’s, and when her husband is dead, under her son’s. She should not have independence” (Doniger, 2013, p.260). So, when Surpanakha wandered in the forest without any male escort and she is not reticent about her sexual desires for Ram, there were reasons enough to carry out violence against her.

Ram, on the other hand, seemed to be appalled by the grotesque figure of Surpanakha who is repulsive to Ram because for him the standard of beauty is epitomized by Sita. For Ram, the beauty of Sita is beyond this world, flawless, and far ahead of the beauty of the moon. His idealized notion of beauty is exhibited when he considers it an insult to Sita to compare her beauty with that of the moon. Surely, Ram too reiterates the ideas of feminine beauty as standardised by Manu.

However, Volga shifts the focus from external beauty to internal one. The garden of beauty within Surpanakha was never witnessed before in the ancient texts but under the light of feminist sisterhood, Sita becomes a vehicle to identify the intrinsic beauty of Surpanakha. This in turn helps Sita to comprehend her own life as well. She realizes that she too is born of mother earth and shall find ultimate peace within the same earth. So, she decides to take ultimate refuge in mother earth (nature) when she says, “I will certainly come Surpanakha. After my children leave me and go to the city, I will become the daughter of Mother Earth. Resting under these cool trees, I shall create a new meaning for my life” (Volga, 2016, p. 15).

This resolution of self-discovery brought serenity to Surpanakha and the same brings peace to Sita when she identifies herself as identical to Surpanakha. Both of them are children of nature, share a common love for beauty, and equally bear the pain of male rejection. This common bond of experience brings the two together to explore sisterhood and hence understand the real meaning of life. They are set up as rivals under societal norms but, at heart, both are sisters to one another.

The beheading of Renuka, another subaltern character of the Ramayan, represents cutting off the ego and robbing one of a position. In the case of women, to deprive the body of the mind that can dwell upon the untrodden path of female fantasy. Mythology has devoted a lot of attention to women’s reproductive organs, from breasts to the womb and to the vagina. But, the head of a woman also carries a significant cultural and religious meaning though it has never been in the spotlight of narratives. The head is a body part that threatens to voice against the patriarchal power. “If the head is typically thought of as masculine, then what is to be made of female head? Our contention is that the objectification of woman as a sexual body necessarily requires coming to terms with the presence of her head” (Eilberg-Schwartz, 1995, p.1). Sexualizing a female face is a greater injury to a woman than beheading her. Depriving a woman of her head is denying her of her identity and voice and what is left behind is a mere reproductive body. For Wendy Doniger, beheading is a symbol of the “dehumanizing of women”. The act of beheading not only

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blinds the beheaded person but also represents blindness on the part of the beheader. “The mythologically beheaded woman is seen (or at least partially seen) but does not see; she is blinded and those who have beheaded her are blind to her true nature” (Doniger, 1995, p.15). Wendy Doniger believes that beheading is hardly a fatal act because the head is soon restored but the act of restoring the head erases the ‘memory of sexual vision’. This is what happens in the case of Renuka when she gets back her head, but it maybe not the same head again. This is a new transformation in her life.

However, the transformed Renuka strikes a chord with Sita when they meet first in the forest and Sita was dumbfounded to see the wealth of sculptures in Renuka’s ashram. Renuka finds a new focus in her life by creating earthen sculptures and propagating the art to other tribal women of the forest. She says, “I teach my skill to people of different tribes in this forest and give them the essence of my experience” (Volga, 2016, p.53). Now, for Renuka, the art of creation is not bound in the chains of marriage. For her, nature is the best teacher and she gives back her knowledge to nature. She learns to find life beyond conjugal obligations. This is a lesson for Sita indeed where she too learns to be one with nature. This inspires Sita to teach kshatriya skills of archery to her sons Lava and Kusa. Sita learns to focus her energy on a new skill which she possessed but never identified within her. Like Renuka, Sita too is a victim of mistrust and humiliation at the hands of her husband. Both have a similar story to narrate.

Sita realizes that she can learn from the experiences of Renuka, Ahalya and Surpanakha because suffering is universal. This camaraderie gives strength to Sita to withstand the dharma-bound cruelty of the patriarchy. Sita’s act of self-realisation occurs when she learns the art to focus on herself just like her subaltern sisters. However, in *The Liberation of Sita*, one finds that it is Sita who lends her ears to the silenced ones so as to voice the voiceless. A common bond of sisterhood not only liberates Ahalya, Surpanakha and Renuka but also leads to the self-realisation and liberation of Sita.

CONCLUSION

Mythology is a constant reminder that tells us about our roots and culture. Mythology is a treasure and a fountainhead of knowledge that inspires writers to retell myths to suit modern contexts through the medium of mythic fiction. It demystifies myths and mythology and humanizes ancient avatars. The importance of this study lies in the fact that it reveals to us new facets of our culture through feminist re-interpretation of our ancient muted women. So, mythic fiction facilitates us to analyze our ancient texts in the modern light of feminist studies and subaltern studies. Modern-day mythic fiction is an attempt to take a reader back to the roots but with a newer interpretation of texts, language, and messages. Today, Indian mythic fiction is emerging as a great literary force to understand culture.

Contemporary readers and writers have shown a keen interest in mythology because it is one of the instruments for transporting them to their cultural roots. Through Indian mythic fiction, a new world of mythology has been explored by deconstructing the old times. The yore myths have been readjusted to present-day life so that readers do not feel alienated in the world of magic. In present times, this genre has become an effective source of vocalizing the unknown voices of the past. The lesser-known characters have been construed so that they no longer remain a subaltern. Especially, aphonic female characters of the canonical texts have become phonic protagonists in the contemporary mythical world. Through the medium of Indian mythic fiction, Sita and her subaltern sisters show solidarity in bringing forth the feminist version of traditional text. The texts revisits Sita and other female characters, reopening a debate on their lives, and offering fresh interpretations of these enigmatic figures because they still impact our

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everyday life. Hence, Sita and her sisters, with all their idiosyncrasies, get a space where they can be discussed as a woman and as a human. The female and subaltern unheard images are studied under a new lens of feminist and subaltern studies.

Through this study, it can be stated that though mythic fiction is deeply rooted in myths, social customs, and culture of India, yet they shake the very foundation of every prototype as planted by ancient ideologies. Through the deconstructive reading of the texts, it is observed that heroines transform into new figures that women aspire to be. The postmodern Feminist theory along with the Deconstruction theory rejects essentialism and universal truths but embraces differences and individual experiences. In the present times, Feminism refers to the emphasis on an individual woman's inner freedom. It has also been characterized as a break from a previous range of oppressive relations. The use of such theories tries to place the human aspects of those characters that were unheard of in the ancient mythological text.

Keeping this in view, one can conclude that in the wake of gender analysis, the language, representations, and actions were inherently gendered in canonical texts. This led to the inevitable silencing and pacification of females since time immemorial. Through modern Indian mythic fiction, a newfound voice of women has taken the centre stage. The feminist perspective in writings can have a radical impact on today's world by giving voice to the voiceless. Feminist writers of modern times have redefined the status of ancient women. They have portrayed women as liberated and bold souls. Today's readers are given the gift of a novel, a multifarious and alternative interpretation of epics that surely will try to acknowledge many stifled voices. The genre of modern Indian mythic fiction brings a new meaning to the old blessing. Indian mythic fiction comes to salvage the image of Indian women by drawing its strength from mythology and reinventing the archetypes under the lens of feminism. Modern mythic fiction creates a world where gender equality is no more a myth but takes the shape of reality.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Ahalya: Ahalya, the wife of Sage Gautam, was enticed by Lord Indra, disguised as her husband and on being caught in the act of intimacy Ahalya was cursed by her elderly husband to turn into a rock. Bearing the sun, rain and wind, her only salvation lies when Rama would touch her with his feet. Canonical texts stress the punishment inflicted on her for her infidelity but Volga tries to reason out her stone-like silence.

Avatar: The word's literal meaning is descent or to make one's appearance. In Hinduism, the concept of an avatar refers to an incarnation of a deity in human or animal form to annihilate evil from the world. It stands for new incarnations, embodiments of the archetype often in association with Lord Vishnu. Ram is considered to be one of the avatars of Vishnu. However, Amish Tripathi uses the term to signify Sita to deviate from the traditional telling of Ramayan.

Ecofeminism: In 1974, French feminist Francoise d' Eaubonne minted the term 'ecoféminisme' where she called upon women to lead an ecological revolution to save the planet. Ecofeminism is a movement that employs feminist principles to ecological issues. Ecofeminism is a social awakening of women to uphold a war against a patriarchal society that is causing injury to them and the environment. Ecofeminists examine a close connection between women and nature.

Ramayan: The Hindu epic Ramayan, meaning the journey of Lord Ram, composed around 2CBC to 2AD by Sage Valmiki, is a legend of Lord Ram of Ayodhya. He was banished from Ayodhya along with Sita and Lakshman for fourteen years at the behest of his stepmother Kaikeyi. As a dutiful son, he spent his banishment days at Panchbati where Sita remains just a shadow to her Lord throughout his adventures outside Ayodhya.

Renuka: Renuka was the wife of the famous sage Jamdagini and the mother of Parshurama. Once while returning from a bath, carrying a pot of unbaked pot, she saw king Citraratha sporting in water with his wife. This turned on in her a fleeting desire for the sport as well and just then the pot broke soaking her. Her soaked body symbolizes her erotic wetness. On returning home, sage Jamdagini noticed her wet condition and concluded that she had committed a sin and hence was adulterous. So, he ordered his son Parshurama to behead his wife for the mere act of looking at a man making love to his wife. However, Volga tries to unearth the reason for decapitation.

Sakhi Tradition: The word Sakhi is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Sakshi' which means a witness to an event. In Indian mythology, sakhi is an important accomplice to the heroine. Sakhi can be a female friend, a companion, a devotee or a sister. The dedication of a sakhi is epitomized through the dedicated love of gopi's for Lord Krishna. In Hindu mythology, the sakhi tradition is a representation of selfless love. Particularly famous in Benaras, the sakhi tradition represents a woman-woman emotional bond marking a seal of the authority of a woman in a relationship unlike any of her other familial bonds.

Sita: In the nineteenth century, Raja Ravi Varma's paintings greatly impacted the masses regarding the depiction of Hindu gods and deities. Through his canvas, he was successful in creating a prototype of an Indian goddess like Sita who is docile, obedient and in despair to be rescued. Also, Amar Chitra Katha founded in 1967, a graphic narrative series of Indian epics and myths, propagated an image of

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Sita as one having fair skin, long hair and a sari-clad woman. Amish Tripathi on the other hand paints a warrior-like fearless image of Sita.

Subaltern: The term was coined by Antonio Gramsci, notably through his work on cultural hegemony. The concept identifies the groups that are excluded from a society's established institutions and thus denied a right to raise their voice in their society. In India, the concept shot to prominence with Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?". She is of the view that patriarchy creates subaltern women whose voices "cannot be heard or read". The concept is utilized in mythic fiction to voice the aphonic female characters of Indian myths.

Surpanakha: Surpanakha was the fourth child of Asur king Vishravas and queen Kaikesi of Lanka. She was the youngest of four siblings and Ravan, Kumbhakaran and Vibhishan were her elder brothers. Being a girl child, she was the unwanted one in the family, and because of her dark colour and repulsive looks, she was given a hideous name. Surpanakha means one having nails spread like sieves or one that is as hard as nails. Volga and Chitra Banerjee find beauty in her ugliness.

Chapter 8

Philosophical Analysis of Verbal and Non-Verbal Communications in Yoruba Ethical Culture

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ABSTRACT

The Yoruba people of Southern Nigeria are often believed to place much value on ethical cultural norms. It is observed that they do not depend only on the use of verbal communication in passing moral messages. As a matter of fact, it is averred that a Yoruba parent could make a child cry for doing wrong without necessarily saying a word or holding a cane. This shows the use of non-verbal communication in the passage of moral values among the Yoruba people. Detaching the culture of the communicator from the communication seems implausible. Communication, culture, and morality are tripartite that are inseparably interwoven. This explains why the individual culture influences the way one communicates, either verbally or non-verbally. The crux of this chapter is to philosophically analyze verbal and non-verbal communications as the means of passing ethical values among the Yoruba. The methodology the chapter intends to employ shall be analytical. Juxtaposition will be made in the understanding of verbal and non-verbal communications in the passage of morals among the Yoruba people.

INTRODUCTION

Human culture would have remained in perpetual stagnation if there are no people to flame it to life. In other words, the role human beings play in the expansion of culture cannot be over-emphasized. Through communication, culture is passed from one generation to another and the values inherent in every culture are kept alive (Oloidi & Oke, 2021). People serve as the playmakers in the necessary intertwining between culture and communication. Without communication, it would have been somewhat impossible to transmit cultural values to an unborn generation. This communication could either be verbal or non-verbal.

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As a matter of fact, it is averred that a Yoruba parent could make a child cry for doing wrong without necessarily saying a word or holding a cane. This shows the importance of non-verbal communication in the passage of moral values among the Yoruba people. The primacy of communication as the means of inculcating ethical values cannot be overemphasized. Detaching the culture of the communicator from the communication seems implausible.

In Nigeria, hardly would you see any ethnic group that is not grounded in cultural nuances. The Yoruba ethnic group which happens to be one of the three major ethnic groups is the concern of this paper. The population of Nigeria is estimated to be around 200 million and the Yoruba people constitute over 40 million, which is about 35 percent of the whole population. These people are located in Ogun, Ondo, Ekiti, Lagos, Oyo, Kwara and Osun states. Some of them are sparsely found in Edo and Kogi States (Come To Nigeria, 2023). Nigeria as a whole is made up of different tribes and cultures that are often in consonant and at times, at loggerheads with one another. This is epitomized in the incessant crises that are hinged on cultural affiliation tainted with religious colouration. Nigeria is the most populous black nation in Africa with over 250 different ethnic groups. It is reported that the most populous and politically influential are the Hausa-Fulani being 29%; Yoruba 21%; Igbo 18%; Ijaw 10%; Kanuri 4%; Ibibio 3.5% and Tiv 2.5%. It has over 500 languages with English being the official language (Keizersgracht, 2022).

It is reported that the Yoruba are the most urbanized Africans of pre-colonial times based on the numerous kingdoms of various sizes, each of which was centred on the capital city or town and ruled by a hereditary king or *oba*. Oyo developed into the largest of the Yoruba kingdoms in the 17th century and Ile-Ife remained a town of religious magnitude. With the invasions by the Fon of Dahomey (the present-day Benin Republic) and the Muslim Fulanis, the Yoruba kingdom declined and lost some political powers. With the obvious fact that many Yoruba people are now either Christians or Muslims, the aspects of their traditional religion survive. This religion has a hierarchy of deities, including a supreme creator and some 400 lesser gods and spirits (Gorlinski, 2022).

ETHICS, MORALITY AND CULTURE

Ethics as a subject matter cuts across all spheres of life with an immense amount of divergent opinions. It has been observed that it is somewhat difficult to separate ethics from morality which makes scholars use the two words interchangeably. In every human society, there is the need to distinguish right conduct from bad one as a means of fostering harmony. When this is not put into consideration, there is a tendency for such a society to be chaotic and disharmonious. Man can only be conscious of a right or wrong action if the principles, norms and values that guide human behavior have been internalized. From the foregoing, we can say that morality is concerned with human behavior, in terms of the rightness and wrongness of human actions. As Oladipo would say, morality is necessarily tied to human behaviour or conduct because if this was not the case, there would be no need for praising or blaming people for their actions or training them to behave in certain desirable ways in society (Oyeshile, 2007, p. 84). Morality therefore, has to do with some sort of standards that can guide human action.

Confronted with the trend of using ethics and morality interchangeably, there is the need to note that there is a difference between them. Without undermining the fact that the two concepts are distinct, using them independently could be somewhat difficult. It is worthy of note to say that ethics is the umbrella that gives shelter to morality. This accounts for the reason why ethics is often referred to as moral philosophy. It is the branch of philosophy that studies the principles of morality. Popkins and Stroll define

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ethics as “a code or set of principles that men live with” (Popkin & Stroll, 1969, p.1). With this definition, we can assume that ethics could only have existed when people began to reflect on the best way to live. This explains why the ‘state of nature’ in the social contract theory was chaotic and disharmonious due to the lack of ethical standards. Morality makes man different from other animals and it is universal to humanity irrespective of the location or the kind of life they live. The thought of excluding Africans from morality would be tantamount to denying the universality of morality. Little wonder Goodman places serious significance on African ethics when he defines it as “the conceptualization, appropriation, contextualization and analysis of African values within the African cultural experience (Aden & Kebede, 2017, pp. 57-64).” Wiredu on the other hand considers African ethics as the observance of rules for the harmonious adjustment of the interest of the individual to those of others in society. It covers the entire range of human behavior that has evolved in our relationship with oneself, other person and with other world as well (Wiredu, 1998, p. 423).

There is no gain-saying the fact that the bedrock of morality is the societal traditions and cultures. This conforms to the stance of Kwasi Wiredu that morality is founded on culture. If there is moral decadence in society, the society which is the seat of culture cannot be excused. This is the reason culture is often conceived as a way of life. As Abimbola would say, the Yoruba believe that without morality or morally good persons (that we referred to as *Omoluabi*) “the world will be a very difficult place to live in” due to vices of different sorts and disorderliness (Abimbola, 1975, p. 401). A good number of scholars aver that the laws, norms, customs and set forms of behaviour constituting the moral codes and ethics of a given community are held sacred and are believed to have been instituted by God. The likes of Bolaji Idowu opined that ethics in African thought comes from and is the fruit of religion. In his words:

Ethical codes which are sometimes expressed in proverbs and wise sayings emanated as a product of events which are enshrined in African myths. For the bona fide Yoruba, it is not possible to separate morality from religion without witnessing the disastrous consequences. (Irele & Jeyifo, 2010, p. 351)

The positions of Bolaji Idowu and others such as Dopamu and Awolalu (1979) are in contradistinctions to the claim of some scholars who posited that society is the seat of morality. These scholars are of the view that African moral systems have cultural bases. It would not be out of place to note that this paper does not have the intention of contributing to the controversy, either in terms of defense or rebutting any of the proposed foundations of African moral system but to testify to its existence regardless of its religious or cultural foundation. Little wonder the Yoruba people would succinctly agree with Oluwatosin and Olukayode that without a moral and legal check, man is but a beast (Oluwatosin & Olukayode, 2020). These checks make man to rise above the level of amoral behavior to attain the standard acceptable in the society. The Yoruba ethical culture gives room for the moral check to be either verbal or non-verbal. Since every Yoruba child is believed not to be isolated from the community and his development and growth cannot be devoid of the community. This implies that man is not created to be alone. If the foundation of morality is traceable to culture, how then can we delineate this culture?

Regardless of tribal or ethnic affiliation, no individual can be said to be without a culture. Culture sets us apart and differentiates us from one another. It is a general belief and thought of a group of people. Obafemi sees culture as the instruments of a group of people that could be material or immaterial. It is reflected in the knowledge they gather through their life experiences for years (Aladesanmi & Ogunjimi, 2019, pp. 569-589). Ishola on his part divides culture into two: the tangible culture which can be seen and touched; and the intangible culture which can only be felt. In his words, the tangible cultures

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are the ones handed down by the forefathers through oral means in form of traditions such as proverbs, legends, myths and other forms of oral performances. The intangible cultures are gradually going into extinction due to the little or no attention they receive. Examples of such are taboos, greeting forms and moral teachings. Therefore, this set of intangible cultures deserves to be protected from going into extinction (Isola, 2010).

In African societies, the culture extols the virtues of the community, and moral obligations are primarily social rather than individual. Each person is a representative of himself or herself as well as the family. It means that the individual needs to consider how a course of action would affect not only him but his family as well, either directly or in terms of the way they would be perceived in society. Morality therefore, being a personal thing is only partially true in the African setting (Bewaji, 2004, p. 196). There is the temptation to say that morality being primarily social stems from the communalistic tradition of the African people where it is somewhat impossible for an African individual to separate himself from his community. An individual cherishes the aged-long tradition of preserving the supposed good name of the family and would consciously make the effort not to rub such name in the mud. Should any member of the family dares to upturn this belief, then it is easy for other members to dissociate themselves from him. Every parent would ensure that his child is well-trained so as not to rub the name of the family in the mud relating with others especially the elderly ones. This is in line with the words of Samuel Ali that “man is by nature a social, political and communitarian person” (Ali, 1997).

VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

Before delving into the two aspects of communication this paper intends to examine in the analysis of the Yoruba ethical culture, it is pertinent to consider the meaning of communication. The word communication has its etymology in the Latin word *communicare* which means “to share.” Communication can therefore be seen as the “conveyance of different forms of information through the exchange of ideas or messages. It is the meaningful exchange of information between two or more communicators (De Valenzuela, 1992). Every communication is often three-pronged; the sender, the message and the receiver. The sender serves as the harbinger from which the message emanates before being directed to the receiver. A proper understanding of what communication is would lead us to the two modes of communication which are the verbal and non-verbal. Verbal and non-verbal communications can be taken to be aiming towards the same purpose but slightly different approaches. In both media of communication, words, either said or unsaid, are used as a means of communication. Linking the use of words to verbal communication does not seem to draw much attention as it would with non-verbal. As it were, the projection of words through oral means would necessarily meet the ears but the interpretation of such words perceived may differ depending on the background and mindset of the listener. Verbal communication can easily be assessed on the verbosity and eloquence of the speaker but it must be noted that the interpretation of the message intended to be passed across might be differently interpreted and understood. Can we completely expunge verbal communication from non-verbal? In attempting an answer to this question, Ong takes us on the use of words when he avers that:

Words acquire their meanings only from their always insistent actual habitat, which is not, as in a dictionary, simply other words, but includes also gestures, vocal reflections, facial expressions, and the entire human existential setting in which the real, spoken words always occur. (Ong, 1982, p. 47)

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Consciously or unconsciously, for every verbal communication we make, there are incursions of non-verbal gestures to corroborate and substantiate our points. It has been argued that visual means is the best mode of learning and acquiring new knowledge. In every communication, regardless of the eloquence of the speaker, what most of the listeners can boastfully refer to are the gestures, facial expressions and eye contact of the presenter as a means of recalling the message passed unto them. Little wonder that communication scholars such as Novinger estimated that some two-thirds to three-fourths of our communication take place non-verbally through behaviours (Novinger, 2008). This is in line with the study undertaken by Birdswhistell who resolved that 65 percent of our interpersonal communication is done non-verbally (Agwuele, 2008). It has been suggested by Eisenberg & Smith that the human body is capable of over 270,000 discrete gestures. This range of variation may be greater than the range of possible human speech sounds (Eisenberg & Smith, 1979, p. 78). This is a pointer to the significance and the long-lasting impressions gestures could make in the communicative processes.

However, it must be noted that non-verbal communication deals with the process of transmitting meaning in the form of non-word messages. As Sannie would say, it involves the use of chronemics, postures, physical appearance, facial expression, symbols, eye contact etc. (Sannie, 2000). A critical look at the assertion of Sannie in the description of nonverbal communication, we would realize that none of the terms employed tends towards the oral expressions in communication. This is a vivid juxtaposition and an attestation to the fact that communication could both be verbal and nonverbal. It would have been difficult to develop human culture without communication, which is the medium through which our culture is transmitted from one generation to another.

THE YORUBA VERBAL (OMO ORO) AND NON-VERBAL (OMO OJU) ETHICAL ANALYSIS

Before delving into the verbal and non-verbal moral system of the Yoruba of South-Western Nigeria, it is pertinent to consider their ethical perspectives in general. In African language, unlike the western counterparts, it will be difficult to pinpoint a particular concept that translates into the word 'ethics.' The closest word that one easily finds as a direct translation to ethics in Yoruba language is *iwa* (character). Two types of *iwa* have been identified within the Yoruba moral context: *iwa rere* (good/positive character) and *iwa buburu/iwa buruku/iwa ibaje* (bad or negative character). Without making any recourse to these two divisions, *iwa* is sometimes used to mean good character. Thus, the Yoruba would say *iwa l'ewa omo eniyan* (a person's real beauty consists in his/her character); *obirin so iwa nu oni ohun ko ni ori oko* (a woman without character is bound to lose her husband). This implies that a person with good character, however ugly he/she may be, is morally beautiful, while his/her counterpart with bad character, although he/she may be physically attractive, is thought of as morally repulsive. The Yoruba, in this case, will say of the former person that he/she has *iwa* (character) whereas the latter does not. In the first proverb, *iwa* is portrayed as the beauty of humanity and not the physical look; in the second, it is considered as the condition for a woman to have a peaceful and permanent seat in her matrimonial home. In the two instances, *iwa* was used strictly on a positive note without minding the divisions we earlier considered. The reason *iwa* is held in high esteem can easily be fetched in the myth as contained in *Ifa* literary corpus on how Orunmila was asked to marry *Iwa* when seeking success and how the marriage yielded noble successes (Balogun, 2013, p. 113). This mystical story intends to parade the nobility of character in the race for success in life and to elevate it as the highest of all moral virtues.

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Ethics (*Iwa*) is interpreted as the philosophy of understanding the right or wrong of human action. The earliest Yorùbá people who observed the universe from the early days concluded with the belief that one should respect the rights of others in all spheres of life and embrace the principle of higher unity. An example of such a moral philosopher is Oranyan (Oranmiyan), a direct descendant of Oduduwa. Oranmiyan would teach *iwa* and encourage his kinsmen to have good *iwa*. He would even ask people to monitor the activities of his people to ensure that they were of good character and behaviour. Oral tradition narrated that he would emphasize good character because he believes that only an *Omoluabi* could be allowed to live in a community. Somebody with a bad character was not worthy of living among men. Such would destroy the community (Adekanye, 2020, pp. 1-43).

Omoluabi is the concept that explains how one ought to or should live and the kind of person one should strive to be. This is in line with Aristotle's virtue which is central to good living. Whatever approach the Yoruba might take regardless of the concepts used in describing ethical behaviours, everything boils down to the notion of *Omoluabi* (virtuous person). Bewaji for instance opines that ethical behaviour and morally approved conduct are expressed in various ways such as *iwa rere* (good character), *iwa pelel iwa tutu* (gentleness) and *iwa irele/iteriba* (respect) (Bewaji, 2004, p. 399). All these among others are the attributes of a virtuous person (*omoluabi*). Among the Yoruba people, the concept of *omoluabi* has been preserved for ages and they would not want it to go into oblivion anytime soon. According to Olanipekun, it is a derivative noun which has the words "*Omo + ti + Olu-iwa + bi*" as its morphological components. Translated separately, *omo* means 'child', *ti* means 'that or which', *Olu-iwa* means the chief or master of *Iwa* (character), *bi* means 'born'. When combined, *omoluabi* simply means "the baby begotten by the chief of *iwa* (Olanipekun, 2017, p. 317)." From the foregoing, it becomes obvious that the Yoruba consider an *omoluabi* as a paragon of excellence who combines all virtues. Acting virtuously or the attributes of a virtuous person are enshrouded around the idea of *omoluabi*. Inculcating the attributes of *omoluabi* could be done verbally or non-verbally with more emphasis on the non-verbal aspect. The verbal and non-verbal ethically virtuous persons are referred to as the *omo oro* and *omo oju* respectively. *Omo oro* (verbal moral child) is a child who understands verbal moral communication and *omo oju* (non-verbal moral child) is a child who understands and assimilates non-verbal moral communication.

In the Yoruba ethical system, it is expected that the *omoluabi* should be showcased by every person as the standard of behaviour. Little wonder Barry Hallen argues that the original Yoruba term *omoluabi* is deep in meaning because it begins from what a person really is from the inside when it is associated with 'good character' (*iwa rere*) (Hallen, 2006, p. 361). The point suggested by Hallen can be interpreted to mean that good character should be internalized by every person. If this claim is considered holistic, then it would not be out of place to note why the Yoruba place so much value on the *omo oju* than on the *omo oro*. When an *Omo oju* goes morally wrong due to frailty, it is easy to bring such a person back on track because of the internalized ethical virtues that need to be awoken and signaled to life. An *omo oro* who refuses to internalize these virtues would always be corrected verbally.

It is observed in the traditional Yoruba society that children are introduced into the world of taking instructions, corrections and distinctive acculturation. This is demonstrated when a pregnant Yoruba woman is seen tapping on her stomach when she feels the position of the fetus in her womb gives her some discomfort. Without any oral form of instruction, such fetus takes to correction and makes a comfortable adjustment and posture for the peace and comfort of the mother (Aladesanmi & Ogunjimi, 2019, pp. 569-589). The illustration portrays the importance the Yoruba people place on non-verbal ethical instruction as the best means of passing morals even to unborn children. An average Yoruba parents would prefer their children to be *omo oju* (non-verbal moral children) because of their tendency not to

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rub their inbuilt moral values in the mud, and the ease with which they grasp the correction being made by the parents when they are on the verge of threading on the wrong path.

Non-verbal communication is not devoid of its shortcoming especially when one finds himself among people who do not share his cultural and language orientations. There is a huge gap between culture and language when related to ethics and morality. Some gestures are particular to some cultures but may provoke some insinuations in another culture. For instance in Yoruba culture, it is considered unethical for a young person to first stretch out his arm for an elderly person in exchange for pleasantries; or a child who looks straight into the eyes of an elder when being scolded maybe interpreted as being confrontational or not sober for his misdeeds. In another culture, such a child who looks straight into the eyes of an elder could be taken as being very attentive to the corrections being made. In the Yoruba culture however, such a child would be seen as being disrespectful. In non-verbal communication, there is the need to guide against the possible conflict between cultural and language barriers through learning to speak the culture. Speaking the culture here is tantamount to understanding the culture in order to efficiently flow with nonverbal communication so as not to incur unnecessary conflict and wrath (Elegbe & Nwachukwu, 2017).

It is expected of every Yorùbá-society-bred individual to be vast in the use and understanding of these non-verbal means of communication. The Yorùbá will term anyone deficient as “the one who has no knowledge of communication through the use of the eyes and the body” - *e- ni tí kò mo- ojú tí kò tún mo- ara*. Bernard argues that there are various types of body movements used as means of communication and sometimes they are alike. Some of these gestures can be misinterpreted, miscommunicated and ambiguous because of the similarities (Bernard, 2014). This is the reason we earlier drew our attention to the need to speak the culture from which non-verbal communication is emanating from. The Yorùbás have invented ways of avoiding such confusion. The context of use always determines the meaning given to a particular body gesture and sometimes, the encoder of a message would have shared the meaning with the one who is meant to decode the message. Thus, the Yorùbá adage “*ọ rọ ọ sọ tí ló n jẹ ọ mọ mi gbọ ẹ nà*” which literally means that “my child understands my code is based on presentiment.”

Among the Yoruba, almost every part of the visible body can be used as a means of communicating. This is in line with the assertion of Bernard that the Yorùbá body language communication includes the use of the head, the eyes, the nose, the ears, the fingers, the shoulders, the feet, etc., with different meanings to be deciphered from such gestures. He writes:

*Moving the head from side to side or nodding is disapproving or approving respectively. Eyes rolling means discontentment, tears from the eyes could mean happiness or sadness. Nose squeezing means dissatisfaction. Pulling ones ear lobe could mean the person is emphasizing on the need for attention to be paid or that he intends to pull the ear of an erring individual as punishment for an offence. Fingers snapping mean the person will get his revenge or calling attention to something. While dragging of feet could mean tiredness or reluctance to do something. Almost every part of the body can be used to communicate among the Yoruba; that is why a lady or a man who has been seeking the affection of the opposite sex and is not getting the expected result can say “*mo fi ojú, fi gbogbo ara bá e- sò- rọ- síbè- kò yé e-*” “I spoke with my eyes and my body movements still, you don’t seem to understand.” The “body” here does not necessarily have to be the movements alone. It could also mean the type of clothing put on the body to seek responsiveness. (Bernard, 2014)*

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The above is a vivid illustration of the significance the Yoruba people attached to non-verbal communication. Every part of the body can be employed in communication, depending on the message to be passed across. As earlier mentioned, social consciousness goes a long way in helping an individual to preserve good character (*omoluabi*). This happens to be one of the avenues that necessitate a quick grasp of the non-verbal language in dire situations. As it has been suggested, there are always two types of children from every walk of life. For the sake of emphasis, *omo oju* is used to describe a very good child while *omo oro* is a child that always appears to be morally annihilated. An *omo oju* is always conscious of the *omoluabi* attributes in him and he takes correction very easily without making the moral instructor repeat himself. You can communicate with him with your eyes or body language and he would understand and carry out your instruction. An *omo oju* seems to have completely internalized the *omoluabi* qualities and will always use his initiative to improve on whatever he is taught. The paper does not intend to say that an *omo oju* is more intelligent but rather he is more loyal, obedient, morally grounded and ever-ready to improve his lifestyle. The internalized *omoluabi* attributes of the *omo oju* give him an edge to consciously act morally without thorough supervision (Olanipekun, 2017).

Omo oro on the other hand requires constant admonition and even resorting to punishment to make him act morally. The Yoruba parents would necessarily want to avoid having their children as *omo oro*. Besides the continuous embarrassment they would bring upon the family, they are considered deviants, rebels, sociopaths and moral dwarfs who are believed to have strayed from the supposed *omoluabi* attributes that are expected of an average Yoruba person. An *omo oro* is always averse to correction. He sees every correction as hatred or vindictiveness.

CONCLUSION

Taking a rapid look at the hosts of moral decadence pervading African society today, it has been explored that virtuous behavior is gradually going on vacation. Non-verbal communication as a means of reawaking the internalized good character (*iwa omoluabi*) has been taken for granted. The quest for inordinate wealth and pleasure is making an average African not to care a hoot about moral consciousness. With or without verbal expressions, it is easy to categorize and pass judgment on every action as either blamable or deserving of praise. In African society, particularly among the Yoruba people, good character is placed on a high pedestal and this determines how the behavior of every person in the society is assessed. A typical *omoluabi* is always conscious of his actions and whenever he is on the verge of faltering inadvertently, non-verbal communication would wake him up from his moral slumber. This is the reason why an average Yoruba person believes that an *omoluabi* tends towards an *omo oju*, who can easily correct himself when he falters or when he intends to forget the qualities of the *omoluabi* he possesses. It is argued in this paper that the analysis of the *omoluabi* in the Yoruba moral philosophy is built by verbal and non-verbal ethical communication but sustained bracingly by the non-verbal aspect.

Our submission therefore, is that a well-ordered society is possible with everyone imbibing *omoluabi*'s attributes which are better flamed to life with the notion of *omo oju*. An average Yoruba parent can knock some senses into the erring children, without necessarily holding a cane or uttering a word of reproach. If our society is restructured in such a way that immoral attitudes are vehemently frowned upon, it would be better for it. Building an *omo oju* starts at birth, where such a child is introduced to the ethical norms, culture and values. By so doing, he grows up to be fully integrated into them and they become the cloak he wears. It is derogatory among the Yoruba people to refer to a child as *omo oro* because it is assumed

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such a child is a moral dwarf. With human frailty on the part of an *omoluabi*, non-verbal communication should be enough to bring him back to track to behave himself becomingly.

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Chapter 9

The Rhetorical Strategies in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's "Zikora"

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ABSTRACT

The issue of identity alongside social integration is a matter for concern; hence, there is a need to view it through the lenses of "Zikora". This study interrogates Adichie's ability to demonstrate how immigrants navigate their way through new environments to attain cultural stability, transcultural citizenship, and new identity in the novel "Zikora" written by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. The chapter as a qualitative research is descriptive and the data for the study is selected from portions of "Zikora". The theoretical frameworks of Harris and Michalik and Michalska-Suchanek underpin the study and findings clearly emphasize that language is made to communicate the thoughts and identity of people to readers. This study concludes that the cultural complexities of new environments compel people to embrace and adapt to new culture and reality.

INTRODUCTION

Language which is intrinsic to the expression of human thoughts is a fundamental aspect of cultural identity which helps to convey our innermost self; transmit our ideas as well as express our culture and its values. Language is a tool which humans use to express themselves and to manipulate objects in their environment and as observed by Van Valin (2001), Evans and Levinson (2009), is a system of communication that enables humans to exchange verbal or symbolic utterances. An individual's identity is constructed from interaction with varying social groups which typically influence the individual's thought and by extension, the linguistic choice. A writer makes a conscious effort to communicate their feelings through deliberate and carefully selected words and various rhetorical devices and as posited by Chetia (2015), a rhetorical device is a linguistic tool that employs a particular type of sentence structure, sound, or pattern of meaning in order to evoke a particular reaction from an audience.

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In Nigeria and Africa, a number of writers have reflected the diasporic experiences of black females in their works. Buchi Emecheta in her novel, "Second Class Citizen", disclosed her personal experience and the situation of the black female migrant in the United Kingdom much in the same way that Ama Ata Aidoo in "The Dilemma of a Ghost", revealed interracial clashes experienced by Americans in Africa. Adichie has also followed suit and negotiated interracial harmony among her characters in her novels as she reveals characters who are cocooned in a private world of hate and snobbishness referenced by the turbulent contemporary world. Invariably, Adichie as a transcultural writer is bound by the need to depict issues which verge on individuals' intolerance for people outside their ethno-cultural or socio-political backgrounds (Adeniyi & Akingbe, 2017).

Our identity encompasses all that we are; hence, the ability to reveal our identity shows who we are and our value system which helps to strengthen our confidence in ourselves as well as distinguish us from every other person. Rhetoric as a branch of applied linguistics is used in organizing ideas (Farrokhi & Nazemi, 2015). The language of persuasion employed within rhetorical devices, is used to lead audiences or readers to accept what the speakers or writers have to communicate to them (Wongthai, 2013). Peeples (2015) asserts that rhetoric is the persuasive use of language. Adichie (2013) in an interview on "Africa: The Danger of a Single Story" observed that "the single story creates stereotypes and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete; they make one story become the only story." She attempts to present a true picture in the short story, 'Zikora' where she puts across the story of an abandoned single mother in a foreign land. The short story explores the challenges of single parenthood and the attitude of people to African working mothers in the United States of America. As is characteristic of Adichie, she has concentrated on, and touched most contemporary issues which affect Nigeria and Africa generally, hence the need to further examine her exploits in Zikora. As Asoo (2012) observed, Adichie's short stories have attained world standards technically by virtue of the fact they have contributed to the short story sub-genre of prose-fiction.

While many studies such as Alfaki (2015) and Muhammad and Ariffi (2019) have investigated aspects of rhetorical strategies and devices in various disciplines, this chapter is conducted to investigate the rhetorical strategies adopted by Adichie in her novel, "Zikora". The chapter hopes to enhance the skills of language users on the effectiveness of rhetorical strategies in discourse. The objectives of the chapter are to identify the rhetorical devices employed by Adichie in the novel, "Zikora" and to examine the effectiveness of the rhetorical devices in communicating the writer's emotions and challenges.

These research questions were tailored to serve as a guide to the work: What are the rhetorical devices employed by Adichie in the novel, "Zikora"? Secondly, how effective are rhetorical devices in communicating the writer's emotions and challenges?

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section is a review of concepts and topics such as the nexus between language, culture and identity; the place of language in writing, an overview of rhetorical devices and a summary of "Zikora" and puts them in perspectives as they relate to the chapter.

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The Nexus Between Language, Culture, and Identity

According to Edwards (2009), language is the main “marker” of group or individual identity; it is both a connecting and distinguishing factor between groups. Language, as a matter of fact, is the core of group identity. The problem of the relationship between language and identity (ethnic/national) is one of the most relevant in the modern world and is becoming an increasingly important category of humanitarian science: it reflects the most important processes of man and society’s self-determination, determines the ability to self-preservation and maintenance of own integrity in the modern conditions of globalization. Pavlenko & Blackledge (2004) agree that group members form their identity through the choice of a language such that social, political and economic changes in society impact the choice of personal language identity at the moment of history when one desires to share one’s experience or challenges.

Culture can be defined as the traditional set of beliefs and behaviors shared by the members of a group. Many of our identities involve a group with a shared culture. Oyserman (2007, 2009a, 2009b) defines identity as the traits and characteristics, social relations, roles, and social group memberships that define who one is. That is to say that identities can be focused on what a person expects or wishes to become, what one feels obligated to try to become, or what one fears one may become. Our cultural identities encompass multiple identity traits, such as our ethnic, racial, religious, generational, and geographical identities. For instance, members of an ethnic group may have their unique traditions. Similarly, members of a religion may share values centered on their faith. A person’s identity can gradually shift and change due to nuances in their circumstances and environment. Schmeck et al., (2013) observed that an individual may experience an intensive analysis and inward exploration which may result in an identity crisis.

The search for identity is a natural phenomenon; thus, we can speak about self-identity, social identity, gender identity, cultural identity, religious identity, national identity and many other identities. This paper focuses on the aspects of identity that deal with the individual as a member of a particular group and how that image of self is shaped by our language and the social experiences. Several factors constitute very intimate elements of our being and our identity and these dictate whether we are embraced or ignored, accepted or rejected in our immediate environment. The concept of identity is relevant to the chapter as the writer considers and communicates the identity crisis experienced by Zikora in a foreign land while revealing her subsequent ability to cope.

Another aspect of culture is that it is multicultural; it mirrors the multiple cultural identities and diversities in societies and individuals. Multiculturalism promotes cultural diversity, enriches society and contributes to individual and collective identities and most writers attempt to convey this in their writings. Adichie portrays multiculturalism in “Zikora” as she weaves the cultures of Africa and America, and accentuates areas of similarities and diversities in various circumstances. She explores the issues of womanhood, identity, and the clash between cultural expectations and personal desires with her powerful storytelling skills. By this, she delves into the intricacies of Zikora’s life, painting a vivid picture of her struggles, vulnerabilities, and resilience in the face of societal pressures.

The Role of Rhetorical Devices in Writing

A rhetorical device is a linguistic tool that employs a particular type of sentence structure, sound, or pattern of meaning in order to invoke a particular reaction from an audience. According to Kenney and Scott (2003), “traditionally, rhetoric was considered ‘the exclusive province of verbal language’”. Rhetoric

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is an important element of language use; hence, virtually every part of the human experience that can be looked at from a rhetorical perspective. Scholars such as Voormann & Gut (2008) have gradually adapted the theory to the practice of argumentation, and as Bazerman (2013) notes, rhetoric is "The study of how people use language and other symbols to realize human goals and carry out human activities... ultimately a practical study offering people great control over their symbolic activity."

Harris (2019, p.3) submits that rhetorical devices generally fall into three categories: those involving emphasis, association, clarification, and focus; those involving physical organization, transition, and disposition or arrangement; and those involving decoration and variety. Sometimes a given device may be used mostly for emphasis; but more often the effects of a particular device are multiple, and a single one may operate in all three categories. Parallelism, for instance, helps to order, clarify, emphasize, and beautify a thought. He observes that a metaphor is a profoundly important and useful device which not only explains by making the abstract or unknown concrete and familiar, but also enlivens the discourse by touching the reader's imagination.

Rhetorical theory has also seen a shift away from a strict focus on persuasion as the central focus of rhetoric to an interest in all of the reasons for which humans create rhetoric. According to Koszowy, Budzynska, Pereira Fariña & Rory (2022) rhetorical theory now addresses all aspects of the rhetorical situations (exigence, audience, and rhetor) as well as the larger contexts in which any given rhetorical act occurs. Alfaki (2015, p. 2) offers some rhetorical devices such as: epithet, epizeuxis, hyperbole, litotes, metanoia, metaphor, metonymy, onomatopoeia, oxymoron, simile and understatement, which though not exhaustive, are equally useful as analytical tools to this chapter.

Studies in rhetorical strategies or devices have been of great interest to researchers and as a result, several linguists have conducted researches on the area. Vu Xuan Doan (2017) conducted research on "Rhetorical Devices" and worked on rhetoric in television advertising in Vietnam. He adopted a quantitative approach to examine the frequencies of rhetoric in advertising and rhetorical figures in the form of images, words, and sounds were observed. A selection of 200 videos of television advertising which had 123 short advertisements for 15 seconds, 74 advertisements for 30-40 seconds; 1 very short advertisement with 7 seconds; an advertisement that is longer than 1 minute and a special advertisement of 2 minutes was done. The rhetorical figures in the form of images, words, and sounds were noted. The results showed that repetition, hyperbole, and comparison (including metaphor) were used the most, accounting for 99%, 73% and 70%, respectively. The findings showed that repetition, hyperbole, and comparison (including metaphor) were preponderant and the concluded that rhetorical figures are used frequently to influence the emotions of consumers. A gap has been identified between this paper and this chapter; the previous study is on television advertising with data sourced from the television while the current chapter is focused on the rhetorical devices used in the novel, "Zikora".

Sindano (2014), in "A Study of Rhetorical Devices Used in Selected Cars Advertisements in The Namibian Newspaper", conducted a qualitative research in order to examine the rhetorical strategies employed in car advertisement. A total of forty car advertisements were collected from The Namibian newspaper and the researcher used persuasive moves suggested by Hashim (2010) in the data analysis. The finding revealed that even though some of the moves were different from Hashim's proposal, it still concluded that car advertisements contain slogans, aggressive language, comparative and superlative form. Kuritzky (2015) in his work, "Rhetorical Strategies in Black Boy" examined the rhetorical devices used by Richard Wright to describe the struggle of blacks in the American South from the mid-1920s to the late 1930s. Kuritzky concluded that Wright, through imagery and other rhetorical devices such

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as repetition and pathos, was able to establish a repetitive and emotional meaning to his work which replicated the struggles he experienced.

Ouno, Magak & Muhoma (2018) in their work titled: "The Establishment of Transcultural Citizenship in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Novels" established that Adichie's literary works provide resourceful forums for describing the transcultural encounters which black women experience and the tension that occurs in trans-cultural mobility. Findings show that her characters challenge, and adapt to the cultural differences in foreign lands as exemplified by Zikora. The gap between this chapter and that of Ouno et al. (2018) is that they did not address any specific novel by Adichie, but this one focuses on "Zikora".

This chapter is underpinned on the frameworks of Harris (2013) and Michalik and Michalska-Suchanek (2016) with a view to validate their approach to writing by way of communicating the thoughts and experiences of characters in the text. The theoretical frameworks have been selected to achieve the objectives of the chapter which are to identify the rhetorical devices employed by Adichie in the novel, "Zikora" and to investigate the effectiveness of rhetorical devices in communicating the writer's emotions and challenges. Some of the rhetorical devices of both Harris (2013) Michalik & Michalska-Suchanek (2016) are explained below:

- Antithesis is contrasting the relationship between two ideas. It emphasizes the contrast between two ideas. The structure of the phrases or clauses is usually similar in order to draw the reader's or listener's attention directly to the contrast.
- Hypophora is a question raised and answered by the author or speaker. The author or speaker raises a question and also gives an answer to the question.
- Simile is direct comparison whereby two things are compared directly by using 'like'.
- Metaphor is a figurative expression that compares two different things in a figurative sense. Unlike a simile, the word "like" is not used in metaphor.
- Parallelism is the way that sentences are structured to make it easier for the reader or listener to concentrate on the message.
- Rhetorical Question is a question without a direct answer which is used to provoke, emphasize or argue a point. The speaker raises a question, but does not answer it directly because he or she already knows the answer.
- A Sentential Adverb is a single word or short phrase that is used to interrupt normal syntax from a pause or interruption in a sentence.
- Synecdoche is a type of metaphor, and it can be in short, portion, section or main quality.
- Epanalepsis is an aesthetic device which repeats the beginning word of a clause or sentence at the end.
- Pronouns are a strategy that aims to direct the closer relationship between the speakers and the audiences purposefully.
- Repetition is a strategy that repeats the given message to show its importance.
- Personification is an idea, an animal, or a thing bestowed with human attributes.

Correspondingly, the framework of Burgersa, Konijn, Steen, and Iepsma (2015) is useful to this chapter based on their assertion that irony is an evaluation that contradicts an intended one, while metaphor is introduced as a comparison made from the original source to the target domain. Based on this fundamental understanding, this chapter aimed to identify the societal influence in the shaping of the language choice in novels by analyzing the rhetorical devices employed by Adichie in "Zikora". The

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justification for choosing the two frameworks is hinged on the fact that rhetoric devices help the reader to understand the creative thought pattern of the writer and at the same time, help to sustain the readers' interest because of their complexity.

Synopsis of *Zikora* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche grew up partly in Nigeria and the US where she went for further studies and through the eyes of *Zikora*, is able to delineate the efficacious role language plays in forming one's identity and social acceptance through an ingenious use of various rhetorical strategies and potency of language in a way which seems to reflect her personal experience in America. Her ability to communicate in clear terms what the average black woman encounters is presented through *Zikora's* journey to motherhood in an environment that does not seem to appreciate her predicament. In an attempt to bear her burden alone, she presents the image of a strong African woman.

Zikora grew up in Nigeria, and in rebellion against her mom's proposal that she goes to study in the United Kingdom, moves to Washington, D.C. instead. She eventually became a high-powered lawyer and met another dashing young lawyer, Kwame, at a book launch. She was overwhelmed by his maturity and good humor and sometimes felt he was too perfect for her, and would change, revealing the dark truth of his character but Kwame remained consistent. Thus, *Zikora* allowed herself to become convinced of their future together and told her cousin, Mmiliaku about him. *Zikora* got pregnant and when she informed Kwame, he walked out on her. Throughout the story, *Zikora's* relationship with her mother takes center stage. Her mother is critical because *Zikora* got pregnant out of wedlock. Her authoritative attitude frequently leaves *Zikora* feeling inadequate and pressured to conform to societal norms. This brings a strain on their relationships which further intensifies the emotional turmoil *Zikora* faces as she navigates her pregnancy and impending motherhood. As *Zikora's* due date approaches, the story takes a different turn, as the risks and complications of childbirth cause her great distress. Her mother, despite her disapproval at *Zikora's* pregnancy, showed up for the birth when she was to deliver her baby. While in the delivery room crippled with physical pain and despair, she still thought about Kwame and the loss of his love, but when she held her son for the first time, she felt pure love for him. *Zikora* was also terrified of being alone, but her mother offered to support her, and as she watched her mother care for her son, she suddenly realized the depth and intensity of maternal love. The revelation and subsequent consciousness that she had erroneously misjudged and mistreated her mother caused her to change her attitude. She had a new understanding and appreciation regarding the sacrifice her mother had made to keep their family united. Through *Zikora*, Adichie offers a poignant exploration of womanhood, the challenges of single motherhood, and the clash between tradition and modernity. Her evocative writing style coupled with her ability to create powerful representations of cultural details create a rich and thought-provoking narrative that invites readers to reflect on the complexities of love, family, and the choices we make in shaping our identities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The primary source of data for this chapter is the text, "*Zikora*", a short story written by Adichie (2020) while the secondary data include scholarly journals and other textual material. The research is qualitative in nature and data was purposely selected from the novel to reflect the diction, word sound, and word

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combination which are analyzed via the rhetorical devices advanced by Harris (2013) and Michalik and Michalska-Suchanek (2016).

Rhetorical Strategies in *Zikora* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

The data is sourced from the entire novel, "Zikora", which is a short novel of about twenty two pages. The novel is not broken into sections; consequently, it is difficult to select from any particular section. All the same, the data has been purposely selected to suit the theoretical framework and excerpts from the novel analyzed using some of the rhetorical devices. Consequently, the analysis focuses on the language and individual words that shape a text via the analysis of rhetorical devices at word, sentence, paragraph and structural levels.

Adichie used several forms of diction in *Zikora* and also switched between colloquial, formal style of writing to popular style in her writing. In p. 7 she describes some of her childhood experience as she switched from colloquial style to her African roots as reflected in the statement, "Bear it, that is what it means to be a woman, and it was years before I knew that girls took Buscopan for period pain." This sentence mirrors the African stoicism and ability to bear pain as part of her existence. Bravery is a universal concept which is measured by how one is able to endure pain; hence, the African woman, like the Spartan boy, is expected to endure pain even at the point of death. This explains why *Zikora's* mom encouraged her to endure her period pain instead of offering some relief.

Adichie employs language in "Zikora" as a means to convey her opinions and ideas; she reveals that language can represent a person and become an opening into their life and surroundings. She achieves this through the use of several rhetorical techniques; she deploys a lot of figures of speech to convey her psychological state. She expressed her pain in the following words:

All through the night my mother sat near me but never touched me. Once, I screamed, a short scream that lanced the air in the hospital room, and she said, "That's how labor is," in Igbo, and I wanted to say, "No shit," but of course she didn't understand colloquial Americanisms. I had prepared for pain but this was not mere pain. It was something like pain and different from pain." "It was something like pain and different from pain. It sat like fire in my back, spreading to my thighs, squeezing and crushing my insides, pulling downward, spiraling. "My arms itched, my scalp itched, and malaise lay over me like a mist. (p. 5)

This sentence employs both similes and personifications to express her pain. She likens the pain to 'fire' and personifies it using words such as 'sat', 'squeezing' and 'crushing'.

I cried and cried. I no longer had friends, all my time so focused on Kwame. I cried and cried, and even though people said crying made them feel better, it made me feel frightened and small. I sifted through my memories, as though through debris, trying to find. (p. 14)

In pp. 10 and 14 there is copious use of epizeuxis which is the repetition of one word for emphasis. She said 'I cried and cried', to emphasize the depth of her despair. She was despondent and the only way she could release her pent up emotions was to cry. Her repeated cries seemed to have elicited some response because someone encouraged her to cry saying that it would make her feel better. The response:

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He wailed and wailed. His cries seared into my head and made me so jittery I wanted to smash things. (p. 26)

She also used epizeuxis in p. 17 in the following lines:

There was a festering red pain between my legs. Somewhere in my consciousness, a mild triumph hovered, because it was over, finally it was over, and I had pushed out the baby.

The emphasis of 'it was over' was a victory cry as it testified to the fact that she had finally given birth to a child despite the pains she had to bear and the times she cried. Child birth is associated with pain but through pain, a new life is birthed. It is this new birth which symbolizes a new beginning, new hope, new identity and self-realization for her. Through the birth of her son, she also gets reborn as she experiences a bond with her mom which was something she had never felt before. In addition, in p. 20, she stated that "I had caused my son unnecessary pain. My son." Those words: "My son. He was my son. He was mine", asserts her sense of accomplishment – she has given birth to a child, a feat she did not think would be possible considering her age and past experience. She expresses her pains and fears and it was observed that the notion of pain reverberates throughout the novel as words such as 'pain', 'cried' and 'wailed' which denote fear are predominantly used.

From the excerpts, a profuse use of simile is obvious in the sentence 'something like pain' and 'sat like fire' are also employed to show the excruciating pain she felt in p.10. The relationship between Mmiliaku and Emmanuel reveals the socioeconomic disparities between the two of them as the lifestyles and economic divides within Nigerian society are exposed. In p. 5, the sentence, "And then came Emmanuel, older and wealthy, holding his intentions like jewels" is a simile which depicts Emmanuel's intention 'as jewels' show the respect, value and admiration she had for Emmanuel until she realized his money was what made him attractive to her uncle who was intent on marrying off Mmilaku to him as a means to improve his socioeconomic status; based on the conception that the wealth of a son-in-law ought to rub off on his wife's family. Zikora's relationship and subsequent abandonment by Kwame highlights the socio-economic challenges faced by single mothers primarily because they encounter certain difficulties in accessing resources and support which would otherwise have been made available if she had the support of a husband.

Parallelism is the arrangement of clauses, sentences, or verse lines in a pairing or other sequence which suggests some correspondence and its effect is usually one of balanced arrangement that is achieved through repetition of the syntactic construction of words or phrases that have similar structures. In the sentences below, parallelism is observed in the excerpts on pp 6, 13, 14:

It was her third childbirth and she was walking, chatting with the nurses, stopping to breathe through each contraction, and then mid-sentence, she paused and collapsed and died. (p. 6)

On weekends, I lay blankly on my couch reading Kwame's past text messages, as the hours slid one into another. Time spent on remembering, time lost on remembering. (p. 7)

I began to weep because my cousin had grace and I lacked grace.....Nature demanded so much of the woman and so little of the man. The parallel constructions in the sentences show a deliberate attempt to achieve some form of order in her writing and use of language. (p. 14)

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The sentence in p. 5 is enriched with simile which she expresses as “malaise lay over me like a mist”. Also, ‘my arms itched, my scalp itched’, is a repetition which relays her discomfort while in the hospital. Adichie used language to fill certain lapses in her encounter with her colleagues particularly when they realized that she was going to be a single mother. She used irony, sarcasm, personification and a lot of paradoxes to emphasize the awkwardness of their conversation which was prompted by the difficult situation in which she found herself. In p. 12, Zikora’s “See, I can balance files on the belly” to Donna was said with sarcasm and humor to show Donna that she was only pregnant, and not sick. This utterance is a double entendre which is meant to dispel any expression of sympathy or ridicule from her colleagues thereby conveying the impression that she was getting along well, then the unthinkable act of actually balancing a file on the stomach to prove a point appears hilarious.

“Silence was not his fighting tool; he was a man who talked things through”. Silence was not a fighting tool is personification as silence is bestowed with the ability to fight. Similarly, the repetition of ‘itched’ twice may cause the reader to pause and ponder on the delicacy of each statement.

Hypophora is a device which involves responding to a question immediately it is asked. For instance, in p.11 the question, “What are you talking about? You know I stopped taking the pill because it made me fat, and I assumed you knew what it meant, what it could mean” was answered immediately by Zikora to the question she asked. Similarly, in p.22, the question, “But why is he marrying another wife?” I asked. “I don’t want a new mummy” was the instantaneous response received.

Adichie writes in a concise, clear and simple style; using carefully selected words which make her writing evoke sense-impressions. The literal or figurative reference to observable or concrete objects, arouses some emotions which produce a fine rhythm that makes her narration vivid. She used rhetorical appeals to express her attitude toward the importance of language as a key to identity and social acceptance. Adichie’s writing achieved that at the sentence level with her syntactic constructions which were full of long sentences. For example, she said:

Symptoms can mean nothing if a mind is convinced, if a thing just cannot be, and so the sore nipples, the sweeping waves of fatigue, had to have other meanings until they no longer could, and I walked to Rite Aid after class and bought a pregnancy test. (p. 21)

The excerpt here shows her inner struggle with the physical changes she had begun to experience but was not ready to accept. The sentence is a long one which aptly illustrates the long and tortuous journey she went through on the realization that she was pregnant. This is characterized by the tough period of suspense, indecision and the final act of having the abortion.

The excerpt below describes the kindness of the woman she met there as:

Some kindnesses you do not ever forget. You carry them to your grave, held warmly somewhere, brought up and savored from time to time. Such was the kindness of the African American woman with short pressed hair at the Planned Parenthood clinic on Angel Street. She smiled with all 21 of her open face, kind, matter-of-fact, and she touched my shoulder while I settled tensely on my back. (p. 21)

This sentence explicitly captures her admiration for the African American woman, probably borne out of a feeling of kinship between them. A close look reveals that there is an element of irony in connection with the location of the Planned Parenthood clinic which is situated in Angel Street. The name, ‘Angel Street’, is an irony as it appears to mock the entire purpose of the clinic which is to assist in family plan-

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ning, but instead of planning, serves as a home for disrupting the family. An angel is seen as a person of exceptional virtue, so the happening on Angel Street seems antithetical; it causes one to question the virtue of both the clinic and its patients. In addition the phrase, 'Rite Aid' in p.21 is a stylistic deviation from the original spelling of 'right aid' that shows some uniqueness as the different orthographic representations still have the same rhyme and meaning regardless of how both have been represented.

The cadence and fluidity of her expressions create a link between her and the people she related with as we have seen from the exchanges between Zikora and her mom on one hand, and Zikora and the African-American nurse on the other, when she went for abortion. She reveals the kindness of the nurse who touched her shoulder gently in sympathy for her condition with the following words: "her open face, kind matter-of-fact". By this exchange, we get to know that the human race is one irrespective of colour, gender, or distance and that kindness is a universal and spontaneous emotion which can be displayed by anyone, at any time and is not bound by geographical location, class or creed. The love she feels for her son is compelling and the reader gets to feel the depth of that love when she declares that she would die for him in clear terms in the following words in p. 20: "Mummy, I would die for him," I said, partly to make peace with her and partly because I needed to speak this miraculous momentous thing that was true."

The idea that language is important to identity and social acceptance is upheld in the passage through her utilization of her indigenous language. Adichie's choice of words largely relays the comfortability between Zikora and her cousin, Mmiliaku (Water) with each other. According to Zikora, they most often resorted to their local language when they had serious things to discuss or when they wanted to mimic their relatives. This is illustrated in p. 16, where 'Water' said "amuchago m" to express the fact that she was tired of having more children. Similarly, when their grandmother died the grave news was also conveyed in their mother tongue with the expression "Mama-Nnukwu awugo". The recourse to their mother tongue does not only depict the fact that they share a common bond, it also shows that their African language offers them solace and comfort as it removes the distance between them.

The issue of cultural identity and the subsequent tension that arises from multiple cultural contexts are revealed as Zikora's voices some concerns about her identity, belonging, and the need to preserve some of her cultural heritage as a Nigerian woman living in the United States. She reveals her African identity in p. 22 where she tackles the issue of marriage in relation to polygamy and illustrates this with her family where her father practiced polygamy. She said he had to marry a second wife primarily because her mother did not have a son, an inadequacy which is viewed as a 'grievous offense' in most African communities. The lack of a son in a traditional African home has the tendency of making a committed family man go out in search of a male child and when the quest is successful, the mother of the son is brought in as 'a legitimate wife'. Similarly, in some parts of Africa, polygamy is seen as the display of masculine authority over one's household, and as Baloyi (2013) observed, polygamy is an acceptable and valid form of marriage in most African societies. He observed that the more wives a man has, the more children he is likely to have. This may be considered the primary reason for Zikora's father getting married to a second wife; particularly, as he desired a male child. Her father felt the urge to fill the vacuum of not having a son by marrying another wife who ultimately fulfilled his desires by giving him a son. As Zikora observed, her friends did not quite understand that sort of marriage arrangement, so she had to clarify the situation in the following words: "In America, I began to call her 'my father's other wife', because people assumed "second wife" was the woman my father had married when he was no longer married to my mother. But with Kwame I said "second wife," because he understood." This revelation about Kwame who was part Ghanaian and part African-American conveys the idea that polygamy is a

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familiar and acceptable practice in Africa which even Kwame with his mixed parentage understood. He understood that 'second wife' meant the position of the wife in the house and not a second marriage. This is contrary to practice of the western world where polygamy is seen in the same light as bigamy and therefore, considered an offence.

Zikora experienced some cultural shock with regard to fashion as shown by her dislike of the nurse because of her physical appearance which she described as 'full of false extensions'. In her opinion, the African woman is naturally beautiful, so does not need any extensions, attachments or any other contrived means to enhance her beauty. From the excerpt below:

An invasion of fingers. She was gloved and I couldn't see her nails, but her false eyelashes, curving from her upper lids like black feathers, made me worry that her nails were long and sharp and would pierce through the latex and puncture my uterus. (p. 7)

It is obvious that she found the artificial embellishments repugnant. She expressed her displeasure with the simile 'black feathers' to describe the woman with the false extensions as she believed that her eyes were hooded and likely to obstruct her vision, thus creating the impression that her appearance shows she is unserious, incompetent and probably careless with her work. Zikora's fear was that if she had false lashes, she may also have false nails which could prove dangerous to her patients.

Another aspect of African culture which has universal acceptance is the matter of circumcision, which is the removal of the skin covering the tip of the penis. This is considered to be brutal because it inflicts pains on the young child who has to go through it and in p. 18 captures it as "Circumcision is barbaric," I said. "Why should I cause my child pain?" "Cause your child pain?" my mother repeated as if I was making no sense. The nurse endorses her mother's opinion as illustrated in p. 18 when the nurse tells her that the baby will not remember the pain. "When my mother left the room, the smaller nurse gently asked, "Is it really about causing Baby pain?" I stared at her. Her eyelashes made her eyes doll-like and difficult to take seriously. "Baby won't remember the pain." This exchange suggests that circumcision is an acceptable practice as both her mother and the nurse support it in spite of the fact that they. Again, the theme of pain is observed as Zikora does not want her son to go through any pain even if it is one that is beneficial to him.

Zikora in p. 10 confirmed that "I was boasting actually, a callous boast. Only days before, Mmiliaku had said, "Emmanuel still waits until I'm asleep, then he climbs on me, and of course I'm dry and I wake up in pain. Sixteen years." This statement reveals the identity of Emmanuel, Mmiliaku's husband, as a callous, selfish and inconsiderate man. The phrase 'Sixteen years' is cryptic and loaded as it summarizes the pains, lack of romance and care she had endured in her husband's hand in the name of marriage. It reveals some aspects about the African idea of marriage where one has to remain in a loveless and abusive relationship in order not to 'embarrass' the family. Mmiliaku's marriage revealed some issues related to healthcare and reproductive rights as she had to bear her husband's assault all because she had to fulfill her marital duties by having many children. Zikora's pregnancy and her access to reliable healthcare in the United States and Mmiliaku's predicament and lack of access to healthcare facilities when she needed to have an abortion highlights the socioeconomic disparities in access to quality healthcare. She apparently could not walk out of the marriage much in the same way that Zikora's mother could not walk out of her home when her husband brought in a 'second wife' or for the benefit of the Americans, 'her father's other wife', which was an affront on her mom as a wife. The two women could not walk out of their unhappy marriages because no matter how bad a marriage was in Africa, one had to remain

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in it. This was why Zikora's mother, who was educated and financially independent, did not walk out of her marriage in the same way that Mmmiliaku, who was not financially stable, did not walk out of her marriage. This shows that financial stability had nothing to do with remaining in a cruel marriage; staying in it was a way to preserve the 'dignity' of the family.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The aim of the paper was to explore how language has been employed to unveil the identity and beliefs of people in different environments in the novel. The first objective of the chapter was to identify the rhetorical devices employed by Adichie in the novel, "Zikora" and the second objective was to investigate the aspects of rhetorical devices used and the effectiveness in communicating the writer's emotions and challenges. The findings reveal that rhetorical devices such as personification, similes, irony, epizeuxis, and parallelism were copiously employed in the novel. The repetition of the word 'itched' and 'pain' were used to convey her agony while the utterance, 'squeezing and crushing my insides,' or 'silence was not his fighting tool' are examples of personification from the novel. In addition, parallelism was observed in constructions such as 'my cousin had grace' and 'I lacked grace'....Nature demanded 'so much of the woman' and so little of the man'. The use of simile in a sentence is intended to ignite a reader's or listener's attention. As observed in the text, the word 'like' is used to create an association between "pain" and "fire". By this, the intensity is compared to the type one experiences from fire burn. This finding echoes those of Fengjie et al. (2016) and Alfaki (2015) who observed that simile as a device, allows speakers or writers to compare without the need for excessive explanations or descriptions as Adichie was able to capture and express her challenge through the use of similes.

The second objective was to investigate the aspects of rhetorical devices used and the effectiveness in communicating the writer's emotions and challenges. The findings show that the rhetorical devices espoused by Michalik and Michalska-Suchanek (2016) and Koszowy et al. (2021), have been well applied by the writer who deftly used words, expressions and language, to define and shape the experience of her heroine, Zikora. On the use of hypophora, the finding reverberates with that of Chetia (2015) who affirmed the resourcefulness of hypophora as it reveals that speakers sometimes answer their own questions probably because they understand the situation in which they find themselves. For instance, it was observed that certain words served to reveal the loneliness, confusion and despair she felt when she realized she had been abandoned by Kwame whose love she felt was genuine. This analysis has proven that creative linguistic devices such as rhetorical devices are very much prevalent in novels as the devices do not only communicate but also sustain readers' interest.

The analysis of excerpts from the theoretical basis of rhetorical devices as the first research question revealed that speakers employed several rhetorical devices to present their ideas clearly through rhetorical devices which include: personification, similes, irony, epizeuxis, parallelism, etc., to communicate the pains and heartache of Zikora to her readers. The second research question which investigated the effectiveness of rhetorical devices in communicating the writer's emotions and challenges exposed Zikora's fears and dilemma which were presented as legitimate specifically because it was not peculiar to Zikora alone as other African-American women had also gone through such experiences. Through the application of some aspects of Harris (2013) and Michalik and Michalska-Suchanek (2016) framework, Adichie convincingly reaffirms the experiences of Africans and African-Americans through Zikora who acquired new values to help her cope with the feeling of separation and loneliness. The findings also

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correspond with that of Alfaki (2015) who established that rhetorical devices are used to evoke emotional responses in the readers, a feat which Chimamada Adichie achieved in "Zikora".

The application of rhetorical devices requires imagination as it helps to convey a sense of appropriateness to readers such that new and familiar ideas are introduced and linked to readers' previous knowledge. Adichie has achieved the goal of rhetoric which is to persuade the reader towards a particular ideology or viewpoint in order to take a particular course of action. Consequently, the deployment of appropriate rhetorical devices to create sentences has provided a rational argument which makes the reader receptive to emotional changes. The conclusion reached is that the writer's ability to communicate emotions has been successfully achieved through the use of rhetorical devices.

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Chapter 10

Traditional Art's Survival in the Digital Era: Puppet Performance on YouTube

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ABSTRACT

Various aspects of life have changed since the COVID-19 pandemic, including the puppeteer artists. For performing artists, the policy of stay at home really hit them. But on the other hand it creates creativity and innovation in performances. The benefits of literature help reflect, express humanity without feeling patronized, and are invited not only to reproduce but to produce meaning. The aim of this study is to examine the puppeteer survival by YouTube platform during the pandemic. Data analysis was carried out using Adorno's cultural industry theory. As a result, the digital transformation of puppeteers in puppet shows during the COVID-19 pandemic provide economic resilience and evoke solidarity.

INTRODUCTION

The pandemic is a sign of massive change in the digital era. Performing arts is a sector that has been hardest hit by the pandemic. Pandemic condition which requires that health is given top priority has eliminated all performance or gigs. All performance contracts that had been booked were canceled. You can imagine how paralyzed the performance team is. The puppeteers also try to be able to get through this condition while still paying attention to the performance team. At the start of the pandemic the mastermind distributed basic food packages complete with cash so that all team members could follow government policies of stay at home (di rumah saja). However, with creativity and critical thinking skills these conditions can be overcome. Digital platforms such as YouTube provided adequate facilities to hold live shows. Although there were several obstacles, both in terms of production and consumption, in the end digital platforms became a solution for performing artists. For the next time the puppeteers

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began to transform into the digital realm with virtual *climen* puppet (Wayang *Climen*) performances. Many artists have taken solidarity actions by holding virtual performances to raise funds for victims of Covid-19 (Yusuf, 2020).

Theory of critic by Adorno suggests transformation of culture with the emancipatory direction (Bernstein, 1991). This theory is developed in a special context, so that it does not take into account the conditions under which culture cannot be applied in the future. The cultural industry question raised from perspective in its relation to possibilities for social transformation. Cultural industry is understood in its potentials to promote and block integral freedom. The capitalist production forces are unfetter with the capitalist production relations, then in general the illusory people's freedom. Otherwise, further integration and domination is through unification or unity. Enlightenment is about freedom and happiness, but self-destruction of enlightenment in a capitalist perspective – market economy, goods are produced not to satisfy needs and desires but to seek profit and capital accumulation and this puts the use value of objects below the exchange rate – irresistible regression. False universality - bourgeois autonomy for true universality - oppress vs. Public opinion has become a commodity. The Dialectic of Enlightenment as mass deception. Autonomy class by excluding workers producing privately and without specific consumer demands (state, church). Cultural industry inversion is offering cultural goods, exhibitions, concerts on TV, free radio as a public service - fees have long been paid by the mass of workers. Art conflict canteen schemes, how to show the structure of the mass media. On the other hand, Mosco explains that the object that is exchanged has an exchange rate which is known as commodification (Mosco, 2009).

This chapter specifically shows the experience of the puppeteer (Seno Nugroho) in carrying out digital transformation through two YouTube channels during the pandemic. Both channels were managed by a crew dedicated to documenting the show, in addition to showing the strategies pursued in digital transformation. This chapter also identifies the implications for the sustainability of puppet shows, the endurance of the entire crew of the performance team, and the level of accessibility of loyal fans. The innovations and creations of the Seno puppeteer to migrate to digital platforms have created obstacles for some team members and some loyal fans. The digital tradition presents a new way of dividing teamwork when it comes to distancing policies and no crowds. This chapter aims to test the hypothesis behind the innovations and creations that seem to provide ease of transformation to digital platform raises solidarity and several social capital of both internal teams and loyal fans.

This chapter is based on the arguments of Adorno's culture industry theory. The cultural industry often creates a contradiction between freedom of work and the development of culture, but it also creates uncertainty if there is capital domination or regulatory pressure. This condition is namely a mass deception (Noerr, 2002). Even if seen from the aesthetics of the theory of dialectic, Enlightenment which only becomes the autonomy of the bourgeoisie, splendid isolation, non-participatory participation and engagement through disengagement (Heling, 2014). But, digital transformation that is done by puppeteers is successful. It even creates economic resilience as measured by the ongoing performance that is present because there are fans who support it. Research question to be discussed are: how does digital transformation bring up creative strategies to survive for puppet artists and their contribution to the creative economy.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Adorno's Cultural Industry Theory

Adorno and Horkheimer do not reduce thought to instrumental reason and they characterize enlightenment as a historically differentiated process. They maintain both instrument and critical thought that used to criticize what they knew as determinate negation (Pienknagura, 1991). Dialectic of Enlightenment, according to Pienknagura is a theory of the formation of subject. The emerging self experiences to the external world as a threat, so renounces sensorial satisfaction to preserve itself. Instruments rational that domination, but it does not eliminate the possibility for alternative form for social formation free from of domination. Adorno's aesthetic theory, the idea namely, autonomous art of the bourgeoisie era. That is locus of aesthetic subjectivity that experiences and cognize the material world in noninstrumental fashion. Then with negative dialectic Adorno develop the formation of the self. Critics of Kant's enlightenment model can be seen through 3 thinkers:

1. Rawls with a public reason if someone does not have a view of his religion and accepts it without question, then in Rawls's perception that he is still a liberal politician who has no view when making decisions.
2. Foucault criticizes the tools Rawls uses in some ways it can be recognized and dislodged to the obstacles to freedom in some degree. Enlightenment as ethical attitude, a mode of relating to the present times and to ones self as modern subject (Blackhawk, 2018).
3. Habermas is closer to Kant's minimalist theory of enlightenment. His view of each person confirms what is truly believed, no speaker might contradict himself. Habermas also proposes a rule that each speaker needs to use terms that other people know well (Fleischacker, 2013).

The question about cultural industry is raised from the perspective of its relations to the possibility for social transformation. The cultural industry is to be understood from the perspective of its potentialities for promoting or blocking 'integral freedom'. These positive or negative potentialities, however are not naively or immediately available (Bernstein, 1991).

There is a paradox at work in the coronavirus pandemic. Where does data end and ideology begin. The more our world is connected, the more a local disaster can trigger a global fear and eventually a catastrophe, such as socioeconomic impact. Technology development make us more independent from nature and at the same time, at the different level more dependent of nature's whims (Zizek, 2020). That once upon a time, pop metabolism buzzed with dynamic energy, creating the surge into the future periods like the psychedelic sixties, the post-punk seventies, the hip-hop eighties. Much of the momentum for the transformation occurred in terms of modes of consumption and distribution, both of which led to an escalation of retromania. Due to increased storage capacity / store, organization, they instantly access and share vast cultural data. Retro does not mean a manifestation of cultural regression or decadence but because you can write and enjoy, get involved yourself must also be a maniac participant, looking for related literature in the past, etc. (Simon, 2011).

Such as Albert Camus novel with title *La Peste* (Sampar) 1947 is a reinterpretation of historical facts and as the metaphor of Nazism. Here are several things that can be learned from the novel as learning: things that are difficult to express in a philosophical formula can be done with literature. *La Peste* is the result of serious research the pestilence epidemic 1940-1944 then written in 1947. It will be analysis with

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arkansial structural analysis, a living testimony is more effective than the narrator's advice at a doctor's talker. The benefits of literature help reflect and express a sense of humanity without feeling patronized and readers are invited not only to reproduce but to produce meaning. For example, in an atmosphere of fear and panic during a pandemic, that is reflecting on ourselves (who are we, our attitude and what should we do in the future?). Lessons to be learned, that is making decisions even if they are difficult and scary; freedom threshold; give meaning to life; learn humble, and simple. Negative attitudes that cause transmission, these do not immediately see a doctor when there are symptoms, do not live hygienically, do not just stay at home; looking for profit; dilemma of life necessities and risks (Haryatmoko, 2020). The attitude of religious leaders must invite people to think rationally, carefully and have solidarity, and not seek entertainment in apocalyptic discourses (running away from adversity). Albert Camus as an existentialist, says in a tough and difficult atmosphere it is precisely challenging to find food to live, undoubted freedom in difficult and tragic situations.

Criticism of the cultural industry literature is always submitted in order to answer the phenomenon of society. but still lacking, especially in relation to pandemic conditions and necessitating digital transformation. It is in this section that this paper fills in the gaps in literature development.

Technology Development and User-Generated Content

Global collective art project is authentic narrative folk song or religious song for example, but also demonstrates deep mass media technology to express nostalgia in earlier folk culture. The original sources of folk 'the true West not a Hollywood film fantasy (Edwards, 2016). A blend between mass culture and folk culture as a form of cultural expression in the context of a genre. Its uniqueness lies in the mix or mixture which was developed from person to person and developed into mass culture via communication technology (Cash in Edwards, 2016).

The tension between inclusive values and the aesthetic qualities of mentors require them to adapt their goals, conceptions and roles in practice art. That is a change in offline to online approach (Gibson, 2021). Turino's framework is divided into four: real time and replay time performance relation, which between production and reception, each differing in purpose, value, role, practice and style; each differing in social functions; responsibilities; and other features of sound (Turino, 2008 in Gibson, 2016).

Two emerging approaches in the USA in viewing art are: (1) as an object of aesthetic and application of traditional methods of structural and historical analysis; and (2) as a cultural product that has goals and interests in some power structures and applies new methods of sociopolitical and cultural analysis (Ponti, 2010).

Mihaly Csikzentmihalyi's view states that creativity is not only in the mind of the creator but also in a socio-cultural context (resulting from the interaction of 3 systems, namely domain, person, and field). All three form a repetitive and systemic model. Domain represents a symbolic system which supplies the rules and symbols of a particular context define environmental boundaries as rules. Without rules, a creator cannot start creating because the context to draw knowledge from or contribution is lost. The field represents a field of experts that serves as a metaphorical filter of bad ideas from good ones (Csikzentmihalyi, 1997, 2014/1998).

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Global Art Circulation and Digital Audiences

The globalization myth of 'Global Cultural Homogeneity' explains that the same consumption of cultural products and materials such as Disney World, clothes, cars, architectural models, and others creates a meta-culture in group identity based on shared consumption patterns based on choice, emulation or manipulation. Arjun Appadurai shows that at least there are strengths from big cities that have become new societies that tend to seek authenticity in one or several ways. That indigenous dynamics is the beginning to explore in a sophisticated way (read: technology) and requires more attention (Appadurai, 1996). On the other hand, Arjun Appadurai mentions that there is cosmopolitanism, that is, transnational intellectuals who stay connected through global cultural flows and who do not only feel at home in other cultures, but seek and adopt reflexive, metacultural or aesthetic attitudes for different cultural experiences (in Featherstone, 1990).

Traditions are formed from within and interact with the kinetic movements of countless social practices often considered revolutionary. Tradition is often considered to be older than the past, so the debate is afraid of being contaminated with the past. The rejection of the past to the values that have been used for a long time is often revolutionary as in the context of political movement (Michael-Broken, 2003). Preservation and conservation as positions challenge real commercial exploitation in popular culture. The revival has even become a safe haven of cultural heritage from human and industrial over-exploitation. It is also a place where people make art more properly than is available through mediated processes. Revival is interesting because it is invested with the values of truth and authenticity. Also conversely, it represents a representation of continuity, a cultural buffer against what people call the USA carnivorous capitalism (Michael-Broken, 2003). Bordieu states that classical art (music) represents a high culture that has schools and training centers established by the government, recruits intelligent people and concert are held in art buildings rather than stadiums or temporarily built places as popular culture holds performances (Bordieu, 1984).

Cultural workers or artists also do not have to ask companies to distribute and produce recording, because they directly upload them to the internet (Oh & Park, 2012). The presence of the global art industry removes the boundaries between high culture and popular culture on the one hand and on the other hand between advanced and developing cultures. There is an effort to build a network between global talent and social capital to global industries that were not previously connected (Oh & Park, 2012).

The advent of new media changed the way folk or art was performed, produced, distributed and shared. New media helped make folk or art more popular while reducing revenue for those engaged solely in production and distribution. Even piracy is tolerated by artists either out of apathy or an interest in reaching new audiences with their message, while increasing their own fame and associated patronage (Kumar et al., 2011; Fauchart, E & von Hippel, E., 2008). Recommendations to design appropriate folk or art sharing and distribution services that address the motivations of artists and audiences and the default assumption to free open digital access is an integral part of the gifting process cycle from before and indefinitely in the future. The risk of losing old recording from damaged media must be proactive but not limited, to further rescue unlimited digital access. A small group of artists as a model think that without digitalization, their worlds will be degraded and at a loss (Conway & Markum, 2019).

Ahmed (2019) mentions that social media is a collective platform for sharing information which often get feedback on social media (Ahmed et al., 2019). Rajes and Poulus added that virtual shows function for humanity and not for profit; it can also raise awareness of crisis and also promote solidarity (Rajes

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and Poulus, 2022). Tradition is offered as a source of new knowledge, providing resources for creative expression (Michael-Broken, 2003).

For intersection between popular culture and new media, David Beer calls it the hearth of cultural and social issues. For example freedom of speech, privacy rights, digital economy, forms of mass communication, contemporary social connections, etc. This thing also occurs in the formation of everyday life and the disclosure of routine experiences. So when thinking about new media, you should also think about forms of popular cultures as an important part both in terms of its use and its incorporation in daily practice by trying to update the understanding of contemporary culture by dismantling everyday materiality in the context of socio-technological change. The method, through various material sources, is to open up the system and currents that are now shaping and agreeing with popular culture; how it is organized, disseminated and how tastes are formed (Beer, 2013).

And to bring up this critical awareness, a space or channel is needed where ideology is propagated. According to Marx's view, the media is one of the fields to spread the dominant ideology. However, the media which is touted as a public space is now experiencing a decline. This is not only related to the commodification of media but also related to the commercialization which developed rapidly in the 1980s along with the Reaganian and Thatcherian policies of market power (Barret & Newbold 1995). For Theodor Adorno, the industrialization of culture narrows the range of expressive and popular choices in pouring creativity into commercial genre prints (Witkin, 2003). Transnational expansion is often only seen as a process of globalization. Transnational vision consumerism with homogeneity so that world consumption is marked by corporate branding. Commercial consumer culture is often a thin-scale, ubiquitous, designed quality (glamour) mask that conveys the multi-layered context of social interaction in which consumption practices and cultural identities play out which effectively masks the exclusion and marginalization that accompanies participation in transnational markets (Griffin, 2000).

METHODOLOGY

This study used qualitative method. The research analysis unit used the social media platform YouTube. Two channels observationed are the Dalang Seno Channel and the Ki Dalang Seno Channel. Both are the official channels that used for live streaming and archived documentation video. The types of data collected in this paper include show schedule data to determine the number of responses or staging shows each month during Covid-19 pandemic and the number of subscribers of both official channels to find out the number of loyal fans and the comparison with the number of viewers who watched each live stream.

Participants in this study were the puppeteer performance team Seno Nugroho which includes *dalang* (puppeteer), *sinden* (singers in puppet performances accompanied by *gamelan* and songs sung to the rhythm of the puppet show), *gamelan* crews, and official channels crews. The selection of this participant was based on the fact that he was the earliest puppeteer who performed the climen puppet show and had a large audience. As proof, even though Ki Seno Nugroho is a puppeteer with the Yogyakarta style, it is widely accepted and liked by people living outside Yogyakarta. As with the procedures for data collection on social media, researchers must subscribe first before accessing the official channel. This made it easier for researchers to access the required video archive.

The instrument used in this study was the live streaming video of *wayang* climen (climen puppet) on the Dalang Seno's official channel during the COVID-19 pandemic (March - 10 September 2020). The justification for using video instrument is because it is easy to access and open. Only by submitting

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(subscribes), it will get a notification if there is updated information from the channel. This is useful for reminders so they can know the schedule of shows. Videos on the YouTube platform serve as an instrument or space where the digital transformation process takes place. Its advantages or differences with other platforms such as Instagram (IG) or Facebook (FB), videos on YouTube are more common, used across generations and developed earlier. While IG is more segmented, it is even called a stylist. Facebook is often identified with the social media used by older generations.

The research stages were carried out starting from preparation to data analysis and the following conclusions. Data collection time is from the start of the Covid-19 pandemic (March 2020) until the end of the large-scale social restrictions (PSBB) policy in early September 2020. When the first PSBB started on March 16, 2020, there was no digital transformation process, all still complied with the PSBB policy recommendation to stay at home only and the prohibition on crowding. With that in mind, therefore data is collected starting April 2020. Within that time frame a strict PSBB (10 April - 5 June 2020) and a transitional PSBB (5 June - 10 September 2020) apply. When the PSBB was strict, the policy at home was enforced. Meanwhile, during the transition of PSBB, several strategic sectors were given concessions.

The research design or instrument was carried out by direct observation during live streaming or playing back video archives that were missed or not following live broadcasts. This is to determine the dynamics of the performance team and the interactions that occur during the show. When the *limbukan* or (singers or *Sinden* stand and 'sway') part, usually the audience can interact with the puppeteer either through chat on the official channel or the WhatsApp number provided. The puppeteer will read out the chat, it can be a song request, greeting, or other request. Audiences who request songs and sayings usually provide solidarity support in the form of response by giving money according to their respective abilities. Response money is transferred to the account that has been prepared and announced via running text during the show. During this 'sway' time frame, one can assess how interesting the show is.

The data collection technique was carried out by observing participants on the official channel and during the live streaming of the show. To check the number of viewers when live streaming is done by checking the official video archive of the channel. The collected data was then processed through categorization and classification thematically, trends and frequency. Data presentation is done with tables, graphs and matrices. The analysis was carried out by means of an interpretive descriptive analysis using Adorno's industrial theory of culture.

DATA AND DISCUSSION

The Cultural Industry in Creativity and Critical Thinking Puppeteer

Observation and participant observation were carried out through 2 official channels for the Seno puppeteer, the Dalang Seno Channel and the Ki Dalang Seno Channel. The Dalang Seno Channel has 436 thousand subscribers, while the Ki Dalang Seno Channel has 116 thousand subscribers. During the covid-19 pandemic Ki Seno Nugroho canceled his gig schedule and obeyed the government policy to stay at home. However, as a puppeteer who has several crews in each show, he certainly feels he must provide understanding and solidarity to all his crew regarding the conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic. So a live Jemblung puppet show was created with the aim of providing entertainment as well as information about Covid-19 to all fans including the crew.

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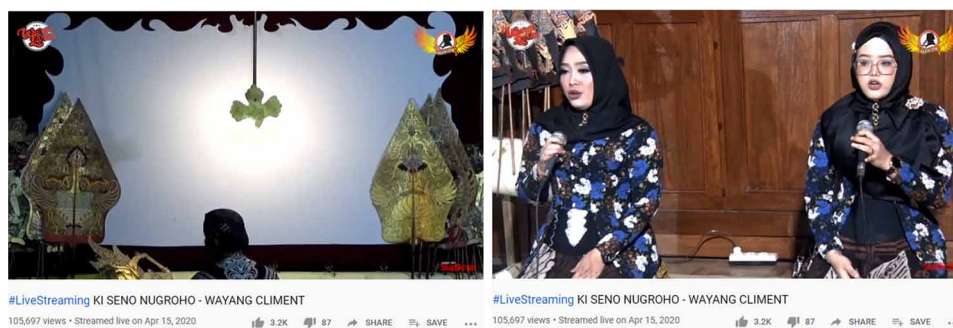
Figure 1. Footage of Jemblung puppet show
Sources: Screenshot from official Dalang Seno channel



Figure 1 is a screenshot of the Jemblung puppet show. Jemblung puppet is a simple performance, without any gamelan instruments as accompaniment or sinden. The puppeteer tells the story with a voice that comes out of his own mouth. This Jemblung puppet is performed with the intention of entertaining, eliminating fear of Covid-19 as well as socializing about Covid-19. The story that is told is slightly out of the norm of the usual stories puppet. Jemblung puppet is broadcast live streaming on March 29, 2020 with a duration of 1 hour 5 minutes. The number of views on the two official channels, namely the Dalang Seno Channel, was 158,050, while the Ki Dalang Seno Channel was written March 30, 2020, with 117,950 views.

It seems as that the Covid-19 pandemic continues, even the government is planning a large-scale social restriction (PSBB) entering April, to be precise on April 10, 2020, the PSBB has begun to set. Ki Seno Nugroho also took the initiative to hold a climen puppet show, namely a minimalist puppet show, carried out in a simple or practical way, but the story reaches to the audience. There were 5 climen puppet shows 1 to 5 times in April 2020. The total views during the climen puppet show can be seen in the Table 3. This climen puppet show apparently really caught the attention of fans so that views on both official channels reached 228,639. Figure 2 shows the highest number compared to 4 other climen puppet shows in April 2020.

Figure 2. Footage of the 1 Climen puppet show April 15, 2020
Sources: Screenshot from official Dalang Seno channel



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There are only 2 singers accompanied by gamelan (*Sinden*), whereas in performances before the pandemic this number could reach up to 8-10 people. The gamelan players only consist of about 3-5 people, each of which plays a dual role in playing the gamelan. For example, the main drummer of the gong, drums, gender, and also other instruments when needed. Even Ki Seno as the puppeteer also played a small drum so that the gamelan accompaniment would sound complete. An excerpt from the story at the first Climen puppet show:

The story that was told during the first climen puppet show was the pageblug (the plague) in Astina as an analogy to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is said that the character Durna often treats students at the hermitage, but cannot treat Astina residents. It was said by the herbalist mastermind made of wrongly mashed leaves, so that it did not heal and many other countries in the world were also affected by the COVID-19 pageblug. Some of the Amerta countries where the Kauravas (Kurawa) lived were already affected, among others, Citraksi and Durmagati.

In addition, the performance also includes socialization for the puppet fan community. The following is an excerpt that shows the socialization material:

The story of Wuhan after knowing that it turned out that Covid-19 had caused many victims, so that the hospital's capacity was unable to accommodate, as well as limited doctors and health workers. Virus with symptoms of 4 days is treated by drinking salt water, having strong immunity, taking vitamins. The 2% mortality rate becomes a lot if the hospital is unable to accommodate the patient. But don't make information scary and confusing. You don't have to search for data because no one knows if it's hit or not, it's better to take care of yourself which means protecting others. Please post videos that encourage and escape Covid-19.

Lockdown must be interpreted appropriately, which has been locked down, those outside cannot enter and those inside cannot go out and out too. If someone is going to come in, it is better if you wash your hands with soapy water, keep your distance, so that it can be like Wuhan which is already free. Don't like nagging. Be careful and don't be afraid to overdo it. Appreciate the health workers who are struggling in the front line and people are encouraged that every disease has a cure.

Overall Climen puppet 1-5 aims to entertain the community in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic as well as raise donations for Covid-19 victims. The funds that were successfully raised were then distributed to residents around the residence of the Seno mastermind who were economically affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. The climen 3 puppet show collaborated with painter Nasirun who was inspired to make a corona puppet painting that was auctioned and the gains were donated 100% to victims of Covid-19.

At the Climen puppet 4 show, Seno puppeteer is auctioning off puppet Wisanggeni for donations. Several sinden and guest stars donated fees and auctioned t-shirts with self-portraits, the results of which were also 100% donated to victims of Covid-19.

After the climen puppet show has finished up to climen 5, then the 2 official channels will only replay past shows. On May 20, 2020, donations were distributed from fundraising during the wayang climen performance. Donations will be distributed to each of those entitled to receive IDR 1,250,000.

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Figure 3. Footage of the Climen puppet show April 18, 2020

Sources: Screenshot from official Dalang Seno channel



Figure 4. Footage of the Climen puppet show April 20, 2020

Sources: Screenshot from official Dalang Seno channel



Figure 5. Distribution of funds from fundraising during the Climen puppet performance

Sources: Screenshot from official Dalang Seno channel



In May 2020 there were only 2 climen puppet shows supported by Ki Seno himself and responded to by the Central National Cultural Agency for the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (Badan Kebudayaan Nasional Pusat PDI-P) in commemoration of Pancasila's birthday. Starting in June 2020, climen puppet shows have become more frequent due to the government's policy to relax the PSBB (transitional PSBB). The climen puppet show from June onwards until September 10, 2020 when the transitional PSBB ended as a whole was the support from the wider community, both from individuals, communities, government agencies including educational and private institutions. All shows were carried out according to the Covid-19 protocol of wearing masks, maintaining distance and washing hands.

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Figure 6. Commitment to using masks to keep your distance and wash your hands during the show (3M movement)

Sources: Screenshot from official Ki Seno Nugroho channel



The movements carried out by the artists show that the economic logic which is full of uncertainty is not just numbers, but in the form of entertainment that comes from local wisdom. The puppeteer Seno Nugroho's sense of sensitivity as an artist gave rise to critical thinking to hold the Jemblung puppet show. Meanwhile, his sense of responsibility in having a performance crew member affected by covid-19 gave rise to the idea of raising funds. Given that every show is inseparable from the audience, the proceeds of the donation are distributed not only to the internal crew of the show but also to the surrounding community who are also in the same boat who must comply with government policies to stay at home and always keep their distance.

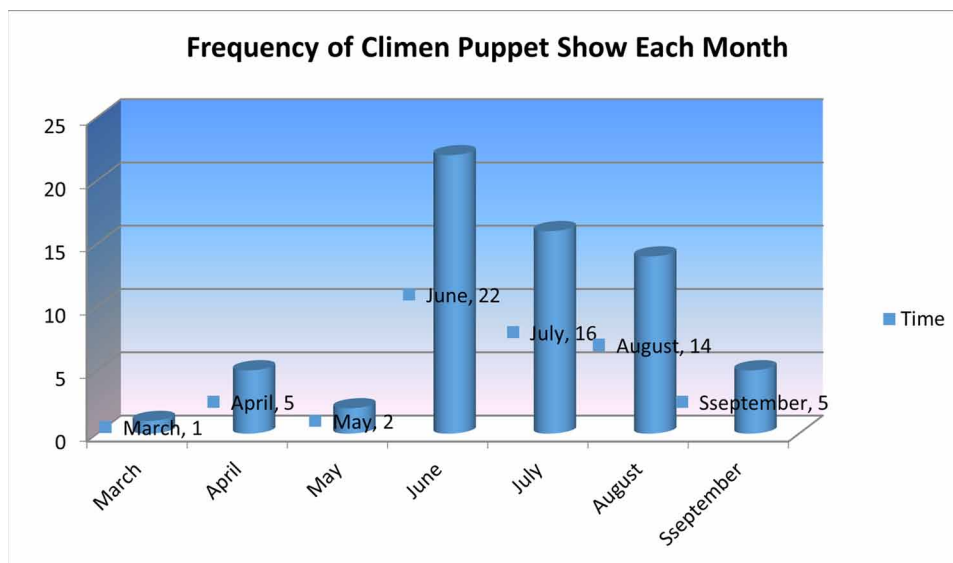
The cultural industry theory related to integral freedom and domination or repression of regulation is not fully applicable in the context of this research. Because it is not always the culture that is of interest to the masses and becomes mass culture that will regress and decline in quality when compared to high culture. There is a value of local wisdom that will help maintain and make dialectics to realize the common good. There are many positive potentials that can become social capital in living a community life even though they have to adapt to changes that are always happening, including living in the midst of a pandemic. The aesthetic theory that initially gave special rooms to certain classes, in a pandemic that befell all citizens of the world, they must be willing to stay at home if there is no urgent need. Everything has changed, if it can be done online and from home, why should you attend while the risk of contracting the Covid-19 disease is still threatening.

Art as Self-Expression Needs and Critical

The highest frequency of climen puppet shows occurred in June 2020 with 22 performances. Then it was followed in July 2020 by 16 performances with one of the performances that the Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (National Awakening Party) responded to in the framework of the party's 22nd anniversary whose duration reached 4 hours. The duration of the climen puppet show during the pandemic ranged from 2 hours, but occasionally there was a duration of 2.5 hours or 3 hours according to the respondent's wishes. In August 2020, there were 14 times with 2 shows with a duration of more than 3 hours, namely once almost 7 hours (6.54.44) and once with a duration of 5 hours 26 minutes.

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Table 1. Frequency of Climen puppet show each month (March – September 10, 2020)



The theme of the show or story is usually adjusted according to the respondent's request. For example, for gratitude for the gift of age, the theme staged by *Wahyu Tunggul* or *Bangun Tresna* (stump revelation or build love). For the city's anniversary, the theme was *Tumuruning Wahyu Katentreman* (the revelation of peace). The theme Wisanggeni born or Gatotkaca born or Ontoseno Born is usually chosen for responders who have a gratitude for the birth of their son or grandchild. During the Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (National Awakening Party) anniversary the theme of the Awakened Pandawa, depicting five knights who always do the best and are dedicated to their country.

The number of visitors highlights the number of visitors on each official channel per show and added up per month. Furthermore, the number of visitors per month from each official channel is combined so that the total number of visitors per month is known. For example, the number of visitors in June 2020 on the Dalang Seno channel was 2,016,395 visitors and on the Ki Dalang Seno channel was 713,985 visitors, so the total visitors in July 2020 on the two official channels amounted to 2,730,380 visitors.

Art is a need for self-actualization, so in a time that requires staying at home, it seems that this need is very important to be fulfilled. Data from the findings show that the climen puppet show, which was initially only done voluntarily by the puppeteer for the purpose of entertaining, then developed into a performance to raise funds for residents affected by Covid-19. It cannot be denied that apart from the need for self-actualization, daily needs related to the economy are indeed a formidable challenge that must be faced by all. Even the state was confused about the policies issued whether to prioritize health first or at the same time also provide room for economic activity to run. It seems that raising donations has received an extraordinary response, as evidenced by the total amount of money channeled to each of the victims affected by Covid-19 reaching over 1 million rupiah. This is quite fantastic because the amount exceeds the capacity of direct cash assistance from the government. In line with the government's policy of loosening large-scale social restrictions, puppet performances began to get busy with support from both individual and political parties. The condition is improving and continues to develop with the support of responders from various strata of society, the performances are held almost every day.

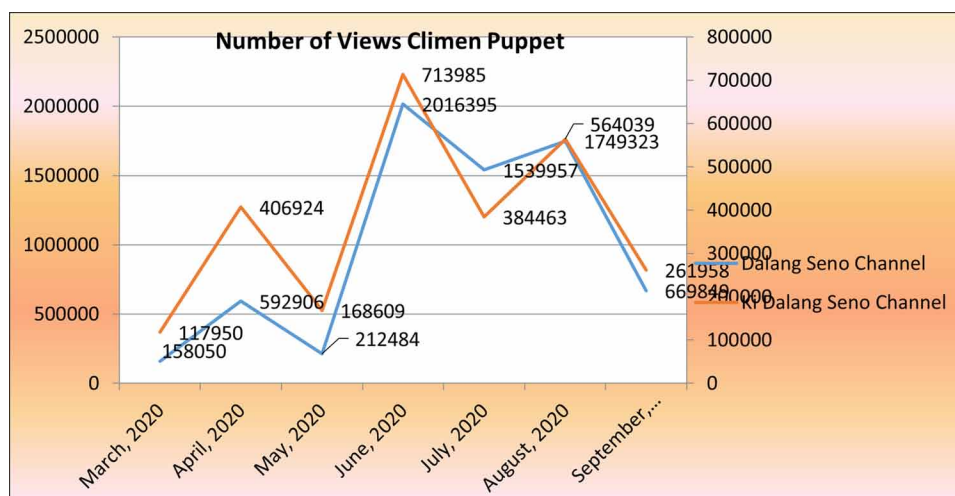
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Table 2. Performance content and support during pandemic

Month	Performance Content	Sponsor
March	Jemblung Puppet – treat the longing of fans	Ki Seno Nugroho self
April	Climen Puppet – solidarity for the people affected by Covid-19	Ki Seno Nugroho
May	Climen Puppet – solidarity for the people affected by Covid-19 - Pancasila’s birthday/anniversary	Ki Seno Nugroho Central National Cultural Agency, Indonesian Democratic Party (Badan Kebudayaan Nasional Pusat Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan/BKPNP PDI-P)
June	Climen Puppet – birthday (people, company, communities, school), thanks for medical personnel, health socialization, cultural conservation, thanksgiving, wedding	Persatuan Pedalangan Indonesia/Pepadi (Indonesia Puppet Association), PT Irawan Djaya Agung, Petrosida Gresik, Indonesian Anti-Corruption Society/ Masyarakat Anti Korupsi Indonesia (MARI), Public Refeuling Station (Stasiun Pengisian Bahan Bakar Umum) Kalibawang, Bolo Seno, Pom-Pom Boys Manager SPBU, Bank Indonesia, SMA (Senior High School) Taman Siswa Nanggulan, etc.
July	Climen Puppet – birthday (people, company, party, community, city), wedding	Person, community, Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa/ PKB, Perseroan Terbatas (Incorporated company), UD (trade business), government institution, etc.
August	Climen Puppet – birthday, socializing, conservation	Personal, PT, Dinas Pendidikan Pemuda dan Olah Raga (Agency of education, youth and sports), Dinas Kebudayaan (Cultural Service) DIY, Universitas Taman Siswa Yogyakarta, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi (Istitute of Economic Science) Rajawali Purworejo
September	Climen Puppet – birthday, thanksgiving, conservation	Persatuan Pedalangan Indonesia/Pepadi (Indonesia Puppet Association), personal, Alumni Akademi Angkatan Udara (Air Force Academy Alumni)

Sources: Processed from official Dalang Seno channel

Table 3. Number of views Climen puppet during live streaming in March-September 10, 2020 at Dalang Seno Channel and Ki Dalang Seno Channel



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Most of the momentum for the transformation occurred in terms of modes of consumption and distribution, both of which led to an escalation of retromania due to increased capacity of storage, organization, instant access and vast amount of cultural data. Likewise with the digital transformation process of the Seno puppeteer, pandemic conditions that required not going home strengthen the tendency to carry out activities that can be done at home. Many things can be done whether through feeding, sending of gifts to one another, playing folk songs or virtual gatherings. Puppet (Wayang) is a culture that can represent your hometown, so that the more it is here, the more attention and interest it generates. People try to find information, referrals or try to join groups or communities even in cyberspace so they can feel the nostalgia of their hometown. Retro does not mean a manifestation of cultural regression or decadence but because you can write and enjoy, get involved and must also be a maniac participant, looking for related literature in the past, etc. Then, they began to express feelings or forms of gratitude for good health during the pandemic, celebrating birthdays, community activities, and others through puppet (*Wayang*).

Digital culture shows that the quantity of expressions rises exponentially as well as the speed of production, transmission and exchange. New media will create unlimited choice from our sizeable cultural heritages and a new creative potential among population. With multimedia, people are enabled to create their own works of art and other products (van Dijk, 2006: 190-191).

The Shifts in Consumption and Distribution of Traditional Art in the Digital Era

Advances in information and communication technology are inevitably adapted in order to carry out digital transformation. The expression space for residents has begun to shift to virtual, including shopping, school, work and the arts. All of which are a challenge for social and humanities research, must also develop digital methods, so that they are able to contribute to solving citizens' problems.

Consumption patterns for art products have changed to virtual with the increasingly massive use of social media and better internet access. In fact, this change was increased during the Covid-19 pandemic when almost all business was done online. Restrictions on movement were carried out by the government, so that people's mobility was limited. The tradition or custom of visiting hometown during holidays or certain times was not permitted during the pandemic. In the end, the feeling of longing for both family and village was cured by watching a performance that shows a hometown tradition, such as puppet show. The YouTube application is the most feasible option without paying as long as it has internet access and can chat directly to greet fellow fans, maybe even with family in the village or elsewhere. Some fans of the show even come from various countries such as Hong-Kong, America, Japan and Korea. They are Indonesian workers or indeed foreigners who like and pay attention to puppet performances and frequently donate to the shows.

On the other hand, Ki Seno Nugroho had a YouTube streaming channel before the pandemic so that during the pandemic, with his creativity, he can immediately create content on his YouTube channel and also present his puppet shows, even with adaptations. Shows were shortened in length and without spectators and they received great appreciation and good responses from various circles and fans. Furthermore, what Ki Seno Nugroho did inspired other puppeteers. Finally, the puppeteers revived and held performances online.

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CONCLUSION

This research confirms that the digital transformation of mastermind Seno Nugroho during the Covid-19 pandemic was successful. In addition to the innovation and creativity of the Seno puppeteer, he held a *climen* puppet show, also because of solidarity with others and the entire performance team. Wayang art (puppet) is an entertaining medium that can be used to disseminate various solutions to problems that arise in society. With advances in technology, interactions are made easier without having to be face-to-face, especially in times of need to maintain distance to protect each other and avoid the Covid-19 disease.

Art as a basic need for self-expression, continues to be actualized. This has proven that almost every day the performance can be done, so that it becomes a daily life. On the other hand, this condition creates economic resilience because their needs are fulfilled from the show. Many parties are involved and can enjoy the results of digital transformation which not limited to space and time. The aesthetics known as class autonomy becomes fluid in the context of digital transformation by the puppeteers. The theory of the cultural industry is dialectic with pandemic conditions that require isolation for all without class boundaries anymore.

This research is limited to online data collection with observation and observation participation without in-depth interviews and the help of data processing tools which are currently widely used. So this research needs to be continued by filling in the shortcomings that have not been done, so that it will produce a more complete and detailed output. This research also has not touched on the obstacles that may arise in the digital transformation of wayang shows. Obstacles may arise from viewers, especially generation X or baby boomers, regarding the use of digital devices, or the availability of signals and quotas for internet access. But once again, it can be said that wayang fans are currently quite internet literate and have expanded to the digital native generation. In this context justified wayang is considered a tangible world heritage by UNESCO.

The advantages of this research is using the theoretical analysis of the cultural industry raises the dialectic of enlightenment in integral freedom by avoiding the occurrence of mass deception. It is not only cultural commodification, but popular culture criticism that has a tendency to repeat itself because people get bored easily and always want to be nostalgic, so that popular culture has also experienced an increase in quality. It is not as always contested in the culture industry theory that popular culture is often considered as a culture that is inferior to a noble culture.

LIMITATIONS

This chapter only took videos from YouTube platform, while the puppeteers used others platform social media like Instagram or Whatsapp for communication with their fans. Hence, future research needs to study other social media platforms in order to find out their fan segment, class social, and taste. The method used in this chapter has optimally utilized big data, so that further research can take advantage of it. Currently, there are many tools that are able to facilitate how to collect data, clean data and analyze it automatically using machine tools. Data obtained with such tools is usually in large amounts, which if done manually will be time consuming and less effective. Along with the increasingly massive use of virtual space as an expression and contestation of various citizen discourses, digital methods should be more utilized. Especially during a pandemic, which requires maintaining distance and reducing physical contact. Before a pandemic social research usually demanded fieldwork in data collection. The puppeteer

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actors studied in this study also included only one puppeteer even though his performance was broadcast live on two YouTube channels. The challenge for other research is to show more about other puppeteers and the pattern of transformation similar to what is written here in addition to investigating more about the fan loyalty base of each puppeteer if the show coincides with the streaming time.

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Chapter 11

The Transformation of the Ethnic Pop Music Industry and the Negotiation of Cultural Identity

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ABSTRACT

Some scholars place too much emphasis on the role of capitalists and their capital in the development of the culture industry, while others view ethnic music as a stable ethnic identity. This chapter discusses how technology influences the development of the ethnic pop music industry in Indonesia. At the onset of the culture industry, the high cost of music production and distribution technologies resulted in a few producers dominating the market and limited options for listeners. Subsequently, advancements in technology decreased the cost of equipment, enabling Minang entrepreneurs and musicians to establish a thriving local music industry. The strong sense of cultural identity among Minang migrants outside West Sumatra has created a large market for this ethnic pop music. However, the relationship between music, identity, market, and business is constantly evolving, as the question of music as ethnic identity is often raised. Often, the success of musicians can lead to the acceptance of their music as ethnic music.

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INTRODUCTION

Music can serve various purposes, both for individuals and society as a whole. It can entertain individuals, impacting their emotions, and it can also bring people together and promote a sense of community (Clayton, 2012). Traditional music serves as a cornerstone of a community's identity, symbolizing its cultural heritage and values through established musical expressions. Despite catering to a smaller audience, this enduring art form retains its significance due to its strong connection to ethnic identity (Boer et al., 2013). It is considered a key aspect of cultural heritage and can be seen as a symbol of tradition and continuity. It can also serve as a reminder of the past and provide a sense of cultural roots and belonging. While it can provide entertainment for its audience, there are instances where traditional music may predominantly hold a ceremonial role, particularly during cultural events (Nicolas, 2019; Valley, 2014). This is especially noticeable when the music remains unchanged for extended periods without any innovative adaptations. In certain situations, particularly for ethnic and migrant minorities, performing or showcasing their traditional music serves as a political statement to assert their presence (Martiniello & Lafleur, 2008).

Ethnic identity, whether in music or other forms, is a dynamic social construct shaped by socio-cultural and socio-historical influences (Jaspal & Cinnirella, 2012; Shank, 1994). Individuals' musical taste is never fixed, regardless of how much they love their social groups. Ethnic music, similar to other cultural resources such as artifacts, rituals, and knowledge, serves as a foundation for the ongoing construction and renegotiation of ethnic identities, rather than entrapping ethnic groups to their past (Lidskog, 2016). Once the cultural practice or identity is established, people tend to forget its contingent historical origin. People tend to idealize their cultural identity and ignore or forget that it may have been shaped by non-cultural factors (Storey, 2015).

Ethnic identity is often constructed through an idealized narrative that omits negative aspects of the group's history, such as inter-group violence and atrocities committed by the group. People seek to belong to a group for a sense of belonging, but also want to dissociate themselves psychologically from the negative aspects of their past (Cohen, 2013). The idealized narrative helps to strengthen feelings of belonging and continuity within the group. It makes a group member perceive themselves not as a separate entity in the world, but as a part of a long line of individuals united by a shared heritage (Jaspal & Cinnirella, 2012).

Individuals within the same ethnic group may have varying perspectives on their ethnic identities. When it comes to traditional music, some people may favor preserving it unchanged, keeping it sounding as it has for a long time. They enjoy the performance of ethnic music as a recreation of historical pieces, rather than an improvisational process (Trimillos, 1986), while some may not feel that incorporating external elements into their traditional music betrays their ethnicity. Musicians working in the popular music industry view ethnic music, like other musical styles, as part of their repertoire and a way to express their creativity (Taher, 2016). The acceptance of mixed music as a form of ethnic innovation or cultural heresy is subject to cultural negotiation.

In today's interconnected world, culture is constantly evolving due to continuous interactions with its surroundings. Keeping traditional music as a static, unchanging "museum object" may preserve it, but it also means that it is only experienced during traditional cultural events, rather than being a regular part of daily life. Conversely, people often consume popular music as their daily entertainment without any association with group affiliation.

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Just because traditional music is often limited to occasional performances at cultural events, does not mean that it has no place in today's entertainment industry. Throughout music history, composers have frequently looked to traditional music for inspiration in their works. In the late 19th century, many composers used traditional music as a way to break free from tonal limitations, explore new composition techniques, and create a sense of exoticism (D'Agostino, 2020). Electronic music creators have continued this trend of drawing inspiration from traditional music and have been using new technologies to incorporate traditional elements into their work.

In this chapter, we explore the growth of the ethnic pop music industry, and how technological developments have played a role in shaping it. It should be noted that technology is not the only factor at play, but is also intertwined with industry trends, shifts in listener preferences, and the cultural demand for the preservation of ethnic music identities.

THE CULTURE INDUSTRY AND THE LOSS OF INDIVIDUALITY

The ethnic pop music industry is part of the culture industry, as it is both produced and distributed as a commercial enterprise. Despite incorporating identifiable ethnic music elements such as language, style, and sometimes instruments, it also incorporates new and external elements to appeal to its target audience. The term "culture industry" was coined by Horkheimer and Adorno (2002) to replace the term "mass culture" in order to rule out that the mass consumption of cultural products emerges spontaneously from the people themselves.

Culture refers to the shared beliefs, customs, practices, and social behaviors of a group of people, which reflect their shared experiences and learning for survival, growth, and cohesion (Schein et al., 2015). However, with the emergence of the culture industry, many aspects of culture are no longer created and distributed collectively and socially, but are instead crafted and marketed commercially. Hence, "Culture has become openly, and defiantly, an industry obeying the same rules of production as any other producer of commodities" (Bernstein, 2005, p. 9).

The culture industry emerged during the period of widespread industrialization in the Western world, and was facilitated by the widespread use of mass media technology (Adorno, 2005a; Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002). At the time, the high cost of production and broadcasting/distribution of cultural products made the dominance of large corporations inevitable. The culture industry was also seen as a battleground for ideological conflict between capitalism and socialism, with some interpreting it as a manifestation of capitalist domination. In this sense, the culture industry was viewed similarly to other industries, as an arena of struggle for influence and control.

During the mid-20th century, the significant influence of the culture industry raised concerns that it would lead to a loss of individuality as individuals conform to societal standards of success. This was believed to be a result of the mass production of consumer goods that were made readily available to the general public. This standardization resulted in a homogenization of consumption, leading to a decrease in the uniqueness among individuals (Adorno, 2005b).

Adorno gives too much emphasis on the power of capitalists and ignores the agency of individuals, and technology is seen as widening the power gap. However, according to Lewis Mumford (1964), there are two forms of technology: authoritarian and democratic. The former is system-centered and extremely powerful but inherently unstable, while the latter is centered on the needs and capabilities of individuals and is relatively weak but resourceful and resilient. The dominance of one form of technology over the

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other can vary depending on the phase of technological development. In the early development of the culture industry, media and broadcasting technologies were very expensive, leading to a concentration of the industry in the hands of a few players. This made the Marxist interpretation of the culture industry more appealing, as the domination of capitalists was evident. However, recent developments, such as the rise of indie musicians aided by YouTube, show that this is not always the case. The emergence of new technology has the transformative potential to empower individuals who were previously marginalized or lacked influence, resulting in profound shifts in power relations that were previously unseen.

In the era before the advent of social media, the culture industry predominantly operated as a mass-mediated entertainment sector, providing entertainment products to a wide and diverse audience through various mass media channels. This enabled individuals to enjoy music and other forms of entertainment privately within the comfort of their homes, eliminating the need for congregating in crowds or engaging directly with performers. For consumers of advertising-driven entertainment, their presence was often abstracted and reduced to quantifiable variables that could be tested and described based on their intended purposes, as determined by marketing research (Baym & boyd, 2012). Therefore, some scholars view mediated audiences less as an ontological reality and more as a discursive construct molded by various programs, institutions, and data (Bratich, 2006), or as a temporarily situated role that individuals play while consuming mediated cultural products (Butsch, 2008). However, these concerns arose, prior to the emergence of social media technology, which now enables individuals to create their own media content and entertainment while fostering interactive and reactive engagement among audiences or between the audience and content producers.

CAPITALISM, COMPETITION, AND CHOICES

According to the Marxist perspective, the culture industry has strong negative impacts, particularly in its early stages of development. This industry, like other industries under capitalism, is exploitative in nature. The audience of mediated entertainment was originally viewed as passive and susceptible to manipulation, passively waiting to be amused and manipulated. However, later empirical research has revealed that entertainment consumers are conscious agents who have the ability to select what they feel is best for them, rather than being dictated to by the media (Storey, 2015; Vorderer, 2001). However, while the exploitation of workers under capitalism is undeniable, capitalism is not limited to this aspect alone. It not only caters to the upper class but also makes products accessible to the working class in exchange for gradually decreasing amounts of labor (Schumpeter, 2010).

Despite the persistence of capitalism as a dominant economic system, the dominance of any particular corporation in the culture industry is not guaranteed. Capitalism also encourages competition which stimulates innovation in products and services, leading to creative destruction (Schumpeter, 2010). The culture industry has undergone constant evolution, transforming the audience from having limited choices to being inundated with options vying for their attention. As the industry becomes more competitive, entertainment providers are driven to offer more value to their audiences in the form of more choices, better quality, and greater accessibility. With the introduction of new technology, audiences are empowered to give direct feedback and participate in content creation.

The changes in technology and the business environment have also altered the power dynamics between audiences and entertainment corporations. However, it is not a zero-sum game as both the audience and the entertainment providers rely on each other. This dynamic allows for the coexistence of various

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and conflicting forces in a complex manner. In the past, mass media technology allowed people to stay informed about the world, but also made them vulnerable to explicit or subtle ideological manipulation (Adorno, 2005a; Lukes, 2005). In the case of the culture industry, it tended to standardize the audience's cultural preferences by consistently presenting them with uniform cultural offerings (Adorno, 2005b). In today's age of globalization and advanced media technologies, people have unprecedented exposure to an immense variety of musical repertoire from around the world. While certain music and musicians have gained global attention, often influenced by capital-driven factors, it is important to note that local music has not been homogenized or standardized as a result. Instead, these external influences have opened up new avenues for local musicians to explore and express their unique individuality within the dynamic backdrop of a diverse nation experiencing significant changes in an increasingly interconnected global environment (Wallach, 2008).

The progression of media technology in the industry has provided consumers with a wider range of options. However, the mere presence of technology and market forces may not always result in a diverse array of choices for consumers. In instances of a monopolized industry, such as cable television, the dominant company may not be incentivized to improve pricing and services. To combat this, implementing regulations against monopolistic practices in the cable industry can help to improve pricing and service quality and increase the availability of diverse sources within the commercial marketplace (Aufderheide, 2006).

The conflation of media technology and information and communication technology (ICT) gives both content and interactivity. The audience is not only given more choices but also freedom from being a passive audience (Maulana, 2020). But, technological development does not eliminate competing forces in the industry, while it gives the audience both choices and voices, it also exposes them to algorithmic manipulation through the use of AI and big data (Maulana, 2019).

The advancements in technology have also removed barriers for individuals to express themselves publicly. In the pre-social media era, appearing on television or other forms of mass media was limited to celebrities, political figures, and other individuals of high status. Prior to the rise of social media, the general public was largely limited to being passive viewers of mass media, and when they were featured in it, they were often portrayed through the lens and framing of journalists (Maulana, 2020). Today's technology platforms have enabled individuals to build a following and achieve a level of fame, known as "micro-celebrity". It also allows established celebrities to deepen their connection with their fans. However, the same technology that can make people more connected or famous can also make them vulnerable to online abuse, discrimination, and harassment based on factors such as race, physical appearance, and others. This has led some individuals to choose to stay away from social media (*BBC - 7 Stars Who Have Personal Experiences of Online Bullying*, n.d.).

THE NATIONAL POLITICAL CONTEXT OF ETHNIC POP MUSIC

The following section of this chapter will delve into the evolution of Minangkabau, or Minang, ethnic pop music in Indonesia. The Minang ethnic group is just one of over 600 diverse ethnic groups that inhabit Indonesia, a vast country consisting of nearly 17,000 islands (Arifin et al., 2015). The Minang people are native to the province of West Sumatra, but have a history of migration. Today, there are many Minang individuals residing in various parts of Indonesia and in neighboring countries. Examining Minang pop music is fascinating as, despite its relatively small population compared to other ethnic groups, it has

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left a significant impact on the Indonesian music industry. To fully comprehend this development, it is essential to consider the socio-political and technological context.

Every ethnic group has its unique culture and traditions, which have been partly influenced by and adapted from other cultures. This interplay has contributed to a blend of shared cultural elements and diverse traditions, making the nation culturally rich and fostering a vibrant art scene. In the early stages of its formation, a newly established nation faced the challenge of unifying diverse communities that had limited knowledge of and interaction with one another. This diversity presented significant challenges for the government in terms of fostering national unity and a sense of cohesion. Although Indonesia began as a democratic country, it struggled to sustain its democratic ideals. The politically divided nature of its diverse population weakened national unity and hindered crucial development efforts. This situation provided justification for the New Order regime, which assumed power in 1966, to curtail political freedoms and concentrate political power.

The New Order government employed various measures to foster national unity, with one significant strategy being the utilization of media and communication technologies. In 1976, Indonesia established its own satellite network, becoming the pioneering developing nation to do so. The satellite was regarded as a remarkable national accomplishment, holding the potential to connect the diverse archipelago and promote cohesion. Ideological messages were disseminated through state-owned television and radio stations which were also partially integrated into popular culture (Barker, 2005).

Radio has played a crucial role in the formation and defense of the Indonesian state. During the final decade of Dutch colonialism, it was utilized as a tool for resistance against European cultural domination (Darmanto et al., 2022). During the Japanese occupation of Java, radio was utilized as a tool for Japanese propaganda and also broadcasted local music. To increase the reach of the broadcasts, the Japanese government placed loudspeakers in various public locations including markets, railway stations, busy streets, parks, and squares (Kurasawa, 1987). After the proclamation of independence, it was used to inform the public about its new nation and state (Puguh, 2017). Radio still played an important role even after television was introduced in the 1960s which was still too expensive for the general public.

Television was a highly influential medium for spreading information and entertainment in the 1970s and 1980s, and it was monopolized by the central government. This had a significant impact on the development of the Indonesian culture industry. Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, has become the center of its culture industry. The music industry, which targeted the national market, relied on state-owned television to introduce its artists to the national audience. Aspiring artists who wanted to be nationally recognized needed to go to Jakarta and be accepted by the Jakarta-based industry establishment and the state-owned television station.

In some parts of Indonesia, local music recording industries had been established, focusing primarily on the local market. Occasionally, these products inadvertently reached beyond their intended audience when local residents promoted them to fellow emigrants in other regions of Indonesia. However, the Minang diaspora, in particular, had a relatively small number of emigrants, limiting the potential reach. Marketing cultural products in a vast market like Indonesia would prove challenging without the support of national television or radio networks.

The development of the music industry cannot be separated from the development of its used technology. Technology for music production and distribution/broadcasting has always been important for the industry. This chapter will discuss how the up and down of the local music industry was affected by the changes that occurred in technology.

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TRADITIONAL MUSIC OF WEST SUMATRA

West Sumatra is renowned for its diverse musical heritage and boasts several musicians who have achieved national fame by promoting their local music. While pop industries have emerged in many regions of Indonesia, their success varies. While some local or ethnic pop music has gained widespread recognition beyond their traditional regions, others remain relatively unknown outside of their origin areas (Barendregt, 2002). Therefore, the interplay of numerous factors, including musical talents, the entrepreneurial nature of the music industry, the loyalty of its traditional market, and various other contingent factors, significantly influences the success and dynamics of any music industry.

West Sumatra has long been a center for music production, even before the advent of digital platforms such as YouTube. This is reflected in the presence of a significant number of music producers in the region, as evidenced by ASIRINDO, an organization established by local producers in 2004. By 2013, the organization had 58 members, primarily from West Sumatra, but also including a few from outside the province (Taher, 2016). The existence of numerous producers catering to the Minang ethnic group in West Sumatra and beyond indicates that the small market for Minang music is home to a significant number of small-scale music industries. The development of Minang ethnic pop music is noteworthy to examine, as despite being primarily used as a means of expressing group identity (De Ferranti, 2002; Suryadi, 2003), some of it has also managed to garner attention from music enthusiasts outside of the Minang ethnic group.

Music can serve as a means of creating a sense of belonging and connection to a particular culture or community (Biddle & Knights, 2008; Boer et al., 2013). It can also be a tool for expressing and preserving cultural traditions and values. Traditional music that is exclusive to a specific ethnic group is usually passed down through generations through cultural events and ceremonies, preserving the cultural heritage, rather than through commercial channels. On the other hand, ethnic pop music is created by musicians who view their ethnic music as a valuable inspiration for their creativity. These musicians may use their musical heritage either as a source of inspiration for their creative process or as a means to express their identity within a multicultural society.

Among those who are interested in preserving or promoting traditional music, there are diverse perspectives. Some believe that traditional music has specific characteristics that must be upheld in any music that is considered traditional, while others view music as a living cultural treasure that should be continuously developed rather than kept static. For some people, the idea of authentic traditional music holds great importance. They believe that musicians should strictly adhere to traditional music forms to maintain their identity within their ethnic group. Others, however, see benefits in adapting and evolving traditional music to cater to contemporary tastes and contexts.

During a focus group discussion with artists and academics in Padang, West Sumatra, a debate emerged regarding the identity of Minang music and how it should be preserved in recordings and performances. Those who advocate for the preservation of traditional music argued that traditional styles and instruments should be maintained. They also emphasized that language is an essential tool for preserving and passing on culture from one generation to the next. The linguistic aspect of Minang culture is also evident in song and poetry (Barendregt, 2002). While the general public may perceive a song in the Minang language to be a Minang song, some participants argued that the use of the Minang language alone is not enough, it should also embrace the traditional style of Minang poetry (*pantun*) to truly be considered as Minang music. Some participants even argue that the popular Minang artists on

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YouTube are not performing Minang songs but singing Malay songs in the Minang language due to not complying with traditional linguistic and musical styles.

Some other participants hold a more flexible view towards traditional music, they are less restrictive in their definition of Minang song, and they are more open to the public's perception of it. This is partly due to the popularity of Minang language songs, they believe that as long as the singers are respectful of religion and conform to societal norms, people are more accepting of any type or genre of music.

The emphasis on authenticating traditional music is also driven by the views of Minang migrants living in various parts of Indonesia. The Minang ethnic group has a long history of migration, with members settling in many different areas of Indonesia. According to the participants of the focus group discussion, these migrants want the people in their home province to strictly preserve their ethnic identity. One of them stated, "They want us here to be a living museum."

Agusli Taher, a Minang music producer, holds a different viewpoint than the participants in the focus group discussion. He argues that not only is it difficult to define Minang music, but also that it is unnecessary and impossible to maintain a pure musical identity. Composers are influenced by the various musical styles and techniques they are familiar with when creating music, and also by the audience's acceptance and appreciation, as well as by the appreciation of traditional and modernist artists at the time the music was produced (Taher, 2016). Any elements or influences from within or outside their tradition are sources of creativity that should be utilized rather than ignored.

Culture, including music, is not something that remains constant or unchanging. It is always interacting with the culture of other people, and has its own internal dynamics between its different components (Williams, 1977). While there are dominant aspects of culture that are highly visible, it also encompasses elements from the past or "residual" elements that are not dominant but are recognized as part of the community's identity. Furthermore, there are also emerging aspects of culture that may later become dominant or fade away over time.

National or local identity plays a crucial role in shaping the creation and consumption of music, but it is constantly evolving in response to global and local historical contexts and the process of authenticating musical traditions (O'Flynn, 2007). However, defining musical identity through ethnic identity can be challenging. For example, while the different regions of West Sumatra have unique musical traditions, there is no consensus on the defining characteristics of Minang music (Taher, 2016). Instead, people often identify a style of music as Minang based on its geographical origin rather than its specific musical attributes.

Defining traditional music as purely authentic local tradition can be problematic because even though certain genres of music may be unique to specific places or played by certain ethnic groups, they are not immune to external influences. Furthermore, cultural appropriation can also showcase the talents of local geniuses. The history, elements of musical style, and instruments of local traditional music in West Sumatra demonstrate the presence of both internal and external influences.

Gamad music is a well-known traditional music among the Minang people, but it differs from earlier forms of Minang music in terms of its characteristics and instrumentation. Gamad music incorporates instruments such as violins, accordions, and guitars, instead of traditional Minang instruments. Also, it uses a diatonic scale, while other traditional Minang music employs a pentatonic scale. As such, Taher argues that Gamad is considered as the first generation of modern Minang music (Taher, 2016).

Examining the adoption of music technology, encompassing tools for playing, recording, and distributing music, offers valuable insights into the evolution of the local music scene. The availability of different types of technology profoundly influences the form, orientation, and social practices surrounding

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music. In previous times, radio was the primary medium for music consumption, while recorded music on gramophones remained financially inaccessible for the majority of people due to its high cost. The widespread use of cassette technology in the 1960s democratized and decentralized music production. The adoption of digital technologies, such as VCD, MP3, and the Internet, has further amplified the democratizing effects of cassettes and also introduced new elements to the music industry (Manuel, 2012).

The introduction of technology did not occur spontaneously; rather, it was brought forth by individuals and made more accessible by traders who recognized its market potential. In the late 19th century, Padang, the capital of West Sumatra, had already emerged as a thriving market for these innovative advancements. During that period, Padang had served as a melting pot for diverse ethnic groups, such as Minangkabau, Niasan, Javanese and those from overseas, such as Chinese, Arabian, Indian, as well as European. The town served as a Dutch military base in Sumatra, and was used as a hospital and treatment center for injured Dutch soldiers during the Aceh War (1873-1914). In the late 19th century, a demonstration of an Edison phonograph was conducted in 1898, during coronation festivities for Dutch Queen Wilhelmina in Padang, which was then part of Dutch Indies (Suryadi, 2003).

The development of the music industry is closely linked to the use of technology within the context of capitalism. The culture industry, including the music industry, came about with the emergence of mass media and broadcasting technology (Adorno, 2005a). However, the high cost of this technology initially limited the industry to a small number of major players who could afford the necessary capital. Therefore, the role of capital in the establishment of the culture industry is highly significant. As technology advances, it becomes more accessible and affordable, leading to a larger market for music. This technology also empowers individuals to create, produce, and distribute music, which has a major impact on the competition and organization of the music industry.

During the Dutch colonial period, Western music and instruments were introduced to the local population of West Sumatra, gaining significant popularity. The discovery of coal deposits in the region spurred the development of railway infrastructure, the establishment of mining towns, and the construction of harbors (Cheris et al., 2020). As a result, West Sumatra became a crucial region attracting Dutch settlers and migrants from various backgrounds, creating an unprecedented melting pot of cultures and influences. Diverse nations and ethnic groups arrived in West Sumatra, bringing their own forms of musical entertainment and introducing new genres and instruments to both existing and newly settled inhabitants.

Modern instruments, which are frequently of Western origin, are appealing because they can produce a broader range of sounds compared to traditional instruments. They are also more portable and widely available for purchase. The advancement of electronic and digital technology has also provided musicians with instruments that allow them to create a wide range of sounds that were previously unattainable or required multiple musical instruments. As a result, even small music groups or individual musicians can now produce a much more complex sound than before.

Gumarang Orchestra is considered one of the legends in Minang music, known for their exceptional music that captivated audiences from Minang and beyond. However, their popularity can also be understood in the context of the development of music technology. The Gumarang Orchestra, which was active on the national music scene in 1956, benefited from the expensive and complicated process of recording music in the past. The orchestra's songs were released on gramophone records and produced by the state company Lokananta for the government-owned radio stations, RRI, which include the national and local stations. The period between the first and second recording of music was approximately 3-4 months. As a result, RRI listeners, both Minang and other ethnic groups, as well as neighboring countries, were only exposed to two Gumarang Orchestra songs for the 3-4 months through the government

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radio (Taher, 2016). In addition to that, each local RRI also broadcasted live shows of local musicians. With the advancement of recording technology and the ease and affordability of music production, the music market became increasingly saturated, making it challenging for local songs to attain the same cross-ethnic popularity as the Gumarang Orchestra.

The global introduction of cassette technology in the 1960s had a significant impact on the music industry, including in Indonesia. This technological innovation resulted in the decline of gramophone disc technology and sparked the growth of the pop music industry within the country. As a result, numerous local repertoires that were previously only accessible on discs were transferred to cassettes, enabling them to be enjoyed by a wider audience of listeners. The widespread adoption of cassette technology allowed for greater access to music and helped to democratize the industry (Suryadi, 2015).

Due to the scarcity of national media outlets in the Minang region, musicians seeking national recognition often had to build their careers in Jakarta. The capital city of Indonesia served as the hub for national radio and television stations, which were owned and controlled by the government and catered to the entire country. Furthermore, major record labels that promoted artists and music through national television and radio were predominantly located in Jakarta. As a result, achieving nationwide fame necessitated musicians to operate and thrive in Jakarta.

With the continuous development of more cost-effective production and distribution methods, even small businesses were able to enter the music industry. These businesses did not need to achieve high profits from the national market but rather could focus on the local market with their low investment. The music industry in West Sumatra began in 1974 with the release of the hit song “Sarunai Aceh” by Yan Juneid and the Lime Stone Band, which was produced by Tanamo Record. This marked a shift in the production of Minang music recordings, as it had previously been centered in Jakarta. Between 1974 and 1977, several record producers emerged in Padang, many of whom were cassette and electronics traders in the city (Taher, 2022).

The market for Minang music extends beyond the inhabitants of West Sumatra province and includes Minang migrants scattered across various regions in Indonesia, as well as neighboring countries. In the 1.5-year period between 2004-2005, a total of 204 albums comprising about 2040 songs were released to the market by 15 member producers of ASIRINDO, the association of music producers specializing in Minang music. This means that the public was exposed to an average of 136 new songs every month (Taher, 2016). This crowded market limits the profits that each producer could achieve. This condition made the market for Minang music unappealing to major music labels.

THE THREAT OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Digital technology has simplified the creation and distribution of music, but it has also made it harder to safeguard copyrights. In the past, it was easy to find music stores selling legal music cassettes, and pirated cassette sellers could not sell their products openly. However, digital technology, including the Internet, has had a detrimental impact on the music industry. Many music stores were closed and CDs and VCDs sold in malls and other places were mostly illegal. Furthermore, illegal file-sharing and free music downloads are easily accessible to those with access to the Internet (Warr & Goode, 2011).

ASIRINDO, the music producer association, worked to safeguard Minang music by frequently collaborating with the provincial police to apprehend those selling illegal CDs. The association, with its large membership, united to fight against CD piracy, which posed a considerable challenge to the music

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industry. Although the association was not able to prevent illegal downloads, it was not a major issue as most people were not familiar with the Internet. It can be argued that the Minang music industry was quite successful in resisting the threat of CD/VCD piracy.

The association was not just established to combat music piracy, but it was also effective in resolving conflicts among its members. In the past, music producers frequently engaged in unethical practices such as poaching musicians from each other, and legal means were often ineffective in resolving these disputes. However, the organization's sanctions have discouraged members from poaching musicians from one another. The advantage of this recording industry association is its control over the CD/VCD sales distribution channels. Its members are hesitant to violate agreements as it would be challenging for them to enter the market without using the organization's distribution channels.

In the past, ASIRINDO members conducted business in a traditional manner, hiring musicians, recording their music, and selling physical music formats. As the music market shifted to online channels, CD/VCD sales drastically decreased, causing many producers to go out of business or change professions. This led to the region losing its status as a major center for the recording industry outside of Java. Currently, only 4 record labels of the 58 AISRINDO members are active, representing a 93% decline in the number of AISRINDO member producers. However, two new producers, Indoswara Media Digital and RW Pro, have emerged in the industry (Taher, 2022). The emergence of digital media in the music industry has created a platform for technologically adept individuals or businesses to thrive, while leaving those who struggle to adapt behind.

MIGRANTS, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE PRESERVATION OF ETHNIC IDENTITY

The Minang music industry in West Sumatra achieved remarkable success. Despite being the 11th most populous province in Indonesia, with a population of 5.5 million in 2020, West Sumatra developed into the second-largest music industry in Indonesia, after Jakarta (Taher, 2022). Even though it's much smaller than the most populous province, West Java, which has almost 50 million people (BPS, 2023). At its peak, the Minang music industry saw the distribution of its cassette, VCD, and CD recordings to Minang people living as far away as Jakarta, Riau, Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei. These recordings also had a significant non-Minang audience. The popularity of Minang pop music was exemplified by singer Zalmon's victory at the Anugerah Musik Indonesia award for regional pop music (Barendregt, 2002).

The market for the West Sumatran music industry extends beyond the local market due to the tradition of migration among the Minang people. However, the role of migrants in the industry goes beyond being just loyal consumers of ethnic music. They also play a crucial role in preserving Minang identity. The average person wants their fellow Minang people in West Sumatra to maintain their cultural traditions, and for their home village to remain unchanged when they visit. Minang artists, regardless of whether they work in music or other arts, maintain their cultural loyalty even when living outside of West Sumatra (Bruhn, 2020). Music legends, such as Orkes Gumarang and Elly Kasim, achieved national popularity with Minang songs while based in Jakarta (Taher, 2016). Minang musicians often incorporate external influences into their music, but they still maintain certain characteristics that make their music easily identifiable as Minang, including the use of the Minang language, typical lyrics, and musical components. Themes of "merantau" (to go abroad) and longing for the "kampung halaman" (native hamlet) are commonly featured in Minang songs (Barendregt, 2002).

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Migrants often form strong emotional connections to their homeland, creating shared memories with other migrants. However, they are also exposed to a wide variety of music, leading to a tension between nostalgia for their hometown and an interest in incorporating new traditions into their cultural identity (Miyares, 2008). As our FGD participants have pointed out, blending traditional music with outside influences can raise concerns for some people as it may lead to a loss of cultural identity. However, cultural identity can be a flexible concept. When the popularity of blended music extends beyond the ethnic group, and the music is still recognizable as their own, particularly through the use of their language, it can become a source of pride and they may adopt it as part of their musical repertoire.

Another major factor that has had a significant impact on the Minang music industry is the entrepreneurial spirit of the Minang people, which is well-known both in West Sumatra and beyond (Barendregt, 2002). Many Minang people migrate in search of new opportunities, readily embracing the challenges of business competition with confidence in their new environment. Their Minang and Muslim identities serve as motivation for them to become entrepreneurs (Games et al., 2013). Padang restaurants, which specialize in Minang cuisine and are owned by Minang people, can be found in various cities throughout Indonesia. This illustrates the entrepreneurial spirit of the Minang people, as also evidenced by the growth in the number of music producers from the 1990s to the 2010s in West Sumatra.

CONCLUSION

Every new technology has the potential to benefit certain individuals while simultaneously disadvantaging others. In the past, the high cost of production and distribution technology resulted in the concentration of power among a small number of producers. This concentration limited choices for music consumers and created a competitive environment for musicians seeking access to recording studios and radio stations. Among the fortunate few musicians was the Gumarang Orchestra, whose music dominated the airwaves for several months due to the expensive and time-consuming recording process, as well as the exclusive access provided by state-owned radio stations, which were the sole channels to reach a national audience. Consequently, Indonesian music listeners were limited to hearing only a handful of songs from the Gumarang Orchestra for several months.

As recording technology costs decreased, numerous businesses entered the industry, leading to a greater variety of music options for listeners. This shift enabled Minang entrepreneurs to establish a thriving local music industry, liberating many musicians from their reliance on producers based in Jakarta. Consequently, West Sumatra emerged as the second music hub in Indonesia after Jakarta. This growth can be attributed to the creative and innovative spirit of both Minang musicians and entrepreneurs.

Although based in West Sumatra, the music producers in the region did not isolate themselves from external influences. They embraced diverse elements and incorporated them into their music, which raised questions about whether it could be considered authentic Minang music. Similarly, when the music of the Gumarang Orchestra was initially introduced, it was not solely rooted in ethnic traditions. Alongside the language of the songs, the group intentionally integrated elements from Latin music to enhance its appeal to a broader audience. Eventually, their success made their ethnic community proud and their music was recognized as Minang music.

While the ethnic pop music industry in Sumatra thrives, it remains important to preserve culture through means beyond market mechanisms. Adapting traditional music to cater to market demands carries the risk of diluting its core identity. Traditional ethnic music serves as a crucial symbol of collective

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memory and ethnic heritage, and its preservation is also upheld through customary events. Although certain traditional music forms protected from market influences may appear static, they can serve as a wellspring of inspiration for the creation of new music.

Music plays a vital role in shaping the collective identity of migrant communities. The substantial population of Minang migrants residing outside West Sumatra presents a promising market for traditional Minang-influenced music. Minang entrepreneurs, whether based in West Sumatra or other regions, have a significant opportunity to tap into this market. Their close affinity with fellow members of their ethnic group enables them to better comprehend and cater to the cultural and emotional needs of their customers, with music often playing a pivotal role in fulfilling those needs.

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Chapter 12

Analysis of the Communication Characteristics of Animation as Media in the Protection and Inheritance of Cultural Heritage

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ABSTRACT

In today's era, both worldwide and in China, the use of animation techniques for disseminating, displaying, and reproducing cultural heritage information is becoming increasingly common. This chapter aims to address two primary objectives. Firstly, it seeks to investigate the feasibility of utilizing animation as a medium of communication. Secondly, it aims to examine the distinctive communication characteristics and advantages of animation compared to other methods of media, such as pictures, text, and video, within the context of digitizing cultural heritage. This chapter will discuss and analyze the above questions and explore the applicability and inevitability of animation as a medium in the process of cultural heritage digitization from the perspective of three variables between communication science and animation arts—communication mission, communication ecology, and communication terminal—to provide interdisciplinary research ideas and foundation for the theoretical development of cultural heritage digitization, communication science, and animation.

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Analysis of the Communication Characteristics of Animation

INTRODUCTION

This article analyzes the three variables between communication science and animation: communication mission, communication ecology, and communication terminal, and explores the applicability and inevitability of animation as a communication medium.

DISCUSSION ON ANIMATION AS A COMMUNICATION MEDIUM

Firstly, can animation be used as a medium? The study of animation as a medium has begun to rise in theoretical research in Europe and the United States in recent years (Chow, 2013; Lamarre, 2009; Macdonald, 2015; Torre, 2017). Media, in the sense of communication science, refers to the use of media to store and disseminate information as a material tool (Nick & He, 2014). The famous American communication scientist Schramm believes that “media is a tool used to expand and extend information transmission during the communication process” (Schramm & Potter, 1984).

Animation integrates the animation content, film ideals, and cultural sustenance of creators and publishers and transmits them to viewers through a dynamic sequence of images, thereby completing a communication process. From this point of view, the animation process is exactly Schramm’s definition of media. In his article “Understanding Media,” McLuhan proposed that “the content of any medium is the medium.”

No media can exist independently, and one media always serves as the ‘content’ of the other. The moment when the two media hybridize or intersect is when the truth can be discovered and inspiration can be given, resulting in new media forms, because the similarity of the two media is that we stay on the boundary of the two media. (McLuhan, 2011)

Animation is a content form on different media such as movies, television, mobile phones, and the Internet, while transmitting content, it is also spreading in a unique way for animation. In this sense, animation becomes the media itself, while movies, television, and other media become their content through more integrated media forms, such as CNTV, and APPs of CNN, BBC, iQIYI, and Tencent Video, while retaining their original media attributes. De Fleur describes media in a broader sense: “Media can be any carrier or group of orderly carriers used to disseminate human consciousness” (Defleur, 1989). Here are four key messages: communication, human consciousness, order, and carrier. From animated films such as “Flowers and Trees,” “Snow White,” “Avatar,” and “Dinosaur,” to various experimental animations, film and television animation works, there are all authentic portraits and reflections of human consciousness. The works of Spanish surrealist painting master Dali are filled with descriptions and reflections of dreams and subconsciousness. Hence we may infer that animation adds dynamic elements and time series, making the expression of human consciousness more free, smooth, and realistic. Therefore, animation has a very high adaptability to reflecting human consciousness. The orderliness of animation is reflected in its expressive techniques, with the principles and norms of lens organization in imaging and readable information recognition process design. Therefore, animation can not only reflect the instantaneous consciousness of humans but also connect with the camera through orderly screen organization and carry out the formation and dissemination of meaning. Undoubtedly, it has already possessed the core characteristics of media.

Analysis of the Communication Characteristics of Animation

Secondly, how animated content acts as an effective communication medium?

From the perspective of attribution, the emergence of animation as a medium has not formed a linear distribution with the five major media in the sense of communication science, namely, printing, broadcasting, television, the Internet, and mobile networks, as well as film art. However, it has closely followed the development of media such as film, television, the Internet, and mobile terminals, and its forms and communication methods are also constantly evolving and changing. Animation has always existed as a medium to carry out the communication mission e.g satirical cartoons, fable animation, folk story animation. In the history of Chinese animation, the animation's function as a medium of communication is of particular importance. For example, "Three Monks," "Little Tadpoles Looking for Mother," "Snipes and Clams Struggle," etc., are all intense and vivid displays of life philosophy or scientific laws through animation, achieving the goal of teaching and enjoying. These Chinese traditional style animations emphasize the characteristics of collective culture are significantly different from the individualism advocated in European and American animation. As some scholars have stated in cross-cultural studies: collectivistic individuals are more likely to associate themselves with their cultural group, corresponding to increased ethnocentrism (Yousaf, Ahmad, Ji, Huang & Raza, 2022; Yousaf, 2017).

Animation can form an independent communication system through the screen (such as stand-alone animation works), or it can be combined with other forms of media platforms to form a broader communication system, such as animated movies, television animation, online animation, mobile animation, and so on. From the perspective of communication methods, animation communication can be carried out through both widespread communication and mass distribution, both relying on traditional media for broadcast and sharing through social media. From the perspective of communication depth, animation can not only carry pan -entertainment information but also achieve knowledge popularization and provide professional level in-depth content experience. When animation is combined with different media platforms, the content presented has different performance tendencies and audio-visual styles, forming attraction and adhesion for different audiences (users). Communication effectiveness also undergoes different changes.

Taking the continuous emergence of Motion Graphics (M.G. animation) in the network and television news media as an example, this paper illustrates the communication characteristics of animation forms. The most direct meaning of M.G. is the dynamic animation of graphics or charts, which is a special two-dimensional animation developed in recent years with the development of information dissemination. It is a way for animation art to move towards information representation. M.G. animation is a dynamic evolution based on static information graphics. "J.D. Annual Report" is a typical application of M.G. animation. M.G.'s animation has a compact rhythm, with an overall emphasis on information flow and visual unity. Animation is basically separated from story plot construction, using short, symbolic graphical animation combined with data and commentary to complete semantic expression.

This animation form differs from the PPT presentation of static charts and does not have the typical lens and imaging creation characteristics. Rather, it is a dynamic information presentation method that integrates multiple information capacities and is concise, symbolic, and graphical. Some of this chart information is based on the interaction between big data mining and WeChat user research. Based on hot social issues, in-depth information chart animations are formed, which not only have a robust journalistic nature, concise form, and fast and smooth graphics and text, but also contain data and information points that can be used as the basis for decision-making by the public education and relevant departments, and sometimes even some visual, dynamic, and simulated solutions. These animation forms are significantly different from traditional animation in that they combine the timeliness of news and the

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social communication paradigm of the public, achieving stronger information directionality and more transparent communication effectiveness.

From the current perspective, whether in terms of worldwide or Chinese cultural heritage digitization, the use of animation techniques to disseminate, display, and reproduce cultural heritage information is an attempt to promote the generation of new forms of animation and the launch of new social functions. It is an important stage in the development of animation. In different periods, with the continuous development and changes in social progress and people's needs, the content disseminated and displayed through animation will inevitably change. This growth and activation, like the social functions that animation once assumed in history, will undoubtedly promote social development and civilization progress today and in the future.

ANALYSIS OF ANIMATION COMMUNICATION CHARACTERISTICS IN THE PROTECTION AND INHERITANCE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

As a communication medium, animation not only follows classic communication modes in the traditional sense, such as 5W theory (Lamarre, 2009) and Shannon's theory (Beer & Gane, 2015), but also has its own profound animation laws, rich connotation and extension systems, and its own communication characteristics compared to other media.

Analyzing the Animated Communication Mission as Communication Medium

Firstly, as cultural content, cultural heritage undoubtedly affects animation's dissemination characteristics in the communication process. From the animation perspective, the communication mission of animation also has the same mission of culture and art. Animation art has cultural expressiveness and penetration that transcends different nationalities, regions, and languages and has cross-cultural solid communication capabilities and characteristics, which have been reflected in traditional forms of animation works.

From the perspective of cross-cultural communication, driven by the global integration of the economy, Europe, the United States, Australia, and others are all striving to develop their own cultural industries integrating cultural globalization into the competition and cooperation of economic globalization (Hesmondhalgh, 2016). . The world cultural industry pattern is in a period of reshaping and adjustment. During this period, creative industries with animation as their core played an essential role in the new era and situation¹. Taking Disney in the United States as an example, since its establishment in 1923, its continuously launched animated images have spread throughout the world, become classics, and are widely welcomed by global audiences. With this as its core value, Disney has formed four major business forms, focusing on the film industry, media industry, theme parks, and consumer goods market. Disney has established six theme parks, Disney luxury cruise ships, and Disney resorts in several locations around the world, making outstanding contributions to establishing the status of the American cultural industry worldwide. At the end of 2016, Disney Pictures earned a record total box office of \$7.605 billion, followed by Warner Brothers and 20th Century Fox, who respectively won second place with \$4.93 billion and \$4.49 billion; Universal Pictures (3.314 billion), Sony Pictures (2.158 billion), Paramount Pictures (1.76 billion), and Lion Gate Pictures (1.52 billion) ranked fourth to seventh.² By the end of 2022, Disney had become the highest-grossing film company in the world in 2022 with a record of \$4.9 billion, the seventh consecutive year since 2016, when Disney won first place at the global box office.

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According to the third quarter financial report of Disney Company in 2022, Disney's revenue in that quarter reached 20.15 billion U.S. dollars, an increase of 9% year-on-year (Torre, 2017).

Animation has become a backbone force and is essential in cross-cultural communication in the global economy and in supporting the cultural industry. Coincidentally, the worldwide dissemination of Japanese animation is also a successful example. Japanese animation, represented by Hayao Miyazaki, is widely loved and welcomed by people of all ethnic groups in a way that moistens things silently, just like water. With the export of animation works, Japanese culture is also transmitted to different cultures around the world through films. While being highly praised by men, women, and children worldwide, the high level of humanism permeated in his films not only reflects the humanistic feelings of his works and the author Hayao Miyazaki himself but also, more importantly, elevates the care for human cultural spirit and the ultimate concern for human ideals in the films to the expression of the overall cultural spirit of the Japanese nation, in terms of the output of the country and cultural brands, the animation is a global achievement of Japanese national culture. Undoubtedly, the export of Japanese animation culture is very worthy of reference by other countries and ethnic groups (Li, 2000; Xing, 2012). Peng Ling, a journalism and communication scholar, analyzes the cultural output effect of animation communication from the perspective of the importance of "agenda setting" (Peng, 2007). She proposed that in recent years, with the rapid development of the world's animation creative industry, the "agenda-setting" effect formed by the global cross-cultural communication of animation has become increasingly prominent. Agenda-setting make objects and their attributes salient (Yousaf, Hu & Raza, 2023). Countries no longer regard animation as just a form of entertainment for teenagers, and the output of animation is not only for economic benefits but also as a cultural strategy that can enhance their reputation capital (Peng, 2008).

As a rare resource and valuable carrier of traditional culture, more than cultural heritage is needed if it is restored and opened to visitors through exhibitions. From the cultural connotation of cultural heritage to the multi-level presentation of details, more cultural heritage information will be displayed, and the cultural and artistic spirit of the heritage will be more in-depth, accurate, and practical communication. The animation will undoubtedly play an essential role in cultural heritage digitization.

Figure 1. Part of the murals of the Ming Dynasty Fahai Temple, a Chinese cultural heritage



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Analyzing the Propagation Characteristics of Animation From Its Propagation Ecology

Figure 2. Investigation work site

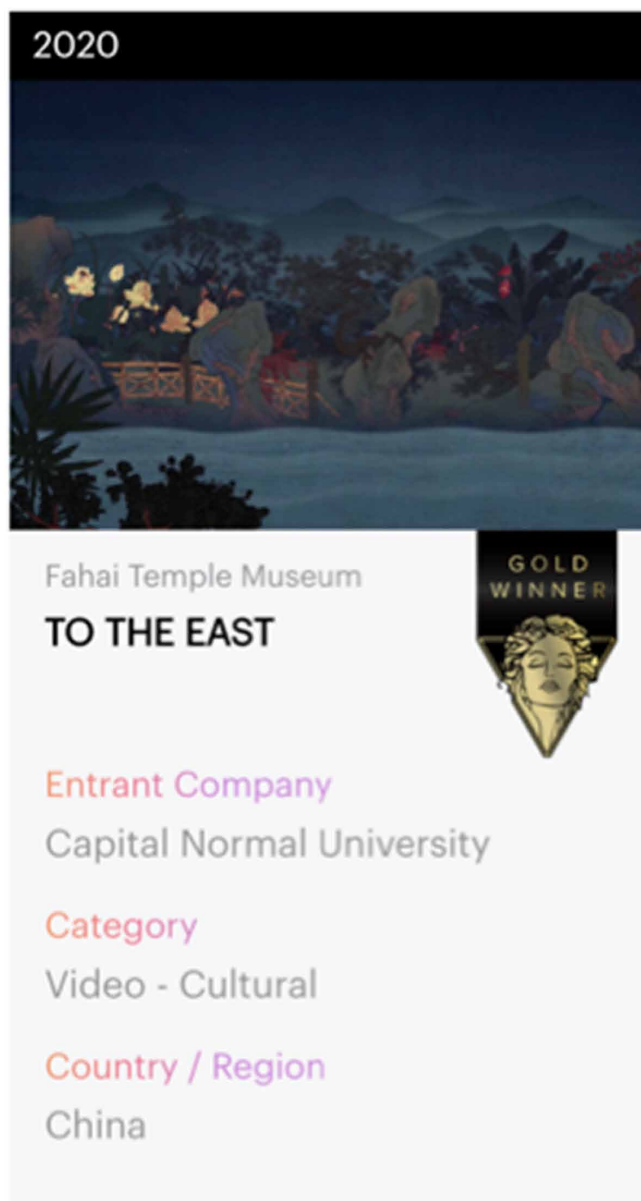


The formation of anything's characteristics cannot be separated from external factors such as its time and place, ecological growth environment, etc. The analysis of animation communication characteristics cannot be separated from its communication ecology, which helps to more clearly grasp the surrounding influencing factors of animation in the implementation of its communication mission, more accurately capture the soil and environment where its characteristics occur, and thus more scientifically and reasonably judge the certainty of its formation of communication characteristics. If animation is viewed in a complete communication ecology, its vitality and integration ability are undoubtedly prominent. Today, the global ecosystem of communication has emerged from the traditional four major media (newspapers, magazines, radio, and television) to today's fifth media (the Internet) and sixth media (mobile networks), presenting a diversity of media development, and constantly changing and evolving in a parallel and cross model. Among them, the traditional printing industry relies on networked media, resulting in digital publishing, electronic journals, and online news, such as the network terminal of National Geographic magazine and the client terminal of Xinhua News Agency; The combination of broadcast media and mobile media forms new forms of broadcast applications, such as the domestic Himalayan FM APP and Qingting FM APP. IQiyi Video, Tencent Video, and Mango T.V. have comprehensively updated the experience and content layout of traditional film and television media in the form of network and mobile media. Therefore, under the nourishment of large-scale communication ecology, animation integrates with various industries and platforms with open and growing media characteristics. Here, not only can we see the rapid development of animation towards film and television, games, Internet, and mobile terminals for a long time, but we can also find that animation actively adjusts its integration methods, constantly infiltrating more and more fields such as real estate, tourism, cultural heritage, and forming more communication models and formats that take animation art as the experience prototype. The

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integration of animation into the real estate industry has led to the creation of environmental roaming animation, such as the animation roaming established a large institution for digital city construction, for geographical features such as Beijing, Hangzhou, Zhejiang, and Kunming, Yunnan; Animation permeates cultural heritage and forms “animation restoration.” For example, the same digital animation technology is used in the Duanmen Digital Exhibition Hall of the Forbidden City. Environmental roaming animation emphasizes the overall interpretation of real estate and urban planning.

Figure 3. Webpage on winning the MUSE Gold Award for cartoons



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Figure 4. Color digitization and repainting of Ming Dynasty murals, a Chinese cultural heritage

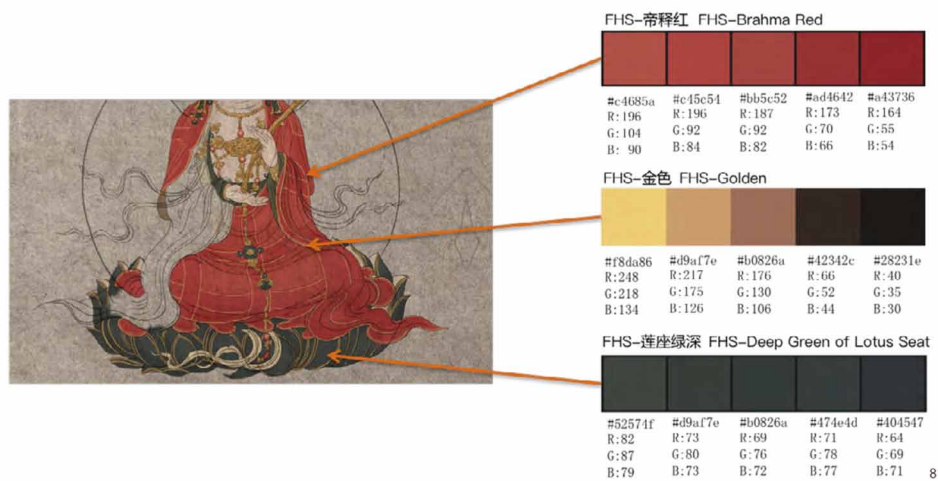


Figure 5. Animation production and dissemination based on the murals of Fahai Temple in the Ming Dynasty



In contrast, such animation focuses on the route guidance and historical landscape display of the overall appearance of the Forbidden City, especially the cultural and artistic display of the Forbidden City as a cultural heritage, reflecting prominent cultural characteristics such as human literature and archaeology. When combined with different communication platforms and different industrial fields, the resulting animation communication behavior is also different. The animation dissemination in the digitization of cultural heritage takes offline museums and online digital museums as the main body of dissemination and uses movies, online videos, DVDs, and other auxiliary means of dissemination; Take the digital protection and inheritance of cultural heritage as the primary goal, and take the cultural connotation and artistic spirit carried by cultural heritage as the communication thread; Take animation as the primary form, and comprehensively embody multimedia elements such as pictures, videos, charts,

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and sound effects; With screen animation as the primary support, and combined with multi-channel and multi-sensory immersive experiences such as V.R., AR, MR, and CAVE.3 As the expansion form, the integration and growth of the entire media communication ecology will be formed. A cross-engineering structure will be formed with university disciplines such as literature, art, and science. In combination with communication science, the disciplines of history, culture, fine arts, design, physics, material chemistry, computer graphics, drama, film, television, and information science will be driven, “To The EAST” is an animated film created by the author and whole team based on four years of research on the murals of the Ming Dynasty Fahai Temple, a Chinese cultural heritage, and combining Chinese meticulous heavy color painting and color digitization (Zhang, Xu & Han, 2019). Received multiple awards, such as the 2019 VEGA Gold Award and the 2020 MUSE International Creative Gold Award (see Figures 1-5).

Animated Communication Transformation From Communication Science to Information Interaction

The leap from communication to information interaction also shifts from communication audiences to experiential users. Some scholars believe that communication is changing from communication content to communication products and applications, and propose to create a fusion media technology system to adapt to user changes, product-oriented, through process reengineering and organizational restructuring, establish a fusion mechanism system, and establish information channels through new media technology at the time of the integration of traditional media and emerging media (Hu, 2015). In this regard, Livingstone proposed that the attributes of audiences are transforming in the current era, namely, from the mass media to internet users (Livingstone, 2003). Wei Lu and Ding Fangzhou proposed in their research on the transformation of communication in the new media era that the emergence of new media has led to a change in the concept of communication academia; that is, the traditional “media audience” relationship research is constantly changing to “new media user” relationship research (Wei & Ding, 2013). In the field of news practice, Cai Wen proposed that the shift from single media content production to multiple media content production has led news editors to face more segmented “users,” which has led to the mutual embedding of mass media and social media. Editors are required to attach importance to the “user experience” in communication activities (Cai, 2011).

In this sense, traditional media presents changes in content and the differentiation of sections and columns to meet different audience needs. In the current information age, content, like other products, becomes a product that consumers can order and purchase through app stores (such as App Store) for payment. The former content audience has transformed into the initiator and new force of the new communication process in the information era, namely, users and consumers.

As for the digital animation of cultural heritage, its exhibition forms, with the development of digital technology and media technology, present the possible dual identities of audience and user, which mainly rely on the media to different communication methods between the (user) and audience. For example, in the animation “ Riverside Scene at Qingming Festival ” exhibited at the Shanghai World Expo, viewers view the work as a viewing (see Figure 6). From the perspective of aesthetic experience, the viewer changes from appreciating a static scroll to a dynamic scroll. Although the content and form have changed, the main aesthetic characteristics have not changed, and they are still the viewers. The panoramic V.R. animation “ Riverside Scene at Qingming Festival,” launched by the Forbidden City in 2017, has completely changed this way of appreciation. This animation utilizes panoramic V.R. technology to construct a three-dimensional virtual scene in the Riverside Scene at Qingming Festival. Viewers

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can stroll or stop in the Riverside Scene at Qingming Festival for 360-degree panoramic viewing (Figure 7). In addition, in 2019, the Palace Museum and NetEase launched the mobile phone animation game “Ink Mountain and Mystery” (Figure 8), which is a panoramic V.R. animation based on the traditional Chinese painting “a panorama of Rivers and Mountains.” Using three-dimensional technology combined with mobile phone gyroscope technology enhanced the audience’s sense of immersion and experience, allowing them to further step into the screen as a user and enter active interaction while viewing as an object, realize an understanding of history and culture. When entering the scene, the audience has transformed from a viewer who passively accepts the screen to a user who actively acquires a sense of experience through dragging, pushing, and shaking on the phone. Just like scholars stated in a paper, in this new world of digital media and information, especially on the mobile terminal and the mode of UGC (User Generated Content), the traditional cultures and arts have new opportunities for their propagation, transportation, and demystification in real-time circumstances (Zhang, Yousaf & Xu, 2017). There is no doubt that animation has played a very important role in cultural communication and will play an increasingly powerful role.

Figure 6. Digital animation of riverside scene at Qingming Festival at Shanghai World Expo, 2010.



CONCLUSION

In the research scope of this article, the animation is no longer a traditional meaning of animation or animation stories but a carrier with the functions of cultural heritage reproduction, deduction, and dissemination. It is no longer an independent animation unit but an information unit in the cultural connotation and information system of cultural heritage. However, compared to text, pictures, and video recordings, animation art supported by digital technology has a more vital and prosperous expressive

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force with a broader range of potential audiences and user groups. At the same time, the ontology of animation is a relatively large system, introducing animation art into the digitization of cultural heritage. This article analyzes and demonstrates its media characteristics, analyzing the three variables between communication science and animation: communication mission, communication ecology, and communication terminal, and analyzing the applicability and inevitability of animation as a communication medium. These studies and analyses, starting from interdisciplinary perspectives, provide a new research perspective and theoretical exploration path for animation theory, cultural heritage digitization research, and the expansion of communication theory.

Figure 7. VR animation of riverside scene at Qingming Festival, 2017



Figure 8. Mobile phone animation game “Ink Mountain and Mystery”



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ENDNOTES

- ¹ According to statistics, the daily output value created by the creative industry in the world has reached 22 billion yuan and is increasing at a rate of about 5%.
- ² The data comes from the box office mojo movie box office network. <https://www.boxofficemojo.com/>.
- ³ CAVE is a projection immersion display system based on virtual reality technology characterized by high resolution, intense immersion, and good interactivity.

Chapter 13

Gender Equality as a Cultural Requisite for Sustainable Development in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

It is crucial to understand that development is an existent fact that demands the contribution of each gender in order to grasp gender roles factually and their significance in the defense of unassailable rights as well as how they affect them. This research examined gender issues in Nigeria and Africa in general and how they have affected development. A combination of the theory of recognition and structural functionalist theory was employed to examine gender concerns and how they might spur progress if well-managed. The researchers used secondary data sources to collect relevant information and used thematic analysis to analyse the data generated. The study shows that there are three categories of socially sanctioned moral rules that establish limits on how well individuals are accepted as members of society in contemporary cultures. The chapter recommends the need for men and women to view their positions as significant but not superior in order to attain sustainable development.

INTRODUCTION

The ideas of equity and equality characterizes gender equality. Equity and equality may be synonymous but the effects they have on the oppressed can differ greatly, depending on how they are used. The practice of allocating the precise resources and opportunities required to produce an equal outcome while taking into account the fact that each person has specific circumstances is known as equity. Equality is the act of giving each person or group the same resources and opportunities (Rawls, J.2021). In order

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to better understand gender issues and development in Africa and Nigeria, the focus will be on cultural differences observed in gender roles and how gender norms are socially produced.

Gender norms assign specific roles, responsibilities, tasks, and privileges to both men and women. This is consistent with the numerous benefits granted to women in Nigeria in relation to particular programmes, such as the Family Support Programme, the Family Economic Advancement Programme, the Better Life for Rural Women Programme, and the establishment of the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs in 1995. The prevailing trend over time that has assumed male superiority, while viewing women as weak, subservient, and inferior, initiated these programmes. All of these efforts aimed at incorporating more women in societal development goals. Unfortunately, this type of initiative for women's empowerment has provoked a significant criticism for neglecting to recognize and care for the true needs and welfare of women. This approach has worsened the issues and even enhanced women's marginalization, rather than achieving gender balance as a developmental agenda.

According to data from North Africa, women in Sub-Saharan Africa continue to face numerous challenges, such as gender discrimination, sexual abuse and harassment, lack of formal education, child marriage and so on, that prohibit them from fully enjoying their legal, political and civic rights and bear losses as a result. This can be related to the differences between how men and women perceive particular opportunities as a result of gender roles that differ globally and seem to be a natural phenomenon. Concerned about this new development, some people contend that in order to contribute and take part in policy making, women must have free access to all opportunities available in the society for which they are eligible as members. With the aim of incorporating women in the development agenda on the basis of equality with their male counterparts, worldwide conferences and programmes are now focusing on women. (Woroniuk, Johanna, & Thomas, 1996). Gender Equality and Swedish Non-Governmental Organisations: Overview and Talking Points: Prepared for the Division for Co-operation with NGOs (SEKA) and the Gender Equality Unit, Sida, Stockholm. (Woroniuk et al., 1996).

In over forty years since its founding, the United Nations has held three international conferences on women: one in Mexico in 1975, one in Copenhagen in 1980, and one in Beijing, China in 1991. One of the subjects on the agendas of these conferences, especially for the African continent and particularly for Nigeria as a country, is the attainment of gender equity in national development. There are several indications that there are still unfriendly gender relations, including the division of labour based on gender, discriminatory rights and privileges and unequal access to power and resources. The concepts of "gender equity" and "women empowerment", as well as increasing possibilities for women to improve their socio-economic conditions and access to health, education and employment are widely incorporated into gender-related policies like "affirmative action" in Nigeria. However, as already stated, many of these measures have fallen short or, in some circumstances, have even worsened the situation (Binswanger, 2004).

African women are immensely strong, which strengthened the society as a whole, despite the strong patriarchal system that penetrates many African societies. Men and women do not hold the same status in society, not even in the United States of America, which is more receptive of women's rights. However, inequality exists in some capacity in virtually every human society. It is true that before women came along, even the world's creation was afflicted; hence, human society would suffer without the female gender (Adichie, 2014). This is because roles are assigned to each gender differently and are paid differently for them. The various obligations embedded in each gender will make it practically impossible to further human growth if women's roles are not honoured. If Africa wants to develop sustainably, it is essential to understand gender roles from an African traditional perspective.

Gender Equality as a Cultural Requisite for Sustainable Development

According to some researchers, such as Adichie (2014), and Olarewaju (2018), restoring the stability and harmony that previously prevailed in traditional African civilizations requires giving men and women the same value and relevance for the gender roles they perform. While analysing closely, though the aforementioned assertion implies that gender equality formerly existed in traditional Africa development, however, understanding gender and gender roles by both men and women has been the crucial fact and implication of a development strategy. Given the foregoing context, the study's goal is to explain gender equality and equity as a cultural requirement for sustainable development in Nigeria, particularly from the perspective of gender disparity experienced by women in modern Nigeria.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since the United Nations declared 1975–1985 as the “decade for women”, feminists and activists have continued the fight for gender equality even while the problems that gave rise to discrimination against women still exist. It, however appears that there is growing new and terrible barriers against women. One of these well-known assertions was that wives and mothers fail to perform their obligations. This explains the ostensible causes of the current decline in societal values on a global scale (The Sun Newspapers, 2021).

Despite the fact that the family institution is frequently used to instil African cultural and moral values in children at the earliest possible age, males persistently reify the male position in families as they provide resources, provide nurturing and care, manage and maintain the family unit, model gender norms and adult sexuality and manage and maintain the family unit. These core male sex roles both promote and frequently repress masculine behaviour inside the family. The family institution is now no longer seen as a social institution since it is impotent to carry out its previous principal job(s) (Iguodala-Cole, Anto, & Jawondo, 2020). The loss of this crucial socialization function has severely hampered standards of living and growth by causing the family unit to disintegrate, leading to moral devastation. It is crucial that this research's focus is on the collective roles of gender, partisanship and tolerance, since these concepts are crucial for growth but are woefully absent from the ideologies that rule modern Nigerian society. All of these colonialism's aftereffects and the majority of recent development in African nations may be attributed to them. As a result of the process, the institution of the family in Africa has substantially suffered. It is in light of the above background that this study aims at explaining gender equality and equity as a cultural requisite for sustainable development in Nigeria, especially from the perspective of gender inequality encountered by women in contemporary Nigerian society.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to examine people's understanding of gender equality and equity as a cultural heritage for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Therefore, the specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the status of gender debate in Africa.
2. Ascertain the link between gender discrimination and sustainable development in Nigeria.
3. Highlight strategies for reducing gender inequality for sustainable development in Nigeria.

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Research Questions

1. What is the status of gender debate in Africa?
2. What is the relationship between gender discrimination and sustainable development in Nigeria?
3. How does gender equality boost sustainable development in Nigeria.?

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

The following concepts are defined for the sake of clarity:

Gender

The social and cultural roles that are given to both men and women in society are referred to as gender in this context. Thus, gender is a social construct that is learned, and gender norms, as well as judgement are also acquired through socialization that takes place after birth. The advantages and social traits that come with being male or female are also gender-related difficulties. Power dynamics in human civilization are defined by gender, as well as current societal expectations, acceptable behaviours and beliefs (UNICEF, 2017). The idea presented above suggests that gender can be seen as a social construct, a byproduct of socialization in which individuals are taught to behave as either males or females in accordance with societal norms. Despite the fact that this is viewed as establishing power relations, it is crucial to keep in mind that gender defines what is valued and acceptable in a man or woman in a specific situation. The fact that an individual's natural attribute affects how they are socialized in society, serves as additional evidence for this.

Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination could be seen as obstacles against the employment or appointment into leadership positions or authority of an individual based on sex (Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary, 2013). It is a social phenomenon that involves the deprivation of rights and cultural requisite of the individual that could have contributed positively to the development of organisations and society at large. The phenomenon has negative implications on the growth and development of people and organizations (Adeleke, 2004).

Development

It is clear that several academics have defined development from various angles. Thus, there is no single definition of development that is widely accepted because it depends on the goals, interests, situations, and viewpoints of the individual or group of individuals. While some perceive it as a rise in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or other good change, others see it as a social and cultural transformation (Akanle, 2011). All of the aforementioned definitions included some aspects of the cultural transition, but it is important to highlight that the occurrence might not always be explained by a one-sided movement. No matter how sophisticated or progressive a change is, it cannot be considered development if it does not raise

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the standard of living of a population. Development is seen as a multidimensional process that entails reorienting and reorganizing institutions and social systems, so that they are compliant with, and able to support progress. In other words, the restructuring and reorientation imply fostering and enhancing individuals' self-esteem within the various social institutions, as well as attending to individuals' basic necessities for existence. In fact, this restructuring and reorientation being carried out jointly by actors, (members of society) for actors must not be forgotten. In light of the aforementioned, this research sees development as a positive transformation that improves people's quality of life and perspectives on themselves and the outside world.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is premised on the theory of recognition and structural functionalist theory.

Theory of Recognition

Axel Honneth, a prominent critical thinker, emphasizes the significance of understanding identity claims made by people and social organizations. His intention was to address the violence committed against those demands for acknowledgment, as well as the pathologies and injuries that result from the petitioners by building on the necessary theory. Honneth (1995) argued that, rather than being motivated by some distant moral principles, people become involved in political resistance because of their violent experiences with spontaneously conceived notions of justice and the resulting demand for acceptance. When it is not given, people feel abandoned and undervalued. They must, therefore, fight against the institution denying them of their rights. Therefore, Honneth (1995) noted that moral injustice is simply harm to a person's or group's right to social acknowledgment in the real world. He contended that when people and groups go unacknowledged, social strife and social action might result.

People and organizations believe it is their right to be acknowledged, and when this recognition is not provided to them, especially consistently, they feel that their right has been violated. In general, diverse persons with varied requirements have frequently gone unrecognized in modern society. For instance, some people, particularly women, do not get enough credit for their labour. Lack of recognition among the populace is bred by numerous institutions, including family, the workplace, and government, failing to provide the required recognition that the populace deserves. It is clear from the foregoing that feminism and a push for gender equality emerged due to the fact that women do not receive the respect they merit and are not acknowledged for their contributions in the family or the house.

Every duty is necessary to the system and must be acknowledged, since failure to do so will hinder society from functioning as it ought to. Even while it may not be required for a stay-at-home mother to be compensated equally to a man who works outside and gets paid for his labour, it is nonetheless important that their responsibilities be acknowledged and upheld with the same values as those of their male counterparts. Not only is it a social construct but women are also good housekeepers and family managers by nature. Despite the fact that they may be naturally gifted for labour in the workplace, the economy or even governance, the truth is that they are essentially built to convert houses into homes and to play a very significant socialization role in the family. However, it seems that this position is minor, latent and backstage, and it might never be recognized.

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The theory contends that for any community to experience a smooth process of development, all genders must be valued for the roles they perform, particularly the women in this situation, given that they appear to be the majority. This piece strongly endorses the promotion of gender equality by numerous organizations and initiates working towards equal opportunity for both genders, especially in formal contexts like the classroom, the workplace and access to other opportunities, given that the family is the cornerstone of society (Giddens, 2001).

People need three different kinds of acknowledgment, according to Hegel's writings (Recognition and the self in Hegel's Phenomenology of spirit, 2022). These are esteem, affection and respect. According to Mead (Sen and Mead 2017), several types of recognition are inter-subjectively gained and maintained. People must receive compliments from others in order to relate to one another in this way and have self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem. Only if people are given enough acknowledgment will they be able to fully fulfill their independence as human beings. This means that in order for women to achieve full human independence to fulfill their roles within the family, for there to be true gender equality, for there to be harmonious relationships, and as a result, for there to be significant advancements, they must be treated with love, respect and esteem.

Every time there appears to be a lack of respect for what someone does, there is a high likelihood that tyranny and inequity will follow, and such behavioural disposition could be interpreted as gender discrimination, which mostly impedes sustainable development. This often has detrimental impact on how people feel about working inside that institutional framework, which would impede their development. Except for the demand of the normative system, conflict resistance and ongoing pursuit of gender equality will persist. This assertion aligns with objective two and shows an answer to the research question two of this study, that there is a link between gender discrimination and sustainable development in Nigeria. However, Honneth faced criticism for elevating "recognition" to the status of the most important factor. Though it might not be the only thing that counts, it is obvious that everyone harbours an underlying yearning for importance and acceptance. This work adds even more emphasis by fusing Honneth's theory with a functionalist viewpoint in response to these criticisms.

Rationale for Applying Recognition Theory

Nowadays, the topic of recognition dominates conversations about social and political philosophy. In the ambitious third-generation programme for critical theory created by Axel Honneth over the past 25 years, most notably in his classic text, "the struggle for recognition." In light of this, one can say that the word; "recognition" has found new expression. This programme is based on Hegel's early Jena writings and his renowned phenomenology of spirit exposition of the master/slave dialectic. Honneth's main concept consists of two parts. For starters, it is essential for modern ethical agency to construct practical ties to oneself that are based on relations of recognition across the three axes of self-formation of love, respect and esteem. Second, under favourable social circumstances, a battle for recognition will be motivated by the non- or incorrect acknowledgment of ethical subjects along any of these axes of self-formation. The research programme that Honneth has created is well known for being both a powerful means of producing a conception of justice and the good that enables the normative evaluation of greater justice within such societies. This volume's goal is to provide a critical explanation of such struggles, as well as an empirically insightful way of reflecting on emancipatory struggles for, and assessment of this work.

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Structural Functionalist theory

Structural functionalism was developed between 1893 and 1912, and was influenced by Herbert Spencer, Talcott Parsons, and Emile Durkheim. According to the functionalist view of gender roles, the purpose of gender roles is to maximize social effectiveness. It views society as a multifaceted system whose components interact to advance stability and solidarity. This method takes a macro-level perspective on society, and primarily focuses on the social structures that give rise to society as a whole. According to the idea, gender inequalities occur as an effective method of dividing labour or as a social structure in which a given population segment is obviously accountable for some labour activities and another segment is obviously responsible for other labour acts. The feminist movement, however, contends that functionalism ignores how women are oppressed within the family unit.

Rationale for Applying Functionalism to the Understanding of Gender Equality

The functionalist school of thought in sociology and other social sciences holds that each of the institutions, relationships, roles and norms that collectively make up a society serves a purpose and is necessary for the survival of the others, as well as of society as a whole. Social change is seen in structural functionalism as an adaptive response to a social system conflict, just as it is in modern Nigerian society. When a component of an integrated social system undergoes change, there may be a tension between that component and other components of the system. This tension will be alleviated by the other components' adaptive change. This explains why it is preferable for both genders to comprehend and value their unique social responsibilities in order to promote sustainable growth. Also, to create social cohesion, which implicitly leads to sustainable development, it is crucial to adopt the adjustable model or approach of functionalism, notwithstanding the perception that women are underrepresented in the Nigerian society.

Therefore, we can embrace such adjustable model as one of the strategies for reducing gender inequality for sustainable development in Nigeria. This adjustable model or approach of functionalism further supports this study's third objective, which is to highlight strategies for reducing gender inequality for sustainable development in Nigeria. However, this provides a more certain indication for study question three, which is that gender equality promotes sustainable development in Nigeria.

The concept of social structure has its roots in the work of French social scientist Emile Durkheim, who believed that interdependence among the components of society imposes structure on the behaviour of institutions and their constituents. Durkheim, Kaleigh, & Hurst, (2022) believed that the interactions between the many components of society helped to create social unity, which is an integrated system with unique life features that exists independently of people, yet influences their behaviour. Durkheim noted that a group can be held together on one of two different bases: mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity. The mechanical solidarity is the sentimental attraction of social units or groups that carry out the same or similar functions, like preindustrial self-sufficient farmers, while the organic solidarity is an interdependence based on different functions and specialisations as seen in a factory, family, the military, the government, or other complex organisations. Similar distinctions were also made during Durkheim's time by other thinkers, most notably (Henry Maine and Ferdinand Tonnies (Quito, 1984).

The British social anthropologist A.R. Radcliffe-Brown made the idea of social structure a focal point of his methodology and linked it to the idea of function. According to him, each element of the social structure serves an essential purpose for the others, as well as for society as a whole which is viewed as an organically interwoven whole. The existence of one element depends on the presence of

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the others. His comparative studies of preliterate tribes showed how many aspects of social and personal life were governed by the interdependence of institutions. Social structure was defined empirically by Radcliffe-Brown as “patterned” or “normal” social relations, or those facets of social interactions that adhere to pre-established social standards. These laws oblige society’s members to engage in beneficial social activities.

The “functional prerequisites” that any social system must meet in order to survive were articulated by the American sociologist (Stan, 2005). These prerequisites included creating routine interpersonal arrangements (structures), defining relationships to the outside world, establishing boundaries, and recruiting and managing members. Such structures were categorized by Parsons based on their purposes, along with Robert K. Merton and others. Due to its widespread use, many sociologists understood structural-functional analysis to be the same as the academic study of social organization. This structural-functional approach is consistent with the gender equality issues in Black African society raised by Cyril-Mary P. Olatunji in the African gender debate. The treatment of women and the issue of gender inequality in Africa have drawn the attention of several experts studying both indigenous and non-indigenous civilizations in Africa.

Despite the fact that Africa has a legal framework that protects women’s rights, some have stated that the causes of women’s oppression may be found in customs and traditions. With the help of a straightforward philosophical analysis and an argument with a legitimately African origin, Olatunji hopes to advance the current gender debate on the topic. He also challenges the widely held assumption among Afro-critics and Afro-apologetic scholars that treating women as inferior people is a practice that is unique to Africa. This is in line with the primary purpose of this study, which is to examine the status of the gender debate in Africa and respond to the study’s first research question “What is the status of gender debate in Africa?”

METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative research which utilised secondary sources of data collecting by gathering pertinent information from British Council publications, books, journals, and official documents in order to characterise gender equality and equity as a cultural requisite for sustainable development in Nigeria.

The researchers were compelled to investigate secondary data gathering methods by a number of compelling considerations, including the vast geographical expanse of the African continent and Nigeria in particular. Time restraints are among these elements. Furthermore, secondary data analysis can provide larger and higher-quality databases that would be hard for any one researcher to acquire alone, saving time that would otherwise be spent gathering data. Analysts of social and economic development, also see secondary data as essential because it is challenging to conduct a new survey that can effectively represent past changes and/or improvements. The obtained data was analysed by the researchers using theme analysis.

In the process of developing this topic and producing this paper, around twelve articles, fourteen books and six reports were evaluated. All of these secondary data, were purposefully adopted by the researchers, since they were crucial to the accomplishment of this study.

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

Gender equality is a panacea to sustainable development. Thus, without objective gender equality, no society can sufficiently advance, regardless of the current legal and political structures. Therefore, gender equality is not only necessary but also sacrosanct, if any nation is to develop. The development strategy that seeks to empower everyone, including men and women, in order to reduce suffering (in all possible forms) and improve living conditions, must include achieving gender equality. Due in part to the relationship between gender equity and sustainable development, the significance of women's contributions to national and global development is being acknowledged more and more every day (Akanle, 2011).

Gender Issues and Development in Africa

Traditional African societies place less emphasis on gender issues because everyone is expected to contribute to the family and community. Each gender has a certain role to play in the advancement of humanity. In other words, women often occupied positions that were more favourable than those held by men. As a result, there wasn't much prejudice towards women. No matter who performed it or how important it was to the society's life and well-being, it was viewed as indispensable. Before colonialism, traditional Africans performed a number of tasks to ensure the smooth running of their group (Olanrewaju, 2018). Thus, the central thesis of this study is that all forms of inequality, including gender inequality, are the result of colonialism.

The wife's or mother's social responsibilities include looking after children, aiding elderly family members and keeping friendly relationships with family members and neighbours through gift-giving and in-person visits. Despite not always being their mothers, women are totally responsible for taking care of younger children. For a family to survive and have a chance at marriage in traditional African development, the role of the African woman is crucial. Women act as a bridge for the Ghanaian Akan people in the archaic patriarchal social structure (Busia, 1952). The importance of African women in educating young people and helping them establish the social, moral, and ethical norms that will serve as the benchmark for what is acceptable behaviour in their culture cannot be overstated. To maintain familial ties, procreation is the main goal of marriage. Reproduction is a woman's principal function whether society is patrilineal or matrilineal.

According to the Ghana Report (2014), the misperception of women in contemporary Africa has given rise to a new dimension with workable solutions for integrating them into society. The United Nations (UN) is also included because every one of its initiatives aims at empowering women and girls. The United Nations support the Ghana Report's main goals which are to advance women politically, economically and in leadership roles. Many women are encouraged by UN to vote, run for office and participate in the electoral process. Women receive assistance with finding suitable employment, increasing their financial resources and influencing institutions and governmental policies. They also emphasize how important it is to recognize, distribute, and do away with unpaid work.

The report describes that the traditional homemaking, child rearing, and nurturing roles in the traditional family system which form the basis of women's identities as wives and mothers are being sacrificed in favour of new roles and relationships outside the home, even though it may seem that most women are more empowered and well-equipped. However, this does not imply that women should solely stay at home and abstain from fieldwork. Though, if society wants to attain sustainable progress, women's contributions to family stability and home building must be valued. The economic, educational, political,

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and social achievements made by women have profoundly benefited African societies. The indigenous African cultures were not founded on the basis of gender inequality because they cannot be easily abandoned; rather, they were founded on the basis of complementary roles played by men and women who both had a responsibility to contribute to the growth of society.

One could claim that traditional African culture does not condone discrimination against women. Women are better able to manage a family and a wider community. Significant responsibilities and duties were granted to women. Men and women could balance their obligations in ways that were viewed as co-dependently enhancing one another. The strong influence that women hold in most African societies serves to keep communities together. The continuation of the family and marriage in Africa depends on the African women. This emphasises the crucial role that women's responsibilities have played in the development of civilization in traditional Africa.

In order to impart moral, social, and ethical values in children, the cultural standards for what constituted acceptable social behaviour had to be developed. Women were given unrivaled respect and protection since they were closer to God, as they could bear children (Iwelumor, Shariffa, Taye, Seun & Olawale, 2020). It may be appropriate to give credit to these life-creators for the concept of sustainable development, given that they were entrusted with the holy task of providing for future generations. As expected, a strong family system is unquestionably necessary for the development of a society that can endure it. The family is the most important component for sustaining life and civilisation. Therefore, it is clear that a strong family structure forms the cornerstone for society's long-term development. The family is essentially the most important component to existence and the survival of society in all communities (Giddens. 2001).

Gender Issues and Development in Nigeria

Every area of Nigerian society is claimed to be impacted by gender inequality. There is a significant disparity between males' and females' employment possibilities and income-generating capabilities in virtually every Nigerian economy. According to research, Nigeria has a significant gender imbalance in every aspect of life, including the home, the job, and the political system. According to the findings, there is a gender education gap, with few women feeling empowered and actively underrepresented in the profession, particularly in teaching (Oluyemi & Kayode, 2021).

Similar to other African nations, nearly equal numbers of men and women make up the Nigeria's total population. According to Worldometer's analysis of the most recent United Nations data as of December 15th, 2022, Nigeria has a population of 218,647,796 (Worldometer, 2022). The country's population as of the first of January, 2022 has a gender ratio of 1.026 men per 1,000 females, which is higher than the global gender ratio. Around 1.016 men were present for every 1,000 women globally, as of 2021. Additionally, Nigeria had an estimated population based on age distribution of 6,696,690 people (3,235,696 males and 3,458,848 females), which represents only 6.9 percent between the ages of 15 and 64, and 120,034,037 people between the ages of 15 and 64 (61,235,769 males and 58,800,414 females), which represents 55.9 percent between the ages of 15 and (Worldometer, 2022).

By this United Nation's data, Nigeria has a larger proportion of its population that falls within the age range of the labour force, that is, able-bodied men and women who are willing and capable of being employed. In such a situation, it is out of place, therefore, to discriminate against women in the area of leadership in organisations, particularly in the Nigerian universities (Gberevbie, Adewale, Adeniyi & Olumuyiwa, 2014). The following tables provided support for these facts:

Gender Equality as a Cultural Requisite for Sustainable Development*Table 1. Academic staff profile from eight purposively selected universities showing disparity in gender*

Institution	Male	Female	Total
UNN	1,017 (73%)	367 (27%)	1,384
FUTO	452 (83%)	93 (17%)	545
ESUT	210 (66%)	110 (34%)	320
IMSU	314 (87%)	47 (13%)	361
UI	1,091 (82%)	243 (18%)	1,334
UNICAL	460 (82%)	102 (18%)	562
UNIPORT	416 (88%)	57 (12%)	473
FUKASHERE	805 (90.4%)	85 (9.6%)	890

Source: Nwajiuba (2011), Akanle and Adebayo (2014), and Iyaji and Haruna (2020)

Table 1 displays that in the 8 purposively selected universities under consideration, there were 73% male lecturers as against 27% female lecturers from University of Nigeria, Nsuka, while Federal University of technology, Owerre had 83% male and 17% female academic staff whereas Enugu State University of Technology had 66% male and 34% female, and 87% male and 47% female, 82% male and 18% female, 82% male and 18% female, 88% male and 12% female, 90.4% male and 9.6% female from Imo State University, University of Ibadan, University of Calabar, University of Port Harcourt and Federal University, Kashere, respectively. Therefore, the proportion of female lecturers to their male counterparts is appallingly low across all selected Universities under consideration. In academia, the feminine gender is still relegated to the back row.

Table 2. Gender composition of academic staff in Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

Faculties	Male	Female	Total
Arts	47 (87.0%)	7 (13.0%)	54
Agriculture	34 (73.9%)	12 (26.1%)	46
Education	47 (65.3%)	25 (34.7%)	72
Engineering	42 (93.3%)	3 (6.7%)	45
Law	16 (76.2%)	5 (23.8%)	21
Management Science	21 (71.3%)	2 (8.7%)	23
College of Medicine	34 (91.9%)	3 (8.1%)	37
Social Sciences	51 (92.7%)	4 (7.3%)	55
Science	78 (78.8%)	21 (21.3%)	99
Total	366 (81.7%)	82 (18.3%)	448

Source: Statistics and Planning office EKSU Nov. 2011; Adegun (2012)

Table 2 indicates that 81.7 percent of the academics in the university are males, while the remaining 18.3 percent are females. It shows that majority of the academics across all the nine (9) faculties that have been in existence since establishment of the university in 1982 are males.

Gender Equality as a Cultural Requisite for Sustainable Development*Table 3. Gender pattern of academic staff by designation at the Federal Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti*

Designation	Male	Female	Total
Chief Lecturer	47 (90.3%)	05 (9.7%)	52
Principal Lecturer	38 (86.3%)	06 (13.7%)	44
Senior Lecturer	48 (92.3%)	04 (7.7%)	52
Lecturer I	53 (85.4%)	09 (14.6%)	62
Lecturer II	51 (83.6%)	10 (16.4%)	61
Lecturer III	43 (86.0%)	07 (14.0%)	50
Total	280 (87.2%)	41 (12.8%)	321

Source: Adegun (2012) and Adebayo and Akanle (2014)

Table 3 shows that in total across all cadres, 87.2 percent of the lecturers are males, while 12.8 percent are females in the Polytechnic.

Table 4. Gender pattern of academic staff by designation in the College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti

Designation	Male	Female	Total
Chief Lecturer	31 (73.1%)	07 (26.9%)	38
Principal Lecturer	17 (80.9%)	04 (19.1%)	21
Senior Lecturer	36 (75.0%)	12 (25.0%)	48
Lecturer I	15 (53.6%)	14 (46.4%)	29
Lecturer II	34 (73.9%)	12 (26.1%)	46
Assistant Lecturer	45 (71.4%)	18 (28.6%)	63
Graduate Assistant	3 (100%)	00	03
Total	181 (64.9%)	67 (35.1%)	248

Source: Adegun (2012) and Adebayo and Akanle (2014)

Table 4 indicates that overall, 64.9 percent of academics are males, while 35.1 percent are females. It demonstrates that male teachers predominate in Nigerian universities. The aforementioned data generally attests to the stark disparity between the number of women and males working as academics at Nigeria's higher institutions. Every facet of life in Nigeria is marred by gender inequity. They show up in the institutions of the family, the economy, the workplace, politics and social services. Thus, prejudice against women does really exist both within and outside the house in Nigeria.

In the informal market and at home however, women have proven to be greater managers. In numerous institutions around the world, they can also hold important management roles. It was also shown that disregarding gender balance and carrying on with unequal treatment of women and girls will only hinder Nigeria's sustained growth and development (Ikeke, 2021). In the Urhobo community of Delta State, in the southern part of Nigeria for example, women have made great and evident contributions to traditional African development and cultural patterns. Women in the traditional Urhobo family structure continually had an impact on the moral tenacity of conventional society. Women have historically been

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given the responsibility of providing care, giving them a competitive advantage in terms of reproduction and life support. As a result, the family structure is better suited to sustain societal norms and values (Ikeke, 2021).

Women, are therefore, primarily in charge of providing for families, among other traditional Urhobo communities. Urhobo women performed a significant job by imparting moral and social ideals to the younger generation. It is true that women's responsibilities are essential in traditional Africa, particularly in Nigeria. Though many African communities were patriarchal and men still hold leadership positions, yet, women were given many occupations, responsibilities and chores in ancient African cultures. Although this study does not assert that gender disparity does not exist in light of the numerous studies that have been made public as was previously stated, it is accurate to argue that it has in the past occurred in Africa. Even though the patriarchal system was unfair, there was harmony because both gender roles were regarded as valuable and complementary (Ikeke, 2021).

Gender Issues in Workplace

Inequality in the workplace persists in Nigeria and throughout Africa, despite decades of progressive initiatives. In recent years, efforts have been made to resolve the problem of gender-based pay disparities by the government, workers, and numerous businesses. They have also worked to guarantee that men and women are treated equally. This necessitates terminologies like gender inclusiveness, gender sensitiveness and gender balance. As the leading topics in the modern business world, it is essential to understand all current business laws to enhance the commitments of staff. When employing these terminologies, the first thing that springs to mind is, "what are gender concerns in the workplace?"

Workplace gender discrimination can take many different forms, including unequal compensation, unequal opportunities for advancement, sexual harassment occurrences and racism and nepotism. It frequently manifests itself in subtler ways, such as through fewer opportunities for females to be elevated. The most important and fundamental gender issue in the workplace is gender disparity. Consequently, a business that upholds gender equality serves both men and women equally. This has many implications that an organization might overlook because of, for instance, an ingrained corporate culture, individual attitudes or a misunderstanding of current legal requirements. However, such organisation or company should be aware that men and women must be treated equally. This equal treatment includes:

- a. Equal pay and benefits for comparable roles.
- b. Equal consideration of needs.
- c. Equal opportunities for progression and promotion.

Employees should not be subjected to any form of discrimination due to their gender identity or gender expression. Leaders must eliminate prejudice in the workplace and close the gender gap in career advancement. There are practical means to realise this goal, such as open pay structures, adaptable work schedules, opportunities for training for both genders, and an emphasis on wellbeing and mental health. Employees can contribute to achieving gender equity in the workplace by speaking out against discrimination and providing leaders with candid feedback (Iguodala-Cole & Anto, 2020).

Importantly, the discrimination against women is mostly the result of human resource (HR) regulations and HR-related decision making. When employees interact with corporate decision-makers during HR procedures or when they are notified of the outcomes of HR-related decisions, they may also hear sexist

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remarks. Gender is still important in organizations since human resource strategies alone cannot keep women in senior positions. Human resource policies complement working conditions in practical sense, therefore, the effectiveness of the latter depends on the former. Economic incentives are still important for motivating managers and keeping both genders in positions of leadership. The social implication however, is that human resource management programmes cannot be effective without empowering females, and that economic resources are still necessary to keep female managers in positions of leadership (Imhonopi, Urim, George & Egharevba, 2013).

In addition to being a social and moral requirement, gender equality is also economically necessary. The World Bank estimates that globally, countries are losing \$172 trillion in wealth because of differences in lifetime earnings between women and men (World Bank 2022). To support Nigerian companies to address gender gaps across employment and entrepreneurship and to improve gender equality performance, International Finance Corporation (IFC) in partnership with NGX launched Nigeria-2-Equal in 2020. IFC is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for both men and women by addressing persistent gender gaps and increasing women's participation as leaders, employees and entrepreneurs in the corporate value chain. This is key to achieving sustainable and inclusive growth and development. Nigeria-2-Equal is a two-and-a-half-year programme implemented by IFC in partnership with NGX that aims at reducing gender gaps across employment and entrepreneurship in the private sector. The programme seeks to reduce gender gaps in the private sector through research and best practice case studies, a peer learning platform and firm-level advisory support to help companies implement gender action plans.

Formal HR policy, HR-related decision-making, and the implementation of HR policies and decisions can all be classified as human resource practices. Employee relations, performance reviews, employee relations, and resource planning are all codified by HR policy (Wright & Kehoe, 2013). When organizational decision-makers (managers, supervisors, or HR staff) use HR policy to decide how it will be applied to a specific circumstance and person, that is when HR-related decision-making occurs. When HR regulations are implemented, personal interactions occur between corporate decision-makers and job applicants or workers. HR-related decision-making and enactment may represent personal discrimination by corporate decision-makers, in contrast to HR policy which may reflect institutional prejudice.

Personal Discrimination in HR-Related Decision-Making Process

Organizational decision-makers evaluate the competence, potential, and deservingness of others as part of the practice of social cognition in HR-related decision-making. Therefore, HR-related decision-making is susceptible to personal biases, just like all other forms of social cognition. HR-related decisions are crucial because they affect how much money women make and how many opportunities they have at work (e.g., promotions and training opportunities). Every stage of HR-related decision-making, including recruitment and selection, position assignments, training opportunities, remuneration, performance evaluation, promotion and termination might involve personal prejudice against women by organisational decision-makers.

Studies using various approaches have demonstrated that women experience personal discrimination during the selection process (Morgan, Walker, Hebl & King, 2013). In comparison to matched male candidates, meta-analyses show that female candidates are evaluated more adversely, and suggested for employment less frequently when applying for male-typed (i.e., male-dominated, believed-to-be-for-men) positions (Glick, Cannor & Fiske, 2016; Morgan, Walker, Hebl & King, 2013). For instance, in audit studies, which include sending ostensibly legitimate applications for job positions but changing the

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applicant's gender, female candidates are less likely than male candidates to be called for an interview or follow-up call (Roth, Purvis & Bobko, 2012).

An undergraduate scientific student was evaluated by male and female biology, chemistry and physics instructors for a post of laboratory manager in a study (Moss-Racusin, Dovidio & Brescoll, 2012). In comparison to the female candidates, the male applicants received higher ratings for competence and employability, a higher beginning salary of about \$4000, and more career mentorship. In conclusion, women are at a substantial disadvantage when applying for positions that are more suited to men. It is evident that male-typed tasks subject women to biased performance ratings. For instance, women in leadership roles receive worse performance assessments than their men counterparts. This, according to a meta-analysis of experimental investigations is exacerbated when women operate in a stereotypically masculine, or agentic way (Roth, Purvis & Bobko, 2012).

In addition, women are held to a higher bar for success in areas traditionally associated with men. In a study of military cadets for instance, men and women awarded female classmates' lower evaluations even when they had objectively the same qualifications as male peers (Boldry, Wood, Wendy & Kashy, 2001). Finally, when it comes to difficult problem-solving circumstances, people tend to view women's competence with suspicion and discount their judgements, while giving skilled men's opinions the benefit of the doubt (Boldry, Wood, Wendy & Kashy, 2001). Certain categories of women are sometimes more prone to experience discrimination in hiring practices and performance reviews. Women, who exhibit assertive and goal-oriented behaviours are specifically assessed as being less pleasant and employable than comparable male applicants (Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan & Nauts, 2012). Also, there is proof that pregnant women are discriminated against while applying for jobs and mothers receive less promotion recommendations than non-mothers or males (Morgan, Walker, Hebl & King, 2013; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan & Nauts, 2012).

Overall, research has shown that prejudice in selection and performance evaluation judgements occur when various sorts of biases toward particular subtypes of women are present. In comparison to men, women are likely to obtain less opportunities at work, which results in their underrepresentation at positions of leadership and management inside businesses (Glick, 2013; Morgan, Walker, Hebl & King, 2013). The scholars observe that when compared to men, managers provide women fewer demanding jobs and training possibilities. For instance, female managers and midlevel employees (De Pater, Schilpzand & Erez, 2016) have limited access to high-level responsibilities and challenges that are prerequisites for promotion. In addition, men are more likely to be offered important leadership positions in disciplines with male preponderance and in industries with female preponderance. This is negative since demanding positions, especially those that are developmental, enable people build crucial competencies needed to succeed in their professions (Glick, 2013; Morgan, Walker, Hebl & King, 2013).

Furthermore, managers believe that women have lower promotion potential than men. In comparison to men, managers are less likely to promote women when they have the same level of qualifications (Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan & Nauts, 2012). Men, therefore, advance through corporate hierarchies more quickly than women (Roth, Purvis & Bobko, 2012). Given the pyramid structure of most hierarchical companies, even minor gender discrimination in promotion decisions for a specific job or level can have significant and cumulative impacts (Wright & Kehoe, 2013). Women are, therefore, underrepresented in organisational decision-making due to discrimination.

Finally, females are paid less than males. In a thorough US analysis analyzing data from 1983 to 2000, the researchers discovered that women were paid 22 percent less than men after adjusting for human capital elements that potentially affect salaries, such as school level and work experience (U.S.

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Government Accountability Office, 2003). Relatively, men typically earn more than women in any given occupation; this “within-occupation” wage disparity is particularly noticeable in higher-paying occupations. Women were paid less than men in a survey of more than 2000 managers, even after accounting for a number of human capital variables (Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan & Nauts, 2012). Consequently, organisational decision-makers’ personal biases and prejudice against women in HR-related decision-making contribute to the gender wage gap. Every stage of HR-related decision-making is susceptible to organisational decision-makers’ prejudices, and it has been demonstrated that these biased HR decisions have a detrimental impact on women’s salary and career chances.

Institutional Discrimination in HR Policy

The term “institutional discrimination” is used to characterize human resource policies and procedures that are fundamentally biased against a particular group of people, regardless of their abilities or expertise in relation to their jobs. Institutional discrimination against women can occur during the hiring and selection process for a job, as well as during the employee’s role assignments, training, remuneration, performance reviews, promotions and termination. If, for instance, specific educational prerequisites or prior work experience are necessary to be considered for selection in an area where women are under-represented, discrimination against women occurs routinely, even if inadvertently. When a test is used in the selection process that exposes larger gender inequalities than those found in job performance assessments that is another instance of gender discrimination (Roth, Purvis & Bobko, 2012). Therefore, institutional bias may occur in some areas of HR selection policy and may negatively affect the employment outcomes for women.

Institutionalized discrimination against women is also present in the performance evaluations that determine organizational compensation, opportunities, and punishments (such as promotions, jobs and assignments as well as termination). Gender discrimination may be codified into HR policy if decision-makers at the organization routinely favour men over women when assessing job performance. For instance, “face time”, a crucial performance metric, gives preference to people who are present at work over those who are not. Women use flexible work arrangements more frequently than men do because they are still the primary caretakers. This has an adverse effect on their career because they score lower on face time (Fuegen, Biemat, Haines & Deaux, 2014). Thus, biased performance ranking standards could therefore increase discrimination against women.

The human resource regulations governing chances for advancement and promotions are another problem. In organizations with highly formal employment ladders that decide and limit employees’ opportunities for promotions, women are less likely to progress (De Pater, Schilpzand & Erez, 2016). This occurs because gender-specific career ladders are more prevalent, and as a result, the gender job segregation that already exists at entry-level positions will become more obvious as the employees advance up their particular ladder without having the opportunity to switch to another line of advancement. Women will not be able to advance since they lack certain job experience that is not available within their particular job ladders (De Pater, Schilpzand & Erez, 2016). As a result, institutional prejudice may be included in HR policies intended to determine employee selection, performance reviews, and promotions. These policies may have a severe negative influence on the careers of women. However, HR policy only intends to act as a guide for decisions involving HR. In actuality, it is the managers, the supervisors, and the HR personnel who, in accordance with the policy, must evaluate job candidates or employees and determine how the policy will be applied to specific people.

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CONCLUSION

Undoubtedly, gender has a significant impact on how quickly or slowly a culture develops. As evidenced, sustainable development depends on the actions and inactions of each individual actor that makes up gender. Nigeria and other African countries have distinctive environments and an organised pattern-based society, which is evident in their patriarchal societies. A new viewpoint on gender inequality in roles, incentives, and recognition was developed as a result of the transfer of several other patterns that caused agitations and gender disputes, as well as the propagation of culture in her family. Numerous projects and programmes aiming at empowering women and encouraging their participation in all aspects of society have also been inspired by these perceived disparities. Even while many of these programmes are good and have produced some encouraging results, many women frequently fail to make a difference in their families, which is where all other development starts. This argument supports the idea that women should have an equal opportunity to work and build homes.

Consequently, this study recognizes the contributions made by the myriad programmes and laws that promote gender equality. All gender roles, particularly those that women fill at home and at work are determined to be just as important as those filled by men in formal and corporate settings. This is not to say, however, that women cannot be successful in other areas, such as politics and high-ranking leadership roles in society, but only so long as it does not conflict with their primary responsibilities in the family, which is the basic unit of society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the aforementioned discussions and findings, the following recommendations are offered for development to be straightforward and long-lasting:

1. Organisations must acknowledge the roles played by each actor and provide appropriate compensations and benefits.
2. Men and women must both view their obligations as vital but not more significant than those of the other, in order to achieve sustainable development.
3. Women need to work outside the home to make a point because doing so would leave them with little to no time to take care of their core family responsibilities, leading to an appreciation of their roles that were previously taken for granted.
4. Women must see their work as essential to society's development because they have contributed to, and will continue to do so in the lives that will create nations.
5. The government should see to it that programs and policies that promote the appreciation and importance of unpaid labour—such as doing the laundry, cooking, looking after children or the elderly, and cleaning the home—are adopted. These tasks are often performed gratis by women and girls.
6. The government should also make sure that the general public is more aware of the fact that such unpaid occupations need a lengthy list of daily duties and activities, which are crucial to both everyday living and the global economy and should not be unappreciated.

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7. The government should ensure that women engage fully in public life since it is crucial for achieving gender equality and for making informed decisions in business, politics, and other areas of public life that women hold leadership positions. Equal leadership is necessary to ensure that all viewpoints are heard in decision-making forums, as recently highlighted by the COVID-19 task groups, where women's considerable underrepresentation led to crucial gaps in Nigeria's reaction and recovery efforts.

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Chapter 14

Global Environmental Challenges and the Role of Colored Ecofeminists

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ABSTRACT

Aiming to uphold the ideal of ushering in the true equality between our fellow human beings and their symbiotic relationship with the nature/environment, the goal of this chapter is to rationalize that any activism directed towards women's liberation will achieve the fullest spectrum only when it involves and incorporates the environmental perspective on the decolonization of nature too. The false anthropocentric polarities between culture and nature and man and woman were engendered and proliferated by Western phallogocentric discourses that dichotomized nature and culture bracketing the former with the woman and latter with the man presenting it like an obvious and great truth. This chapter, therefore, deconstructing the myth of the false differences between the genders and the pallocentric nature/culture binary seeks to make a humanitarian claim that the ultimate liberation of women from the shackles of phallogo/anthropcentric is inextricably linked with the liberation of nature also.

INTRODUCTION

Ecofeminism, an interdisciplinary enterprise blending insights from ecology and literature, is a theoretico-empirical movement that offers shared platform for both environmental activists and the environmental litterateurs to break free from the male dominance. It starts with the basic assumption that the woman

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and nature are twin victims of gender and environmental injustice perpetrated by the male supremacy and thus reveals the adroit ratiocination of the Euro-American patriarchal culture predicated on the binary oppositions which prioritize men over the women while nature/environment is subordinated to culture. These supremely powerful patriarchal systems embedded in capitalist, neo-liberal, neo-colonial global structures mainly operate on the mighty principle of binary oppositions embedded in the social system and ideological structures of patriarchal society where women coupled with nature are discriminated against and thrown into near total existential vacuum on sexist and biological grounds. While the scope of feminism is usually circumscribed to the notions of sexism, racism, and heterosexism to illustrate the subjugation of women, ecofeminism makes a daring proposition to save humanity by liberating both woman and nature from any unjust domination by calling for a new system of thought and action that decentralizes and humanizes the relation between woman and nature. In this theoretically supported backdrop of the conceptual/(con)textual of the domination of woman and nature/environment by the global capitalist patriarchal (thought and social) structures, the theoretical and literary contributions of the women from world marginalized communities will be discussed to highlight how employing the insights of ecofeminist theory the Native Indian and Afro- American female novelists and environmental activists have not only provided the insight into the numerous forces working together for the subjugation of the intertwined categories of women and nature by patriarchal demagogues in capitalist, neo-liberal, neo-colonial, highly technologized and implacable democratic set ups of the global North but also presented in the form of decentralizing and humanizing the supreme antidote to patriarchal and anthropocentric propaganda. The symbiotic rather than anthropocentric and humanistic rather than sexist and racialized vision of life envisions the revolutionary reality which can serve as an antidote to racial, sexist and anthropocentric philosophies plaguing the woman and the environment.

This chapter is mainly dedicated to comprehending and evaluating from ecofeminist and environmental lens how women environmental writers and activists from the oppressed and racially segregated communities of black (Afro-Americans) and red (Native Americans) descents have made significant contribution to the earth- and -woman-centered emerging field of ecocriticism and ecofeminism. They have done so by showcasing the environmental narratives of their eco-friendly communities which address formidable contemporary environmental issues. These women writers while addressing environmental problems confronting the globe assumed the roles of environmental activists in predominant patriarchal cultures of the mainstream capitalist world and showed by presenting and glorifying their pre-colonial cultures and ways of living in which they lived in complete harmony with the nature and its inhabitants whom they considered their siblings and showed great respect to the earth, the environment and the non-human creatures inhabiting it. Conscious of the terrifying effects of globally deteriorating environmental crisis and the pressing need to address these urgent issues, these colored women from marginalized sections of the American society translated into their nature writings and environmental discourses their grave concerns and brave actions about the preservation of the pristine beauty of the earth and the environment, and enthusiastically initiated and participated in environmental movements which resulted in inspiring the legions of devoted followers to commit themselves to resolving the environmental problems. These women activists from marginalized communities raised slogans for the preservation of the earth and the environment via these environmental campaigns and artistically voiced their discomfort and detailed the antidotal remedies in their writings where they searched for collective identity with nature and asserted the need to save the earth and its inhabitants from technological and toxic interventions . The most admirable part of their writings was where they celebrated and glorified the unsullied environment in their feminine writings and defended as well as eulogized the nexus of the

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nature-woman closeness by reconstructing the ecological aspect of the black women's lives which had met derogatory treatment at the hands of mainstream Western colonial discourses. Absolutely convinced through their historic encounters with the white man, experiential and observational knowledge as well as being victims of the white man's policies seeking extermination of their culture and traditional ways of life, they justifiably believed that anthropocentric phallogocentrism in nuanced forms was accountable for jeopardizing the deteriorating ecosphere and reckless treatment of nature by the man and the pursuit of capitalistic aggrandizement was brewing more serious troubles for the humanity. To ameliorate the fast degradation of the environment and the consequential hydra-headed crises confronting the safe future of mankind, they girdled up to play their role in urging the technologically geared up capitalist patriarchy to stop despoliation of the environment and its salutary bio-diversity. These ethically motivated colored environmental activists practically struggled against the offensive neo-liberal economic agendas which held detrimental promises to environmentalism. The prime purpose of initiating these environmental movements, apart from saving the environment from being decimated at the hands of power and capital hungry capitalists, was to ensure whether through violent struggle to get their legal right to their lands from which they were being violently driven away and to live in their ancestral familiar environmental space where they and the nature lived in perfect harmony. The black and red environmental narratives centered upon the glorious period of their pre-colonized era when their ancestors lived in complete harmony with the unspoiled nature and its non-human creatures found sorrowfully sensitive and magical expression in their environmental narratives in which they nostalgically dreamed for the retrieval of a lost utopian idea of living in unison with their lands in natural environment where there was no space for environmental subjugation and where they could harmonize their lives with the super abundance and spiritual aura of natural resources, where there was no Western anthropocentric hierarchical structures between a human and non-human and where they had large hearted appetite for loving and co-inhabiting the natural world. With uncommon capacity for compassionate understanding of the need to live in symbiotic relation with the environment and the non-human creatures inhabiting it, what they aspire for is to have conditions of equality between fellow human beings without any considerations of gender and race and an access to their unhindered association with nature where they can nurture nature's immaculate form to help it attain its remarkable beauty and absolute splendor by retaining its stunning power and dazzling mystery without any fear of devastating technological invasion, polluting capitalist waste materials and adrenalized oppressive and exploitative ploys by the patriarchal hegemony.

Theoretical Background and Contextual Underpinning

As this chapter discusses the discursive reconstitution of the environmental identities of the marginalized Afro-American and Native American women and their discursively constructed and disseminated degraded relationship with the environment in the mainstream Euro-American culture and literature, the rigorous evaluation of the selected women writings necessarily involves the ecocritical and colored women's ecofeminist perspectives on the issue. Since the study in this chapter of the Native and black female writers discusses the nuanced ecofeminist perspectives on the issue, it is significant to highlight the contradistinctions delineating the nuanced versions of the feminist milieu. As feminism in its simplistic and basic form underpins the theoretical and epistemological agenda that, it is a women's movement that strives to its fullest scope for equality of holistic rights for women in a patriarchal society. Reddock beautifully describes that it is "the awareness of oppression, exploitation and/or subordination of women within a society and the conscious action to change and transform this situation". Drawing attention

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to the similarities between the ecocritical and ecofeminist agenda for adopting radical measures and activism for the preservation of the environment, Estock (2001) opines that both fields of inquiry are not contradictory approaches rather, they imply complementary and balancing epistemological strands.

Cheryll Glotfelty, the founding figure of ecocritical discipline, on the contrary, dissects the ‘eco’ and ‘enviro’ in an attempt to provide genealogical explanation of the anthropocentric and geocentric philosophies concerning the relationship of the human and the non-human. While the anthropocentrism, building its thesis upon the Western philosophical tradition of binary oppositions, places man at the centre of the universe bestowing upon him the absolute authority to rule and dominate the non-human, the geo/biocentrism refers to more mutually dependent and extraordinarily coordinated communal system according equal value to all creatures. Glotfelty’s contradistinction between eco and enviro is rigorously corroborated by Sun (2006) who asserts that man in the grand scheme of the universe is only a fraction not a whole of it, therefore, any spirited attempt to upend the formidably escalating environmental crisis would certainly entail renouncing the mistaken anthropocentric aplomb in favor of bio-centrism acknowledging the rights of the flora and fauna of the nature. While feminism with its fixed agenda of targeting the entrenched patriarchal social formations and repressive institutions of the society blames the gendered institutional structures which cause immense damage, ecofeminism contends that patriarchy in collaboration with its deeply institutionalized repressive power structures doubly dominate and control the existence of women and nature to assert and perpetuate its eccentric hegemony and infinite control over everything that is not masculine.

An Afro- American Feminist, Patricia Hill Collins is a renowned Black theorist whose piercing insights into colored women’s issues regarding gender, race and ecofeminist identity have broadened the spectrum of marginalized women’s creative potential . While a handful number of Afro- American writers and theorists such as Angela Davis, June Joarden, Audrey Lorde, bell hooks, and Adrienne Rich have made considerable contributions to the advancement of Black (Eco)feminist theory and presented alternatives to Western Feminist position, Collins is a distinguished Afro- American Feminist scholar and theorist whose theoretical contemplations of present-day Black women’s life has quintessentially revealed and questioned the extremely corroding impact of prevailing Western patriarchal capitalist power structures upon the Black women’s existence and culture, highlighting unique articulation of Afro- centric epistemologies and knowledge claims.

Collins authenticates black women’s distinctive identity and challenges with billowing concern Western misleading collective construction of African American women by advising women to reclaim and assert their identity by and self-actualization through solid everyday life experiences. These increasingly challenging and contrastive images of Black women, according to Patricia, will oppose the brutally negative discursive constructs of Black women triggered by dominant systems, and contradict even reject internalized psychological oppression of the black women. In her seminal text *Black Feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness and the politics of Empowerment*, she emphasizes the value of writing down every day lived experiences and sharing the deeply personal feelings. She states “only the willingness to share private and sometimes painful experience can enable women to create a collective description of the world that is truly ours” (p. 16). Morrison has piercingly portrayed these painful experiences of the Black women in her narratives. The literature of women writers from the colored nations subverts western system of twin domination of woman and nature suggesting the alternatives to rectifying the power inequities. They advocate that both white and non- white male and female must give considerate

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attention and listen to each other's stories and cultural differences, especially when these narratives tell conflicting truths. In this regard, the new hybrid form of the environmental narratives of Toni Morrison and Louise Erdrich exemplify the new era when the white and black, the mainstream and marginal cultures must learn to harmoniously coexist, listen to the stories of each other and promote enduring peace by sharing gifts, voices, varied experiences and relative truths.

Interconnection Between Nature and the Marginalized Colored Women emphasizing the empathetic reverence for the unjust domination of the earth and the splendor of environment as well the subjugation of colored women by the hegemonic patriarchal culture, black and Native environmental justice narratives unveil the ruthless exploitation of the earth and the woman by the forces that foster the "same habitual structures of thought, feeling and action that devalue and harm women [and] nature" (Curry 2006, p. 95). Nevertheless, a distinctive ecological conscience characterizes the black ecofeminist thought which, contrary to mainstream white phallogocentric binarism, doesn't (de)privilege one entity over the other, it rather "show[s]the connection between all forms of domination including the domination of non-human nature" (King 1983, p. 142). This precision of insight into the patriarchy's unjust treatment of woman and nature is thus a clear reminder that the compassionate sensitivity towards nature that the women are endowed with threads ecocriticism and ecofeminism together and imparts a significant message that women and nature can coexist and are the common roots of ecofeminism and ecocriticism that underpins the "domination of women and the domination of the natural environment" (Warren cited in Estock, 2005). Susan Prentice explaining the seminal proposition of ecofeminism gives a realistic appraisal that "While asserting the fragility and interdependence of all life, [it] 'assumes that women and men ... have an essential human nature that transcends culture and socialization' so it implies that what men do to the planet is bad; what women do is good". (qtd. In Merchant, p. 193).

Women exuberantly celebrate their union with nature by proclaiming that because of their natural proclivity and extraordinary sensitiveness towards nature, their relationship with environment is stronger than men who in their materialistic pursuits undermine the substantial potential of symbiosis and destroy the natural environment. Their animated belief in the connectivity of all forms of life guarantees that the living world is rife with symbiotic bonds and they are inevitably linked to nature for their survival and subsistence which helps them to appreciate and value the prime importance of water for their survival as well as for other creatures.

Furthermore, their intimate knowledge and profound wisdom about the primacy of nature informs their life decisions and permeates through generations. Ecocritics and environmental writers agree that women have seeded the most significant ecofeminist revolution which ties women and nature into timeless critical association. Women, sharing the fertility principle with nature, on the contrary, despise these actions of men because they consider it a stultifying encroachment on their source of continuity of life and the next generation. Ironically, their sterling contribution in this regard has not been properly acknowledged in the patriarchal systems of a society, therefore, this chapter within the short scope seeks to briefly highlight the meritorious environmental theoretical and literary outpourings of Native American and Afro -American women novelists and environmentalists, acknowledging the critical contribution of black women writers within the framework of ecofeminism. Mellor by quoting Simon de Beauvoir draws our attention to how men conflate women and nature in the process of othering and alienating as "Men try to alienate women as the other as they do the same thing for nature. However, we, as women, know the unsteady feelings of men towards nature. He abuses woman but she challenges him because he is born from her and dies in her" (p. 51).

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As the quote above affirms the immediate cause of the emergence of ecofeminism was the disturbing consciousness developing within the women that man treats nature and woman as lesser and insignificant entities, therefore, combating gender discrimination via ecofeminist activism, they struggled to protect and preserve both nature and women from the unremitting predominance of patriarchy. Jeffery Bile's claim that the philosophy of ecofeminism is predicated on "eclectic structures" (p. 8) which describes a resilient connection of nature with women is largely true as the historical evidences from the colonized lands prove that the white colonizers enslaved and savaged both women and nature describing them both as passive, conquerable, having no will and voice of their own and hence were created to be dominated. Furthermore, ecofeminism attempts to emphasize the shared characteristics of nature and woman such as their reproductively which further strengthens the bond between them. However, paradoxically, despite this reproductive prowess of women and nature, both have been immensely relegated entities existing only to be conquered, subordinated and misused by patriarchal, philosophical, and epistemological power structures. Karen Warren, underlining the function of ecofeminism in deconstructing the gender politics of Western phallogocentric binarism, articulates the compendium of ecofeminist philosophy with clarity of vision:

Women are identified with nature and the physical realm, while men are identified with the 'human' and mental realm. Whatever is identified with nature and the physical is inferior to whatever is identified with the 'human' and the mental. Therefore, women are inferior to men; or, reversely, men are superior to women. For any X and Y, if X is superior to Y, then X is justified in subordinating Y. Therefore, 'men are justified in subordinating women. (p. 123)

Liberatory potential of the Native American and Afro-American Ecofeminist Environmental Narratives

As eco-feminism denounces the patriarchal domination of nature and woman in any socio-political system founded upon biological essentialism (Warren 2000, p. 2), this chapter briefly surveys the theoretical and fictional contributions of the black and red American environmental writers and activists. Considering the basic proposition that Native American and Afro-American women writers like Toni Morrison, Louise Erdrich, Marmon Silko and many others have produced remarkable deconstructive environmental narratives featuring the mythic vision of their communities from ecofeminist viewpoint have, other than expanding the frontiers of ecocritical/ecofeminist studies to the black women writers and environmental activists, helped conceptualize and suggest possible solution to the important environmental problems confronting the humanity. These narratives present the humans, animals and nature symbiotically co-inhabiting the environment living in perfect harmony without hierarchical divisions peculiar to anthropocentric philosophy of life. It is pertinent to think that women possess better ecological conscience and their closeness to nature serves as a site where nature meets human nature. These environmental narratives present women instinctively participating in the charitable celebration of the natural world and being increasingly considerate and rational towards nature whether human or non-human. If men discount females' relations with nature and act wantonly towards nature, the study of the red and black female authors who use ecocritical and ecofeminist insights quite extensively "promote the exchange of ideas and information pertaining to literature that considers the study of the relationship between human beings and the natural world" (Glotfelty, 1996, xviii). Even though men

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venture to enmesh women in man-made gender roles, women have prefatory association with nature. Susan Griffin in her book, *Woman and Nature*, succinctly sums up the case:

“Patriarchal man feels that he must dominate everything in nature including wild animals like wildness inside him which can be observed in relation with woman. Therefore, man should dominate woman before woman controls him. So, he likes an animal in a zoo and woman in a domestic cage jailed by a man. Domestic responsibilities of women generally given to them by men lead to keep women away from social and economic life. This situation is similar to catch animals for entertainment purpose and then imprison them into man-made artificial places. So, both women and living beings are removed from their natural environments by men” (Griffin, n.d., p. 87).

Black women writers and theorists explain that the ecofeminist philosophy not only explicates the profound association of women with nature but also encourages “new nature writing, traditional and innovative scholarly approaches to environmental literature, and interdisciplinary environmental research” (Glotfelty, 1996, p. xviii). In any patriarchal society, women are disciplined to accept and internalize performing the role of a domestic worker a natural part of their gender which is believed to be an obvious and inviolable truth of their gender. Women by cultivating unflinching set of environmental ethical values through their proximity with nature have strengthened their ties with nature which are reflected through their ecofeminist discourses. Similarly defying patriarchal values and oppressive norms they have initiated environmental movements which seek to challenging traditional gender thinking and celebrating social, environmental and domestic sphere of a woman’s life that is closer to nature. The aesthetic description of the intimate relation between woman and nature by radical feminist philosopher Susan Griffin is worth noting:

“We are the bird’s eggs. Bird’s eggs, flowers, butterflies, rabbits, cows, sheep; we are caterpillars; we are leaves of ivy and sprigs of wallflower. We are women. We rise from the wave. We are gazelle and doe, elephant and whale, lilies and roses and peach, we are air, we are flame, we are oyster and pearl, we are girls. We are woman and nature. And he says he cannot hear us speak. But we hear” (p. 76).

To ensure equitable treatment of the woman and nature in capitalistic, highly technologized global patriarchal societies, the ecofeminist writers and environmental activists played significant role in raising the environmental consciousness and gender equality so that the female gender could be treated in a better way in a society plagued with male domination and supremacy. They came up with theories, philosophical treatises, literary artifacts and political activism to highlight the oppression and discrimination that women and the nature suffered in the hands of patriarchal societies. Bell hooks a famous black American philosopher and social activist, while explicating the term feminism, refers to all forms of oppression that are perpetrated upon women to silence and enslave them and hence inspires women to deliberate and devise new forms and systems of liberation to defeat the patriarchal system of domination in all forms, thus “Feminism, liberation struggle, must exist apart from and as a part of the larger struggle to eradicate domination in all forms. We must understand that patriarchal domination shares an ideological foundation with racism and other forms of group oppression, that there is no hope that it can be eradicated while these systems remain intact” (Hooks, n.d., p. 22).

By subscribing to the fact that the race and the gender inequality that Hooks calls “domination in all forms” was endless, these feminist writers became more interdisciplinary in explaining the hedonistic mechanism of women and environment treatment in a world facing grave environmental crisis . The preservation of environment entails among other things a fundamental change in our ethical attitude towards nature, an essential ingraining of environmental ethics in our behaviors, because this is how we can deal with the cataclysmic global environmental crisis which has already started disastrously upset-

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ting the ecological balance of our globe. The predicament is encapsulated in an exquisitely insightful passage by Donald Worster (1993):

We are facing a global crisis today, not because of our ecosystems function but rather because of how our ethical systems function. Getting through the crisis requires understanding our impact on nature as precisely as possible, but even more, it requires understanding those ethical systems and using that understanding to reform them. (Worster cited in Glotfelty, 1996, p. xxi)

If Worster's constructive advice proposes that literary studies can be employed to play a decisive role in indoctrinating crucial awareness and responsiveness among the people about the need and significance of fostering a complementary spirit of symbiotic relationship between humanity and nature, then black and red feminist environmental narratives embodied in the oeuvres of Toni Morrison, Elizabeth Bishop, Leslie Marmon Silko, Paula Gunn Allen, Vine Deloria jr, Gerald Vizenor, Louise Erdrich, and a host of other Native American and Afro-American writers epitomize this awareness as the human beings peacefully co- inhabit the lands with animals and other non-human creatures like the descendents of one parents. Thus, their environmental writings which I term ecocritical ecriture feminine contribute to fostering a spirit of sympathetic understanding among nations and communities about the environmental menaces enveloping our ecosphere and suggest some positive ways for the restoration of the accelerated environmental degradation. Ecofeminist environmental scholars and critics see the philosophy of environmentalism bounded with the idea of gender difference also and observe that on closer inspection the seeming dipoles of woman and nature are intimately woven and subtly exploited in our societies and thus studying the literary representations of the scenes and events reflecting upon the interactions between (wo)men and nature, they ambitiously contribute to changing people's understanding of and attitude towards environmental thinking .

Consistent with Glotfelty's anticipation she envisioned in 1996 that ecocritical scholarship will no longer remain confined to one field and will rather become interdisciplinary, threading together the multicultural strands in the wake of fast changing global environmental developments, the present chapter provides those "stronger connections" by integrating black and native strands of ecocriticism to make it "a multi-ethnic movement" (p. xxv). If the focus of feminism is upon the clarification of this knowledge and ideas that women and nature face degradation and oppression in a patriarchal society because of the phallogocentric and anthropocentric structures, ecofeminism clearly theorizes the capitalist patriarchy as the single decisive factor behind the interrelated domination and exploitation of nature and the women. Though the global recognition and wide-spread popularity of the ecofeminism as theory and praxis is inevitably linked to the publication of Glotfelty's *The Ecocritical Reader* (1996), the term was, however, first coined by Françoise D' Eaubonne in 1974 with the intention to explaining the unmistakable similarity between the twin domination and exploitation of women and nature by phallogocentric patriarchy. There is hardly any doubt about ecofeminism as an offshoot of feminist theory that incorporates ecological theoretical postulates to integrate the idea of domination of woman with nature. Since ecocriticism, like many other philosophies concerning the oppression of women was originated in the west and was later appropriated by the black philosophers, activists and scholars in various disciplines, therefore understandably most of the preliminary studies scrutinizing the relationship between and theorization of nature and women were undertaken by the western academia approaching the issue from a western perspective to the complete disregard of black and Native nations' perspectives. The present chapter espousing inclu-

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sionary rather than exclusionary approach analysed Native and Afro- American literatures in the light of ecocriticism. A very typical example involving the western appropriation of the field excluding the colored women's perspective on the issue is the King's distinction between feminism and ecofeminism which reflects on the white perspective only as if it were the only universalistic perspective. When she deliberates on the ecofeminism's challenge of various forms of social domination, she generalizes that these broad challenges extend far "beyond sex to social domination of all kinds, because the domination of sex, race and class [which recur in black feminist thought] and the domination of nature are mutually reinforcing" (cited in Warren 1997, p. 21). King is not the only scholar who has considered the subjugation of nature a feminist issue, rather there is quite a long list of contemporary literary and cultural writers, academicians and scholars including Ruether 1992, Howell 1997 and Warren 1997 agree unanimously over the issue of connection between the domination of nature and women and unanimously recognize/categorize it as a feminist issue. Ecofeminism, affirming and extending nucleus of feminist postulations that women are disparagingly dominated by patriarchy, posits that unjust and deplorable domination of non-human nature by the anthropocentric, male stream global power structures is also a feminist problematic. Whereas Howell (1997) in her article " Ecofeminism: what one needs to know" (1997) attempts to analyze and interpret the problematic of ecofeminism from ecological point of view corroborating ecofeminism's connectivity with the domination of women and nature, Ruether (1992) takes cultural position and examines the ecological issues from cultural and social studies perspective. Similarly Van Rine Shiva (cited in Brink 2009, p.1) and Cook (2008) also conform to the understanding of ecofeminism's indispensable link with the culture of male domination that prospers on the exploitation and degradation of women (and nature) for the aggrandizement of men.

The philosophers and critics posited that the female gender because of their instinctive moral inclination towards nature is more likely to love and protect the natural environment while men being more cautious deliberate on reflexive reactions and seldom or cautiously transcend them. Val Plumwood in her book *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* quoting Fidelis Morgan states the reasons behind the suppression of nature and women, "That women's inclusion in the sphere of nature has been a major tool in their oppression emerges clearly from a glance at traditional sources: 'Woman is a violent and uncontrolled animal'" (qtd in Plumwood, p. 19). As for the ecofeminists, both nature and women are dominated and relegated by men and they misuse and obliterate the both, as they claim that they are the ultimate masters of a society who have the power and right to dominate everything. To counter this reckless domination of women and nature by the sexist and phallogocentric cultural ideology that harmed women and nature in negative ways and discursively disfigured the otherwise positive and ecologically useful relation between women and nature, the philosophy of ecofeminism emerged during third wave of feminism as the most instinctual response to the recognition that a positive change is needed to defend nature and women from the incursions of expansionist patriarchal structures. The term was first coined by Françoise d'Eaubonne, a French writer who explained this concept in detail in her book *Le Féminisme ou la Mort (Feminism or Death)* (1974). Warren's (2000) description of the essential features of ecofeminism conceptualizes the subjugation of women and nature:

"Ecofeminist philosophy, in general, agrees on three main claims. The first one is that there are connections between domination of women and nonhuman nature. The second one is that ecofeminism must raise awareness in environmental philosophy about these interconnections between women and nature. The last one is that ecofeminism tries to replace unfair domination over women and nature with justified structure in the environmental philosophy (p. 57).

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The logic of ecofeminism's initiation within the matrix of environmental movements is instrumental in understanding the feminine problems and issues that are parallel to the environmental quandaries. Despite the indisputable relation of ecofeminism with the plight of women and ecology as it is crystallized in literary and cultural discourses, ecofeminism, in view of its susceptibility to multivalent perspectives, eludes a cohesive or monolithic definition, implying that there is no homogeneous ecofeminism. However, despite the plural and polyvalent character of the discipline, some of the distinguished scholars of the field including Warren (2000), King and Birkeland (1993), Adams (1990) and Howell (1997) have drawn some shared principles, values and motifs that typify the seminal concerns in ecofeminism. The first principle is that ecofeminism explores the nature of relation between the unjust(ified) domination of nature and women. Secondly it investigates the implications of malestream, whitewashed, canonical, anthropocentric as well a phallogocentric philosophical notions about nature and women and ; Thirdly it offers practical alternatives to anthropocentric/ phallogocentric views (Warren 2015).

Ecofeminist writers and critics by taking into consideration the interconnection between the treatment of nature and women by patriarchy and their negative stereotypical discursive construction as inferior and insignificant creatures created only to be exploited and ruled over by patriarchy in various forms, posit that the role of nature in the life of humans is gendered and because women naturally are more intimate to nature and cater for its preservation, the philosophy of ecofeminism throws light on the environmental as well feminist awareness in the patriarchal structure of a society where both endure similar violent effects and seek environmental justice.

Colored Women and Global Environmental activism

The female stance is that since both women and nature are the victim of male oppression and supremacy, they should be liberated altogether. This idea injected a new spirit in the theory of ecofeminism in the USA and proved instrumental in raising consciousness among the women about the need for the preservation of the environment worldwide. In Kenya, women enthusiastically participated in the Green Belt Movement which was established by professor Wangari Maathai in 1977. The women showing solidarity with this movement planted millions of trees in the infertile lands. Later in the beginning of the 1970s in India, when a movement named as The Chipko movement, or Chipko Andolan got momentum, women joined this movement and in accordance with the spirit of the movement hugged the trees to preserve the surroundings and environment of their community. Women living in Sweden also started preparing jams from the berries and presented it to the people of parliament which they refused to eat. The women in Canada also took steps to protect the environment, while the women living in the United States locally arranged a support program to clean the dangerous waste places of their towns. As a whole, in every country, women came forward to stand against the destructive behavior of men towards the environment. These women through their actions supported the worldwide movement which progressively came to be recognized as "ecofeminism". As this movement has keenly worked to maintain life on earth, the major influence of this movement has been that it has bridged differences between the man-made dualistic categories of nature and culture, and built and enhanced relationship among human beings by connecting them with the natural surroundings.

In addition to this, these women started establishing their groups to protest. These organizations established by the women have an increasing tendency of inspiring women towards environmental activism. In California, a woman founded an organization named the Greenbelt Alliance in 1958. In 1961 another organization Save the Bay Association was established. Then again in California, a group of

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women settled a union, Women in Timber in 1975. What is noticeable here is that the women who built these organizations and worked in them do not seem to be feminist or not even struggling for the feminist cause. As for these women, feminism is a “radical label” (Merchant, p. 190) which tends to stigmatize their goals and ambitions. Whereas on the other hand there were organizations such as Friends of the River (1973), Citizens for a Better Environment (1971), and Environmental Defense Fund (1967) in which women acted as feminists as well as especially the men who were concerned with the feminist’s issues regarding overturning the patriarchal set hierarchies.

They also built a relationship with other organizations which were working for the betterment of the environment. In this struggle, the main event was as Grassroots Movement in which majority of the women activists took part who raised their voice against the toxic wastes. The reason for their involvement in this movement was because of the miscarriages they experienced as well as their kids who were suffering from natal deficiencies in their bodies, moreover, suffering from other many forms of disease such as cancer, leukemia, etc. they claim that the reason they are facing these problems is because of the hazardous waste materials nearby in their streets. There was a movement initially titled as “Not in My Backyard” which later changed to “not in anybody’s Backyard (NIABY)” and then again the title was changed to “Not On Planet Earth (NOPE)”. This tells a deep concern of women community for the environmental issues which increased gradually. A woman named Cathy Hinds who lives in East Gray found that the citizens of Maine were facing Coalition on Toxics. After she lost her child as Maine was polluted by the dirt and the chemicals also her daughter was suffering from dizzy spells because of the industrial dirt in Maine. This urged her to participate in different campaigns and she became an energetic activist in the National Toxics Campaign where she (protests-delete; insert:protested) for her children. She passionately claims, “we are the mothers of the earth, who want to take care of it” (Merchant, p. 193). Later around in the 1980s and 1990s critics observed that the movement of ecofeminism became increasingly an important topic for discussion. The women during this era started producing more critical perspectives on the movement of feminism by linking it with ecology. Through different movements such as the anti-nuclear movement, the peace movement, and social justice movement they registered their protest and unwillingness with the social treatment.

The writers like Susan Griffin and her book *Women and Nature* (1978) and Carolyn Merchant and her book *The Death of Nature* (1980) were marked important writings which claimed that woman were morally connected to nature in every possible way. As for these feminist writers, woman and nature share a lot of features so the ecology is linked to a woman. Moreover, these writers challenged different norms, movements, and actions such as environmental classism, nuclear testing, militarism etc. They talked against these ideas which destroy natural resources and leave harmful effects on the environment. And by the passing of time, feminists related to the third wave of feminists as well as the scholars and intellectuals who believed in the philosophy of Post-structuralism linked woman and nature in their analysis, forging a deep relationship between the two. These women philosophers and critics by connecting themselves with the concepts of ecology raised the issues about the oppression, subjugation, and degradation they faced while living in the dominant patriarchal societies.

In the seventeenth century, the scientific revolution also affected nature and environment in several ways. Through this scientific revolution in the form of machines, they degraded nature by substituting it with Renaissance organicism. They replaced the earth nurturing process with the metaphor of machines and technology. These mechanisms were viewed by the cultural feminists on ontological and epistemological developments. They stated that these mechanisms were exploitative as well as masculinist by nature and would be further used to dominate and dehumanize the female gender and their apprehen-

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sions have become largely true as in the present century the women have initiated movements like cyber feminism to reclaim their cyber rights and space . Just like earth, a female is ruled and controlled by the man made technologies and developments in science and industry. For Cultural ecofeminists there is a strong relationship between a woman and a nature, so they took a stance arguing about anti-technology, and anti-science and praised the earlier ancient rituals that focused on the natural things such as moon, animals, they placed women at the center by worshipping them as goddess and celebrated the female reproductive system. Whereas around 1990s, critics also observed that because of the essentialist views ecofeminism propagates, it is being criticized by different writers. Karen warren conceptualizes the philosophy of ecofeminism as follows:

An ecofeminist ethics is both a critique of male domination of both women and nature and an attempt to frame an ethics free of male-gender bias about women and nature. It not only recognizes the multiple voices of women, located differently by race, class, age, [and] ethnic considerations, it centralizes those voices. Ecofeminism builds on the multiple perspectives of those whose perspectives are typically omitted or undervalued in dominant discourses, for example, Chipko women, in developing a global perspective on the role of male domination in the exploitation of women and nature. An ecofeminist perspective is thereby... structurally pluralistic, inclusivist, and contextualist, emphasizing through concrete examples the crucial role context plays in understanding sexist and naturist practice. (qtd. in Merchant, n.d., p. 185)

Ecofeminism is divided into three categories: liberal, social, and cultural. While these all three are deeply concerned to make several amendments to improve the relationship between human beings and nature, these all forms contributed to the theory of ecofeminism in three different ways. Whereas liberal feminism is observed as the most reliable form which struggles to reform environmentalism so that the relationship of a human with nature can be altered. They reform this relationship by adding and representing new laws and regulation in the existing governance. For liberal ecofeminists, ecological issues result from the excessively fast advancement of natural assets and the inability to manage pesticides and other natural waste products. Moreover, cultural ecofeminism presents the perspective of a society which is based on the patriarchal structures and makes a critique on the male-dominated cultures. This form of ecofeminism offers a different substitute that can help both nature and women to liberate themselves from domination. As for cultural ecofeminism, both nature and women are associated with each other mutually and face devaluation in the Western cultural perspective. While the last form, social ecofeminism, talks about capitalist patriarchy. It attempts to incorporate ecology in the theory of feminism since it condemns feminism on account of the absence of ecological issues. An American political women writer, Janet Biehl claims, "Social ecofeminism accepts the basic tenet of social ecology, that the idea of dominating nature stems from the domination of human by human. Only ending all systems of domination makes possible an ecological society, in which no states or capitalist economies attempt to subjugate nature, in which all aspects of human nature-including sexuality and the passions as well as rationality are freed" (qtd in Merchant, n.d., p. 194).

The practitioners of ecofeminism believe that it can bring an end to the oppression and domination women face in a patriarchal society. They highlighted that the liberation of nature and environment can help women to get freedom. Women are connected with the ecological system in several ways. So the negative attitude environment encounters also leaves an impact on the women and their children which results in degradation. For instance, the waste materials, chemical waste and different radiations cause harm to the reproductive system of females. According to the ecofeminist perspective, women's biological

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system that is connected to nature is regarded as a female power which is commonly celebrated by these ecofeminist women. Women who deal with the ecological activism shed light on the interconnectedness between a woman's reproductive biology as nature and the men's designed technology as culture. What these women protest about is that the male gender while designing and producing the technologies and machines does not pay attention to the dangerous effects these technologies produce through pesticides, harmful wastes and chemical radiations which later leave harmful effects upon the female body as well as disturb the ecosystem. The reason to protest against the issues such as radioactivity from the nuclear wastes, bombs and other technologies is that they are harming human beings leaving them with dreadful diseases such as cancer, infertility, leukemia, birth defects, and miscarriages which result in the abolition of life from the earth. These industries built by a man expose dangerous waste chemicals near homes and schools which also leave impurities in drinking water as well as in the soil. They complain and protest against spraying pesticides and herbicides, on harvests and forestry as these chemicals influence kids and childbearing ladies living close to these forest places.

Native American female activists built an organization WARN (Women of All Red Nations) in 1974 to dissent high radiation levels from uranium mining tailings on their reservations which were causing the high pace of premature and abnormal children. They perceived their duties as stewards of land and expressed their regards for their Mother Earth which they believed is a wellspring of their physical sustenance and the profound strength of their people. Rachel Carson, an American marine biologist made the interrogation about the subject of life on earth and claimed it a public matter. In 1962, she initiated a movement which was credited as advancing the global environmental movement. This movement focused on the deadly aftermaths of chemical insecticides collecting in the soil and tissues of living organisms—deadly elixirs that bombarded human and nonhuman life from the moment of conception until the moment of death. Henceforth, ecofeminists claim that the preservation of natural surroundings results in preserving the women and the next generations as well. But in this regard, environment demands efforts both from men and women. While the main reason for the degradation and subjugation is the dominant males who rule over everything so women through their feminine writings state that patriarchal attitude towards nature and women need to be changed to liberate and preserve them.

Many of the ecofeminist critics have represented the biological similarities between nature and woman. As for them, the primary reason one states is that biologically, the woman is as fertile as nature which brings her close to nature. Moreover, both nature and woman can give birth and nurture. Simon de Beauvoir claims that, “women and men were biologically different, but that women could transcend their biology, freeing themselves from their destiny as biological reproducers to assume masculine values” (Merchant 189). Whereas the social life of a woman also deals with cultivation, cooking, harvesting and it also brings them close to nature. Therefore, they claim that they can better communicate and listen to the language of nature and they can feel their pain as they are under the process of same domination and exploitation. They demand liberation from patriarchal exploitation. The significant thing which needs to be observed through this ecofeminist theory is that, women by linking themselves with different driving forces and motivations explore themselves and solve the existing environmental problems. Luce Irigaray and Michele Le Doeuff rightly state, “Traditionally, women are ‘the environment’ they provide the environment and conditions against which male ‘achievement’ takes place, but what they do is not itself accounted as achievement” (qtd in Plumwood, n.d., p. 22).

Socially and culturally, women are assigned the roles of mother, who spend their whole lives in parenting and taking care of the family. They become close to their families and far from the world outside of their homes. A woman is defined as an emotional being who is connected to the surroundings, while men

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do not have this characteristic in their personality as they are socially defined as the rational individual who have the greater ability. Numerous social women activists value the period in ancient times when nature was symbolized by pregnant female figures, trees, butterflies, and winds and in which females were held in high regard as providers of life. A rising male-centric culture known as patriarchal culture, nonetheless, exiled the mother goddesses and displaced them with male gods to whom the female goddesses were subservient to. They started degrading the female figure. As Edmund burke states, 'A woman is but an animal and an animal not of the highest order' (p. 187)

The critics who believe in cultural ecofeminism state a solution so that women and nature can make their way out of these dilemmas. For them, political action is needed which can elevate and set women and nature free. Female is labeled and defined by the socially and culturally built stereotypes of a patriarchal society which positions them as a mother and child-bearer and a human being who is a nurturer of life. However, these stereotypes help them to build and enhance their closely connected relationship with nature. The main biological features of a woman's body that deal with pregnancy, childbirth, breast-feeding, are major reasons that women experience their closeness to the natural surroundings. These socially assigned duties enable women to observe nature with a different vision. So, this closeness with nature encourages females to preserve nature to benefit from the environmental resources as well as to save their own lives and reproductive systems. Although both woman and nature share the same ground and become victims of exploitation and disaster, woman's vulnerability is a primary reason that they are more rapidly affected by the change in nature rather than a man. Sherry Ortner in her article, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture," claimed that:

Cross-culturally and historically women, as opposed to men, have been seen as closer to nature because of their physiology, social roles, and psychology. Physiologically, women bring forth life from their bodies, undergoing the pleasures, pain, and stigmas attached to menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, and nursing, while men's physiology leaves them freer to travel, hunt, conduct warfare, and engage in public affairs. (Merchant, n.d., p. 190)

The theory of ecofeminism also talks about the Gaia hypothesis approach that was formulated by James Lovelock. Lovelock named his theory as Gaia hypothesis according to which the planet of the earth is a living valuable organism in itself. It is an important surface and planet on its own and there are not interventions done by human beings to make this earth a valuable place. Moreover, James Lovelock in his thesis claims that it is a productive and sensible part of nature. Gaia hypothesis also defines the connection between nature and women and states that women share similar qualification and features which earth has. For that reason, the degradation of the earth results in the survival of human beings on the earth. Moreover, the theory opposes the dualistic behavior of male /female and human/nature. Ecofeminism tries to solve this dualism and presents two main arguments in this regard as: (1) the process of deconstruction and (2): the process of revaluing these culturally made dualisms. Primarily all living beings are assumed as an important part of nature and in this way, they are natural living beings like nonhuman life forms in nature. Though, we live in a culture in which mastery of nature is overwhelming and there are counterfeit lines made by the humans to isolate humans and nature. The ecofeminist viewpoint states that human beings particularly females should remember that they are intensely connected with nature so they have additional obligations to talk about these issues of dualisms. Ecofeminism attempts to make association between women and nature against male supremacy over nature and women. Thus, through the process of revaluing this issue without alienating women from nature, ecofeminist

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reasoning endeavors to alter the course of male dominance over nature. Ecofeminist reasoning condemns dualisms because according to this theory dualistic discourses are utilized to subordinate females and nature and make them less valuable. Since dualistic reasoning isolates females from nature, it makes it hard to safeguard and keep nature from humiliation and exploitation by men. Cudworth succinctly sums up the issue and states:

“Ecofeminist philosophy emphasizes the subordination of nature and women to neutralize hierarchy of man over women so, they can draw attention to the intertwined structure of dualism in Western understanding of environmental ethics, of human/nature, male/female and mind/body. At this point, she refers to Plato’s dualism in which the first is a difference between the world of ideas and the world of sense and the second is a distinction between reason and perception. So, she suggests that the hybrid version of this dualism plays a decisive role in humans’ domination over nature. The hierarchical dualism is determined by the social hierarchy in the patriarchal system. So, the language of dualistic perception destroys the harmony of nature and women togetherness. Nature becomes a senseless and soulless mechanism in the dualistic universe” (qtd. in Seçkin, n.d., p. 19).

The relationship between women and nature and their shared interiorization is in no way a story of the past times rather it continuously situates itself into the present. One of the well-known types of interiorization of females and nature is the process of suppressing them. This suppression of women and nature is pervasive and can be understood by the rational structure of a society. Predominant Western culture has methodically interiorized, buried and denied reliance on the system of reproduction and subsistence. Thus, the process of suppression and exploitation of nature and women is firmly parallel.

Praxis of Environmental Ethics in Native and Afro-American Women Literature

In this background particular mention is to be made of Louise Erdrich and Toni Morrison who in their deeply environmental narratives, written in distinctive feminine sentence, have dwelt upon the relations between human beings and environment exposing how the environmental concerns have been conceptualized to demonstrate its relationship with and effect on Black women affirming the need of embracing environmental ethics in restructuring nature and black female’s environmental identities.

Erdrich is a very well-known and productive contemporary Native American writer and her *Love Medicine* is one of the most striking works of Native American Ecofeminist literary tradition. This novel, combining the oral and the discursive traditions narrates the lives of Chippewa Indians living in the reservation, their living conditions and the variety of Indian women who were either suppressed or misrepresented in mainstream whitewashed discourses. As women are ill-treated by the patriarchal society and their voices silenced the male figures of the society consider women as simply something imperfect and dependent upon them, nevertheless, the Indian women don’t submit to this treatment of their gender on racist or sexist basis. This section discusses Native American women’s association with nature or environment and the broader implications of this connection between them. Within the critical and theoretical spaces offered by the theories of ecocriticism, ecofeminism, and environmentalism, the different layers of the relationship between Native woman and the environment have been explored and it has been demonstrated that, unlike their stereotypical association with nature as primitive and passive, lustful and dangerous creatures in mainstream discourses, they forge a symbiotic and harmonious relationship with nature in all its forms, and provide for the contemporary era of environment crisis, exemplifying through their lifestyles and attitudes towards nature/environment, a symbiotic way of life that proposes a harmonious living with nature and grants promises of secure future.

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What makes *Love Medicine* a contemporary and relevant novel is its engagement with the critical global environmental issues. Erdrich, in *Love Medicine* meditates on the close relationship between women and nature and presents insightful female characters like Lulu and Marie in *Love Medicine* and Fleur Pillager in *Tracks* who maintain an intimate and harmonious relationship with nature and show striking sensitivity towards protecting it. With the remarkable insight into the important role earth-centered literary texts can play to save human ecology from destruction by encouraging environment friendly approaches, ecocritics draw attention to the notion of environmental ethics and value literary representations that profoundly promote environmental ethics and suggest through fictional accounts, the viable responses to environmental crisis as well as the possible ways to address global issues.

Erdrich's *Tracks* as an Embodiment of Environmental Literature

Tracks (1988) is a remarkable environmental narrative of Erdrich which candidly portrays the close and perennial spiritual relationship between Native American subjects and the non-human objects of nature. Opposed to the Euro-American anthropocentric view of dominance over the natural world, *Tracks* builds an Ecofeminist discourse, epitomizing temperamental receptivity of the Native American people towards environmental protection. The novel presents contrastive attitudes of the Euro-Americans and the Native American nations towards environment characterized by the motifs of salvation and preservation of nature and environmental problems. Because the environment holds a vital place in the lives of the Native Americans, Erdrich describes with unparalleled affection the lives of the Natives foregrounding their deep-rooted belief that the mutual relationship between man and nature depends on the balance and sustainability of the ecological life. Erdrich illustrates these conflicting white and non-white approaches to the environment by the white lumber companies that harm and devastate the environment by felling trees and the Natives like Nanapush and other male and female characters. For instance, Fleur, Nanapush and Eli to mention a few adopt environment friendly life style and cherish deep ecological ethics. Eli Kashpaw, for example, "lived too much in the company of trees and winds" and was "uncomfortable around humans" (p.40). The natural consequence of this living in proximity with nature is that these characters have deeper environmental imagination and unusual gift of listening and responding to non-human voices as their "ears pricked up everything in the woods, the rustle of birds, the crack of dead spring leaves and twigs" (p. 58).

Erdrich appears in these novels a remarkable Native American environmentalist and ecologist who, in her distinctive environmental novels poignantly presents case for ecological and environmental justice in *Love Medicine* and *Tracks*. Ecofeminists assert that in the contemporary society, both female and nature are victims of extraordinary discrimination. *Track* underscores the twin abuse of women and nature by enlightening the parallel exploitation of women and the natural resources on the earth. Erdrich contends that both women and environment are encountering grave danger, and a robust environmental activism is needed to liberate nature and women from exploitative approaches. The central argument of this chapter- the functioning of patriarchal structures in ways that institutionalize the exploitation of women and nature- is mirrored throughout the novel as the abuse and miserable ends of the female characters are linked with unremitting damage to the earth.

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Morrison's Ecofeminist Approach in *Beloved*

Similarly, the winner of the prestigious Nobel Prize for literature and known as the most influential contemporary Afro- American novelist, Toni Morrison also has exquisitely represented the lives and problems of contemporary generation of Black people. *Beloved* is the reconstruction of Afro- American socio-cultural and mythic history, especially the re-enactment of black women's identity and their symbiotic and invigorated relation with nature/environment through indigenous discourses, cast in Ecofeminist narration. This is what makes Morrison an important figure of present-day Afro- American women writing. She made dedicated efforts dedicated to reworking the history of the Afro- American people and brought to light their communal life and eco-friendly life in her environmental narratives. She has conscientiously redressed the wrongs done to Afro-American people and their relation with environment by the so-called champions of the rights of human beings, by deconstructing the racial stereotypes of the Black people in her marvelous environmental fiction. In *Beloved*, for example, she has narrated movingly the agonizing history of the Black slavery and the outrageous consequences of this psycho-physical subjection of the Black people. The terrible history of racism and environmentalism exposes the bitter truth that since the beginning of Western colonization and the enslavement of the Blacks, the Black women have suffered the environmental racism. They had history of living harmoniously with nature and non-human creatures contrary to the white societies which created binaries and prioritized culture over nature, mind over body and humans over non-humans. Her two representative novels *Beloved* and *Paradise* reveal that Afro Americans, just like the Native Americans had reverential relation with environment and a large variety of non-human creatures in it, had profoundly affectionate understanding of and relation with nature before being colonized by the Euro-Americans, so when they were brutalized and brought to Americas as slaves, the love for their native lands and protective sensibility towards environment also accompanied them. Their atrocious treatment at the plantations, callous subjection to persecutions and confinements, brutal sexual abuse of women, and the wicked laws and discriminatory judicial procedures that legalized the physical and psychological abuse of the Blacks was consistent with the white masters' vicious exploitation of nature and environment. Morrison acts as eco-warrior, a committed environmental activist in her fiction as she demonstrates that the issues of environmental politics and Black feminism are unified because both suffer unscrupulous exploitation, so, one of the purposes of her fiction is to highlight and struggle for ensuring environmental justice for her Black females. Her depiction of women and the non-human nature echo the ideals of predominantly white American society where anything but white male, be it non-white women or ecology is suppressed and marginalized. The black slaves employed at plantation in *Beloved* are treated not as humans but as the part of non-living nature; they are kept deprived of the human rights and status and are treated like sub-humans having characteristics of animals and environment which the white masters dominate to establish their speciestic supremacy over them. The black slaves are unscrupulously sold and bought like the unvoiced lands and the worst tragedy visited them when once sold, they along with their miserable families and children became the permanent property of the unprincipled white slave owners.

The Euro-Americans' ill-treatment of the Black women and non-human nature and animals is described in school teacher's nephews' appalling treatment of Sethe when she is made the victim of several brutal experiments to discover the similarities between her and the animals. Morrison reveals here the terrible implications of the Euro-American anthropological claims of the supremacy of human over every other creature as they have lead the white world to numerous dreadful beliefs, the predominance of human

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mind over nature being the most dangerous one, resulting in the devastation of non-white subjects and diversity of natural/environmental life that is causing unspeakable environmental hazards for all.

CONCLUSION

This study is a comprehensive discussion with regards to the demonstration of the ecofeminist and environmental themes of Erdrich and Morrison's selected works. The chapter concludes that Black and Native American women's strong relationship with nature and its willful distortion in the white discourses was made an epistemological excuse to control and exploit both women and the environment by white patriarchal institutions. The chapter on ecofeminist accounts in the chosen works of environmental writers, illustrate non-white women's emancipatory struggle through environmental narratives and political activism in capitalistic environment that is fraught with patriarchal violence committed upon women and nature.

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Chapter 15

Celebrity Endorsement and Cultural Orientation as per the Indo–African Perspective

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ABSTRACT

In many countries, celebrity endorsement is considered as the most premium form of advertisement where a renowned celebrity such as a popular actor/actress, singer, sports personality, etc. is made the brand ambassador. However, the consumer attitude towards celebrity endorsement is dependent on various cultural aspects. This chapter focuses on the different aspects of celebrity branding through the lenses of the culture and demography of two continents: Asia and Africa. The main focus of the chapter is on India from Asia and South Africa and Nigeria from Africa. In Asian countries like India, companies have been using famous celebrities like movie stars, singers, cricketers, etc. to endorse their brands as are much influenced by the long-term orientation. In African countries the most successful companies believe in establishing an affinity with the consumers by being “the brand of the people” and prefer local celebrities. Thus, the chapter sheds light on the role of culture on the effects of celebrity branding from Indo-African perspective.

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INTRODUCTION

“Celebrity Branding” popularly known as celebrity endorsement (CE) is an advertisement campaign for the marketing or promotion of a product that uses the superstar’s fame and social position to make a product, service, or brand famous and popular amongst the public (Carrillat & Ilicic, 2019). In many countries, celebrity branding is considered to be one of the most premium forms of advertisement where a renowned celebrity such as a popular actor/actress, singer, sports personality etc. are made the brand ambassador of a company by paying them ransom and promoting a product or a service through them and raising awareness about it (Olmedo et al., 2020). Since the consumer market is highly competitive, marketers, must concentrate on at least one aspect of advertising that consumers cannot ignore, i.e., celebrity endorsement, wherein, recall becomes easy with CE (Ahmed, 2014).

Definition

Celebrity branding refers to the practice of leveraging the fame and influence of celebrities to promote and endorse products, services, or brands. It involves using the celebrity’s image, persona, or reputation to enhance the visibility and credibility of a brand, ultimately leading to increased sales and brand recognition. This marketing strategy has gained significant prominence due to the popularity of social media and the increasing influence of celebrities on consumer behavior. McCracken (1989) defines celebrity endorsement as “any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement.”

Erdogan and Baker (2000) define celebrity endorsement as “the use of a celebrity’s image or reputation in advertising or other promotional activities with the purpose of endorsing or promoting a product or service.” Roy (2016) defines celebrity brand endorsement as “the process of using a celebrity to promote a product or service with the help of their fame and personality to gain a competitive advantage.”

Importance

The importance of celebrity branding lies in its ability to create a strong emotional connection between consumers and the endorsed brand. By associating a brand with a well-known and admired celebrity, companies aim to tap into the celebrity’s positive attributes, such as trustworthiness, attractiveness, or expertise, and transfer those qualities to their products or services. This association can help companies differentiate themselves from competitors, build brand loyalty, and reach a wider audience. Marketers intend to convince consumers to buy or utilise the recommended good or service by impressing a superstar’s good qualities onto the product (Rai et al., 2021). A superstar is hired, and new item is created around as it can pay off greatly by giving goods an immediate personality and appeal (Malik & Sudhakar, 2014). Several academic studies have shown that celebrity branding suggestively increases the efficiency of publicity (Carlson et al., 2020) and celebrities have supported many causes since the middle of the eighteenth century (Yu & Hu, 2020). Celebrity endorsements can influence a company’s decision to use celebrities to boost its competitive advantage in three situations: launch, reinforcement and repositioning. The first chance comes when a brand is introduced for the first time, and in that case, using a celebrity can be highly effective. This can be especially effective when creating a new category because consumers require assurance, which a suitable star will give them. When it comes to preserving and bolstering a brand’s competitive position in the market, celebrity enforcement may be quite success-

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ful. If other brands have joined the market and changed its dynamics as a result, the use of celebrities in this situation may be highly beneficial. This also occurs when consumer needs create possibilities in a different industry. When a brand is currently positioned in a market, it will be necessary to reposition it. A celebrity can help with this because they can serve as the focal point of the brand's communications while also communicating to the public that the brand is changing its positioning to better serve a newly emerging target audience (Dimed & Joulyana, 2005).

Effectiveness of Celebrity Endorsement

Its effectiveness can vary depending on various factors, including the celebrity's appeal, credibility, relevance to the product or brand, target audience, and the overall execution of the endorsement campaign. Here are some general points regarding the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement:

1. **Increased Awareness and Attention:** Celebrity endorsements can generate significant attention and awareness for a brand or product. The association of a well-known personality with a brand can capture the attention of consumers and enhance brand recall.
2. **Enhanced Brand Image:** Celebrities often possess desirable qualities such as attractiveness, expertise, or trustworthiness. When a celebrity endorses a brand, these positive attributes can be transferred to the brand, resulting in an enhanced brand image and perception among consumers.
3. **Improved Credibility and Trust:** Celebrity endorsements can help establish credibility and build trust with consumers. A well-liked and respected celebrity can lend their credibility to a brand, which may positively influence consumer perceptions and trust in the brand.
4. **Emotional Connection and Consumer Engagement:** Celebrity endorsers can create an emotional connection with consumers. The association of a beloved celebrity with a brand can evoke positive emotions, leading to increased consumer engagement and loyalty.
5. **Expanded Reach and Market Penetration:** Celebrities often have a broad and diverse fan base, allowing brands to reach a wider audience. This can be particularly beneficial for brands aiming to expand their market or appeal to new customer segments.
6. **Impact on Purchase Behavior:** Celebrity endorsements have the potential to influence consumer purchase decisions. Consumers may be more inclined to try or purchase products that are associated with their favorite celebrities.

The effectiveness of celebrity endorsement is not guaranteed and can vary based on the specific circumstances and context. The fit between the celebrity, the brand, and the target audience, as well as the authenticity and relevance of the endorsement, are critical factors to consider.

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement can evolve over time due to changes in consumer behavior, cultural shifts, and the influence of social media. Ongoing research and analysis in the field help provide insights into the evolving dynamics of celebrity endorsement effectiveness.

A strong fit between a celebrity and a brand can significantly enhance credibility and influence consumers' purchase intentions. It facilitates the transfer of positive associations, increases relevance and appeal to the target audience, establishes emotional connections, and provides a competitive advantage. These factors collectively influence consumers' perceptions and purchase intentions, making the endorsement more effective in driving consumer behavior and brand success.

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Objective of the Study

Since superstars are an enormous business, taking care of and supporting the popularised media framework and web. So, marketing managers must consider the cultural differences across countries and the impact of celebrity endorsement. This chapter, thus, focuses on the different aspects of celebrity branding through the lenses of the culture and demography of two continents, India and Africa. In Asian countries like India, Korea, China, Japan, and so on, companies have been using celebrity faces like movie stars, singers, cricketers, and other popular public figures to endorse their brands. In most African countries, on the other hand, like Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, and so on, the most successful companies believe it is of utmost importance to establish an affinity with the consumers by being “The Brand of The People” and hence they often prefer to endorse their brands by local celebrities (Madinga et al., 2021). Also, many research studies suggest that the Celebrity’s nationality, personality, and sometimes ethnicity also tend to influence public behaviour towards the product, service, or brand they endorse. Therefore, the main focus of this chapter would be to carry out a cross-cultural comparison of celebrity endorsement or celebrity branding between African and Asian countries. This study has utilized secondary and qualitative data and has adopted the interpretative and deductive approaches for studying the celebrity endorsement and cultural dimensions in Asia and Africa. Since with advancements in virtual reality and the metaverse in the world, the cultural dimension is likely to impact more (Babatunde & Mustafa, 2018).

Role of Marketing Department

Marketing department plays a crucial role in effectively implementing celebrity endorsement strategies. They are responsible for managing the entire process, from identifying suitable celebrities to executing the endorsement campaign. Here are key aspects of the marketing department’s role in celebrity endorsement:

1. **Celebrity Selection:** The marketing department is responsible for identifying and selecting the right celebrity endorsers for the brand. This involves conducting research, considering the brand’s target audience, and evaluating the fit between the celebrity’s image and the brand’s values and positioning. The department should consider factors such as the celebrity’s popularity, relevance, credibility, and appeal to ensure a strong alignment between the celebrity and the brand.
2. **Contract Negotiation and Management:** Marketing departments handle the contractual aspects of celebrity endorsements. This includes negotiating terms, duration, exclusivity, usage rights, and financial arrangements with the celebrity or their representatives. They ensure that all legal and contractual obligations are met and manage the ongoing relationship with the celebrity throughout the endorsement campaign.
3. **Campaign Strategy and Creative Development:** The marketing department plays a pivotal role in developing the overall campaign strategy for the celebrity endorsement. They collaborate with advertising agencies, creative teams, and other stakeholders to create compelling and impactful campaigns. The department defines the key messages, objectives, and desired outcomes of the endorsement, ensuring that they align with the brand’s overall marketing strategy.
4. **Integration Across Marketing Channels:** Marketing department ensures that the celebrity endorsement is seamlessly integrated across various marketing channels. They coordinate with teams responsible for advertising, public relations, social media, and other marketing activities to ensure consistent messaging and maximize the reach and impact of the endorsement. The department

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ensures that the endorsement is effectively communicated through various channels to reach the target audience.

5. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Marketing department monitors the performance and effectiveness of the celebrity endorsement campaign. They track key metrics such as brand awareness, consumer perceptions, purchase intent, and sales to assess the impact of the endorsement. They also gather consumer feedback and conduct market research to gain insights into consumer attitudes and reactions towards the endorsement. This information helps in evaluating the success of the endorsement and making informed decisions for future campaigns.

By effectively managing these aspects, the marketing department can optimize the implementation of celebrity endorsement strategies and maximize the benefits for the brand. Their involvement ensures strategic alignment, creative execution, and measurement of results.

Role of Celebrity Endorser

Celebrity endorsers can enhance the credibility of product quality and performance promises, supported by relevant citations and references as follows:

Expertise and Authority: Celebrities are often seen as experts or authorities in their respective fields, whether it's acting, sports, or other areas of expertise. When a celebrity endorses a product and vouches for its quality and performance, consumers tend to associate that expertise and authority with the product. This can enhance the credibility of the product's promises. As research by Erdogan and Baker (2000) suggests, celebrity endorsements can positively influence consumers' perception of product expertise.

Social Proof and Validation: Celebrity endorsers serve as social proof for the product's quality and performance promises. Consumers may perceive that if a well-known and respected celebrity is willing to associate themselves with a particular brand or product, it must be of high quality. This social validation from a celebrity can increase consumers' confidence in the product. A study by Gupta and Lord (2018) supports the notion that celebrity endorsements enhance the perception of product quality through social proof.

Trust and Reliability: Celebrities often have established trust and credibility with their fan base. When they endorse a product, consumers transfer that trust and reliability to the brand. Consumers perceive the endorsement as a signal that the product can be trusted to deliver on its promises. As discussed in a study by Erdogan and Kitchen (2015), celebrity endorsements contribute to trust-building in the context of advertising.

Association With Positive Attributes: Celebrities are often associated with positive attributes such as success, attractiveness, and popularity. When a celebrity endorses a product, consumers may attribute those positive attributes to the product as well. This can create a halo effect, where the positive qualities associated with the celebrity extend to the product's quality and performance promises. The research by Till and Shimp (1998) suggests that positive celebrity information influences consumers' perception of the endorsed brand.

These studies provide insights into the ways in which celebrity endorsers can enhance the credibility of product quality and performance promises. They highlight the role of expertise, social proof, trust, and association with positive attributes in influencing consumer perceptions. By leveraging the credibility and influence of celebrity endorsers, brands can effectively enhance consumers' trust and confidence in their products.

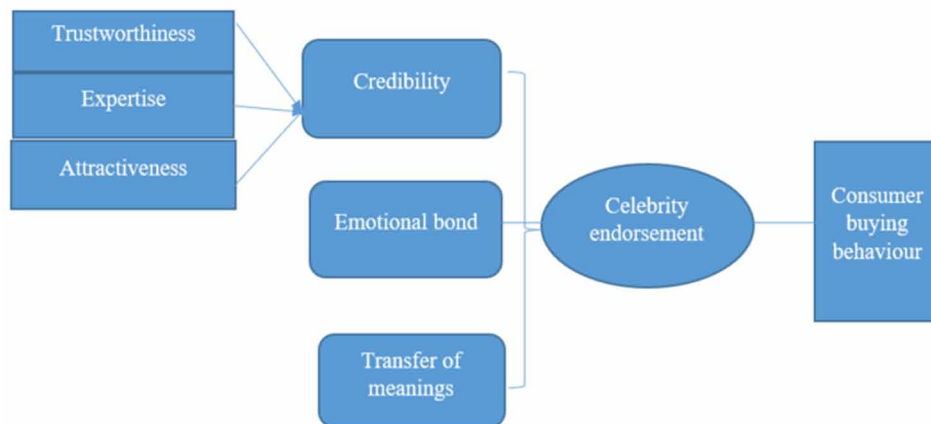
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Celebrity Branding and Purchase Behaviour of Consumers

For decades, marketers have endorsed superstars with their goods in their ads to raise their sales and alter the viewers’ perceptions about their brands, which positively tends to impact the customers’ “purchasing behaviour”. Brand association tends to impact the buying patterns and behaviours of the consumers positively, such that if the brand image is positive, the consumers would like to purchase the products time and again (Madinga et al., 2021).

In Asian countries like India, marketers pay ransom to celebrities, especially actors and cricketers for vouching and promoting their products. Consumers tend to feel more engaged and sympathetic towards a brand, and if the products are somewhat promoted by celebrities, they tend to adore and relate to (Jha et al., 2020). In this way, the brands tend to increase their awareness, familiarity, trust and so on. These are the most important variables in the “purchase decision-making processes” (Park et al., 2022). Figure 1 depicts the Celebrity endorsement affecting buying behaviour of consumer with trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness forming the credibility of the celebrity. Besides, the credibility of the celebrity, the emotional bond and transfer of meanings by celebrity endorsement, make celebrity impact the consumer buying behaviour.

Figure 1. Celebrity endorsement affecting buying behaviours
Source: Created by Author



Thus, most often, it is found that a celebrity endorsement leads to positive attitude towards the brand and results in the intention to purchase the goods (Park et al., 2022). However, one of the most important things to remember about celebrity branding to positively influence consumers’ buying behaviour is that the celebrity characteristics should match those of the products and services (Park et al., 2022; Babatunde & Mustafa, 2019). For example, an athlete is often seen to endorse products like protein shakes and other food/drinks that help boost strength and immunity (Babatunde & Mustafa, 2018).

However, celebrity endorsements often do not guarantee any kind of success, nor affect buying behaviour of consumers, unless the strategies are well-integrated with the target market features and other marketing mix elements such as product designs, packaging, prices, and also “branding itself” (Babatunde & Mustafa, 2019). One example is Globacom, a multinational telecommunications firm

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with operations in Ghana, which implemented a brazen celebrity endorsement programme by signing up Ghana's superstars to promote its goods and services. However, according to market share data of September 2017 from the National Communications Authority, Globacom saw a decline in subscribers for their products and services of 3.92 percent, translating to a market share of 2.09 percent for no known reason (Frimpong, et.al.2019). Thus, while celebrity endorsements are successful at generating buying intentions, actual purchases may not always follow.

Therefore, it can be said that celebrity endorsement tends to set out the expectations of the experiences the consumers would have with the business. A potential brand tends to help guide consumers towards the experiences that the businessmen or the marketers want them to have, and it is also a very important part of establishing "credibility" (Babatunde & Mustafa, 2018). The celebrities tend to have huge positive influences on the youth. As a matter of fact, they can also serve as role models. However, it is worth mentioning here that famous people, whether singers, actors or any other celebrity can also set some unhealthy or wrong examples (Molelekeng & Dondolo, 2021).

As the demands and expectations of consumers are rising, marketers are constantly busy updating and changing their marketing methods to approach their targeted consumers emotionally and effectively (Chan et al., 2021). There are some positive correlations between various celebrity attributes as well as buying intentions of the "middle-class customers" demonstrating the overall contribution of the celebrities as effective endorsers in buying attitude. Luxury firms use social media to put photographs of famous people using their items. Yet, they face the challenge of deciding whether to standardise or localise their superstar endorsers for a variety of markets (Raza & Zaman, 2021). Many studies find that significant alteration is required to suit local residents' preferences and sense of style (Hultén, 2017), given that social norms and customs have a remarkable influence on how consumers perceive and behave (Yu & Hu, 2020).

Indeed, social media is an important point for online shoppers, and CE is one of the most important strategies for online promotion (Jarman et al., 2021). Olausson (2018) found that readers of a fashion brand's weekly blog post had a stronger connection to the blogger and were more likely to purchase the product than readers of an online magazine item. Also, the Influencers on Instagram are perceived as being more trustworthy and real than traditional ladies (Lalancette & Raynauld, 2019)

Thus, celebrity endorsement influences customer behaviour, but to what extent relies on how effectively the marketing department implements the plan in the appropriate target market. Even at cheap rates, the presence of a celebrity sponsor increases the credibility of product quality and performance promises (Bennett et al,2021).

Celebrity Endorsement Practices in Africa

The South Africans are often receptive towards identifying with the famous superstars but in spite of the huge progress in using celebrity endorsers, not much research has been carried out in this field till date. Moreover, within the African countries, celebrity endorsement is in its infancy, and one would speculate that attractiveness tends to play a vital role in understanding the influences of celebrity endorsers on the buying intentions. It has been found that within Nigeria and South Africa, the attractiveness tends to contribute to recall and recognition (Khan & Zaman, 2021). Apart from that, the acceptance of an advertising message and the favourable responses are contingent on the impressions of the audience

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about the skills, expertise and proficiencies of the celebrity endorsers (Chan et al., 2021). The skill sets and proficiency levels of the celebrities tend to associate with the “Valid claims”, that seem to come from one having legitimate knowledge and proficiency within the subject area (Molelekeng & Dondolo, 2021). Thus, the topical proficiencies of the endorsers tend to affect the perceptions of the “celebrity-endorsed goods” and the “buying intentions”. Resultantly, South African and Nigerian customers are somewhat likely to make judgments regarding the goods endorsed by the celebrities based on the extent to which the concerned celebrity is knowledgeable about it (Chan et al., 2021).

Cosmetic businesses tend to pay South African celebrities, like singers and popular athletes, huge ransom for endorsing their products and also gaining competitive advantages. Within many countries in Africa, marketers use a combination of national and international celebrities for product endorsement such that one of the most popular national brand ambassadors of Revlon Africa was “Bonang Matheba” (Ngo, 2019). They chose the celebrities who recommend the cosmetic products and brands and its ranked on the basis of “frequency of mention”. It goes without mentioning the fact that the top two regional superstars have been Connie Ferguson and Bonang Matheba, whilst Beyonce Knowles and Nicki Minaj were the top ranked “international celebrities” endorsing African cosmetic brands. The international star Gwen Stefani had also been a “Revlon brand ambassador” in South Africa. Since within the cosmetic industry, a large number of skin and facial products may have side effects when they are used in an incorrect manner, the brands or the marketers need a celebrity endorser whom the consumers can trust and rely on. In this context, it might be the case that the consumers would more potentially have faith in the local celebrities (Khan & Zaman, 2021). Also, the local celebrities often charge less than “international counterparts” (Ngo, 2019). Nyamakanga et al. (2019) revealed that generation Y and Z customers’ purchasing intentions were highly influenced by the beauty and dependability of local celebrities, whereas overseas celebrities’ expertise had a considerable impact on buying intentions. Generation Y and generation Z have more readily relatable and admirable local role models as a result of the impact of social media and are more likely to buy and spend more for celebrity-endorsed brands (Ndlela & Chuchu, 2016).

Competing companies in Ghana’s telecommunications sector, including Vodafone, MTN, Globacom, Airtel, and Tigo, employ celebrities to promote their brands including musicians, comedians, film actors and actresses, football players, and more. Other industries also engage in this technique, making it not just restricted to the telecommunications sector. For instance, Nestlé Ghana Limited hired Didier Drogba to advertise the chocolate beverage Milo in 2016. (Frimpong, et.al.2019).

Starting from the electoral campaigns to various social campaigns, the superstars have slowly become dominant fixtures in the realm of contemporary politics also. They are “information platforms” for the contestants and the parties they endorse or officially support. South African political parties were seen to raise their eyebrows when they rallied the most renowned celebrities of the country for their public endorsement (Ahmad et al., 2019). The political parties tend to pay huge money for “celebrity endorsements” believing that celebrities can anchor “secondary brand associations” (Derry, 2020). Many African countries, including Nigeria and South Africa had shown the same interest and had been endorsing celebrities that had huge potential.

It is to be noted that celebrity endorsements are not necessarily an effective technique of advertising, especially for alcohol products (Pramjeeth, & Majaye-Khupe, 2016).

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Celebrity Branding in Asia

Within Asia, celebrity branding had been predominantly used for many years for promoting various products for the consumers. It has been found that celebrity endorsement is much influenced by the long-term plan in India such that the Lux brand has been endorsed by different film stars since 1929. The emergence of the collaborations between brands and celebrities within Asia has been seen such as with “Chinese basketball star” “Yao Ming” who endorses numerous ranges of goods from the customer-electronics and clothes to the fast-food chains within China. Within India, Bollywood superstars such as “Shah Rukh Khan” are seen to endorse the “ever-increasing portfolios of brands” within India and additionally, Jackie Chan is also seen to speak for a range of brands (Babatunde & Mustafa, 2019). Also, as the employees are one of the primary stakeholders and are known as “second customers”, their concerns regarding the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement and pride, build the identifications with a company (Molelekeng & Dondolo, 2021). Another example from India is Akshay Kumar who has endorsed more than 44 brands in the year 2021. More than 80 per cent of all Indian Celebrities tend to endorse some or the other brands and the top-ranked Indian celebrities include “Alia Bhatt”, “Ranbir Kapoor”, “Shahrukh Khan”, “Virat Kohli”, “MS Dhoni” and so on. Again, within Asia, the famous pop star of Hong Kong, “Kelly Chen” had appeared in various commercials for “Pepsi”, “Shiseido” and so on. It is worth mentioning that, within Asian countries including India, China and Japan, celebrities tend to act as the “spokespersons” and position the brand with the help of their personalities, statutes, popularities and fame (Madinga et al., 2021). Within India, celebrity endorsements have been traditionally thought of as providing distinctive differentiations. On the contrary, the majority of the brands within Asia tend to use celebrity branding and have made it one of their major “branding tools”. However, it is important to remember that attitude and perceptions towards the brand and advertising mediate the impacts of the effectiveness of celebrity branding on the buying intent (Babatunde & Mustafa, 2018).

Nagdev and Singh (2016) in their study of Indian students found celebrity endorsements more alluring. Bollywood actors and actresses are more persuasive as endorsers based on their attractiveness. The use of a famous person in an advertisement boosts consumer recognition and recall, according to the findings. Value for money, celebrity influence, and celebrity name are among the key criteria that have the most impact on students’ purchasing decisions, according to this study. It is further to be noted that Celebrity endorsed advertisements having no “Explicit Sex Appeals” have received good response across Asia. The significance of a drug-free lifestyle and avoiding sex scandals in choosing celebrity endorsers may be connected to mature adults’ solid moral principles and traditional values, particularly family values(Chan & Fan,2020).Moreover, most of the Islamic countries of Asia such as Dubai, tend to filter the themes of the advertisements via salient cultural values and respond in an utterly negative manner to explicit “sex-appeals” otherwise, showing an acceptance of sexuality in association of a celebrity endorser (Madinga et al., 2021). Asian nations tend to favour expressive and symbolic pleas made by well-known endorsers (Chan & Fan, 2020).

Thus, the nationality and culture of the “celebrity brand ambassador” also tends to influence consumer decisions which can be further supported by the “Meaning Transfer Model” as shown in Figure 2.

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Rise of Online Influencers in Asia and Africa

The rise of online influencers in Asia and Africa has been a significant phenomenon in recent years, driven by the growing digital landscape. Some of the key factors contributing to the rise of online influencers in Asia and Africa include:

1. **Growing Internet Penetration:** Both Asia and Africa have witnessed significant growth in internet penetration rates. The increasing availability of affordable smartphones and improved internet connectivity have allowed more people to access social media platforms and engage with online content creators.
2. **Mobile-First Markets:** Asia and Africa are predominantly mobile-first markets. This accessibility has facilitated the rise of online influencers, as social media platforms are highly mobile-friendly.
3. **Rise of Social Media Platforms:** Social media platforms have provided a space for individuals to build their personal brands and reach a global audience. Platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok have become popular channels for influencers to create and share content, gaining followers and engagement.
4. **Authenticity and Relatability:** Online influencers often connect with their followers through relatable and authentic content. They share personal experiences, lifestyle tips, product recommendations, and opinions that resonate with their audience. This relatability helps build trust and loyalty among followers.
5. **Influencer Marketing Opportunities:** Brands recognize the potential of collaborating with online influencers as Influencer marketing has emerged as an effective strategy, leveraging the influencer's credibility and reach to connect with target audiences in a more authentic and engaging manner.
6. **Cultural Diversity and Niche Markets:** Asia and Africa encompass diverse cultures, languages, and interests. Online influencers who understand and cater to specific cultural or niche markets have gained popularity within their respective communities. This allows for targeted marketing efforts and effective engagement with niche audiences.

Thus, the rise of online influencers in Asia and Africa has created new opportunities for digital marketing, brand partnerships, and influencer-driven commerce. To promote their brands, companies are adopting online media influencers (also known as “micro-celebrities”), like “vloggers” and “Instafamous” characters. Online influencers (referred to as “influencers”) are popular in comparison to traditional superstars who got notoriety through their capabilities in the online realm by effectively aligning themselves as professionals on online platforms (Rogers 2020). An animated character like Fred Flintstone is seen as a star in this online era (Campbell & Farrell, 2020). Indeed, CE is a must in marketing, with studies indicating that they account for 25% of commercials in the US (Tian et al., 2021), 25% in Europe (Fernández Gómez et al., 2021), and up to 65% in Asia (Sharma et al., 2021).

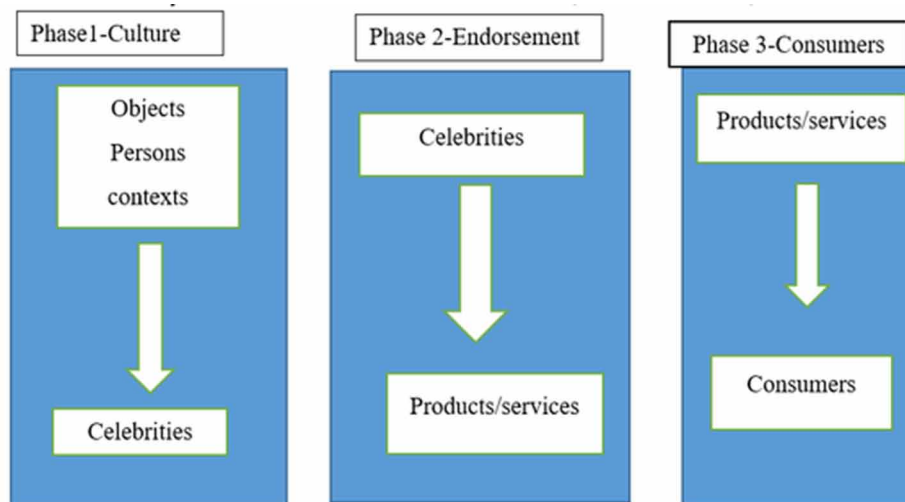
CE has been regarded as one of the important tools for publicising (Saldanha et al., 2020) However, it is worth mentioning that the consumer behaviour towards celebrity endorsement is dependent on various cultural aspects. Also, due to cultural differences, multinational brands' executional advertising strategies vary depending on the country (Taylor and Okazaki, 2015). Regional and cultural nuances should be considered when working with online influencers to ensure authenticity and align with local preferences and values

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Influence of Culture and Nationality of the Celebrity Brand Ambassador on Consumer Behaviour

The nation’s culture has a significant influence on people’s psyche, which raises the recall value. India has a very rich cultural background, giving advertisers numerous opportunities to portray cultural values through celebrities too (Sharma & Bumb,2020). As per Figure 2, the Meaning Transfer model applies to “celebrity endorsement” such that it supports the influence of culture and nationality of the celebrity ambassador on the consumer behaviour. The model is segregated into 3 different phases as shown in the Figure 2. The celebrity endorser had an overall impact in all three phases. In terms of culture, celebrities offer lifestyle meanings and various kinds of personalities that other normal people cannot provide (Madinga et al., 2021). In terms of endorsement, companies should select the right personality as per the specification of the products. In terms of consumption, they must make an advertisement campaign to transfer the personalities and meanings and from the celebrities to the products. Thus, as per this model, celebrity endorsement is more cultural in nature (McCracken, 1989).

Figure 2. Meaning transfer model
 Source: Author



In contrast to non-famous endorsers, celebrities give deeper connotations that lend power to their personalities and lives, adding value to the image transfer process. Also, when a celebrity is linked to bad news, it is possible that the celebrity loses the power to convey the desired meaning for the brand to the company (Dimed & Joulyana,2005).

Besides, the meaning transfer model, the marketing managers also consider the source credibility and social theory model when choosing celebrities (Malik & Sudhakar, 2014). The “Signalling theory” (Jensen, Head, & Mergy, 2020) states that a brand’s image and a person’s self-image should be same or congruent in order to increase the salience of brand trust and purchase intent. Signalling theory can also be used to explain the idea of CE and cultural orientation (Essman et al., 2021). It considers the influence that members of a certain social network have on particular behavioural patterns. Important

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elements being the signallers (here the celebrities). Customers view the signaller as being trustworthy. Signalling theory is more popular for luxury goods which are taken as status symbol in collectivistic societies. So, luxury brand managers should create distinctive strategies for customers from various cultures (Khan & Zaman, 2021).

Dimensions of Culture

Cultural factors play a significant role in shaping attitudes towards celebrity endorsement and can influence consumer perceptions and preferences in different regions. Here are some examples of cultural factors and how they can impact attitudes towards celebrity endorsement:

- a. **Individualism vs. Collectivism:** In individualistic cultures, such as the United States and Western European countries, where individual achievement and personal freedom are highly valued, celebrity endorsements that emphasize personal success and individual benefits may be more effective. On the other hand, in collectivist cultures like many Asian and African countries, where group harmony and social connections are prioritized, endorsements that emphasize community or group benefits may resonate better.
- b. **Power Distance:** Power distance refers to the extent to which a society accepts and expects power inequalities. In high power distance cultures, where hierarchical relationships are valued, celebrity endorsements featuring well-respected and authoritative figures may be more influential. Conversely, in low power distance cultures, where equality and independence are emphasized, endorsements that focus on relatability and authenticity may be more effective.
- c. **Uncertainty Avoidance:** Cultures differ in their tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. In high uncertainty avoidance cultures, such as Japan and many Middle Eastern countries, where stability, rules, and structured environments are valued, celebrity endorsements can provide a sense of security and credibility. In contrast, in low uncertainty avoidance cultures, such as the United States and many Western European countries, where risk-taking and flexibility are more accepted, endorsements that emphasize novelty and excitement may be more appealing.
- d. **Cultural Icons and Role Models:** Certain cultures have strong traditions of reverence for cultural icons or historical figures. Endorsements featuring such icons can carry significant weight and influence consumer attitudes. For example, in India, endorsements by Bollywood celebrities or cricket stars hold substantial sway due to their cultural significance and widespread popularity. Cultural values and social norms can shape consumer perceptions and preferences regarding celebrity endorsements. For instance, in conservative societies where modesty and traditional values are important, endorsements that align with those values are more likely to be positively received.
- e. **Ethical and Moral Considerations:** Cultural beliefs and values related to ethics and morality can impact attitudes towards celebrity endorsements. Consumers may scrutinize whether a celebrity aligns with their cultural values and evaluate their credibility and trustworthiness based on their behavior and personal integrity.

It's crucial for marketers and brands to consider these cultural factors when developing celebrity endorsement campaigns. Tailoring the messaging, celebrity choice, and execution to align with cultural values and norms can enhance the effectiveness and resonance of the endorsements within specific regions or target markets.

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Abhishek and Sahay (2016) studied the three dimensions of culture with respect to celebrity endorsement being Power distance, Individualism-collectivism and Long versus short term orientation. The individualism/collectivism aspect of the culture can be used to explain why superstars are so well-liked where they come from such that as Dhoni rose to prominence as the top batsman and leader of the Indian cricket team, sales of the goods he promoted in Ranchi surged. Dhoni's emotional impact on the residents of his state had an effect on the sales of the goods he promoted, from motorcycles to merchandise for fans. Some reports claim that the sale of TVS Star City motorcycles increased by 80%. So, while Aishwarya Rai topped the search rankings in states in the Konkan region (her birthplace), Katrina Kaif was the most searched star nationwide. When prominent actor Dharmendra promoted the Rajdoot motorcycle in the early 1980s, Punjab, where Dharmendra was born, saw a large spike in sales. Indian corporations have seen the trend and have begun using regional celebrities for state-specific product promotions while maintaining their usage of national celebrities for ads at the national level. Examples of this include Emami's use of Surya for Fair and Handsome in Andhra Pradesh, Pepsi's use of Simran for Kurkure in South India, and Dabur's use of Ravi Kishan for Fair and Handsome in Uttar Pradesh. The collectivism means particular ideals like harmony, belongingness, and respect for social orders, in Africa and India (Hofstede, 1984). Customers in this situation are more likely to gravitate towards celebrities who share their social ideals (Frimpong et al., 2019).

People with long-term orientation do not use probabilistic reasoning (Hofstede, 2001), and have complete faith in both the endorser and the brand. Likewise, corporations in India use celebrity endorsers to combat bad press about their brands, and it works well. Coke responded to claims that its soft drinks in India contained dangerous pesticide residue with celebrity endorsements by Aamir Khan who defended Coke while downing a bottle of the soft drink to support Coke's security standards. Worms were previously discovered in some of Cadbury's products in India in 2004, which caused the company considerable embarrassment. Cadbury went to Amitabh when the public was unconvinced by the company's claims. Cadbury's reputation was saved by highlighting that it had made significant modifications to its packing and storage settings for its products in retail establishments. This was done with reassuring personality and a pan-India appeal (Abhishek & Sahay, 2016).

Impact of Celebrity Branding on Business Profitability in Asia and Africa

The need to assess endorsers' financial effects on the organisation and consumer brand attitudes is motivated by the huge advertising budgets for endorsement deals, particularly by multinationals and other local South African companies such as Unilever, Proctor and Gamble, and Nike (Ndlela & Chuchu 2016). It is worth noting that there are strong direct relationships between the use of celebrities for advertisement purposes as well as an improvement in the profitability of the company. Furthermore, it is not to be forgotten that "celebrity endorsement" is considered to be a potential advertisement tool and is a strategy which is used for promoting brands within the marketplace. Within both the continents, that is Asia and Africa, Celebrity endorsement had developed to promote the brands within a particular market place and is considered a must for the advertisers of the brand to influence their consumers' buying behaviours (Babatunde & Mustafa, 2018).

Within retrospect, the idea of using famous faces for endorsing different brands was at the lowest ebb within a large number of Asian and African countries, including India and South Africa as numerous companies don't prefer spending money on it and most have less or no competitors to deal with (Babatunde & Mustafa, 2018). However, in the last few years, it was seen that both Asian and African

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companies tend to get engaged in different “marketing communication” approaches to have a greater market share from rivals that entails the concept of using celebrity faces for gaining the attention and patronage of the audience.

Furthermore, potential growth was perceived within the Cosmetic Industry in South Africa due to the increase in disposable income of the “black middle-class people” within South Africa (Jha et al., 2020). The trends have caused a huge sales rise in a large number of cosmetic products, like skin care products, beauty and facial make up products, that boosts the product and the price competitions which also motivates the sellers to apply marketing tactics for gaining strong and long-term competitive advantages. In the case of Asia also, brands are referred to as intangible assets which further contribute to firms’ performances in a significant manner (Madinga et al., 2021). Celebrities tend to appear in more than 50 percent of the ads within Asian countries, especially in India. Data from AdEx India, a part of TAM Media Research, shows that celebrity endorsements increased by 44% in 2021 compared to 2020. Moreover, celebrity endorsements made up 27% of all television advertisements in 2021, with non-celebrity-led advertisements making up the remaining 73%. “Words made by celebrities continue to impact ordinary shoppers in India such that it’s time “they faced responsibility for deliberate miscommunication or a genuine mistake,” as one agency director puts it. (Chakraborty,2022). The Indian market for social media influencers, which was valued at Rupees 1,275 billion in 2022, is anticipated to rise at a CAGR of 19–20% to reach Rupees 2,800 billion by 2027. Recently, on January 20, 2023, the Department of Consumer Affairs issued additional guidelines titled “Endorsement Know-how” to prevent celebrities, virtual influencers, and influencers from deceiving their audiences when endorsing goods or services on social media platforms (Jain,2019).Since there are some looming dangers associated with using celebrities in marketing communications campaigns, many studies have established that negative information regarding celebrity endorsers, such as abrupt changes in image, decline in fame, involvement in morally repugnant behaviour, overshadowing of products, and celebrity involvement in any dispute, should be avoided(Malik & Sudhakar, 2014).However in case of India, even in cases of negative exposure, brands in India continue to have faith in celebrity endorsers (Abhishek & Sahay, 2016).

Limitations and Challenges

While celebrity endorsements can offer numerous benefits, they also come with limitations and challenges. Some common limitations and challenges associated with celebrity endorsements are:

- **Credibility and Authenticity:** While a well-matched celebrity can enhance credibility, the authenticity of the endorsement can be questioned. Consumers are becoming increasingly savvy and may perceive endorsements as paid promotions rather than genuine recommendations. If the fit between the celebrity and the brand appears forced or lacks authenticity, it can undermine the effectiveness of the endorsement.
- **Overexposure and Fatigue:** Celebrities are often involved in multiple endorsement deals, appearing in numerous advertisements and campaigns. This can lead to overexposure and consumer fatigue. When consumers see the same celebrity endorsing various brands repeatedly, the impact and novelty of the endorsement may diminish over time, resulting in reduced effectiveness.
- **Relevance to the Target Audience:** The relevance of a celebrity to the target audience is crucial. If the celebrity’s appeal or image does not resonate with the target demographic, the endorsement

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may not have the desired impact. Marketers need to carefully evaluate the alignment to ensure the endorsement is meaningful to the intended consumers.

- **Risks and Controversies:** Celebrities are prone to negative publicity, scandals, or controversies that can significantly impact their image and reputation. If a celebrity endorser faces a public scandal or falls out of favor with the target audience, it can negatively affect the brand's image and consumer perceptions. Marketers need to consider the potential risks associated with the celebrity endorser and monitor their public image continuously.
- **Higher Costs and Contractual Obligations:** Hiring a celebrity for endorsement campaigns can be expensive, especially for high-profile celebrities. Negotiating contracts, managing obligations, and meeting the expectations of both the brand and the celebrity can be challenging. Marketers need to carefully consider the financial implications and ensure that the benefits of the endorsement justify the associated costs.
- **Limited Control Over the Celebrity:** Marketers have limited control over the actions and behavior of the celebrity endorser outside of the contractual agreement. Any negative actions or controversies involving the celebrity can reflect poorly on the brand. Marketers should be prepared to manage potential risks and have contingency plans in place.
- **Measuring Return on Investment (ROI):** Determining the direct impact of a celebrity endorsement on sales or brand equity can be complex. It can be challenging to isolate the effects of the endorsement from other marketing efforts or external factors. Marketers need to establish clear metrics and methodologies to assess the effectiveness and ROI of celebrity endorsements.

Marketers must carefully consider these limitations and challenges when employing celebrity endorsements. Thorough research, due diligence, and strategic planning can help mitigate risks and increase the likelihood of achieving desired outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on the different aspects of celebrity branding through the lenses of the culture and demography of two continents, Asia and Africa. The main focus of the paper was on India from Asia and Nigeria and South Africa from Africa. In Asian countries like India, companies have been using famous celebrity faces like movie stars, singers, cricketers, and other popular public figures to endorse their brands. It has been found the celebrity endorsement is much influenced by the long-term plan in India. Also, CE has grown across the board in recent years, particularly in light of the development of online marketing and the rise of social media like Instagram. Indeed, with Instagram has come the concept of micro-celebrities, or average people who become well-known by routinely posting on social media and endorsing goods and brands there (Jargalsaikhan & Korotina 2016; Moraes et al. 2019).

Overall, the chapter concludes that celebrity branding had been predominantly used for many years for promoting various products for the consumers and also celebrity endorsement tends to lead to a favourable attitude towards the brand and it finally results in the intention to purchase the goods. Instead of focusing on the company's reputation to win the public's confidence and business, advertisers go so far as to endorse a large number of celebrities to project a picture of perfection in the eyes of the audience (Nelson & Deborah, 2017). However, one of the most important things to remember about celebrity branding is to positively influence consumers' buying behaviours, such that the characteristics of the

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Celebrity should match those of the products and services. It is suggested that the celebrities may need to be careful about the items they market and hold companies accountable for poor product quality because of the great influencing potential of celebrities in nations like India and other growing countries. Also, celebrity endorsements work better in nations with a high-power distance since they face inequality and pay attention to and value the opinions of the powerful people, such as celebrities (Gangwar,2016)

Thus, the chapter advises product managers and advertisers to decide whether to use celebrities in their advertising. It's crucial to comprehend how consumers view celebrity endorsement and to determine whether cross-cultural attitudes of consumers from other cultures differ or are similar (Biswas et.al,2009). Customers may believe that celebrities would prefer to get money than to give the product any meaning as they become more aware about marketing, which will impact their purchasing decisions. Thus, it has been found that customers prefer endorsers having knowledge of the product. Also, the effect of celebrity endorsement in advertising depends on the demographics of the target market such that compared to young individuals, mature persons aged 65 or above are more reluctant to being convinced by celebrity endorsers. Recent years have seen an increase in the number of old people worldwide, according to Population Reference Bureau (2018), the proportion of the population aged 65 or older will rise from 18% in 2018 to 27% in affluent countries and from 7% in 2018 to 14% in less developed nations by 2050 (Chan & Fan,2020).

The chapter also introduced qualities that are important when examining what characteristics customers believe are most important for a business to consider before creating a strategy, using celebrity endorsement such as, product and customer matchup etc. The attributes were developed from earlier empirical findings in celebrity endorsement, where the main concern was with celebrities and cultural dimensions impact on business, brand, and customer where three main dimensions of culture have been discussed. It stresses that influencers may currently have a higher impact than traditional celebrities on brand attitudes and purchase habits, supporting the widely recognised effectiveness of influencer approvals as a marketing strategy (Mittal, 2017).

Thus, the societal values imbibed through the culture greatly affects the amount of impact a celebrity has on the purchase intention and in the current digital era view of the influencers is considered too. Thus, celebrity endorsement is a great way to increase brand equity and awareness in this competitive era. It requires deep deliberations by the management such that expected results commensurate to the expenditure involved in CE are achieved keeping pace with the digital trend.

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Chapter 16

Conflict and Communication in the Global South: A Peace and War Journalism Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Mass media's content is the vital source of eventual changes in individuals' as well as community's preferences about foreign policy, public opinion, and relations among nations. Policymakers consult media content on public opinion, and the media are the people's major source of information on what policymakers are doing. The discourse in the communication scholarly society on how to influence and shape mass media content under situations of systematic violence and conflict keeps budding not just in geographical capacity, but also on the praxis and epistemological fronts. The practitioners of the paradigm of peace journalism, the theoretical base of this chapter, forward the idea of revisiting norms of conventional journalism that until now take side of violence and/or conflict and to develop new norms that favour communal harmony and address common grounds. This chapter explores the trends, influences, and interplay of conflict and communication in the Global South with a particular reference to South Asia.

INTRODUCTION

Media is indispensable in today's world. Its effects vary from individual to groups and nations to globalisation. Mass media's content is the vital source of eventual changes in individuals' as well as community's preferences about foreign policy and relations among nations. On one side, the mass media are the prime channel between community and policymakers. Policymakers also consult media content on public opinion, and the media are the people's major source of information on the activities of policymakers (Soroka, 2003). This triangulation makes the media a strong stakeholder in influencing both the public and the policies. From the publishing of the seminal work "Public opinion" to this day, much

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work has been done to understand the relation between the mass media and the public opinion about the events happening far away from the locale of the reader, as Lippmann (1922) rightly said that “the press makes the images of the outer world in the heads of people; they perceive the outer world through press”. Also, Ross (2006) says that, media play a decisive role in international affairs and conflicts because the people are dependent on the mass media to give timely and trustworthy information about distant events.

Journalists (as media practitioner) are key players in influencing both the public opinion and public policies. Charles (2019) argues that people always turn towards the media for news about what is happening outside, and this desire for news denotes a longing to participate in public life and news content befits the vehicle through which people seek to perform their citizenship.

Here the focus is towards a specific yet vital beat of the journalists which is too often reported and discussed in our media: conflict reporting. Conflicts are happening everywhere if we talk about the international scenario and journalist reports them every single minute for their audience (Ahmed et al., 2018). One of the major methods to report conflict is peace and war journalism. Therefore, it can be deduced that conflict reporters are leaders of public opinion in the matters on which they are reporting (Macassi, 2019). This chapter deals with the crossroads of journalism and peace studies in the emerging perspective of war and peace journalism, both in inquiry and practice. The practitioners of the paradigm of peace journalism forward the idea of revisiting norms (framing) of conventional journalism that until now support violence and/or conflict; and to develop new norms (frames) that favour communal harmony and address common grounds (Galtung, 1998, 2000, 2010, 2011; Lynch, 1998, 2010; Kempf, 2007; Nassanga, 2007, 2008; Lee, 2008, 2010; Birungi, 2009; Shinar, 2004, 2007; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005, 2010; Tehranian, 2002; Howard, 2003, 2009; Wolfsfeld, 2004; Lugalambi, 2006). The proponents of peace journalism’s claims based on historical facts, in addition to research pointing out the destructive capacity; although the potential for peace, of human beings in which, as a social institution, media play an important role (Thompson, 2007; UNDESA, 2005; OECD 2001; Dallaire 1997, 2003, 2007; Chalk, 1999, 2007).

Peace journalism was evolved as an alternative to previously held conflict reporting styles. According to Lynch and McGoldrick (2005), it is hailed as a form of reporting conflict which is more committed towards discovering root causes of the reported conflict for the purpose to basically generate an opportunity, through reporting, for the community at large to appreciate and consider non-violent responses. Historically, the term was coined by Galtung and Ruge (1965) while exploring and analyzing the news content to determine what is vital for making foreign news newsworthy, in contrast to conflict/violence-oriented war reporting. For the other part, Lynch and Galtung (2010) explain that the mass media predominantly use biases, while reporting a conflict in particular, giving violence prominence while considering the conceptual terms of ‘conflict’ and ‘war’ in equal capacity.

The world is no more a place for war. However, sometimes, war is unavoidable for the long-term peace. The only in-depth and foreseeing analysis of the events can avert the conflict and helps maintain good public and governmental diplomacy. No country can replace her neighbours in international arena. Home to nearly 2 billion people, South Asia is witnessing this bitter truth more than any other country in the world today. Therefore, to live side by side is not a choice but an inevitable truth for both Pakistan and India. Co-existence is far better than disagreement. These bilateral relations are either a blessing for the South Asian peace and prosperity or a bane. The two nuclear powers hold the key to the regional stability, which also is directly linked with global peace (Burke, 1994). Their importance to the world affairs, their geo-strategic location and the labyrinth of relations between each other are

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full of conflicts and crisis that can trigger any fatal chain of sorrowful events between the two nuclear hostile neighbours. This milieu has something, like pulling force to attract media academia to apply the paradigm of war and peace journalism.

The Case for South Asia

South Asia has been a centre of world's attention due to its geographical and demographical features. However, the last seven decades of this soil have been marked with the history of violence and rivalry. British India was divided into two sovereign states, namely, India and Pakistan in 1947 owing to the longstanding communal struggle for independence from Alien "*Raj*" and the process of de-colonialisation that started as one of the outcomes of post World War II Scenario. Here we discuss the historical relationships between Pakistan and India and their conflicting points.

With the birth of Pakistan and India, by the consent of the main leaders of key political parties, the emphasis shifted to building a peaceful arrangement for the coexistence of both countries, relegating the previous political controversies.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan who was acknowledged as Quaid-e-Azam (the supreme leader) had declared, shortly prior to independence that "Pakistan will live peacefully and maintain friendly and cordial relations with her immediate neighbours" (Amin, 2010. p.14). Indeed, the rationale behind the demand of partition from British India was the durable peace for the region, which could only be gained when the Indian Muslims have their own sovereign state (Pakistan) that would co-exist with the Hindu-majority in India. Amin (2010) also argued that considering the resentment between Muslims and Hindus in context of the riots during the Pakistan movement and the regrettable events that happened during the largest human migration history has ever witnessed, Jinnah, in hope for a friendly relationship with India, was optimistic that the two neighbours would live as friends. It is evident that in Jinnah's speech of 11th August, he expressed conviction that the division of British India was the only feasible solution to the historical and contemporary problems of Hindus and Muslims, adding that this would eventually enable them to live peacefully and in accordance with their beliefs and aspirations in sovereign states (Burke, 1994. p.5-6). On the other hand, although Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, widely known as Mahatma (the great soul), leader of the Indian National Congress, did not accept the idea of division till the end, he was also not one of the hawks who propagated to reunite both sides with force. Instead, he worked for peace and friendly relationship between the neighbouring states after the migration (Azad, 1959). Apart from the faith of the founders of Pakistan and India described above about the future relations between both states, the history of both states has been characterised by sharp hostility driving their relations since emergence. According to Ahsan (1996), the Pakistani side claims that the zeal of Indian Military and Civil bureaucracy to re-emerge Pakistan in Indian Dominion from the start under the umbrella of ambitious politicians is the threat, and to counter it, the Military must be upgraded as well as secure alliances. While the Indian armies claim that the low period of tension is when the Pakistani armies feel unconfident to challenge them according to their ability, the opposite situation occurs when the Pakistani armies find herself more confident in doing so (Siddiq, 2004).

According to Hewitt (1997), Pakistan and India share a sense of 'mutual distrust' since the partition of British India and the ultimate creation of independent Pakistan. He considers this mistrust as an outcome of colonial legacy widely claimed as 'divide and rule', which results in insecurity in each Hindu and Muslim community on one another. According to Sattar (2013), the distrust erupted with the emergence of diverse disputes that darkened the horizon of peace and stability in South Asia. The divi-

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sion of assets, military stores and financial capital of British India between Pakistan and India started the conflict followed by the Kashmir dispute and water issue. The demarcation of boundaries in Punjab and Bengal also worsened the situation and in the result, the largest and bloodiest migration between two countries took place, which marked hate and blood on the collective unconscious of both nations. Hence, the era of seven decades of relations among neighbouring nuclear states comprising 1.5 billion people is marked with four wars, many other disputes and tensions along with some measures taken to reconcile and some parameters define to bring relation to peaceful coexistence. Here is the overview of the leading issues both responsible for mounting tensions and also which reduce them (Amin, 2010; Burke, 1994; Sattar, 2013; Ali, 1967; Azad, 1959; Geelani, 1993; Arif, 1995; Lamb, 1991; Longer, 1988; Dixit, 2002; Cohen, 2003; Schofield, 2003; Rizvi, 2011).

The issue of Kashmir has been core conflicting point between Pakistan and India since their emergence. In past sixty-seven years, two nuclear capable countries have engaged in four wars, three of which were because of Kashmir. Yet this issue has brought both countries to the brink of the trench of war many times.

The region of Jammu and Kashmir was an autonomous princely state at the time of partition of British India. It was a Muslim majority state ruled by a Hindu "Maharaja" (king). At the time of partition, almost all the states had joined (make agreements of accession) either India or Pakistan at their agreed terms and conditions. Kashmir was among those few states, which maintained 'standstill' agreement with both dominions. According to Dixit (2002) and Schofield (2003), in October 1947, a group of tribes' men from Baltistan region rebelled against the Maharaja; they were supported by Pakistan with arms and soldiers. The rebellion spread rapidly and when the war started burning outskirts of Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir, Maharaja threatened immensely and rushed towards India for help. Indian Government (Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister) offered protection on two conditions; first, Maharaja would accede to India and second, Sheikh Abdullah, a prominent Kashmiri leader, should support the accession. Two conditions were met and Indian military was airlifted to Srinagar. Sattar (2013), Ali (1967), Korbel (1966) and Amin (2010) are off the view that the 'standstill' agreement was deceive, the Maharaja conspired with Indian leaders, and the plot for the drama has been decided even before the partition. Seventy seven percent (77%) of the population of Kashmir was Muslim, all land routes were linked with Pakistan (Srinagar to Muzzafarabad to Rawalpindi, Jammu to Sialkot) and the trade relations and routes were also linked with Pakistani soil. Hence, the popular demand was obvious. Masses celebrated Independence Day of Pakistan enthusiastically and Pakistani flags were decorated. Maharaja panicked from this and skirmishes started between barehanded Muslim subjects and state forces. In area of Jammu where Hindus were in majority, they attacked Muslims along with state forces and wreaked havoc on them. A movement started to join Pakistan. India could not linger on further and in a hurry airlifted her army to Srinagar to crush the movement. Pakistan too entered in war. Both sides fought their first war within one year of independence. India moved to United Nations and a ceasefire was declared on 1st January 1949. The ceasefire line was termed as line of control (LoC). The part of the state held by Pakistan is called *Azad* (free) Kashmir by Pakistan and 'Pakistani occupied Kashmir' by Indian side. Whereas, the Indian held part is called state of Jammu and Kashmir by India and Indian-occupied Kashmir by Pakistan and Kashmiri separatists. Both Pakistan and India agreed upon that the fate of Kashmiris was to be decided by a free and fair plebiscite under united nation's supervision. India agreed time and again to solve the matter according to the resolutions passed by United Nations but never materialised the promises. This issue of Kashmir was directly responsible for the wars of 1948, September 1965 and 1999 (Burki, 2007). India has been deploying 700,000 military personnel in the state from many years. The Kashmiri separation movement has claimed more than 100,000 lives of men women and children

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whose blood is on the hands of Indian forces and the life in the valley is not a life one should desire. Many 'standoffs' have been credited to this conflict (Schofield, 2003). This oldest conflict still carries lion's share in worsening the bilateral relation of India and Pakistan and has declared as alarming threat to peace in this highly sensitive region of world (Cohen, 2003).

Water dispute is another issue that had arisen in the early stages after independence. Indus and its tributaries irrigated seven million acres of land, after divide, three million acres were in Pakistan. Indus and its tributaries rise in Himalayas and run through Indian held Kashmir to reach Pakistan in the south. After partition, India came in stranglehold and unilaterally cut-off the waters in canals running south from the barrages into Pakistan ignoring her rights as per international law. India also embarked the building of Bhakra dam in order to divert all the water in Sutlej. This created a panic in Pakistan. After many efforts, at last India agreed to give Pakistan a part of her righteous share of waters in the result of Indus Water Treaty agreed in 1960 with the helpful mediation of World Bank. A commission was established to overlook the affairs of water in the name of 'Indus water commission' (Amin, 2010). India repeatedly violated the agreement and tried to build Dams that designs always exceeded the storage limit agreed in Indus water treaty. Salal dam on Chenab river in 1970's, Wullar barrage on Jehlum river in 1980's, Baglihar hydro power project on Chenab in 1990's and Kishanganga on Jehlum in 2005 are the main concerns rise yet and either refused by Indus commission or reduced in size (Sam, 2010). This issue is continuously haunting the bilateral relations (Sattar, 2013).

Pakistan shares more than 2500 kilometres of border with India from hot waters of Arabian Sea to the frozen heights of Himalayas. Keeping in view the history of hostile relations between two countries, this border is guarded with high security and fences. Many times, small skirmishes here turned into a series of fights and issues took up to high levels. Territorial issues such as Siachin and Sir Creek are also engaging the armies of both countries (Burke, 1994). This situation gives importance to even a small incident on this boundary. Therefore, this issue is also under consideration in the present research. In the absence of peaceful relations and bad temperament for co-existence, consequences led the governments of both countries in quest for military superiority through the modern tools of warfare (Ahsan, 1996). Pakistan tilted towards USA in early fifties and India joined USSR group but also waved the flag of non-alignment. Both countries started their atomic programs for acquiring latest energy technology for various progressive purposes manifestly. However, according to Sattar (2013) & Perkovich (1999) it was found in mid sixties that India is using technology to acquire weapons. This led Pakistan into the mess also. India tested its atom bomb in 1974 and became nuclear power. Pakistan, in reaction, had attained the technology until 1983 and cold tests were conducted to test the reliability (Amin, 2010). On 11 May 1998, India tested 5 nuclear weapons. USA accepted it as a bitter reality but when Pakistan did the same to Balance power, sanctions applied. India got uneven treatment from both Clinton and Bush administration in nuclear matter as compared to Pakistan. On the other hand, the traditional military hardware was also necessary. Therefore, both countries started spending a large share of their annual budget on purchase of arms and ammunition (Sattar, 2013, pp 211-13). Pakistan and India developed a modern missile system against each other, acquired lethal aircrafts and ships competitively on the cost of poverty and despair in masses. Hence, this issue can work as litmus test in relations between Pakistan and India to measure the tilt towards either war or piece by analysing comments of each side on others zeal for gaining weaponry. Terrorism is another modern phenomenon and is very favourite term for the administration of both Pakistan and India to blame each other for malpractices as it has a vast circle to encircle different affairs of conflict. In the start, it was called insurgency and interruption in internal affairs. Kashmir, East Pakistan (Bangladesh), Baluchistan separatist movement and Khalistan movement

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are some examples from not very past (Sattar, 2013). Now a days, people are familiar with as Mumbai attacks, Samjhota express case and role of Indian consulates on the Afghan-Pakistan border in which each side blames other for terrorism. This issue can also help in determining the stance as well as framing regarding war or peace journalism.

The resolution of conflicts can do through effective and sincere communication between the contender parties. When the conflict is between two or more nations, it is called dialogue or peace talks in the daily language of international relations. The process of dialogue to resolve issues arising soon after the emergence of Pakistan with India started at the end of 1947 when Chaudri Muhammad Ali, along with Malik Ghulam Muhammad (then Finance Minister) went to Delhi to discuss the transfer of assets (Ali, 1967). Liaqat-Nehru pact and Indus water treaty are the examples of successful dialogues. This dialogue process also resolved issues after 1965's and 1971's war in Tashkent and Shimla agreements respectively. Different confidence building measures were taken by time to time by both sides to reduce tensions. The meetings of high army officials of both sides as meetings of DGMOs (Director General Military Operations) were initiated to avert clashes. Lahore declaration in 1999 and the Back channel Musharaf-Manmohen diplomacy also paced the peace process. Most recent talks held at higher level were initiated in in April 2003, India began what was declared as a 'step-by-step' initiative towards Pakistan. In July 2003, consulate relations and direct transport connections were re-established that were cut-off during 2002 tensions. In addition, in November a truce (ceasefire) initiated. The Composite Dialogue Process invigorated in June 2004 in pursuit of a judgment taken during the visit of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, former Prime Minister of India to Pakistan in January 2004. Since then, four rounds of serious discussions have taken place between Pakistan and India (till the Mumbai terror attacks on November 26, 2008), on the eight topics in order to seek and decide these contentious conflicts to the pleasure of both sides. The eight issues under debate in the Composite Dialogues were: (1) Peace and Security, counting confidence-building measures (CBMs); (2) Jammu & Kashmir; (3) Siachen dispute; (4) Tulbul Navigation project/Wullar Barrage; (5) Sir Creek boundary issue; (6) Commercial and Economic Cooperation; (7) Drug trafficking and Terrorism; and, (8) Promotion of friendly relations in diverse fields.

These talks were alternative of war to solve disagreements on various issues. There are many cases in the world in which trade played a positive role in resolving conflict between neighbouring states. The Asean, EU and Mercosur are often quoted as examples for improved political and military relations. India-Pakistan's trade is rather competitive than complimentary. However, a huge informal (illegal) trade is still Carrying on between the two countries, estimated to be more than four times larger, standing at about US\$1.5 to US\$2bn, against formal trade of just US\$400mn. It suggests a vast trade potential. Regional trade between India and Pakistan has a potential to grow but the often-hostile relations between India and Pakistan does not allow this opportunity to work with full enthusiasm. It is a debate in the corridors of regime of Pakistan to grant MFN (most favourite nation) status to India in order to boost trade. The measurement of the coverage of trade issue between Pakistan and India in press of both countries would reveal the agenda of press that to what extent they consider trade as factor in building peace. Likewise are the sports. The different kinds of sports are common between Pakistan and India. Hockey, Cricket, Wrestling and Kabbadi are the famous sports in which Pakistan and India's teams considers as top teams in the world. Apart from this, the people of both countries show immense interest in the matches between India and Pakistan. When either side's team visits other country, the stadiums are full of cheering crowds. This activity is a form of people-to-people contact that can produce harmony between the masses. Another sign of common interest between two countries is Showbiz and Arts. Three languages, Urdu, English and Punjabi are present on both sides of the border. Their writers and poets

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are acknowledged on both sides. Classical writers are also a common point of interest. The archaeological and historical sites that are world famous belong to the cultural heritage of both the nations. Both countries acknowledge and praise actors, musicians and singers of film and drama of each side. How the press views this phenomenon is the topic of this category's analysis. It is placed under the heading of peace journalism measures. Related to all above described categories of relations between Pakistan and India, another is the visa criteria and policy by both governments for each other. It is known that many families separated during the partition and people sought to visit their relatives in either country from that time. There were no formal visas for many years after independence to visit each country but with the bitterness added to relations, sanctions applied to visa policy. Now, Hindus and Sikhs have their most sacred temples on earth (Katas and Nankana Sahib respectively) situated in Pakistan. On the other hand, many sacred Sufi shrines are situated in India. The common people from both sides want to visit and this can enhance people-to-people contacts. The policy of reduction in visa strictness is also used as a goodwill gesture to other government by both countries when needed (Amin, 2010).

Since his election in May 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made substantial changes to Pakistan policy. From early enthusiasm to making an unexpected trip to Lahore in December 2015 and subsequently carrying out "surgical strikes" on terrorist facilities with bases there, Mr. Modi's Pakistan policy has radically shifted. With the Jammu and Kashmir border becoming particularly tense, an increase in terror strikes against India, and significant elections approaching, the relationship between India and Pakistan looks to have reached its breaking point. The threat of the war escalating is still there and real.

The move to end the semi-autonomous status of Indian occupied Kashmir by the Indian government worsened the bilateral relations and trade when the central government of India repealed Article 370, a constitutional provision that grants special status and allows the Indian state of Jammu & Kashmir to make its own laws. Up until then, there has been no trade between the two countries, and relations on the diplomatic front are also at an all-time low.

This historical debate is for the understanding of the south Asian destiny, and now for the methodological approach of the chapter, we turn towards the peace journalism in theory and practice.

Peace and War journalism

In an endeavour to encourage a culture of harmony and peace, media critics and scholars urged journalists in recent years to support peace journalism rather than war journalism. Johan Galtung, one of the earliest scholars to recommend peace journalism as an idea for journalists that are covering war zones, anticipated war journalism and peace journalism as two competing opposite frames in covering a conflict. In 1965, devoid of particularly coining the concept per se, Galtung and Ruge (1965) first documented the concept in relation to foreign news and conflict coverage. Since then, peace journalism developed as a substitute and a normative answer to challenge conventional war reporting, heading towards this landmark journalistic notion of peace journalism in the 1970s (Galtung, 1986, 1998b, 1998c).

So, it can be said that the media is a multi-dimensional tool which when applied in one way can yield the result of peace and in another way the result of war. It is a mechanism of conflict resolution and has proven to be a catalyst for peaceful change. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and development (OECD) in a 2001 report argues that the mass media, as information carrier along with other information providers, have an exclusive ability to reach and persuade people in conflict-affected areas as well as a main role to play in promoting the discourse of dialogue to solve clashes in a divided society. The report observes that the violence and tensions in a given situation of conflict are often the

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misunderstanding of the real phenomenon behind conflict and the disinformation about the very nature of conflict. The OECD proposes in her report that the media and the press should ensure that the society has a wider access to the information elucidating its state of affairs in a broad context for the prevention of conflicting matters. Hence, the media should play its role by stopping clashes from turning into violence.

The OECD also proposes a broad array of activities for enhancing the different roles of media in solving conflict through a free and fair reporting which should include all viewpoints, accurate coverage keeping in view the context of the conflict, not only the apparent event and objective unbiased stance which can be decisive to resolve conflict.

Critique on Peace and War Journalism

Many scholars oppose the idea of peace and war journalism. The basic objective of the mass media is to report objectively and fairly. McGoldrik & Lynch (2000) define peace journalism as the type of journalism that employs conflict analysis and transformation to revise the concepts of objectivity, fairness, balance and accuracy in reporting the conflict. However, Journalist Lyon (2007) opines that peace journalism approach describes an active participation that is simply not the role of a journalist, and is based on a flawed notion that the world would be a better place if we report wars in a certain prescribed way, encouraging peacemakers rather than reporting warriors. This prescription is the most dangerous part of peace journalism, as it tries to define itself as a new orthodoxy. Moreover, the peace journalism approach was criticized from the outset for being normative and hence impractical during conflict times (Hanitzsch, 2004), lacking a coherent theoretical base (Lee and Maslog, 2005), proposing powerful effects of media on the passive audiences (Hanitzsch, 2007), ignoring the structural and institutional factors that determine the operation of media industries and journalistic practices (Fawcett, 2002). War and peace journalism model was criticized for having four dichotomous war and peace orientations which Johan Galtung presented in 1998. On the basis of this model, a number of scholars labeled it as naïve (Hanitzsch, 2007), lacking explanatory power (Lee and Maslog, 2005) and deficient in analyzing the journalistic culture (Fawcett, 2002). Also, it was sometimes criticized for its multi-disciplinary approach. Peace journalism borrows its scholarship from peace and conflict studies, journalism studies and social psychology. Shabir (2023) accepts the derailing from journalistic norms but debunks other criticism for being biased and relying on poorly informed sources. Lyon (2007) also says it is not the role of reporters to deviate from the traditional norms of objectivity and neutrality. Lee (2008) summarizes various scholars who favour the argument that such practical conceptualisation of journalism is an unwelcomed journey from objectivity and that it would be a compromise over the integrity of journalists to manipulate their part as the media content's "neutral disseminators". Shabir (2023) accepts the derailing from journalistic norms but debunks other criticism for being biased and relying on poorly informed sources.

Justification and Explanation

The basic objective of the mass media is to report objectively and fairly. Whereas the basic definition of the peace journalism by McGoldrik & Lynch (2000) states that peace journalism uses conflict analysis and transformation to revise the concepts of objectivity, fairness, balance and accuracy in reporting the conflict, the truth that will never alter is the logic that the media, as a means of message transformation, plays a crucial role for information and social development. At the moment, all over the world, the mass media is a linking tool in the state or between states. On the other hand, the media is 'accused' of

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becoming a source of conflict through propaganda and prejudice. As a result, the mass media can be a source to problems because the world relies on it for news and information. In conclusion, Bagdikian (2005) submits that the modern society is crammed with images from the mass media about the world. The discourse in the journalism scholarly society on how to influence and shape the mass media content under situations of systematic violence and conflict keeps budding not just in geographical capacity, but also on the praxis and epistemological fronts. Lee (2008) says that the pioneer to validate a positioned part of the mass media in reporting of violence and war was BBC journalist, Martin Bell (1995) who “stressed on the impracticality [in journalism] of covering (standing) neutrally between victim and oppressor, right and wrong, good and evil” (p. 5).

The roles of the mass media have been observed in many ways and diverse context. For peace and conflict, the media, as an organization and entity, have been condemned to take part in negative function for conflict acceleration and therefore not succeed to consider about peace initiatives. The works of mass media have been linked to the issues that result to violent behaviours such as the correlation among substantial exposure to the mass media and the enhancement in violent behaviours between mass media viewers (Felson, 1996).

Conflict and peace are not easy terminologies to define owing to the complexities and realities that encompass peace and conflict. Both concepts have been defined and elaborated by different writers in several ways. Understanding peace and conflict is the multifaceted fixation to do. For example, if an individual is not pleased, or is starving, it is sensibly that he/she is not in peace. But it also does not imply that he/she is in a situation of ‘fight’. In accumulation, if one is hungry and stays calm in his/her home and not demanding for help, then she/he will be in a condition of not having peace except not really involving in violent conflict (Abdalla et al, 2002)

Numerous researchers who studied peace and conflict have defined conflict by relating it with material violence. For instance, Mitchel (1991) and Ramsbotham (2005) are few researchers who have linked violence to conflict. However, it does not indicate that they did not point out ‘other’ aspects that comprise the theory and applicability of conflict. Conflict can also occur when one group maltreats another as in cases such as gender issues in the Balkan warfare where women symbolizing the reality of conflict were raped, tormented and murdered by a dominating group (Abdalla et al, 2002). Other main factors contributing to conflict mentioned by same author include:

- Ethnic tensions
- Religious issues
- Political differences
- Distribution of resources

These are concerns that have been addressed from time immemorial in oral and written communications since the dawn of humanity’s evolution starting from the era of the Greek and Indian epochs. However, they appear no closer and possibly even beyond from resolution than these concepts were in the age of the *Iliad* and the *Mahabharata* respectively. ‘Peace’, like numerous theoretical terminologies, is hard to define. But too like ‘happiness’ or ‘harmony’ or ‘love’ and ‘justice’ and ‘freedom’, *we generally distinguish it by its non-existence*. Therefore, Galtung et. al, (2002) have anticipated the important difference between ‘positive peace’ and ‘negative peace’. ‘Positive’ peace indicates the synchronized presence of a lot of wanted conditions of mind and social structure, such as equity, justice, harmony,

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etc. On the other hand, 'negative' peace has been historically linked with the 'non-existence of war' and other types of wide-scale aggressive human clash.

Many theoretical, religious, philosophical and cultural customs have defined peace in its 'positive' context. In Chinese, for instance, the word '*heping*' refers to the world peace, that is, peace between nations. (Webel, 2007).

According to Webel (2007), the exact opposite of the term 'peace' is not only conflict. Conflicts emerge historically unavoidable and may be, in a social context, advantageous if they end in individual and/or political development. Conflicts may, perhaps strangely enough, advance and enhance peace and reduce violence if the conflicting groups bargain in good confidence to achieve solutions to troubles that are attainable and tolerable, if not principally idealistic.

In addition, at some occasions, the antithesis of the above discussed term is not the concept of violence merely, even in the form of political violence. War-prone states can transform into peace-prone (such as Switzerland, the Scandinavian nations, and Costa Rica etc) if their genuine and supposed security and resource requirements are met and their standing armed forces are significantly diminished or retired.

Peace and conflict are not both antagonists, particularly if the conflicting sides use nonviolent, a smaller amount of violent or even non-lethal forms of conflict resolve and conversion. Yet peace and war are not constantly antitheses if the either side, who come across the situation in which they unwillingly pulled into warfare, try to reduce the frequency and lethality of brutal conflicts, operating all through a wartime and in good faith determine to finish the violence as soon as possible and not to impose violence on civilian and armed forces non-fighting units. Terrorism and terror, however, are unable to coexist with peace, conciliatory efforts and the fight to soothe existence. As claimed, terrorism is a double-edged sword, a method used by nation-states (terrorism from above) and non-state actors (from below) to provoke fear in terrorizing the public for the intention of influencing others, less vulnerable people (Barash & Webel 2002: 80–3; Webel 2004)

Conflict can be defined by differentiating two ideas into splitting parts: one is the negative peace and the other one is positive peace. This is a model originally introduced by the distinguished peace journalism scholar and sociologist, Johan Galtung. As quoted in the study of Ramsbothm (2005), John Galtung has clearly defined the term 'negative peace' as the ending of direct violence and the term 'positive peace' as the triumph over structural and cultural violence. For that reason, the concept of negative peace is not to be gruesome (the term 'negative' is inopportune in this context). At an intrapersonal stage, any person who has not been capable to sleep through anguish, guilt (for the past), worry (for the future), etc., will know the good thing of a peaceful mentality. The similar goes at the family rank for a person who has suffered aggression or abuse, or, at a society level, bias, harassment, 'ethnic cleansing', genocide, or, at the international level, the horrible destruction of warfare... On the other side, negative peace on its possess can be attached with oppression, deprivation, mistreatment, injustice.

Positive peace, in comparison, includes the main ideas of 'legitimacy' and of 'justice'. An unjust composition or association in this terminology is not a peaceable one. In order to attain positive peace, consequently, injustice must be ended. This also works at all the different stages, from unfair economic relations among 'North' and 'South', from unjust political ties between majority and minority segments within a society or from country to country, to unjust individual relations amid individuals. This applies to the entire various sorts of 'differences' that differentiate sets of mankind: diversity of race (the notion that some races are 'superior' to the others), gender (male dominance), and class (continuation of socio-economic gain and disadvantage throughout the course of life based on birth, not worth of somebody or defined merit), etc. At an intrapersonal stage, positive peace goes further than absence of anxiety

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and holds the idea of deep internal peace through integrity (wholeness) of human being, all physical, emotional, and spiritual. Several believe that 'inner' peace of this type is the eventual underpinning of long-lasting global peace (Ramsbotham 2011, p.11-12).

Oganjanyan (2012) says Peace journalism can be termed as a reaction in opposition to some of the flaws pointed out in contemporary practice of journalism. Instead of covering only bare facts in a conflict area, peace journalism tends to go much further, reporting the milieu to the conflict in addition to encouraging de-escalation and non-escalation (p.44). In the time of a conflict the key actors or institutions aims to hold the focus of press concentration. However, for a peace journalist, all parties of the conflict need to be the focus of attention instead of one, "peace journalism equally portrays the truths and lies of all rival parties; hold focus to ordinary public, their participation in exploration for solution and their sufferings" (Oganjanyan 2012, p. 45).

The key rationale behind peace journalism, as believed by some prominent scholars is the peace building and conflict transformation (Lynch, 2008, p.3). As indicated by Galtung (1998), peace journalist would perceive conflict as a chance to find novel ways of peace building in the region that is bearing conflict. Whilst some persons would see conflict to be a terrible thing, some schools of thought have considered conflict to be the catalyst meant for transformation and community advancement (Ramsbotham, 2005). People often tend not to perceive the ease of use of the opportunity that can lead them to resolution. Within conflict, persons who determine to solve it can unearth an improved way of stopping that conflict for a very long term (Galtung, 1998). He further adds that, Conflicts would be noticed as a challenge for the world. As persons, groups, nations and groups of states appear to stand in each other's path (that is what conflict is with reference to) there is an obvious threat of violence. Except in conflict there is also an obvious opportunity for human development, using the conflict to discover new ways, transforming the conflict productively so that the prospects take the upper hand - devoid of violence.

The promoter of peace researcher John P. Lederach has on one occasion pointed out that in conflict circumstances, readily available are peace opportunities. Lederach (1997) said that he has not gone through any condition of conflict where there have not been persons who had a dream and vision for peace. Far too often, though, these similar people are ignored and disempowered either for the reason that they do not embody official power (p. 94; cited in Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005, p. 255).

Journalists are repeatedly again the earliest to try to interpret violent measures to wider masses. Rather than just depending on uncontroversial data, profound intellectual burden are placed on journalists to narrate chronicles of conflict that are not just balanced but disclose why people battle and what is at risk. Not including these intellectual talents and an editorial environment that acknowledges and appreciate them, it's simple to fall back on stereotypical outlines that make historical and relative detail deserted. And the sharing of this content can play into how the conflict disclose. Stereotypes do not accidentally appear. Those people or groups who have their stake in the continuance of a conflict are fit served by portrayals of group hostility as intractable, never-ending (Sharp, 2013).

Obviously, there is no disagreement that violence should not be reported. Although the first prey in a war is not truth - truth is merely the second victim. The earliest victim is, of course, peace. Good quality reporting - low down- or high-road - should evidently be truthful. But truth journalism only is not peace journalism. Furthermore, truth does not approach easily, given the inclination to take sides once the 'who wins' viewpoint has been accepted. If one side is backed by one's personal country, nation, class or newspaper/ radio station/ television channel, the low road tempts untruthfulness, as observed in the Gulf war, Somalia and Bosnian wars (Galtung, 1998).

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Hence, peace journalism engages that “editors and reporters make choices – regarding what stories to present, and how to present them – which produce opportunities for the public at large to believe and to value non-violent reactions to conflict” (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005, p. 5). This upper elaborated idea affirms the relationship of framing theory with peace journalism.

Galtung (1998) forwards the idea that mass media often follow the “low road” in covering conflict-chasing wars. Galtung argues for an alternate course: the “high road” for peace journalism that concentrates on the phenomenon of conflict transformation. Peace journalism struggles to depolarize the issue of conflict by presenting the black and white of each and every side, and peace journalism also works to de-escalate it by stressing on peace and conflict resolution as much as violent behaviour. Peace journalism tries to curtail the rift between opposed groups by not saying again facts that demonize one side and prepare the stage for conflict, (Lynch and McGoldrick 2001; Patel 2004). Galtung states, “Journalism not only legitimizes violence but also it is violent in and of itself”. Galtung and Vincent (1992) discuss critically the criteria of selection of news content such as negativism, personalization and proximity to elite states and elite people (p. 7).

According to Galtung (1986, 1998) the war journalism and peace journalism are two competing frames in the media’s coverage of conflict and war. He brackets peace journalism with truth, people, conflict and solutions. These four broad categories are the bases of his orientations towards the conceptualisation of peace journalism. On the contrary side, the conceptualisation of war journalism is rooted in elite oriented coverage, propaganda, violence/war and victory. Here Galtung labels peace journalism both peace and conflict-oriented journalism that can be perceived as paradoxical by one but this reality must be understood that the acknowledgement of the conflict itself before going for its solutions and the exact identification of the rival parties, origin of conflict and basic issues involved is necessary. In this context, the journalist can understand and accurately expresses the historical and cultural foundations of conflict by presenting the views of all the parties involved in conflict that makes the conflict understandable and creates empathy. Through application of consistent and active peace journalism practices, the journalist creates an environment that is necessary to seek ways and possible solutions to solve conflict. Other main techniques argue to involve editorials and columns using preventive advocacy approaches and create demand for reconciliation by objectively focusing on common interests not stressing upon vengeance, differences and retaliation. Through highlighting stories that emphasis on the hidden results of violence such as damaging social structure and emotional trauma (Lee, 2010).

On the other hand, as Galtung (1986, 1998) states, war journalism portrays conflict as the arena of some sports event in which the participants are bracketed in two rival sides (“us” vs “them”) and underlines the evident outcomes of war such as property loss and casualties whereas sidelining the intangible effects. There is no surprise in the fact that the recommendations Galtung makes for peace journalism like reporting on origins and effects of a clash, representation to all rival groups in media and unbiased coverage are much more synonymous to the rules of good journalism as fairness, objectivity, truthfulness and thoroughness.

Galtung (1998) looked at the purpose of peace journalism as to “make out the conflict formation, the groups, their objectives and the issues, and not drop into the trap of admitting that the main actors are where the act (war, conflict) is.” Galtung (1998) sought after to exercise peace journalism the way a physician diagnoses the reason of illness.

Media generally endorse an ethnocentric vision of the world, which becomes particularly blatant in times of catastrophe; for that reason, (Bennett, 1990; Wolfsfeld, 2004) mass media reports are prejudiced with nationalistic and ideological inclinations. Ozgunes and Terzis (2000) refer to a Turkish reporter

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saying, “I am always keeping in mind of our national interest and the concern of my organisation when I am in the field for reporting Greek-Turkish dealings. At the end of the day, I do not wish for criticising my national regime for the reason of my „objective“ reporting, that also might be used in wrong way or misinterpreted by the other side”. Concerning journalist objectivity in coverage of conflict, Galtung (2000) interprets, “I’d be fond of to see objective journalists: by that I am pointing towards those journalists who are capable to cover all the sides of the conflict” (p. 163; cited in Suleyman Irvan, 2006). Two aspects frequently influence coverage on conflict: the connection of the mass media with governments and armed forces authorities for the duration of a conflict (Aulich, 1992; Herman and Chomsky, 1994; Kellner, 1992; Liebes, 1992; Philo and McLaughlin, 1995) and, secondly, the influence of journalistic schedules and practices (Conflict and Peace Courses, 1997; Williams, 1992;., cited in Fawcett 2000).

Wolfsfeld (2004) argues that the “original mode of action for the media is to cover tension, clash, and violence” (p. 156). Shinar finds in a relative study that the press prefer to use war frames even whilst covering peace talks (2004, p. 85); Fawcett (2002) claims that the Irish press find conflict frames more striking than conciliation frames (p. 221). Lee and Maslog (2005) arrive at this result: “evidently, the coverage of the conflict in four Asian countries by media is dominated with war journalism framing” (p. 322, cited in Suleyman Irvan, 2006). „War journalism“ is a form of covering an issue which contains a hidden bias in support of violence. It causes to be conflict opaque, obscuring the structural aspects starting the cycle of aggression and occluding the political actions required to interrupt and distract it (Lynch & Mcgoldrick, 2005).

Peace and War Framing in Coverage

Here are some examples of the press coverage analysed from the perspective of Peace and War journalism, Global South in general and South Asia in particular, both in foreign and domestic press. Siraj (2007) conducted a study on the coverage of Pakistan-India conflict in the elite press from 2001 to 2002 that was among one of the pinnacle conflict eras between Pakistan and India based on Galtung’s theoretical assumption of war and peace journalism (1986, 1989). He concluded from the study that based on whole, coverage of the relations of Pakistan and India in both the dailies (Washington post and New York Times) was more favourable towards war journalism than that of peace journalism.

He found in his study that Most of the articles with a tilt towards war journalism frame pinpointed on the conflict field, militants’ actions, violence and casualties in Indian occupied Kashmir, terrorist attacks on the building of Indian parliament. The two dailies noted that the countries were at the brink of war in December 2001. The stories having war framing contains words of Kashmiri insurgency, terrorism, nuclear war, Weaponisation and militancy.

Most of the stories with a peace frame concentrated on solutions to the situation turned into conflict by highlighting various parties having vested interests in the conflict, milieu and upcoming effects of the clash and by not taking sides with any single party or group in the conflict. The press in peace framing focused on the issues of promoting peace by resolving conflict with bilateral talks, defuse tensions on international borders, curbing militancy and engaging both parties in friendly ties. These frames endorsed by the report of SIPRI’s (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) yearbook 2002 in which the institution claims that South Asia is among one of the world’s top ranked regions that were being measured the highest escalation in defence expenditures. Prominent leaders of the world depicted the Line of Control (LoC) separating Kashmir between AJK and Indian held part as the most hazardous place in world.

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Jan and Khan (2011) concluded in their study examining peace keeping role of Pakistani media that press can fabricate peace in the nation and the journalism is considered an instrument to resolve conflict. Preponderance of respondents considers that the press can resolve conflicts while peace journalism is observed as the conflict trigger. Press persuades the policy makers for peace and highlights hidden narratives in face of audience.

Journalism plays a fundamental role in the backing of peace; hence it is the most important responsibility of reporters and editors to implement an unprejudiced stance throughout conflict and get on board all stakeholders. Peace journalism facilitates bridge the breach between enemies, so peace journalists require keen perceptiveness of the procedure of advocacy. Peace journalism demands professional values and unbiased approach, where a peace process desires to persuade elements for recognition of a national peace accord (Jan & Khan, 2011). During the nationalistic wars (Bosnia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone), scholars pointed out towards the catastrophic impact of media and its correlation with the messages of hate (war frames) and the subsequent massacre (Thompson, 1999; Des Forges, 1999; Onadipe & Lord, 1997; Kirschke, 1996). The propaganda of this type was related with one of the most terrible genocidal waves in human history. The Rwandan media was believed to be the decisive contributor to the initiation of carnage that took lives of more than half million people in less than one hundred days (Metzl, 1997; Straus, 2007; Monasebian, 2007). Print and electronic media in Bosnia fuelled the ethnic conflict in the name of promotional campaign of nationalism's ideology (Buric, 2000).

The pioneers among the scholars who operationalised Galtung's (1986, 1998) work on framing war and peace journalism were Lee and Maslog (2005). They studied the framing of Iraq-US war in comparison with four Local conflicts from Asia, Pakistan and India's clash over Kashmir, Tamil Tiger's movement in Sri Lanka, the separatist movement of Muslims in Philippine's Mindanao province and the civil wars of Aceh and Maluku in Indonesia. They selected eight newspapers from Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and India and analysed 1558 stories overall. They concluded that all Asian newspapers used war framing for local conflicts and peace framing for Iraq war (international conflict). Lee et al (2006) explained that the reason behind war framing for local conflicts was the involvement of the respective countries in the conflict where the newspaper based. They further explained that the Asian press predominantly used peace and neutral frames for Iraq war, whereas the western media such as associated press mostly produced the war frames. These scholars also found an interesting difference that the war frames are mostly used in shorter stories whereas the peace frames used in opinion articles. According to Spenser (2007), the media, in the race of sensationalization, is obsessed with the frames of confrontation rather than non-confrontational frames and lacks perceptiveness to propose promoting integration and build constructive peace through discourse, media discourse zero-sum politics rather non-zero-sum.

A peace reporter, Bayuni (2008) argued that media mishandled, exaggerated and oversimplified the issue of East Timor by selecting dominant war frame in coverage of conflict, by portraying it a war between giant military of Indonesia and Fretilin Separatists, a clash between Christian East Timor and Muslim Indonesia. Analysing the origin of conflict, as described by Galtung, Bayuni says the takeover of East Timor in 1975 was done with the approval from US and Australia as it was the tactical part of cold war. Further, in the recent conflict, East Timor is a divided society and a large number of people wanted to be a part of Indonesia by some particular arrangements for autonomy or by membership of the republic.

Another example is the content analysis of three Nigerian newspapers conducted by Djebah (2003) in the period of Nigerian Delta crisis. Djebah used the Galtung's peace journalism framing and concluded that the media presented the clash as a war in which it focused on who retreats and who advances,

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measured the losses in the estimate of material damage, number of citizens killed and wounded. The dominant theme was the zero-sum perspective.

Chung et al (2008) applied Galtung's (1986, 1998, 2002) idea of two opposite styles of journalism for the analysis of media coverage to the North Korean nuclear test in 2006. Leading dailies from five (Japan, Russia, China, US, South Korea) were selected for examining. Large sum of war framing was found (mostly on the US newspaper's part) that was elite oriented, firmly emphasised on status quo and with a clear partisan approach. On the other hand, peace framing (mostly found in Chinese, Japanese and Russian newspapers) used a multi-party approach and avoided confrontational and emotional language. South Korean newspaper chose neutral stance in reporting the nuclear tests. Lynch (2005) found during an empirical analysis of the content of UK's newspapers on coverage of Iranian nuclear crisis that the coverage was highly conflict provocative and war favoured thus paving the way through media discourse for military invention. McGoldrick (2008) found that the framing war journalism had more negative serious impacts on the feelings and psyche of people than peace journalism.

Siraj & Hussain (2010) examined the editorials and opinions of the four leading Pakistani newspapers, both Urdu and English language on the coverage of Taliban's issue. He referred to Galtung's theoretical classification for war and peace journalism framing. He concluded that the media framing was predominantly oriented towards war journalism. English press is more war oriented than the Urdu press. Kasbari (2006) concluded in his research that due to commercial anxiety, the media institutions frequently exercise war and conflict-oriented frames. Shinar (2004) reveals from the results of his study that the media would prefer to apply war framing even though it is covering peace negotiations. According to Fawcett (2002), the Irish media did not prefer conciliatory framing to conflict framing and frequently used conflict frames in reporting. Until now, the most inclusive empirical research of war versus peace journalism owes much part to Lee (2010), who investigated several long Asian conflicts during defined periods. She argued to re-consider some structural limitations whilst applying the practices of peace journalism. Revisiting her previous works, she found that the English language news articles (Published in Pakistan News Service & Times of India) were using more war framing as compared to the vernacular press (Urdu & Hindi) stories presented in leading national newspapers. Whereas the stories coming from foreign news services were predominantly focused war frames than peace. Moreover, the features and opinion pieces were more likely contain peace journalism framing as compared to hard news that predominantly used war journalism framing. She also concluded that the existence of active ongoing peace negotiations process in the time of conflict enable the journalists to utilise more peace frames over typical frames of war at their cost. It was also found during the research that as the conflict prolongs, the frames have tendency to incline more toward war journalism, with the decades old and intractable dispute of Kashmir, the heavy war framing particularly increased (Lee, 2010).

In terms of conflict resolution and war break, there are two fashions, researchers have discovered. The first is the apparent decline in the times eruption of conflicts and wars, there is evidently a necessitate to discover the aspects or forces that are moulding and influencing these global conflict inclinations in order to realize better why a number of conflicts are declining and whether or not this *inclination* will persist. The second fashion is the rising interest in negotiated resolutions (Marshall and Gurr 2005).

According to the approaches that are communication based, an imperative supposition is that even though groups involved in conflict identify particular issues as the reasons of conflict, conflict also mirrors subjective, phenomenological and societal ruptures and, subsequently, analyzing 'interests' can be lesser significant than identifying the primary needs that direct each party's understanding of the conflict (Doob 1993; Lederach 1995).

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It is said that the liking for the negotiation choice in the resolution of violent international conflicts is one that has taken place against a setting manifested by a rising inclination for international negotiation as the most important means for handling international conflicts for a broad variety of issues. This is partly owing to a better consideration of the processes of negotiations that are interest-based, a process of building negotiations to a 'win-win' result in which both sides reach on an acceptable, pleasing agreement on issues critical to every participant (Fisher et al.1991).

Many peace scholars argue that from the view point of the conflicting groups, negotiation on conflict-ing issues through peace talks has become a more enviable choice when the wish of winning the warfare on the battlefield lost colour (Hampson et al. 2007). Maslog (1990) prepared a practising manual for the journalists who were covering conflicts keeping in mind the concept of peace journalism. He prepared it keeping under focus the Mindanao conflict in Philippines. In this manual, he stressed on the journalists to focused on mutual beneficial points of rival parties and discuss common grounds, should not highlight the disputing elements and points. He exemplified pork eating in Christian community and polygamy in Muslims are considered offensive to each other group. He did use the historical and contextual background to dig out the common standings and confrontational points between Christians and Muslims.

According to Hanitzach (2004), the coverage of war journalism revolves around the groups, which are engaged in battle with each other over a conflict. The conflict's causes and consequences and the suitable solutions to it are sought on the battlefield. The main concentration of the coverage mostly lies with the question that who will be the winner and held the upper hand at the end. The result of this type of journalism, as portrayed by Hanitzach, is chiefly zero-sum oriented. In this situation, the victory of one side and defeat of other is obvious. This type of coverage in media generally begins when the conflict outburst and turns into a violent battle or riots, then the focus of the coverage in media is about the visible happenings such as the death toll, tyranny or the loss of property. In covering the conflict issues, war journalism generally focuses on the propagated biased truthfulness of "our side" and the blame of the violence mainly accredited to the "other side". This is done through exposing insincerity and atrocities of the "other side", whereas the same attributes on "our side" are mostly kept hidden and covered. The mode of war journalism does not permit it to cover the peace initiatives taken to resolve the conflict as long as it is not visible to foresee the future winner. At the end of one hostile conflict, it diverts its focus towards the next "hot" warfare and only return to the previous when the violence once again flare up.

Discussing about peace oriented journalism, he argues that the peace journalism mainly addresses the grounds on which the conflict arises and tries to explore the origin of the clash to make the conflict's understanding transparent in order to present the coverage more easily understandable before audience. This journalism goes for the explorations of solutions for particular conflict and explains the causes keeping in view the each rival side's perspective. The orientation that peace journalism adopts is not to blame "other side" as the sole problem, but to see conflict itself as problem. Prevent of violence and warfare is the core philosophy with which peace journalism is strongly committed. Adoption of the method of creative conflict resolution is the main focus in peace journalism along with the attention towards peace-keeping and peacemaking efforts. Practising this, peace journalism exposes cover-up efforts, wrong doings and criminals on all conflicting sides along with exposing the sufferings of each side in conflict. This approach of peace journalism for the solution of conflict enables it to put particular attention towards peace building initiatives and coverage of post war developments. Whilst on the other side, the model of peace journalism also goes through the critique of scholars. Lee (2008) summarizes various scholars who are in the favour of the argument that such practical conceptualisation of journalism is an unwelcomed journey from the objectivity and it would be a compromise over the integrity of

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journalists by manipulating their part as the media content's "neutral disseminators" (p.4). He goes over the main points from the studies that there is a conflict between main proponents of peace journalism and traditional journalistic values of neutrality, detachment and objectivity (Ibid). He further highlights the charges on peace journalism that it focuses too much on the direct and powerful effects of media and hence ignores the fact that the possibility for journalists to stand aside the cultural consensus of their respective societies in which they work and live is rare (p.5).

Hackett (2007) describes the viewpoint of a TV media correspondent for war who says that war is the better reporting option as compared to peace because "warfare is full of highlight moments, contains resolutions and actions and convey a powerful sensation; fear". Whilst peace is broad and formless and "the emotions bracket with it are internal, personal and subtle, which are much difficult to present on TV" (p.48). Another argument is that covering peace is tough than war because "war fulfils all needs of present news values, it is dramatic, unusual, full of action, and there is simplicity, results and personalisation" (Shinar, 2007). On debating, what paradigms constitute peace journalism, the conceptualisation of peace journalism seen as a call to re-refer to the traditional values and norms of journalism, which have been submitted in the way of transforming into market oriented (Mutere & Ugangu, 2004; Tehrani, 2002). Galtung (2000) argues the failure of journalist to stick to conventional journalism's trade and states, "journalist who cover all aspects and sides of a conflict are objective" and those who "tell it in their own wording", that feature can be termed as neutrality and balance (p.163). Howard (2003) describes the same argument as he considers peace journalism as "reliable journalism" which represents such practices that meet the requirements of international standards of impartiality, accuracy and social responsibility. These view points are attributed to the scholars who are not considering peace journalism as a separate genre but a call to re-focus on the values and norms of conventional journalism such as impartiality/neutrality, truthfulness, accuracy, objectivity, detachment, fairness and social responsibility (Rukhsana, 2010; Howard, 2009; Kemp, 2007; Hackett 2006).

CONCLUSION

The Global South in general and South Asia in particular largely advocate frameworks for conflict. There is a significant chance that the public support the employing of military action to handle current and possibly future conflicts that will increase if the press follows suit. This study highlights how different conflicts can transform from non-violent to violent, how people are lured into the grandeur of war, how they are exposed to certain media which are ultimately shaping their reality of the outer world and a conflict which is otherwise non-existent for them. The findings are, therefore, distinct and inclusive of all issues. By applying this framework of peace and war journalism, this research helps to understand how various foreign policy subjects are easily handled by the elitist press. We have seen that framing in the context of peace and war categories is powerful and considered as one of the most effective tools for influencing the public's perception of influential figures, decision-makers, and the general public involved in a conflict. This insight might help predict relations between different communities and nations may change in the context of conflict through its coverage.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ An example is off the 2002's clash in which 'lashkar e tayiba' a kashmiri separatist movement attacked Indian parliament's building on 13th December 2001, resulting in mass movement in military deployments and troops on international boarder.
- ² In June 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote Mountbatten about the accession of state of Kashmir with India falsifying that this would satisfy the popular demand and maharaja's wish. Mountbatten influenced on Radcliff and the two Muslim majority areas (Subdivisions of Gurdaspur District) were allotted to India in the award of Punjab boundary commission that was announced on 17th August 1947 to provide a land route to India for link with Kashmir. Gandhi also visited Kashmir in July 1947 and talked with Maharaja Hari Singh on the matter (Korbel, 1966).

Chapter 17

Socio-Religious Norms of Pakistan: Understanding the Emotional Labour and the Dilemma of Stay-at-Home Women

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ABSTRACT

A huge percentage of females act as stay-at-home women in Pakistan. In this chapter, an attempt is made to explore how stay-at-home women are offering their contributions towards society and why their role is underestimated by their families and society. According to the socio-religious norms of Pakistani society, women are assigned the role of homemakers as their foremost responsibility is to take care of their husband and children. For understanding the region-based norms, various interpretations of rulings of Islam offered by highly acknowledged scholars are analyzed. Moreover, many stay-at-home women and their families are interviewed for understanding their schedules and duties and to get to know what their families think about their role. It is concluded that there is a need to educate the people about the gendered roles defined by their religion which doesn't restrict women from becoming a part of practical labor workforce but at the same time does not underestimate the role of stay-at-home women in shaping the society.

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan is a Muslim majority country where the dominant religion is Islam. Islam does not restrict women from working but they are not bound to work and earn for family if their male family members are able to afford a handsome living for them. Although the ratio of women is increasing day by day in practical workforce (Mirza, 2014), there is still a wide majority of stay-at-home women who restrict their lives to taking care of their husbands, children and families only. According to World Development

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Report 2012, Pakistan has only 28% of its women in practical fields whereas the remaining 78% are housewives (The working women of Pakistan, 2013).

No doubt, the efforts and struggles of working women are acknowledgeable because they manage their offices and homes simultaneously but that does not mean housewives are not doing anything. Unfortunately, it is not the only perception of the Pakistani society towards housewives but that of the whole world that if women sit at home; the talent of half of the society will be killed. According to many viewpoints, making a happy home is not sufficient execution of talent instead a woman has much more to do to prove her worth (Our greatest waste of talent is women 1961, p. 64).

These viewpoints basically prove that working at home is of no worth and the time housewives spent in working at home is less valuable as compared to the time their male counterparts spent in working outside the home. According to a research, mothers spend nearly twice of father's time in household and domestic work but yet their work go unpaid (Chemaly, 2016). Putting aside monetary devaluation of household, it is ironical that in spite of all of their struggles, they do not enjoy equal status with their male counterparts at home. Gender inequality exists at home because housewives work throughout the day but they are not considered to be the assistants, facilitators or helpers of their male family members (Chemaly, 2016).

This attitude of the society affects housewives in a negative manner because apart from working physically like the men, they have to do a lot of emotional labour all the time. They are expected to attend to their children and husbands with smile and also show no sign of tiredness, whenever they return home. The term 'emotional labour' was coined by a sociologist, Hochschild in 1980 in her book titled, *The managed heart*. Although her analysis was for working women especially flight attendants, child, aged care workers and customer care representatives who have to please their customers by prioritizing them on their internal feelings. They have to work on their facial expressions and manage to smile to everyone as it is a part of their job description (Hochschild, 1980, p. 11).

If Hochschild's concept is applied to housewives, there is no difference between working class ladies and stay-at-women because the former labour emotionally during their duty hours while the latter equally labour emotionally throughout the day. The stay-at-home women, no matter how depressed they are, conceal their feelings when taking care of their children. Also, they wear a cheerful expression not minding the discomfort or surrounding tension whenever the need arises for them to attend to their husbands. This is because these women are expected to create a peaceful and happy home before their husbands who return home after a long and hectic workday.

The stay-at-home women perform their duties usually by choice but one cannot ignore fear as an element in patriarchal societies that force women to hide their feelings before their husbands because they are usually scared of them. In male dominant societies, working ladies may raise eyebrows before their husbands (The Working Women of Pakistan, 2013) but housewives dare not in most cases. So, their emotional investment in work increases along with physical investment because they cannot share their feelings with their male counterparts. They usually make many personal sacrifices to provide help for their families and always believe that it is their duty to provide such services.

Given that the efforts of stay-at-home women are continuously underestimated by their male counterparts or families, they usually develop inferiority complex by thinking that their role at home is not as important compared to that of their husbands at workplace. In a Muslim society, this situation is quite stressful as Islam assigns the job of homemaking to women but does not consider it a lower form of work. Islam does not consider women as housewives because they are not married to the house but rather as homemakers (Naik) because they are the ones who transform the house to a home. According to Islam,

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women may be paid for performing domestic responsibilities by their husbands if they demand. However, the nobility of the task women performs at home prompts some people to argue that they must not be paid for taking care of their families. They add that as humans, women are supposed to play a positive role towards their families and societies ultimately (Al Amalia, 2016).

Objectives of the Study

The following are objectives which the present research is expected to achieve at the end:

1. To understand how tough and demanding the job of a full-time homemaker is;
2. To develop an insight into our societal behaviours regarding the responsibilities and duties performed by housewives; and
3. To throw light on what Islam preaches to be the best job/role for women.

Broad Based Questions

Certain broad-based questions serve as the foundation for the statement of problem in this research. These questions are whether the role of homemaking is of worth acknowledging in its sole capacity or women have to excel in the practical fields along with performing their role of homemaking to get them acknowledged? What does Islam preach regarding duties, jobs and role of women in society? What the mindsets are of people especially males about role of their wives whether they think the services women provides to them are a result of their tireless efforts or they merely underestimate them as they are free for the whole day enjoying dramas and gossips? If the women's role is not acknowledged by their families and husbands, what possible steps may be taken to improve the situation?

METHODOLOGY

The research is wholly qualitative in nature as feelings of housewives or behaviors of their male counterparts cannot be explored, as desired, by going into numbers, figures or quantification. Interpretations of Islamic rulings are analyzed qualitatively for the sake of developing a synthesis for the roles of women preached and appreciated by Islam. Moreover, fifty stay-at-home women are interviewed in order to know their daily schedules and duties they perform throughout the day. The purpose of interviewing them instead of conducting a structured survey is to ask about their feelings when they do not get acknowledgment from their husbands and families for providing them their 24 hours unpaid services. Furthermore, their families are also interviewed to analyze whether they value the contribution of these stay-at-home women or take them for granted by considering what they are doing as duty which they must do. Data is transcribed and analyzed descriptively in order to reach a conclusion. The combination of the data gathered by the aforementioned methods is expected to generate a clear picture of our society and will help to decide whether the role of stay-at-home women towards their families and society is worthy enough to be acknowledged or not?

Limitations of the Study

The following are limitations of this research:

1. There are multiple psychographic and demographic factors like that of education, family background, social status etc. affecting the mindsets of people and situation of housewives. More studies should be conducted in this area in order to determine the cause of this problem, why the problem is like this and the factors responsible for it in the society.
2. The researcher is not an Islamic scholar to interpret Islamic rulings on her own. So, interpretations of the text offered by renown worthy scholars are used for understanding what Islam says about role of housewives as homemakers.

Review of Literature

Most housewives consider themselves less important in their various homes. This is because they are taken for granted and their roles are not always appreciated despite their dutifulness. The most probable reason for this ugly situation is the wrong notion paraded by husbands and family members that all household chores are the sole duty of housewives. This wrong notion has made many husbands and family members not to assist housewives with domestic chores. The continuous work with no vacation or time to take a rest has made housewives to view themselves as maids. In her book, Gregoire argues that nothing can be more hectic than being a mother and wife. According to her, this is so because all work at home is women's work. She adds that all men and women during their upbringing were taught household chores that are for men and women; and they have accepted this demarcation of domestic chores between men and women without first enquiring whether the demarcation exists in reality or it is merely a creation by the society (Gregoire, 2013, p.12).

In her book, Gregoire conducted a survey where she asked couples to provide information regarding the primary work they do. On the basis of the result derived from the survey, she argued that women are the primary organizers of the home. Her basic focus in the book is females who are stay-at-home as mothers or wives. The findings revealed that most of the jobs assigned to females include: laundry (88%), doing dishes (79%), preparing meals (82%), cleaning and washing of floors (85%), vacuuming (78%) and grocery (75%). As part of the findings, 79% of men assist their wives in household repairing and 74% in lawn work. Other jobs performed by men include: deciding on investments (64%) and buying of insurance (63%). Interestingly, opening of an account in bank is also a responsibility of the male which reveals gender imbalance in distribution of work among couples. Women do not only work at home. Other related tasks like paying bills, doing grocery or planning a vacation are also the primary responsibilities of females and as such they can be considered as the one in charge of their houses (Gregoire, 2003, p. 22).

Before launching the revised edition of her book in 2014, Gregoire has written an article in which she describes ten reasons why women feel more like maids even though they play the highly respected roles of wives and mothers. First of them is that they have to do all the domestic chores on their own without seeking for help. Hence, she is of the opinion that women should engage their children in household chores in their young age. The second reason is that they do not ask their husbands to help them even in managing the mess they (their husbands) have created like to place their shoes and clothes in wardrobe or to hang their towel on the stand after taking a bath etc. (Gregoire, 2014).

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Other reasons mentioned in her article include: allowing kids to treat them with condescension, picking up stray items after everybody, rescuing every family member when they are in trouble, over-scheduling themselves and their families, being less organized, doing things on their own instead of allowing others to do them, eating in hurry and thinking of making their children, husbands and families happy as the ultimate goal of their lives (Gregoire, 2014). Apart from identifying the factors affecting housewives negatively, she also offered some solutions to avoid this negativity and help housewives develop a healthy attitude towards life. The crux of her article was that women must fulfill their responsibilities as moms and wives. However, they must not carry every responsibility on their heads and must ask their kids, husbands and families to assist them whenever the need arises.

According to her, women must understand the opportunity cost of the time they spent in managing their kids (Gregoire, 2009b). They must train their kids to clean up their mess in the morning and before going to bed instead of cleaning the rooms for them (Gregoire, 2009a). Moreover, they should involve their kids at dining tables instead of talking to their husbands to avoid wasting their time again in making their kids eat because kids become picky eaters if mom does not give attention to them on dining tables (Gregoire, 2013). All of these attempts are expected to make her life at ease as a housewife because she will get time to manage other things as well and will also not get tired physically for taking too much work load on her.

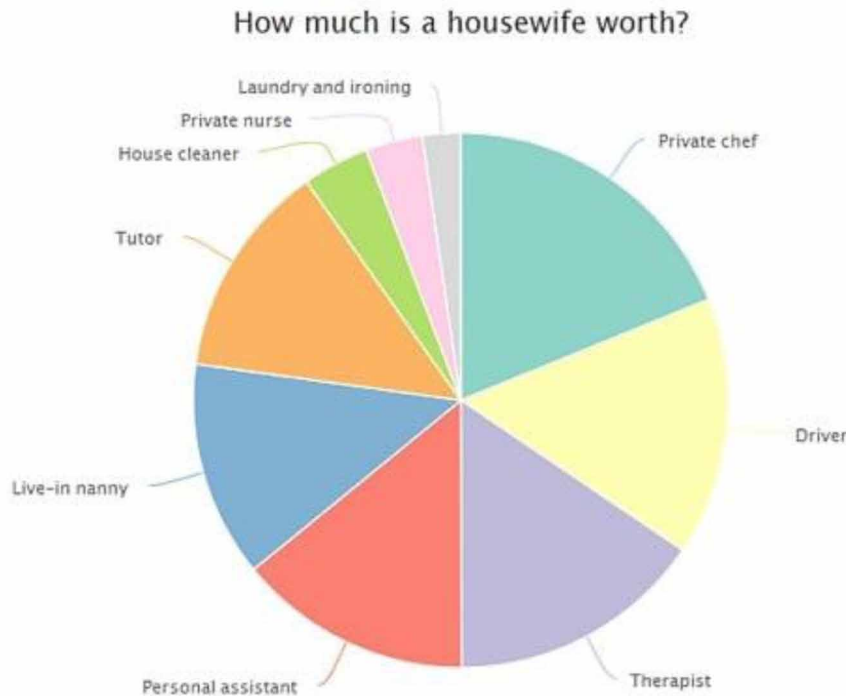
Her analysis is further supported by many other people working in various fields like Gold Hill has presented her analysis that the hardest job is to be a mother and they deserve a highest salary for the services they provide for their families. According to her, if you hire a chauffeur, cook, cleaner, therapist, personal assistant, nurse and laundry man, you will have to pay all of them. But when all of these services are provided by housewives, they usually remain unpaid. She calculated their salary and concluded that a housewife deserves an annual salary of £159,137. In addition, she has also acknowledged that this salary is a vague calculation of all the duties she performs at home but no one can pay for the role of partner and mother as it is priceless. She has presented all of her services in the form of a pie chart to defend her argument on how difficult it is to be a housewife (Goldhill, 2014).

But the problem is if men are willing to pay, they may easily get a maid from any housemaid providing agency. They want a full-time maid with whom they are having a legal license of sex and who is responsible for managing their homes, kids and them too. As in a public speech under a title “why I want wife” Syfers now Judy Brady, published in *Literature for Composition*, has explained why not anyone will want to have a wife. Her speech later became a soul for feminist revelation as she explained men want to have a wife to take care of them, to handle their kids, to be sensitive to their sexual needs and to take care of their social lives. At the end, she reveals the bitter irony of this world by saying whenever that man, for whom a woman has sacrificed her whole life, finds another woman; he simply leaves his previous woman to have a new fresh face to accompany him (Brady as cited in Barnet, Berman, Burto and Stubbs, 1993, pp. 775-776).

Here it is important to consider that men cannot be blamed solely for this situation of stay-in-women instead women are also responsible. Many women also have a desire to get a man with handsome job and salary that can buy them a house and provide them with all of their basic and secondary needs. In return, they accept the dominance of men giving them the authority to take all major decisions about them. This means a transactional relationship may be a choice of a woman too in which she serves her male by providing him a sex partner, managing his homes and producing his children (Brennen, 2013a).

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Figure 1.
 Source: Goldhill (2014)



Finally, in developing a synthesis, it is condemnable to impose on a woman to be a housewife. It is a matter of her free-choice whether she wants to stay at home or work outside home and wants husbands' cooperation in managing households (Brennan, 2001). But in our society, this freedom is restricted and women have to stick to the orders of their male family members. Many of the women especially housewives are treated so terribly because of unrealistic expectations of their husbands. It is the responsibility of a man to encourage, appreciate and acknowledge his wife for providing him her services instead of treating her as a maid or merely a sex partner (Brennen, 2013b).

Islamic Perspective on the Role of Housewives as Homemakers

Before going in depth into the role of housewives, it is important to understand that in Islam there are basically two types of rulings. The first is a binding rule that makes any order an obligation and necessitates the people to perform an act if allowed by the rule or refrain from such act if prohibited. However, the second type of rule does not compel the people to do or not do something. This rule simply explains what Allah likes or dislikes. In this case, a person is not prevented or compelled to do something. This means that such a person is given the privilege to make a choice or take a decision about the rule. This type of ruling is called 'allowed' in which a person may decide whether he wants to do something as it is liked by Allah or not and the opposite case is called 'preferable' or 'detested' in which case Allah wishes a person not to do something but does not forbid him from doing it (Fadlallah, 2016).

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In terms of rulings, housework falls under the second category. What this implies is that no relative of a woman like father, brother or husband may legitimately compel her to manage household and domestic work before marriage or after marriage. This also means that women may voluntarily take the responsibility of managing their house but they are not obligated to do so by Allah. If the household is not compulsory, that does not mean that women are supposed to work outside the home in order to share the economic burden with their male partners. This totally depends on mutual consensus between married couples who are to decide their roles on how to manage their family in a proper way. Islam acknowledges and appreciates the participation of women in supporting their families and making the home a happy place to live in. To avoid any burden on the woman, Islam has not made it obligatory for her to work both at home and outside the home (Fadlallah, 2016).

This is so because in the struggle for making a home and providing for the kids and husbands, women may not lose their connection with Allah unknowingly. They take care of homes, rear their kids on the paths of righteous and offer their services to their husbands. For all of these accomplishments, they are guaranteed a better reward by Allah. If they cannot extend their work outside the homes with all of these duties, they must not underestimate them as they are fully understood by Allah and will be rewarded for their struggles at home (Khan).

This means that the act of homemaking especially motherhood is highly dignified and appreciated in the eyes of Allah. He has created women to be mothers and educators who are responsible for shaping the whole society. Being almost half of the total strength of society, they are given the noble cause of preserving ethics, nurturing moralities and ensuring wellbeing of the future generations (Al Qazwini, 2001, p. 21). Although in our era, the role of homemaking and motherhood is considered demeaning but according to Islam there is no shame or humiliation in becoming a homemaker. Nothing can be more respectful than nurturing a family because the house is the basic foundation for every child and a mother is the one who trains the child at home. No one can compensate a mother for her compassionate role. This is because a child continuously looks up to the mother, imbibes her traits and absorbs the beauty of her character. So, being a mother is something highly precious and demanding (Al Qazwini, 2001, p. 21).

But that does not mean women are solely responsible for household and parenting as men and women are supposed to share domestic responsibilities equally. According to the Prophet of Allah both of them are like shepherds driving their families. Hazrat Aishah, his beloved wife, explained that the Holy Prophet used to mend his shoe, and if his clothes were torn, he used to patch and sew them. Although he was messenger of Allah, he never considered himself superior to other human beings. He lived his life like an ordinary man. He never minded milking his sheep, taking care of his clothes or serving himself (Al Khyat, 2003, p. 10). This means that the concept of homemaking in an Islamic society is characterized by a home developed by love, affection and mutual consensus. Both husband and wife have to discuss their family matters and share their opinion with each other in a reasonable manner to reach a conclusion (Al Khyat, 2003, p. 10).

A support to the above argument is offered by the Quran in a way that it describes husband and wives as one another's clothes. Nothing can be closer to one's body than his/her clothes. This closer connection may also be reflected in the relationship between husband and wife. This simile is not only because of the closer connection but also the resemblance in the usefulness of clothes to the human body. For example, they insulate the body from hot or cold weather, conceal any imperfection in the body as well as beautifying it. Same is expected of two persons in a marriage relationship where each other are to provide assistance, facilitation and protection to their partners throughout their lives (Amini, 2011). This is how Islam strengthens the respect and regard in a very decent way between husband and wife.

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So, from the above discussion it may be concluded that it is a wrong perception about Islam that it undermines women by restricting them to their homes. In fact, Islam is a universal religion that has a better understanding of the demands and needs of all of the creations of this world. Islam does grant the responsibility of household to women but she is neither slave nor employee of her husband. In fact, she is the queen of her house who has complete authority on what is happening inside her house. She is allowed to experiment all of her abilities like management skills, hospitality, artistic sense, creative and aesthetic expertise in her house. From the foregoing, it is expected that good husbands should acknowledge, appreciate and respect their wives for all the services they provide at home (Kamoonpuri).

The foregoing discourse implies that those in the society who have developed a wrong perception of housewives as women who are uneducated, economically inactive, dependent on her husband, backward, unable to cope up with demands of modern society and menial are absolutely thinking on wrong lines. Thus, the image of housewives is created by western world who only explore the material potential of people ignoring the moral, emotional and social potential offered by them for their beloved ones. According to Islam, a housewife is a colleague of her spouse. The matter to be realized is that she is equal in status but her endeavours are different from him (Kamoonpuri).

Analysis of Interview Data

This study interviewed fifty housewives in order to understand what they think about the attitude of male members of their family towards them. Most of the respondents interviewed claimed that their husbands regard them as housewives who derelict the duties they are meant to perform at homes. They added that though their husbands care for them, they are never bothered when they (housewives) are tired as a result of their endless work during the day. Speaking further, the respondents stated that their husbands want to be attended to in due time and a minor mistake may incur their wrath. A few of the women opined that their husbands acknowledged the fact that they work all day and do not go on vacation.

As regard the attitude of family members towards housewives, a significant difference was observed between housewives living with extended families and those living with nuclear families. The former complained about their incessant maltreatment by their family members especially if their sister-in-law is a working woman. According to them, in-laws only recognized the routines of working women. They do not acknowledge the efforts of housewives even when they can attest to their dutifulness. Sisters-in-law who work are allowed some time to rest when they return from workplace but the reverse is the case with housewives.

On the contrary, the situation is different for housewives living in a nuclear family setting where they only have to deal with their husbands and children. In this relationship, there is a natural feeling of love and respect. If a husband scolds his wife, he tries to praise her on some other side. Same is the case for children. Pakistani society is a value-oriented society where children cannot even think of letting their moms down. Although some of the women complain about the misbehaviour of their husbands, they acknowledge that if they can manage and organize their homes well, their husbands will feel happy and satisfied.

The difference is also noticed in the feelings of women who voluntarily stay at home as housewives and those who are forced to sit at home. Women in the former category are happier in the sense that they love to stay at home and keep themselves busy with homemaking. This does not mean that they are dull or incompetent. The only thing is that they are best suited for the home environment by considering it a best suited job for themselves. These housewives are also expert in multitasking as they rear their kids,

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keep their homes well-organized and manage their husbands' temperaments comfortably. They are of the opinion that staying at home is not in any way less respectable than working outside home. They nurture their abilities by doing their best for their families.

However, women in the latter category are compelled to fit into the role of homemaker which is not best suited for them. As mentioned earlier, Pakistani society is patriarchal in nature and many men impose their choices on their female family members by considering them their property. These ladies want to work but the role of homemaking is assigned to them forcefully by their families and they have to make themselves believe that it is the only best choice for them if they want to live a happy married life. Many of the housewives, who fall into this category, say that they have sacrificed their pleasures and choices just to make their families happy but they are neither happy internally nor are they able to make their families happy.

One of the housewives during her interview said that being married does not mean being subordinate to anyone. She stated that women must have a choice of deciding for themselves and that their husbands or in laws should not be the one to decide whether they should work fulltime or parttime. Speaking further, she noted that women have the right to decide what is best for them on the basis of their strengths and that it seems very lucrative to their husbands that they sit at home all day to fix wonderful meals, care for the children and perform other domestic chores. However, this, according to her, may seem like hell to most women to waste all their abilities in providing those services which a housemaid may even provide. In all, she observed that everyone is born with a different temperament and nature and that should a woman be compelled to live a life that is in contradiction with it, it becomes very difficult for her to cope. In most of these types of cases, housewives are sad rather than been cheerful when performing their duties.

The reason behind the discontentment of these ladies is the lack of acknowledgement of the duties they perform at homes. One of the housewives said that she had been working as a manager in an office before marriage. She had to work a lot throughout the day. After marriage, she had to quit the job because of the long schedule and routine. Now, she bears too much workload compared to when she was a manager. As if this is not enough, her husband returns home from office and accused her of staying idle all the day. Most probably you have watched a morning show and then just fixed a meal. "You spend the rest of the day in gossiping on telephone with your friends about sales on brands and deals in restaurants."

The lady said that she will not complain that it is frustrating to be a housewife. She added that it seems to her that she is not a housewife but a housemaid who is expected to work for the whole day and at the end receive insults from her employer. To avoid such frustration, she spends maximum time in reading books because it gives her immense pleasure and also help her escape from her daily routine. She regretfully expressed that she had to quit her job because of lack of cooperation from her husband's side. He has never cooperated with her. What he often does after returning from work is to scold her for every single mismanagement by saying that she left her brain in the office or she does not know how to manage a home etc.

She was of the opinion that Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) never hesitated in doing any domestic work and also helped his wives when they needed; she does not understand why the people claiming to be his followers are so insensitive and ignorant about the rights of their women. The distinction between the work done by male and female is self-created by society and not preached by Islam. We must advise our sons and brothers never to consider their wives as their subordinates whenever they get married but rather as helpmates that will assist them in running the family smoothly.

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CONCLUSION

On the basis of the interview conducted and data analysis of various texts available regarding Islamic preaching, it may be concluded that the duty of housewives is same as that of the working women. However, the problem is that the society generally devalues the roles performed by housewives in the homes. In the course of devaluing the roles of housewives, people usually forget their contributions to the societies which include making homes the best places to live in. Home is the foundation stone for the whole society and if it is built on proper grounds, it will eventually shape the whole society. So, the efforts of those who make houses to become homes must not be undermined by stigmatizing them as coward and less-empowered.

The problem has become even intense with the rising popularity of feminist ideas, women empowerment and individual rights. This is because advocates of the aforementioned thoughts consider housewives as low esteemed ladies who failed to dream big like their male counterparts. After analyzing the situation, it is discovered that people usually believe that ideal women are the ones who do not rely on men for their needs; these women enjoy successful career and healthy family relations. On the other side of the spectrum, the poor housewives are perceived by the modern society as “Damsel in distress” because they depend on their husbands for all their needs and waste their lives in raising their children.

This situation is quite disturbing especially in a Muslim society where women are expected to enjoy a respectful life of their own choice. This is so because Islam recognizes the difference between both genders and expects them to perform their best within their own domains. The reverence Islam accords to women who are mother, sister, daughter and wife is remarkable though the problem is that the followers of Islam are unable to interpret this reverence properly because they want housewives to cope with the modern standards of society set by western world. So, there is a need to educate the people and make them realize what is the best lifestyle preached by their religion and admired by Allah. If people will try to understand Islam properly, they will not let their housewives down by considering them non-functional members of society.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of this research, the following recommendations are made for the improvement of the situation of housewives in society:

1. There is the need to work on the mindset of people in the society as well as sensitize them about the importance of the duties of housewives. This will greatly aid in rectifying the erroneous notion that the society has about the insignificance of housewives in the homes.
2. Housewives should also be sensitized about the indispensability of their roles in the home. This will help them to jettison the thought of inferiority complex or sense of guilt that may arise as a result of not belonging to the working class. In all, it will open their eyes to the worthy contribution which they make towards the society by giving it a responsible generation.

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Chapter 18

Philosophical Mediation Between Patriarchal Theory and Feminism: A Reflection on Igbo Society

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ABSTRACT

Legal dissolutions of traditional rights phenomenon and the constitutional elevations of gender neutrality have stirred deep argument within contemporary societies. The cultural Igbo society takes the lead to insist that rights systems are inherent because nature assigned certain rights to each gender of which men have superior rights while rights accruable to women are limited, and inferior. This delineates systematically patriarchal rights which are thereof eternally proactive, culturally endorsed, ontologically certified, religiously approved, and politically acceptable. Recent events show that a manifestation of male dominance over women is the gross restriction of women's legitimate right to power and possession. It is on this premise that the study argues that though there are cultural evidence of gender roles and biological differences do not mean that a particular gender is superior, more powerful, or should enjoy higher rights than the other. The study tends to promote gender neutrality which is subjected to criticisms for further research.

INTRODUCTION

The inception of feministic movement of whose concept originates from the French noun 'féminisme' in nineteenth century has limited the cultural autocracy of patriarchy (Lawrence, 2004). Prior to the movement, the rights of women were completely caged in the prison of culture. Women were forced to accept that they are only 'a second' to men and as such, have limited rights (Aguzie, Umunakwe & Akaire, 2020). This supports an affirmative action which claim that the primary role of a woman is to produce children for the husband, provide physical and emotional care to the family and take care

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of domestic affairs while the man exacts absolute control of the entire family. By this, roles delineate rights exacted over a period of time. In the history of philosophy, discrimination against women on the basis of gender runs through the classical era down to the contemporary period. Scholars in their diverse philosophic works show societal sentiments on the status of women in every epoch. During the ancient period, women were denied access from social mainstream like politics, education, joining certain groups, participating in general affairs. Male members of every family were direct heirs in matters of inheritance and succession. Women were oppressed and marginalized during the ancient era because ancient societies particularly the Greeks consider women to be deceitful, serpentine, and also caused the downfall of men. Granting them any modicum of independence however will be more disastrous to the entire world (Meehan, 2017). Lefkowitz & Fant (1992) recount Medea (431 BC)'s complaint about the state of women in Athens, Greece:

Of all creatures who live and have intelligence, we women are the most miserable. . . . People say that we women lead a life without danger inside our homes, while men fight in war; but they are wrong. I would rather serve three times in battle than give birth once.

Medea's complaint shows that the democratic freedom of the classical Greek polis is not meant for women rather their rights are imprisoned by the authority of men - fathers or husbands. Negligence of domestic duties by women attract much consequences both legally and socially while violence or exploitation against women are not punishable. These mirror ancient patriarchal society where women possess no right at all or have fewer rights/roles when compared to male rights.

Sentiments on the status of women in the medieval early and modern era are believed to base on tradition stemming from classical thoughts. Though opinions are divided concerning the status of women but the underlined story of the original sin (the event of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden) make women to be considered inferior to men, morally weaker and likely to tempt men into more sins. Merry (1993) reveals what Jacques Cujas, a medieval misogynist says that: "A woman, properly speaking, is not a human being." This shows that the status of women in that era fall between the level of a servant and an animal. Describing certain set of laws like rights to inheritance, capability to own or manage property and appearance in court as both complaint or defendant in old Roman Empire which limits women's activities in the medieval period, Amy (2001) informs that the society structures it in such a way that any unmarried woman should have a male guardian that will control her inheritance or property and also to represent her during a court proceeding. With interruptions in feudal practices and new kingdoms joining their legal code with the Roman code of law, unmarried women and widows began to represent themselves, of which they lose again during the early modern period. Married women are deprived of holding any public office because such might result them to act independently of their husbands' wishes, leading to disobedience. Again, married women are not allowed to neither sue nor make contracts without the approval of the husband, nor could she be sued or charged with a civil crime. While women are limited by the legal system and excluded from even participating in it, they are also protected by it. One legal protection a woman has then is the marriage contract which allows a woman to keep legal control of her dowry and grant certain inheritance rights. These inheritance rights allow a woman to also possess a certain amount of the deceased husband's property until her death, which then reverted to his heirs. Generally, during the medieval era, women are subjected to diverse domestic responsibilities like caring for children, preparing food, and tending livestock. Women also join their husbands in the farm for both planting and harvesting. The subjugations of women are also revealed in the doctrines of world ancient

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religions. According to Qur'an 4:34, "men are the protectors and maintainers (qawwamun) of women because Allah has given men more strength than the women and because they support them from their means..." The Holy Bible in the book of Ephesians 6:21-24 affirms the authority of man over a woman. Ethnographers and scientists are not left-out even because through biological and cultural histories, women are considered separate human species from men. Generally, gender inequality revolves around gender roles with men holding the majority of the skilled and supervisory work in the society and women in the unskilled and subservient jobs.

Previous affirmatives on gender differences anchor on gender roles which transpired into gender inequality beginning from the family and streamlined to the entire society. Hooks (2000) writes that:

Gender inequality commonly revolves around three meanings: first, men usually experience better opportunities, more freedom, and higher social regard than women who share the same social characteristics (such as class origins, race, nationality, and age); second, men usually hold sway in marriages and other direct relationships between genders; and third, men occupy a preponderance of the social positions that possess significant political, economic, legal, or cultural power. (p. 49)

In a patriarchal society, a man is typically referred as the epitome of human being while the woman is an unfortunate imitation of, appendages to, or even curses upon the male norm. The tenet behind patriarchal theory is systematically rooted in the hypothesis that male and female are created through the erotization of dominance and submission. This is supported with the thesis that nature made woman a weaker sex in both intellect and body (Aristotle, 2001). The enlightenment period awakens the consciousness that human society is a social organization in which men and women contribute for the welfare of the society. Onwunali-Ugo (2012) avers that:

Men and women comprise the human society. As such they are assigned different roles, responsibilities, obligation, rights, etc, according to their ages, classes, sexes, creeds, local customs, traditions rather than mental capacities. (p. 67)

Social organisation defines the society which is sustained through theories that promote equal rights. These theories manifest through the principles of feminism which imagine a world where all genders are equal. By this, women like their male partners, can realise their potentials as individuals both in the family and the wider community. By this, feminism demands for a reverse on the perverse practices hold against 'today women' which kept them far from accessing their power/decision as it exists in the Igbo society. In this study, a thorough philosophical analysis was made to establish a common ground which hold that both men and women are entitled to an equal footing to the full protection of their rights, enjoy every basic necessity of life and demonstrate the will to power because they are human beings. Significantly, this study will benefit the entire human who will understand that right systems are inherent value only to rational beings who order and manage social organisation. By this, men and women belong to the category of rational beings. The rationale behind this study is to deconstruct patriarchal practices prevalent in the Igbo Society. The study is limited to the epistemological disarray existing between patriarchal ideologies and feminist movement.

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Statement of the Problem

The principle of duality of 'the Same One' and 'the Other One' such as day-night, sun-moon, good-evil, rain-fire, right-left is the lens through which cultural societies classify human gender to be either male or female. This principle intensifies that certain species are superior to the other and at the same time have unlimited privilege than the other. To this effect, a particular human gender is assumed to possess unlimited rights more than the other as decorated in patriarchal theory. The Igbo society is a good example of a structurally organised patriarchal society where men are deemed superior to women. Gender identities and relations are critical aspects of Igbo culture which influence the manner right systems are meted in the family and in the wider community. Thus, the Igbo society is a class society structured in hierarchical patriarchal relations with gender roles and differences acting as pivotal forces.

Discriminatory practices against women are linked in the manner most societies celebrate men as being unique, stronger and fit for the public space while subjecting women to the state of being feeble, weak, breeders of children and their rightful place in the family is the kitchen (Agbalajobi, 2010). Salam (2003) declares that:

Tradition or culture and religion have dictated men and women relationship for centuries and entrenched male domination into the structure of social organization and institution at all levels of leadership. Patriarchy justifies the marginalization of women in education, economy, labour market, politics, business, family, domestic matters and inheritance. (p. 19)

These chauvinistic feelings control the attitudes, mentalities, perceptions and behaviours of the Igbo society causing the relegation of women to low status. The consequences of this daily feeling culminate into gender inequality and various forms of domestic violence. These actions are common in the Igbo society - wife battery, denial of self-expression, denial of right to association, childhood marriage, female genital mutilation, violence from in-laws, violence from sexual relationship, antagonism because of sex of new-born child, exploitation, attitudes and degrading traditional practices like widowhood rites and denial of female education (Alokan, 2013). There are reported cases of husbands killing and maiming their wives. On May 27, 2022, Vanguard Newspaper reports that Federal Government of Nigeria gave 23-count charges against the husband of late popular gospel artist, Osinachi, who died after an alleged prolonged assault by her spouse, Peter Nwachukwu. There are other cases of daily abuse against women that are awaiting trial. Igbo patriarchal culture seems to support physical, verbal, sexual, psychological and emotional control in which women are valued less than men. This does not really mean that women are not entitled to rights rather their rights are caged by the dictates of culture.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Patriarchy

At its inception, patriarchy is used to describe the power of the father as head of household but later, it is used to state the systematic organization of male supremacy and female subordination. Andrienne (2017) defines patriarchy as:

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A familial - social, ideological, political system in which men by force, direct pressure or through ritual, tradition, law, and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labour, determine what part women shall or shall not play in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male. (pp. 76-77)

By this, the theory of patriarchy supports men to hold full rights (leadership activities) while the rights of women are channelled towards domestic affairs. It promotes gender inequality - male domination over female in every matter - social, religious, political, economic and otherwise. According to Aina (1998), patriarchal society “sets the parameters for women’s structurally unequal position in families and markets by condoning gender-differential terms in inheritance rights and legal adulthood” (p. 95). Critics feel that wrong application of patriarchy leads to gender discrimination, biasness, inequality, and male preferential treatment.

Gender and Sex

Gender is not synonymous with sex but both portray anatomical and cultural differences between men and women (Angelica-Nicoleta, 2015). Sex simply delineates a biological concept which is permanent and it is an individual ownership while gender is a social construct determined by genetics and biology, produced or reproduced by society. It is also a social and relational quality generated through cultural practices where personal identity is fixed by social prescriptions which make individuals become a certain type [Express is not complete] (Anghel, 2010).

Philosophical Preview of Human Rights

The notion of right has been an influential discussion in every philosophic epoch. Etymologically, the word ‘right’ is derived from the Latin word ‘rectus’ and this has gained a number of meanings depending on the situation. For example, in the language of law, rights mean moral, ethical entitlements which need to be conferred and exercised as framed by an authority of law. Rights here are legitimate claims that a person (X) makes, or presses upon another person (Y) that: (i) constrain the fashion in which Y may permissibly treat X, and (ii) entail correlative obligations on the part of (X). Achilihu (2006) states that while exercising a right, a person has a just, genuine, constitutional and valid claim to, what he believes in, and is accruable to him or her. From its objective sense, right is described as just actions that individuals have to discharge to maintain harmonious relationships between themselves.

Greek philosophers were the first to formally introduce the idea of human rights but they limited these for the few only. Among all expressions of rights, the whole statement about human rights entails that they are special class of rights - fundamental, inherent and moral rights of the highest order. They embrace all those civil, political, economic, social, cultural, groups, solidarity and developmental rights or privileges which are considered inalienable and indispensable to a meaningful human existence. Human rights are the direct expression of the dignity of the human person since an individual has inherent inviolable rights and any attempt to deny a human any or all of his fundamental rights renders such a person less than a human being. It is worthy of note that the constitutions do not create human rights rather, they only declare and preserve them. A right confers certain liberties or privileges and imposes duties upon individuals to exercise while claiming their rights. The 1946 Universal Declaration of Human Rights intensifies the inherent value of human person irrespective of the sex/gender.

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Background to Feminist Movement

Historically, feministic movement is relayed in three temporal waves. The First Wave occurred between 19th and 20th centuries that involve some of the feminine liberty foremothers such as Elizabeth Candy Stanton and Matilda Joslyn Gage who in their campaign for divorce laws defended the rights of women. In that period, the rights of women were legally locked in Iroquois laws around 1200 and 1500 A.D before the U.S. Constitution which guaranteed that a man should provide for his family on pain of banishment. Again, under the laws, system of election authorised women to choose their governmental representative among eligible men. At first, Iroquois Constitution was not written down rather orally passed down with five original participating groups known also as Confederacy of the Five Nations: Mohawk, Onondaga, Seneca, Oneida and Tuscarora. However, the first wave of feminism took place in America. The Second Wave of feminism took place around 20th century specifically between 1960 and 1990. This second wave according to Rampton (2008) is distinct from the first wave because it comprises women of diverse racial backgrounds who feel the emancipations of women as a class struggle. The passage of Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, the formation of the National Organisation for Women, passage of Title IX in the Education Amendment of 1972, the *Roe v. Wade* decision, and the publication of *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan are some of the results of this wave. The Third Wave is a timeframe from 1990's till date championed by postcolonial and postmodern theories which pauses every constraining boundary of gender inequalities caused by the previous waves.

Theoretical Context of Feminism

The opinions of thinkers on feminism are divided. Some develop from and elaborate on each other while few are in a strict opposition to others. Tong (2009) representing the liberal school of thoughts argues that the “society has a false belief that women are by nature less intellectually and physically capable than men” (p. 2). This discards the tenets of patriarchal society because it fuses sex and gender together, making only those jobs that are associated with the traditionally feminine appropriate for women to pursue. Thus, liberal theory campaigns for equal chances between men and women in all civic matters. Radical feminists present a contrast view that the liberal idea is not quite convincing to address the individual, institutional, and systemic oppression which have ensued for centuries against women. To this school, there is nothing wrong with femininity rather the low value patriarchy assigns to feminine qualities. It becomes that if the society places a higher value on feminine qualities, then there will be lesser gender cruelties and brutalities. Feminism theories, however, are principally built on fact that:

1. Women have something valuable to contribute to every aspect of the world;
2. As an oppressed group, women have been unable to achieve their potential, receive rewards, or gain full participation in the society; and
3. Feminist research should do more than critique, but should work toward social transformation (Ropers-Huilman, 2003).

Feminism does not disclaim that there is a natural normality which makes differences at biological level likewise there is a cultural normality which is linked by what is naturally in a certain culture rather, it seeks for equality and draws attention to socio-cultural perception that women are wrongly included

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in the category of ‘the Other One’, ‘the Object’ and characterized in relation to the man, who is ‘the Subject,’ ‘the Absolute.’

Notion of Patriarchal Rights in the Cultural Igbo Society

1. Igbo people

To identify the Igbo people is to use the process of elimination to illustrate the category of people that conform to that category. People whose roots through and through are in Igbo involve those born in Igboland and of Igbo parents, whether grew up, nurtured, domiciled in or out of Igbo soil, and have drunk deep into the values, styles, and systems prevailing in Igboland. Geographically, Igbo community is dominantly located at the South-Eastern part of Nigeria in West Africa. It comprises states such as Imo, Anambra, Enugu, Abia and Ebonyi which lay between latitude 5 to 6 degrees north, and longitude 6.1 to 8.5 degrees east covering an area of approximately 16,000 square miles that has borders on the East with the Ibibio people, West with Bini and Warri people, North with the Idomas and South with the Ijaws and the Ogoni. Igbo society also extends to parts of the Mid-Western and Delta Regions of Nigeria. People usually feel that all persons speaking Igbo language and all occupants of South-Eastern region of Nigeria geographically are all Igbo people. Eze-Uzoamaka (2011) writes that, the word ‘Igboland’ “is a collective word for the towns that speak Igbo language ...they generally occupy the Southern Eastern part of Nigeria” (p. 11). Sum together, this defined who is an Igbo. Igbo society has so many identical cultures which among them is the culture of patriarchy.

2. System of patriarchal rights

Patriarchy is a crucial institution in Igbo culture that signal a very strong feeling for male dominance over female. By this, the notion that women are unsuited to, and incapable of, certain roles is so deeply fixed in the mentality of the average Igbo and also reflects in the cultural practices. Traditional Igbo community is structured in a way that a woman is born into a culture of male supremacy; the male is deemed superior to the female irrespective of differences – age, intelligent quotient, economic prowess, level of social exposures, while the female remains a subject to the male. Thus, men are undisputedly the head of every family with the supposition that their wives (in cases of married people) are part of their property. Ojukwu (2015) states that much intensity of gender sentiment in Igbo society influences male gender to see themselves as superior gender over the female and as such, males feel stronger, more important and indispensable, while the females are trained to see themselves as weaker sexes or even as appendages to the male folks. Women thereof, become objects and commodities whose sole responsibility revolves around domestic matters: to be good and moral wives, produce children, take care of their husbands and assist financially in some cases, protect their children and support the household through farming, marketing, and trading (Anyalebechi: 2016, Agujiobi: 2020). Chuku (2013) adds that:

Everything about her socialization as a girl was built around marriage and procreation. The girl was taught how to cook and provide domestic services to her husband. She was also trained in her mother’s trade or sent away as an apprentice to learn other trades that would enable her take care of her children when the time comes. (p. 272)

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Women in the cultural Igbo are compelled to be obedient and submissive to their husbands on whom they must depend for their self-fulfillment and protection. Their effectiveness as wives and mothers earns for them the society's assessment. This cultural expression of women provides the society with the inherited transmissible code of conduct as both part and function of the complex whole. By this, women are restrained from exercising and possessing certain rights. Further, women are excluded in core societal issues. Apart from aesthetical purposes, ability to perform chores and as objects of sexual satisfaction, women have no defined cultural value in the Igbo society. Achebe (1956) illustrates statuses of women in his description of a traditional Igbo ceremony when he says that: "it was clear from the way the crowd sat that the ceremony was for men, there were many women, but they looked on from the fringe like outsiders" (p. 87). In a similar vein, the Nollywood movie with the title: 'Battle of Musanga' directed by Bolaji Dawodu shows the cultural position of women in Igbo setting. The Igbo culture also makes women ignorant to formal educational system. They are to remain silent in political affairs of the community - they cannot be elected as village head or decide what will become laws in the society. Women cannot be crowned as 'eze' or 'aku' (traditional prime minister). Though women belong to social group but this group is not politically recognised just like the male groups. Women depend on their husbands for means of livelihood, and other essential needs. They are restrained from eating certain kinds of foods and any violation of such becomes a taboo or an abomination. For instance, in the cultural Igbo society, it is a sacrilege for a woman to eat gizzard, coconut head, drink last portion of wine from the wine keg, amongst others. Women are often refrained from involving in certain cultural ritual practices such as breaking of kola-nuts, blessings of lands, climbing, wearing of masquerades, entering the shrine, etc. Women have no right for direct inheritance of their fathers' property such as lands instead, only their male counterparts have such right of bequest. In matters of land portioning or sharing, women are culturally restricted from making any contributions since inheritance of properties are only meant for the male members of the family. It is this lack of legitimacy to possess certain rights that is responsible for the poor participation of Igbo women in certain functions resulting in their being far less visible in societal affairs than the men.

Patriarchy and Feminism: A Philosophical Mediation

Basing right differences on pedagogical claims alone – gender status, accounts by religions, traditions, biological compositions/development might be illogical in relaying exercises on human rights. Though common experience shows that nature assigns different roles to each gender but inherent value ought to be pivotal in initiating right systems of which the Igbo culture even has a reward system that recognised both female and male particularly those who excelled in the sphere of their femininity and masculinity respectively. Division of labour has structured the society in such a way that every gender has equal rights to deploy the available talents, skills and resources for the welfare of the society. Women like their male counterpart possess forcefulness of character, economic prowess, and other obvious potentials that count them inseparable from social organization. This is the reason feminism tends to end autonomy from any subordination or dominant masculine models, inequality of power among gender, subordinated position of women in family and society, undervaluation of women roles in social stratification and employment. Feminism for Hardiman, Jackson and Griffin (2010) support the defence of the feminine gender from individual, institutional and societal/cultural oppressions. Hooks (2000) adds that it "is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression" (p. 8). However, feminism assures women's empowerment, female identity, and potentialities, gender neutrality, social justice and active collabora-

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tion which oversee gender roles, biological sex, gender identity and expression. Pedagogies - religious tenets, philosophic reasoning, societal cultures that construed the principles of duality - 'the Same One' and 'the Other One' - man-woman ended up recreating gender stereotypes. For examples, ancient world religions teach that divinity takes masculine form. By this, the gender of God is believed to be 'male'. The Christian Bible is written mostly by men while women only contributed 1.1% of the total authors. The same Christian Bible instructs that women should obey men and also be quiet in the church (1 Corinthians 14:34-35). In all, women cannot hold certain offices or serve as heads according to the doctrines of these religions. In philosophy, the likes of Aristotle, Immanuel Kant and Jean Jacques Rousseau who in their various philosophical dispositions hold that women are rationally inferior. By expansion, they believe that the will to reason belongs to men only; men have higher Intelligent Quotient (IQ) compared to women. Obviously, these philosophies contain no factual connection between possessing reason and gender inequality. Thinkers state categorically that reason is only associated to class of beings known as human - the composition of male and female only. Reason separates human beings from brutes and it is also the only parameter to determine classes of human beings. Godlaski (2007) clarifies this when he affirms that, "men and women are the same because both have capacity for reason and that the disparities are based on culture not on ability" (p. 3). Women are calculative and assertive just like every rational being so being physically or anatomically different does not depicts either being superior or inferior in reasoning. This is exactly what feminism is projecting.

The Igbo cultural preference of maleness syndrome signals unfair treatment to feminine gender. Ojukwu and Ibekwe (2020) insist that the adoption of patriarchal system in everything usually results to the marginalization, stereotyped and humiliation of female gender in various ways and also have negative impacts such as depression, physical disability and even death. In a study conducted at Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe, Anambra State, an eastern region in Nigeria, Ezejiolor (2012) finds that, as a result of the established maleness culture and patriarchal society in Anambra state, power and authority are disproportionately held by men. Subsequently, women are subjugated and relegated by men to secondary roles in the socio-cultural and economic matrix of Anambra state. Hence, women's abilities to control and manage themselves, including their decisions in this area is determined by the cultural dictates. Gender inequality heightens the rejection tensions among women making them to continuously feel that men are supreme and as subservient partners in the relationships (Ezejiolor, 2012). These cultural feelings influence women's low status and lack of assertiveness as well as limited opportunities to viable economic threshold and other enabling resources.

The assumption that women are inferior with restrained rights is inappropriate because women constitute about half of the population. They play vital roles as mothers, producers, community developers/organizers, managers, and educators (Makama, 2013), considering that the rights of men alone cannot sustain the family even in the so-called Igbo patriarchal society. Family development and societal growth are rightly in the custody of women. For example, in the Igbo families, the man (husband) sees the wife as a helpmate, a symbol of peace and progress, an icon of joy, an adviser, companion and manager. In matters of management, the husband places his whole property in the custody of the wife and this grants the wife traditional titles like 'odozie aku' – one that safeguards wealth, 'oso-di-achi' - one that governs along with the husband, among others. Women are proactive in areas of fostering the economy; they assist their husbands in agricultural activities such as farming, rearing/owning of domestic animals, planting of economic trees (plantain, osisi ukwa- breadfruit tree, orange, mango,). Women also play supportive roles such as giving useful advice for the growth of the family, look after their children, and sedate the husbands when emotionally troubled. Among all, women are deemed channels that con-

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nect their husbands with their children and extended relatives. In fact, the value of women cannot be over-emphasised in the family because women relate in over 99% of family affairs. The birth of social contract through international conventions, protocols and treaties have cleared the prejudices covering inequality of rights irrespective of one's gender. Though that Igbo cultural practices oversee the male as the head does not really connote that one gender is more powerful or superior than the other rather both male and female gender are valuable - each have assigned tasks needed for human survival. These assigned responsibilities delineate and limit each gender's rights in the society. Men and women have equal civic rights because both are endowed with reason. Equality does not mean assigning masculine features to woman, but recognition of specific features, without undervaluing comparisons. By this, no gender has unrestrained rights.

Legal Protections for the Rights of Women

Various international human rights charters, treaties, laws, declarations and protocols take the lead to make elaborate provisions for the equal rights of every person irrespective of gender. For instance, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Article 1 states that: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." The declaration still in Article 2 holds that: "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty." Rights such as equality before the law, right to non-discrimination, freedom from torture and ill-treatment, rights to equal protection of the law, freedom from arbitrary deprivation of liberty, right to private life, amongst others become the fundamental and inalienable human rights (Umunakwe, 2023). By this, on no account shall anyone be deprived of any fundamental rights provided that the constitution sanctions such rights. With the collapse of patriarchal power after the Second World War, after the international communities through the processes of inter-culturalism, transculturalism, multiculturalism, globalization, fundamental rights agitation, and movement for gender neutrality tend to maintain human dignity. This shows that to maintain one's dignity, the individual should have absolute control over the fundamental rights and this allow people to enjoy their existence.

Sustaining human rights on civil laws achieve dual purposes, first to provide the required instrument necessary for human freedom and, second, to create a roadmap for unlimited tap of one's skills or talents in the society. These dual purposes according to Umunakwe, Nzeagwu, Aguzie, and Akaire (2022) are more holistic and deeper in presenting human beings at the centre of security and development strategies which require the active engagement of everyone in the society irrespective of the gender. Development and security strategies take the forms of physical and economic with systems such as accountable and transparent system of government, inclusive and participatory decision-making, and active rule of law and principles of non-discrimination.

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CONCLUSION

Igbo idea of patriarchy promotes cultural discriminations which provide material gains to men while at the same time threaten the rights of women. It relegates women to irrelevant status and subservient treatments ranging from placing various forms of cultural boundaries/obstacles to societal norms, conventions, biological make up and municipal laws. Generally, theory of patriarchy prevents women from accessing their skills, and talents. Today, feministic movement has taken the burden to correct those negative impressions about gender by postulating that gender roles do not depict gender inequality and women are not inferior to men. Through the systems of civil laws which protect equal human rights, women can freely display their talents in societal growth, security and development. What the traditional societies consider as gender roles are aspects of human rights because without exercising those duties, there will be chaos in the society. The possession of reason facilitates the passion of describing women as homemakers, custodians of social, cultural and fundamental values because if actually women lack reason as claimed, they will be more of brutes. The dictum ‘educating a man is educating an individual, educating a woman is educating the entire generation’ shows that the value of women makes them so important to the extent that the society cannot exist without the existence of a woman. The study concludes that the feeling that women are inferior only to men is illegitimate, inhumane, and unjustified.

Recommendations

This study recommends therefore that:

1. To promote gender equality, human attitudes that support patriarchal should be changed.
2. Since the definition of feminism seems relative across generations, ethnic identities, social groups, sexual orientations, nationality, and myriad identities, detailed premarital counselling should be given to intending couples on how to exercise rights in the family.
3. The mass media and other concerned agencies should be active in enlightening the public on the dark consequences of gender mutilations and domestic violence particularly.
4. Leaders of religious sects should dynamically educate and preach against gender inequality.
5. Youths should be sensitised on the reason to reject core patriarchal teachings.
6. Role differences should not be associated with discrimination.
7. Legislative measures should accord both genders equal rights as regards respect for gender differences.

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Chapter 19

Social Media and Connective Mourning: Analysing the EndSARSMemorial2 Protests in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores how Nigerians are using social media platforms such as Twitter to memorialise protesters who were killed during the 2020 #EndSARS protests in Nigeria. Data for this chapter is from tweets (N=67,678) from Twitter users scraped from the hashtags “#EndSARSMemorial2” and “LekkiMassacre.” Results show that the most frequently tweeted words were “rest in peace,” “heroes,” “who gave the order,” and “#EndSARSMemorial2.” Findings also demonstrate that protesters used social media platforms to display their anger, anguish, imprecating the authorities, and to rouse solidarity contagion which ignited mourning and memorial march for the fallen activists in Nigeria. The chapter shows that beyond the realm of mourning based on relatedness, there is an emerging world of connective mourning where mourners mourn those that they do not have ties to or are unrelated to but memorialised due to shared belief and connective repertoire.

INTRODUCTION

Mourning is usually preceded by the death of individuals so dear, related or known by some members of the society. Mourning is sadness shown by individuals following the death of a person or persons. In some parts of Nigeria, mourning is depicted with the wearing of black or red clothes. This is done as a way to express sadness about the death of someone (Ademiluka, 2009; Akinbi, 2015). The social functions of grief and mourning create social solidarity. These mourning rituals as described in Durkheim

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(1912/1965) re-integrates the deceased the mourners (Wagoner & de Luna, 2021). This type of belief leads to questions such as “who am I now that my loved one is gone?” (Fuchs, 2018, p. 57).

Collective mourning occurs when many people grief the loss of an individual simultaneously in a given social milieu. Collective mourning prior to the diffusion of social media were mainly via public displays of collective grief. These typically take the form of grassroots temporary memorials as happens when people leave flowers, candles, and photos in a central public space (Wagoner & de Luna, 2021). However, these practices are changing since the diffusion of digital media technologies. It has been noted that advances in technology, particularly computer-mediated communication have changed “the death systems” by allowing online memorials, virtual cemeteries, and spaces for social support to occur instantaneously (Bingaman, 2022; Sofka et al., 2012, p. 6).

Studies in online mourning (Cao et al., 2022; Cherasia, 2022; Erll, 2022; Hoskins, 2016; Jiwani, 2022; McCammon, 2022; Wertsch & Roediger, 2022) have outlined how the digital affordances of persistence, replicability, scalability and searchability created suitable spaces for remembering and memorialising the dead online (Cherasia, 2022; Jiwani, 2022). The chapter shows that beyond this realm of relatedness to mourn the dead, there is a large hidden world of “connective mourning” where one mourns those that they do not have ties to or unrelated to but memorialised due to shared beliefs, and connective repertoires. In this chapter, “connective mourning” is conceptualised from Bennett and Segerberg (2012) theorisation of the logic of connective action. The logic of connective action explains the rise of a personalised digitally networked politics in which diverse individuals address the common problems of the time such as economic fairness and climate change. Connective action is the self-motivated (though not necessarily self-centered) sharing of already internalised or personalised ideas, plans, images, and resources with networks of others (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012, p. 753). In this chapter, connective mourning is seen as a form of online mourning by a group of persons who hitherto did not have a tie or relationship with the deceased but only knew the deceased either through the nature of their death or the cause that the deceased is engaged in. It is slightly different with online collective mourning where the mourners use networked space to grief but are either related or know the deceased. This chapter focuses on both the nature of the deaths and the cause that the dead engaged in before their death. Thus, this chapter explores how Nigerians have resorted to Twitter to mourn and memorialise protesters who were killed during the 2020 #EndSARS protests in Nigeria.

This chapter first highlights the issues related to the 2020 #EndSARS and memorial protests in Nigeria. Next, the chapter interrogates the digital activism and online mourning literature. The research methods are then delineated. This is followed by the results and the discussions of the findings.

THE #ENDSARS MOVEMENT IN NIGERIA

On October 7, 2020, protests broke out in the streets of Nigeria against police brutality. During the protests, Nigerians called for the dissolution of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). SARS is a special unit of the Nigerian Police Force that achieved notoriety with a long record of abuses (Uwalaka, 2022). Long before 2020, Nigerians had complained about the crudity with which SARS handled cases. The police unit was founded by former Commissioner of Police, Simeon Danladi in 1992. Mr. Danladi added the word, ‘special’ to Anti-Robbery Squad that was already in existence. This tweak in their name brought about the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) and that introduced SARS into the vocabularies of the Nigerian police and the Nigerian public (Ogbette et al., 2018).

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However, due to the abrasive and highhanded nature of SARS, people started to see them as bullies and oppressors (Ogbette et al., 2018). It has been alleged that SARS tortures people, extorts, beats, jails, and kills those who are not forthcoming with their demands (Ogbette et al., 2018). Police in general are perceived negatively in Nigeria. For example, a study found that Nigerians have lost confidence in the police force as a result of several antecedents of bribery and corruption (Okpo et al., 2012). With all these, Nigerian youths did not pursue the disbanding of SARS. This stance changed when a video emerged on October 3, 2020, revealing some SARS officers fleeing a scene in a white vehicle that allegedly belonged to an unnamed man they had shot in front of the Wetland hotel in Ughelli, Delta State (Dambo et al., 2021; Uwalaka, 2021). The reaction that followed the circulation of the video was substantial as many Nigerians took to the streets of Nigeria and many other cities around the world, protesting and asking for the disbandment of the police unit (Uwalaka, 2023).

The video revealed the highhandedness of SARS officers as it showed a lifeless body of their victim and a paucity of empathy shown to the dying man by the fleeing SARS officers (Uwalaka, 2021). Youths in Nigeria were enraged, protested in the streets of Nigeria and other countries such as the United States of America, Canada, Germany, United Kingdom, Hungary, Ireland, South Africa and Australia (Lawal & Olanrewaju, 2020). In majority of the states in Nigeria, the protests were fierce, with enormous attendance and enthusiasm unseen in previous protests. After a sustained protest for four days, the Nigerian Police Force declared the disbandment of the SARS unit (Uwalaka & Nwala, 2023). The announcement was received widely with joy. It was then reported that instead of ending SARS that President Buhari is rebranding them into SWAT – Special Weapons and Tactics. The protesters' delight turned to disenchantment and the protests returned with more vigour and anger.

On October 20, 2020, armed men from the Nigerian Army arrived at one of the protest venues in Lekki Toll Gate, Lagos State. It was then reported that the Nigerian Army Officers shot and killed several protesters at the Lekki Tollgate in Lagos State. The action of the Nigerian military enraged the youths and protesters that some started hounding and even retaliating against the military and police as well as burning government buildings and police stations (BBC, 2020). At the end of the protests, many civilians and some security operatives lost their lives. According to the news report, among those that lost their lives were 51 civilians, 11 police officers, and 7 soldiers (Uwalaka & Nwala, 2022). Thus, the killing of protesters gave birth to the memorial protests every October 20. The first memorial protests were observed in 2021 where protesters and digital activists showed solidarity and mourned their departed colleagues. The 2022 #EndSARSMemorial2 is the second anniversary of the killing in Lekki tollgate, Lagos State Nigeria.

Like in 2021, on October 20, 2022, Nigerians again engaged in a peaceful protest and a day of mourning to observe the two-year anniversary of the shooting of protesters in Lekki tollgate in Lagos during the 2020 #EndSARS protests (BBC-Pidgin, 2022; Ojigho & Arinze-Onyia, 2022; Oloniniran, 2022). The protesters carried many placards with inscriptions such as “we will never forget”, and “always in our mind” (Uwalaka, 2023). The protesters waived the Nigerian flag and solemnly walked down the streets singing and chanting the names of protesters who were killed during the protests in 2020 (Daka & Musa, 2022). The mourning on social media platforms such as Twitter was immense.

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SOCIAL MEDIA AS SITE OF PROTESTS

Online protest movements' literature has offered different ways social media influence the organisation of collective and connective actions. It has been noted that social media platforms help protesters to coordinate protest actions and to create deliberative space for the planning of social movements (Bennett et al., 2014; Segerberg & Bennett, 2011). It has been argued that digital networks help spread excitement that facilitates emotional contagion leading to protest movements (Gerbaudo, 2016). Thus, online protest movements arguably are conceived, planned, and organised via digital networks. Majority of such protest movements attempts to counter the mainstream posture and hegemonic mien that the protesters believe to be oppressive (Castells, 2012). Such was the case for the 2020 #EndSARS protests in Nigeria.

As many people embrace social media platforms, and their affordances (Uwalaka, 2020), this embrace is leading to improved communication among the citizenry as well as between the leaders and the led. This improved communicability is helping hold those in authority to account. Even with digital media becoming normative, its effects on discursive politics, particularly during contentious politics, is still under debate. The increasing number of protest movements around the world as innovations in digital media technologies increase is raising questions about the influence of social media platforms as catalyst for dissent, protests, and other forms of contentious politics.

Only a handful of studies have dismissed the salience of social media platforms in driving political change (Fenton & Barassi, 2011; Gladwell, 2010b, 2011; Morozov, 2009a, 2009c, 2012, 2014). These studies argue that digital media platforms breed lazy and ineffective activism. The studies contend that the absence of ideological frame in activism mobilised through digital networks are usually weak and unable to achieve their goals (Fuchs, 2021; Kavada, 2015). However, other studies are optimistic as they see digital media platforms as essential for modern political activism (Bosch, 2019; Castells, 2012; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). For example, the diffusion of digital media corresponded with protests around the world (Boulianne, 2020; Kharroub & Bas, 2016). Some of these protests include: the Indignados, the Arab Spring, the Occupy Wall Street, and pockets of other protests such as the Occupy Nigeria protests. The planning and organisation of these protest movements were unconventional. This compelled researchers to conduct studies that assessed the role of social media platforms in influencing protests movements (Castells, 2012; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). Findings of some of these studies demonstrate that protest networks used digital media to engage with protesters during the 2009 G-20 protests in London (Bennett & Segerberg, 2011; Bennett et al., 2014; Walgrave et al., 2011).

Scholars assert that digital media platforms and other media platforms such as satellite television, contributed to the success of the social movements during the 2011 protests in Egypt (Alexander & Aouragh, 2014; Aouragh & Alexander, 2011; Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011). It has also been noted that digital media platforms such as Twitter, played a key role in amplifying and spreading timely information across the globe during the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions (Lotan et al., 2011).

Results from some recent studies show that social media platforms which are used for political purposes correlates with the protest participation. For example, it has been argued that political use of social media platforms influenced how young people evaluated the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong (Lee et al., 2020). The researchers illustrated that digital media platforms helped maintain protest potential even at a time when social mobilisation is generally frail (Lee et al., 2020). Findings from other parts of Asia have affirmed that digital networks contributed to the mobilisation of protest movements. For example, it has been established that the #FreeYouth protests in Thailand were loosely connected clusters of weak ties on Twitter and that Twitter and other social media platforms helped enliven and revitalise

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the protest (Sinpeng, 2021). Intriguingly, scholars have also demonstrated that participating in protests increases citizen's political use of digital media platforms (Chang & Park, 2021). This indicates that the more people join and participate in protests, the more they use the digital media platforms for political purposes. This is magnified during dueling protests such as the 2016-2017 presidential corruption scandal in South Korea (Chang & Park, 2021).

The trajectory is maintained in Sub-Saharan Africa's digital activism and social movement literature. Results have consistently shown that social media platforms help social and digital activists in the coordination and even documentation of the protest. Bosch, Mutsvairo and colleagues (Bosch, 2017, 2019; Bosch & Mutsvairo, 2017; Bosch et al., 2018; Mutsvairo & Rønning, 2020; Wasserman et al., 2018) have tested many questions regarding the impact and usefulness of social media in protest participation. Their results show a considerably positive relationship between digital networks and protest movements. Findings have demonstrated how activists in South Africa use nanomedia and digital media as communicative platforms and as a way of combating their asymmetrical and tenuous relationship with the mainstream media (Bosch et al., 2018).

Majority of protest movements research in Nigeria reflects those of Africa and even the globe. Studies have argued that the socio-political issues discussed by online protesters motivated offline protesters during the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protests (Chiluwa, 2015; Ibrahim, 2013). It has also been noted that social media platforms are used during protests as a result of eroded trust in the mainstream and that these platforms are drivers for protests (Hari, 2014). Recently, it has been stated that the appropriation of social media enhanced Nigerian youths' ability to challenge dominant power groups while making it difficult for the power groups to clamp down on the protesters (Uwalaka, 2022, 2023; Uwalaka & Nwala, 2023). These arguments demonstrate that social media platforms are increasingly leveling the playing field in Nigeria.

SOCIAL MEDIA AS A SITE OF MOURNING

Mourning is usually preceded by death of individuals so dear, related or known by some members of the society. People mourn when their loved ones die. Mourning is a means through which such persons display sorrow for permanently losing a relative to death (Gerrish & Bailey, 2020). Due to the way some people perceive death and dying, mourning the dead could take different forms and level. Consequently, variegated types of meanings could be deduced for the death of the person (Fernandez et al., 2011). Another thing that gives rise to mourning is the way an individual lived his or her life while alive. When the dead person was alive, he or she could be adjudged as either a good person or a bad person and the person's actions could make them community useful man or woman. These suppositions will reflect how such a person will be mourned when they passed (Stevenson et al., 2016).

In order to understand the concept of mourning, it is imperative to engage with the definitions of mourning proffered by scholars in the field. Mourning has been referred to as "a process aimed at closure so that the mourners can get on with their lives, and nations are freed from the burdens of the past." (Robben, 2023, p. 133). Some see it as either "understanding grief following loss" (Fernandez et al., 2011, p. 143) or "identification and validation of grief" (Marín-Cortés et al., 2023, p. 1). Mourning has also been defined as a "severe and long term painful situation that occurs after a loss" (Özel & Özkan, 2020, p. 353). Mourning could be seen as a behavioural, emotional, and cognitive "reaction of individuals who are confronted with loss of a valued and loved person (Emre, 2017; Gizir, 2006; Özel & Özkan,

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2020, p. 353). At a macro level, it has been argued that communal rituals and discursive practices are used to illustrate the significance of a loss to survivors as well as regulating the emotional chaos of bereavement (Neimeyer et al., 2002). It was further noted that at an intrapersonal or interpersonal (micro) levels, survivors struggle to understand the loss of a loved one into their existing self-narrative and that this, sometimes challenges their traumatic bereavement (Neimeyer et al., 2002, p. 235). These were in some ways based on Bowlby's tripartite model of mourning (Bowlby, 1963, 1973, 1980).

When people die in many parts of the world, members of their community collectively mourn their passing. Collective mourn could be the case of many people weeping the death of the individuals simultaneously in a social environment (Beland, 2009). The death of loved ones is often associated with collective mourning. This is because people understand the need to collectively mourning their people who die before the burial rites for the deceased are conducted (Wiederhold, 2017). Collective mourning could depict show of respect to the deceased. Besides an instant response to the nature of death, collective mourning is also buttresses respect and honour to the deceased by many persons in the community (Wiederhold, 2017). Collective mourning could also be extended to those who died from certain disasters and collective mourning ensues as a means of showing concern for their loss (Bovero et al., 2020). This is even more so with the diffusion of social media platforms.

As social media innovate and diffuse, mourning practices are changing. For example, online mourning is increasingly becoming popular as mourners are becoming diverse and dispersed. Online collective mourning brings people from different geographical locations and cultures together into mourning a loved one or someone that hold certain meanings to the bereaved. This could for instance be "hidden protests expressed through multi-semantic mourning" (Cao et al., 2022, p. 159). Social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook allow for affective expressions of grief – underpinning a "networked sociality and articulating politics of opposition from the group-up" (Jiwani, 2022, p. 1).

The increasingly normative, ubiquity and affordances of these social media platforms allow for an increased expression of individualistic performances grounded in looser networks affinity. It does not matter whether these expressions and individualistic performances are primordial or situationally constructed in nature (Gotved, 2014; Jiwani, 2022). These platforms "enable and empower those marginalised by traditional forms of grief to stay connected to the deceased" (Carroll & Landry, 2010, p. 1130). Through these networks, the mourners form collective memorial landscape which then build into a collection of enduring digital memories (Pennington, 2013; Veale, 2004).

Hoskins (2011) employed the concept of "connective memory as a sensitising tool to highlight the moment of connection. It is assumed that social media platforms create "a connective compulsion dependency" and "an algorithmic narrowing of information, knowledge and life" (Hoskins & Halstead, 2021, p. 675). Relatedly, connective memory has offered and expanded view of memory that sees "remembering and forgetting the outcome of interactional trajectories of experience, both emergent and predisposed" (Hoskins, 2016, p. 348). Online mourning has been argued to facilitate "benevolent grief", which is the use of grief for reintegration and recognition of the "other" as part of "us" (Morse, 2023, p. 1302). This means that digital mourning rituals that are collectively, and synergically performed by the state and the media, advocate for the recognition of the marginalised other as belonging to the broader communities (Morse, 2023). Online mourning helps mourners to identify and validate grief in their online communities. The deceased's popularity is measured by the size of those following their death via social media buttons such as likes and emojis (Cherasia, 2022; Marín-Cortés et al., 2023; McCammon, 2022).

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While many of the aforementioned studies looked at mourning from accidents, depression, natural causes, terrorism, and COVID-19, this study looks at mourning that was occasioned by state brute as a repressive technique during the 2020 #EndSARS protests in Nigeria. This study also content analysed the tweets of mourners who hitherto may not have known the deceased that they were mourning on Twitter.

To achieve the above stated objective, this chapter sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the themes that emerged from tweets and replies from Twitter users in Nigeria during the 2022 #EndSARSMemorial2 protests?
2. What do the diameter, density, reciprocity, centrality, and modularity measures reveal about the conversations around the 2022 #EndSARSMemorial2 protests in Nigeria?

METHOD

This chapter adopted a mix-methods data collection approach. This chapter utilised social media network analytics to study the conversations around the 2022 #EndSARSMemorial2 protests in Nigeria as well as a qualitative content analysis technique used to examine the categories that emerged from the tweets and replies of the digital activists in Nigeria.

In this context, social media platforms offer many opportunities to conduct research on a wide range of topics and analysis of its content during protest movements and mourning. It provides valuable insights irrespective of the researchers' geographical location. Thus, this enables scholars to access data in diverse locations where field research could prove improbable. Also, Facebook and Twitter are found to be two of the promising sites for analysing global debates on key issues due to the open environment of their data. While hashtags have been questioned as a sampling approach in big data analytics (Rafail, 2018), they are still one of the most used techniques to capture topic specific data in social media, particularly Twitter and Facebook (Uwalaka, 2022).

Social Networking Analysis

This chapter adopted a social networking analysis technique to understand the nature of the conversations around the memorial protests in Nigeria. Using Netlytic (<https://netlytic.org/>), the study analysed tweets and retweets from the hashtag '#EndSARSMemorial2' to determine the nature of conversations and crowds that used the hashtag and the number of tweets and retweets on how Nigerians mourned their colleagues that were murdered in 2020.

According to Figure 1 below, this study analyzed 67,691 tweets, and retweets from the hashtag "#EndSARSMemorial2" and "LekkiMassacre". These tweets were collected between October 19, 2022, to October 26, 2022, during the second memorial of the killing of protesters in Nigeria. Tweets were scraped and analysed using Netlytic. In this analysis, keywords, were highlighted. Also, network properties were identified, analysed, visualisations observed and discussed. For the social network visualisation, the study used the Distributive Recursive Layout (DrL) which is a 'forced-directed graph layout, effective for visualising large networks' (Meneses, 2019, 355; Pascual-Ferrá et al., 2020; Uwalaka, 2023). In this layout, long edges are hidden to highlight clusters or communities of conversation. Clusters are groups of nodes that share a particular characteristic (Pascual-Ferrá et al., 2020). These communities appear on the graph as round or oval shapes.

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The chapter evaluated diameter, density, reciprocity, centralisation and modularity to understand the typology of the network. It also examined who was mentioned the most, who posted the most, and who were retweeted the most to assess influence. In examining these different network properties, the researcher was able to adjudge which among these network properties might affect the successful dissemination of mourning messages during the EndSARS memorial protests in Nigeria. The diameter measures the longest distance between two users in the network, counted in the number of nodes or unique Twitter user accounts (@name), that it takes to get from one participant to the other (Netlytic, 2023; Pascual-Ferra et al., 2020). Density is another network property. It measures how close nodes are in a network. Reciprocity measures evaluate how much nodes talk to each other (Gruzd, 2020; Uwalaka, 2023). Centralisation measures the extent to which a few nodes dominate the conversation. Each node has a centrality measure: ‘indegree (based on times it has been mentioned or replied to)’, ‘outdegree (based on times it has mentioned replied to others)’ and ‘total degree (the sum of both)’ (Pascual-Ferra et al., 2020, 563). The final network property is modularity. This measures the fragmentation of a network into distinct communities. For all these measures, values range from 0 (lowest) to 1 (highest). This means that a modularity values that is close to 1 ‘indicate clear division between communities’ whereas, values less than 0.5 suggest that ‘the communities overlap more; the network is more likely to consist of a core group of nodes (Netlytic, 2023; Pascual-Ferra et al., 2020, 563).

Qualitative Content Analysis

The objective here is to appraise the categories that emerged from the tweets of digital activists during the 2022 #EndSARSMemorial2 protests in Nigeria. The content analysis was conducted to ascertain the categories that emerged from the tweets on how digital activists in Nigeria mourned their colleagues that died during the 2020 #EndSARS protesters.

After analysing the tweets on Netlytic, the scraped tweets and replies were downloaded from Netlytic and stored as a CVS file. The downloaded and stored dataset was then exported into Leximancer 4.5 (<https://www.leximancer.com/>) and analysed. The aim here, was to evaluate the themes that emerged from these tweets about the second anniversary of the killing of protesters in Lekki Tollgate during the 2020 #EndSARS protests in Nigeria. Concepts emerged based on their frequency of occurrence as the most prominent concept emerges as categories of the cluster (Dambo et al., 2021). Leximancer allows the user to rename themes. This feature was used in this study to appropriately summarise the concepts within clusters. The software also gives the serial number of each response in the CVS sheet. Thus, to screen and improve the interpretive approach and to capture the implied tone of voice, the data was further exported into NVivo 12 Pro (Sotiriadou et al. 2014). The themes were then manually checked and refined with direct quotes extracted from the NVivo.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Contents from Twitter (Tweets and replies) concerning the 2022 #EndSARSMemorial2 protests were examined to understand key themes that emerged from the tweets and retweets by online activists during the 2022 memorial protests which was organised to mourn and remember those that were killed during the 2020 #EndSARS protests in Nigeria as well as to pressurise those in government into seeking justice for those that were killed.

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Figure 1.



Descriptive Analysis

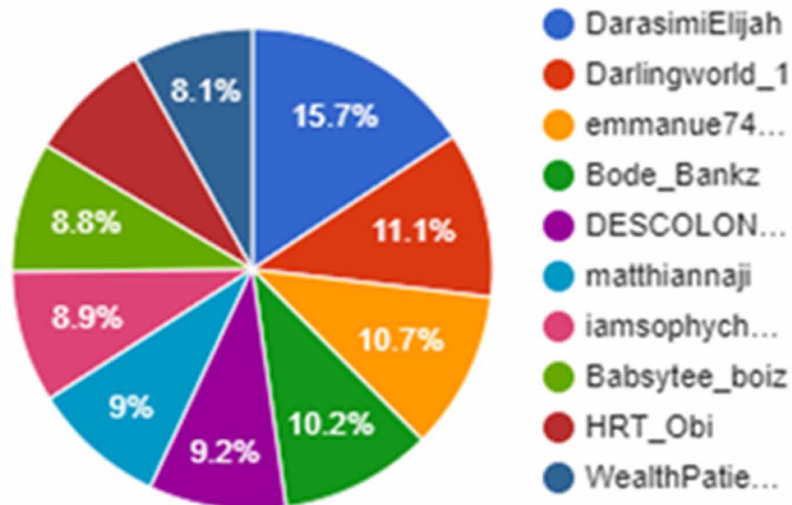
Figure 2 highlights ten keywords that were prominent in the tweets and replies from online mourners in Nigeria. The keyword that was most used in tweets is “#EndSARSMemorial2”. This is followed by “#LekkiMassacre”, “#EndSARS”, “forget”, “Lekkitollgate”, “rest”, “peace” etc. The “forget” keyword refers to how the protesters will never forget the sacrifices of those that were killed in 2020. It was more of a mourning sentence to stand with those that were killed. Other keywords such as “rest” and “peace” were words that were decoupled by Netlytic. What the protesters were really saying was “rest in peace” or words to that effect. This was a mourning and tribute-paying words that were meant for those that lost their lives during the 2020 #EndSARS protests. Those who were killed were constantly referred to as heroes. This shows how much digital mourners in Nigeria respect and honour the murdered protesters.

Figure 2.



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Figure 3.



Furthermore, Figure 3 shows the top ten posters during the 2022 #EndSARSMemorial2 protests on Twitter. The Twitter user @DarasimiElijah posted 140 time and that accounted for 15.7% of the total number of postings on the Memorial Day. He was followed by @Darlingtonworld_1 with 99 (11.1%) postings. This was followed by @emmanue74112786 with a total of 95 (10.7%) postings. Others that made the top 10 include @Bode_Bankz with 91 (10.2%) postings, @Descolonizadora with 82 (9.2%) postings, @matthiannaji with 80 (9%) postings among others.

Social Networking Analysis

In Figure 4, the diameter is 11. In network properties, this means that the longest distance between two users in the network is 11. This is counted in the number of nodes or unique Twitter user accounts that it takes to get from one participant to another. Density measures how close nodes are in the network. In this figure, the density is .8, reciprocity = .75, centralisation = .79 and modularity = 0.4329.

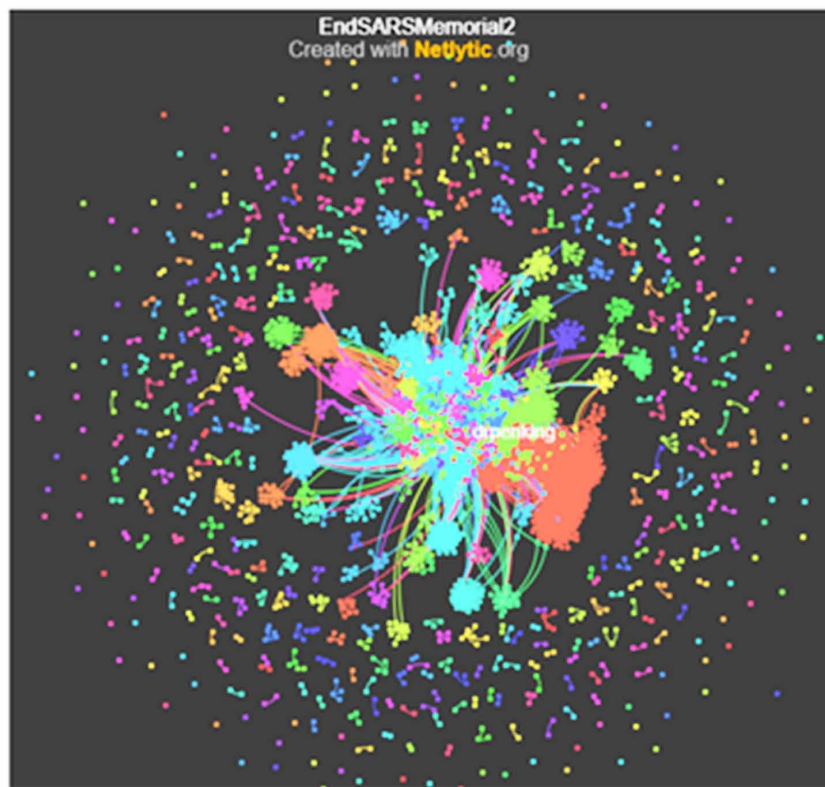
The modularity of the graph is less than 0.5. This suggest that the communities “overlap more; the network is more likely to consist of a great core group of nodes” (Pascual-Ferrá et al., 2020, p. 563). Figure 4 shows that the conversation is centralised, has high reciprocity – meaning that participants were talking amongst themselves and is a close-knit and homophilous network. This is because of the low value of the diameter and the high density of the conversations. This further means that the discussions that the digital activists were having were impactful as majority of the participants were almost in agreement of what is being discussed.

The network visualisation further shows a tight crowd, interconnected by issues that the online mourners are deliberating. This shows that the group is neither polarised nor in an echo chamber. What this illustrates is that online mourners in Nigeria who supported the #EndSARS movements are switched on and engage with one another in a substantive way. A closer look at what they were deliberating online,

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shows topics ranging from police brutality, mourning the protesters that were killed during the protests and to corruption in Nigeria. The valence of the tweets is critical and robust. The tweets and replies kept the issues on the front burner. This insistence and continuous prodding have not only sustained the mourning but also piled pressure on the government to both seek solutions to the grievances of the people and to seek justice for those that were killed during the 2020 protests. The closeness and interconnectedness of the networks show that this was not a polarised crowd as all participants were talking to one another and engaging in substantive mourning of those that were killed during the protests as well as issues related to police brutality, corruption in Nigeria, justice for those killed and reform of the Nigerian Police Force (Adamic & Glance, 2005).

Figure 4.

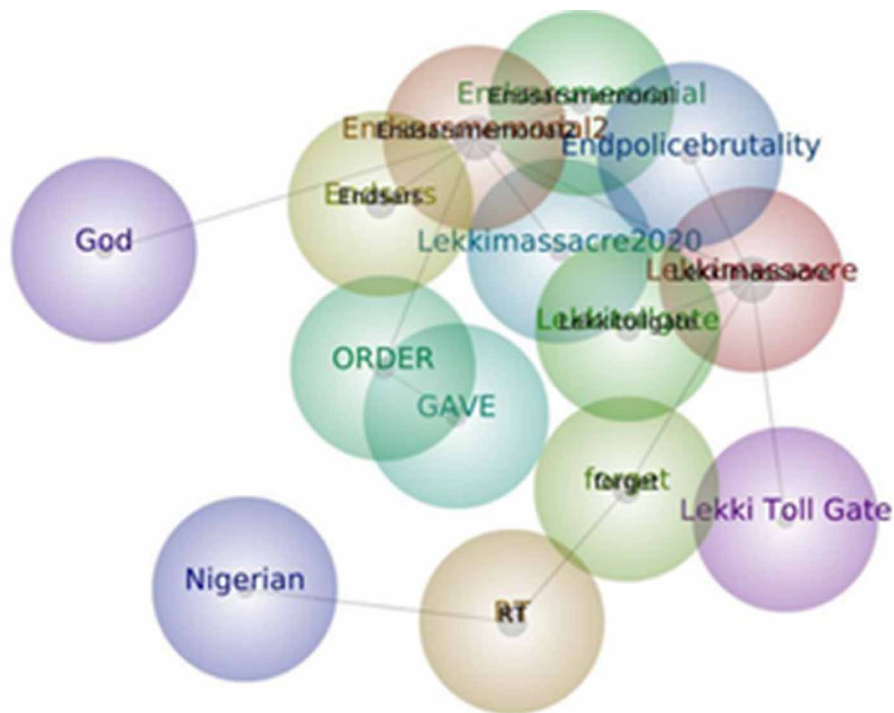


Qualitative Content Analysis

An examination of the tweets and reply from Leximancer yielded five broad categories: (i) anger, (ii) sombre mood (iii) remembrance (iv) mourning of those that were killed (v) imprecation and call to action. These categories were first observed from the categories that emerged during the Leximancer qualitative analysis.

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Figure 5.



Anger

Table 1 below, indicates that the bulk of the tweets were filled with “anger” and “disgust” on how protesters were killed with about 38% of the tweets and retweets related to this theme. For example, a Twitter user tweeted, “I still have nightmares. My encounter with the police two years after #EndSARS protests, is still a gory one”. Another Twitter user noted, “I’m tempted to summon the spirits of the innocent souls killed as a result of bad governance to fight the battle against these ghouls”. One more user tweeted, “I know that there are two sides to every conversation, but I am in the majority. This oppressors in power are Messing with the wrong generation... and it has been proven that God is on our Side.... We move.”

These tweet like many others, revealed how angry the activist was against Nigeria’s leadership for not doing enough to alleviate the pains of the people. What the above referenced tweet and tweets of this nature demonstrate is that the government has not reformed the police enough to enable the security agency to competently carry out their duties. The tweets further indicate that justice has not been served in the killing of protesters during the 2020 protests. This inaction and lack of movement on the part of the government frustrated many of the online mourners. One of such Twitter user tweeted, “we will pray and also beat you until you die”. This tweet illustrates how angry digital activists in Nigerian have become. Their anger is due to the killing of their colleagues who went to protest in Lekkitoll gate but were murdered.

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Sombre Mood

The frustration emanating from the anger that online mourners were displaying surfaced in many ways. One of such ways was via a sombre mood. About thirty percent of the tweets and replies that were analysed were sombre in nature. These tweets showed that the mourners were in anguish and agony on the killing of their comrades in 2020. They were exasperated that their continuous push for justice for their colleagues who were killed during the protests in 2020 has not been acknowledged. Their demand for a reform of the police have not broken through to those in authority as they would like, and this bothered the online activists and mourners. The sombre tweets reflect their horror and vexing stance on how the protesters were killed in 2020.

Remembrance

Remembrance as a category, is one of the most evident in the tweets. More than 15% of the tweets were made in honour of those that were killed during the protests in 2020. A user retweeted a 2021 post that reads: “the bullets, the blood, and tears. We will never forget”. Another tweeted, “two years after, I can’t believe that this happened in Nigeria. Never forget”. Another activist retweeted a picture with the words, “who gave the order? We will not stop until we prevail”. One of the Twitter users tweeted, “We will never forget the sacrifice of our fallen heroes. May they rest in peace, and may we continue to fight for justice and equality in our country” while another noted, “your deaths won’t be in vain”.

These tweets highlight the solidarity of the mourners with their murdered comrades. The tweets demonstrate the reverence that online mourners have for their colleagues who were killed during the protests. These tweets illuminate the love and respect that the protesters have for the dead and show how the protesters have sustained the mourning and memory of the dead. Finally, it illustrates that online mourners have not forgotten the killing of their colleagues in Lagos, Nigeria (Table 1).

Table 1. Broad themes from the 2022 tweets about the memorial protests

Themes	Sample Tweets
Anger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Are this people even learning? Are we still under slavery? Peaceful protest you shoot, killed, and arrested unarmed citizens, a peaceful memorial walk you are harassing and arresting your citizens? Are we being ruled by tyrant? · Read how Police brutality, extortion and harassment have continued almost two years after the #EndSARS Protest.
Sombre mood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Still can't believe some people insist that nobody died during the EndSARS protest. A boy that I know, and firstborn of his father died. Shot in the back. It was a painful experience for everyone. Very painful. · Made this song specially for those we've lost due to bad governance. The #LekkiMassacre is 2 years old today. We hope it gets better 20.10.20.
Remembrance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · I could not post this yesterday because of bad network. 20.10.20 We Will Not Forget. · I remember dressing up like I was going to the office so I could attend the #EndSars protest. I got tear gas and water cannons shot at me that day. I remember spending half of 20/10/20 searching police stations for arrested protesters. I will never forget!
Mourning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · My heart goes out to the families that lost a loved one during the #EndSARSProtest, they didn't deserve such treatment. · The memory of the #EndSARS social movement remains fresh in the mind of young Nigerians. More than ever, many young Nigerians are aware of their role in building the state.
Imprecation and call to action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Make all the Dead body disturb una for una Dreams. No peace for the wicked #LekkiMassacre · The labour of our heroes' pass shall never be in vain Let come out to vote out these heartless people. · We say NO to police brutality. #EndSARSMemorial2. · “Vote the right person now, not when you vote the wrong person and he gives us evil orders, then you will blame the police and soldiers... Then you'll be shouting. Our own is that we will take orders from whoever you people vote for. Police officer #EndSARSMemorial2.

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Mourning

Mourning was the next category by percentage of tweets that related to the category. Ten percent of the tweets and retweets relate to the theme of mourning. Many Twitter users tweeted how they feel sorry for those that were killed and often referenced their family members. One of the Twitter users tweeted, “to those who lost their lives at the #EndSARS protest, my prayer is that your souls find rest”. One other user tweeted, “APC government massacred Nigerian youths peacefully protesting police brutality and extortions. Young lives mercilessly cut short, and their dreams extinguished”. These tweets mourn the protesters that were killed during the protests in 2020. The Tweepsters appear to still mourn and grief for those that were killed during the protests in 2020.

Imprecation and Call to Action

For imprecation and call to action, about 5.5% of the tweets were cursive tweets that also called Nigerian youths to action. Protesters were invoking malediction and hex to certain political leaders that they believed supported the killing of the protesters during the 2020 protests. An activist also tweeted, “look at their faces. These are our enemies”. There were tweets that called Nigerian youths to action. This call to action was not to fight with guns but to fight politically in the voting booth. A protester tweeted, “only way we can make #EndSARSMemorial a real memorial is by getting our PVC and show these monsters how they messed up”. Another protester tweeted, “to those who survived, get you PVC”.

Another online mourner tweeted, “the only way to achieve the greatest justice for Victims of #EndSARSMemorial2 and Police brutality is to Vote for Peter Obi. A vote for Peter Obi is a vote to retire Atiku and Tinubu”. Yet another tweeted, “remember this hashtag before you vote next year”. These posts and tweets are calling on Nigerian youths to get their Permanent Voters card (PVC) in order to vote out those that they believed perpetrated the killing of their colleagues. They also advocated for “fresh blood” to be voted into office. They believe that voting in young people with the interest of the youths at heart is the starting point for the remaking of Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that online mourners on Twitter were in anguish and agony leading to a sombre mood during the 2022 #EndSARSMemorial2 protests in Nigeria. The study further revealed that the protesters were angry, in a mourning mood, imprecating the leaders and showed reverence to their fallen colleagues in a form of remembrance. They showed great solidarity spirit even at the points of arrests. The study reveals that mourners are already planning how they will punish the Nigerian leaders in the next national elections. This they are doing by calling on Nigerians to pick up their Permanent Voters Cards. This reflects other findings where protest participation or anger led to emotional contagion which then increased political engagement and efficacy (Uwalaka, 2021; Wasserman et al., 2018).

A broad look and interrogation of the coordinated way digital activists in Nigeria have tried to sustain the mourning and to press home their demands, open a new window into how scholars can begin to study and appreciate the empowering nature of social media platforms particularly in an uneven mainstream media access environment such as Nigeria. Digital activists have for long been criticised to embark on what critics labelled feel good activism or lazy type of activism as it allegedly does not bring much

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change (Gladwell, 2010a; Morozov, 2009b, 2012, 2013). Scholars have also viewed connective action as a flash in the pan that lacks the robust levers of the more traditional social movements. However, after studying the #EndSARS protests, this connective mourning has sustained the disgust and passion while still fighting for the issues that led to the protests in the first place.

This study demonstrates that decentralised technologies result in a loosely inter-connected, interpersonal networks which create outcomes that resemble collective mourning, yet without the having solid ties with the deceased. Finding from this study confirms the result of Bennett et al. (2008) which uncovered that personal networks' diversity provided a far stronger explanation for the predominant reliance on digital media than simple associations with organisation sponsoring the protests. This study reveals that digital media's affordances, replicability, scalability and searchability created apt digital environment for mourning, remembering, and memorialising those that were killed during the 2020 #EndSARS protests in Nigeria. This means that beyond this realm of relatedness to mourn those that were killed, there is a large hidden world of connective mourning, where one mourns those that they do not have ties to, or are unrelated to, but memorialised due to shared beliefs and connective repertoires. The study further show that digital mourners are embracing more expressive styles of mourning defined around social media and peer content sharing. Connective mourning such as the 2022 #EndSARSMemorial2 protests show that there are growing opportunities to have a shared grief in the society even for people who are unrelated to the mourner by blood, family, or country. However, the mourner relates to the deceased via their shared humanity.

This chapter uncovers that online mourners during the 2022 #EndSARSMemorial2 protest acted as mediators within the mourning community as they mourned on a individual basis during the memorial and yet, contributed towards the collective mourning goals. Although, these mourners acted on an individual basis, the common concern of seeking justice for the protesters that were killed and police reform brought them together. This togetherness of grief was not built through blood ties or strong and thick relations, but through anger and common concern. However, because the grief was situated around a common concern (police brutality and justice), this stimulated feelings of collective grief or benevolent grief and connective memory which provided a form of collective memorial landscape which helped build an enduring memory of the deceased (Hoskins, 2011, 2016; Morse, 2023; Pennington, 2013). Digital mourners' ability to stimulate commonality via decentralised and loose networks while allowing for solidarity building during mourning demonstrates the personalisation of mourning and connectedness of humanity online. These networks help identify and validate grief in online groups such as the 2022 #EndSARSMemorial protests (Marín-Cortés et al., 2023).

Beside the emergence of the themes, this study also showed the networked relationship among digital mourners in Nigeria. Figure 4 showed a tight crowd where information disseminations revolve around a few visible participants who then are placed in an opinion leadership position. The nature of this network showed that the topic under discussion was important and interesting. This demonstrates that protesters used the organising tools of social media platforms to sustain protests and to continue to demand what was due to the people of Nigeria. The high centrality, high density of reciprocity and low modularity lead to fast diffusion of information and promise to encourage widespread adoption of the communique proposed by the mourners in Nigeria.

The chapter illustrates that digital media acts as mourning and solidarity platforms where mourners plan, coordinate and mourn their fallen friends during a protest action. Results show that mourners in Nigeria communicated their anguish and agony, remembered their fallen friends, reviled, cursed the authorities, and called for action against the political class. The study further shows that social media

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platforms help mourners organise memorials as a way to not only sustain the protests but also to ensure that their demands are met. In the 2022 #EndSARSMemorial2 protest, activists continued to use the memorials to remind government to seek justice for their departed colleagues.

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Chapter 20

The Impact of Social Media Use: A Cross-Cultural Study of Youth in Cairo and Casablanca

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ABSTRACT

Digital media have generated a plethora of novel tools and milieus for youth to express and explore their identities, the most famous of which are social network sites (SNS). SNS have revolutionized how people interact and communicate; it is vital to comprehend how this virtual social phenomenon is impacting how we perceive and feel about others and ourselves. This chapter examines how a netizen youth is impacted by social media participation and exposure to visual content, which in turn has the potential to affect the individual's evaluation of self. This chapter aims to investigate youth's experiences of social media use to explore the effects of social comparison, as they integrate and respond to visual representations of identities found online. The study employs cross-cultural analysis between Egypt-Cairo and Morocco-Casablanca.

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital world, we are flooded by visual contents which form the fabric of our socio-cultural structure. Digital milieus have generated many novel tools for youth to express and explore their identities, the most famous of which are social network sites (SNS). Social media, in particular, have tremendously impacted our socio-cultural traits.

This idea of self-projection in an online environment warrants further exploration into how online users - which include youths - utilize social media, particularly SNS, to create an online persona. SNS engagement with youth subcultures has generated interest in several studies exploring issues relevant to youth culture and media studies scholars (Baird, 2022, p. 766). A recent Pew Research Center report

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(2016) concluded that Instagram use is exceptionally high among youth. Approximately (60%) between 18 and 29 use Instagram, nearly double the usage profile among 30- to 49-year-olds (33%).

Despite the plethora of research on social media usage, research examining the complex relationships between social media consumption concerning individual characteristics like psychological well-being, self-presentation, and identity projected on SNS in the Arab World is scarce. In a world marked by vast diasporas of global symbols and cultural frameworks, an understanding of virtual ecosystems is needed. This chapter examines how an Arab online user (Egyptian and Moroccan) is impacted by exposure to visual media content (images), which can potentially affect the user's evaluation of self.

Following a similar vein of researching cultural analysis, this chapter provides explanatory research on Moroccan and Egyptian youth's online experiences. This investigation aims to yield insight into how Arab SNS users experience and denote their online sociocultural consumption. This chapter explores the relationship between SNS use, social comparison, and psychological well-being. Focusing on visual content, this chapter employs two of the most visually-reliant social networking sites, Facebook and Instagram, as the platforms for research. Facebook is the world's leading SNS, and Instagram is a photo and video-sharing social networking service; The American company Meta Platforms owns both platforms.

Literature on cross-culture has employed the triangulation method to examine behavior and stemmed consequences. For example, Alsaleh et al. (2018) used convenience samples to identify factors that predict consumers' attitudes and intentions toward the usage of Instagram among users in Kuwait and the USA. Moreover, Sheldon et al. (2017) utilized similar parameters to compare motives for Instagram use among participants from two countries: Croatia, a highly collectivistic culture, and the United States, a typical individualist culture. Sheldon et al. (2017) examined the relationship between motives and behavioral outcomes of use (time spent on Instagram, the frequency of hash-tagging, and the number of Instagram followers). Sheldon et al. (2017) circulated a questionnaire consisting of a series of demographic questions, followed by questions measuring one's motives for Instagram's consumption.

Cho and Park (2013) used qualitative approaches to examine the use of SNS, investigating both Asian and Western countries. Using semi-structured focus interviews, Cho & Park's research provides qualitative data-based analysis of social media's culture-specific effects, demonstrating that a qualitative method is proper when examining the cultural differences developing in online communication aimed to establish social relationships (Cho & Park, 2013 p. 2319).

Moreover, Lee et al. (2014) distributed an online questionnaire in an attempt to examine the relationships among social media use for information, self-status seeking and socializing, body image, self-esteem, psychological well-being, and some cultural effects moderating these relationships as a Cross-Cultural Comparison of Korea and the United States. Finally, Lichy and Stokes (2018) study used both surveys and focus groups to produce findings that offer insight into the fast-evolving sphere of Internet user behavior (adoption and usage) in France and the UK. The survey method was chosen since it is a well-rehearsed research method for obtaining data on behavior, interests, and opinions shared by people (Davies & Fitchett, 2003, cited in Lichy & Stokes, 2018, p. 127).

Visual Culture and Identity Construction

Computer-mediated technologies serve as today's resources for identity construction. The internet is creating a visual culture on its own; Lister et al. 2013, suggests that the most dominant form any culture may take is visual, Enhanced, and magnified with cyberspace communication; today, online users have the agency to curate their online persona.

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Though the range of self-expression is boundless online, it's prone to social acceptance regulation by both users and platforms. For instance, digitally manipulated photos are the coin of the realm on the photo and video-sharing social networking site Instagram. Hence, the online persona of youth is subjective, outward-oriented, and guarded by the accepted norms of SNS.

Since its inception, social media have managed to infiltrate half of the 7.7 billion people in the world (Ali et al., 2022, p. 126). A 2018 study by Hopelab and Well Being Trust found that 93% of youth aged 14-22 use social media almost daily (cited in Rideout & Fox, 2018). Youth and teens worldwide are glued to vivid visual content on digital platforms like TikTok and Snapchat.

This mediated digital milieu calls for increased concern over its potential psychological effects on an individual's well-being. According to Turkle, online spaces are 'identity playgrounds' that allow users to experiment with identities bearing little resemblance to their offline selves and lacking any repercussions of their self-representation in the physical world (Turkle, 1995, cited in Gardner & Davis, 2013).

Images, especially SNS profile pictures, are vital to online identity. 98.7% of college students reported that they posted a photo of themselves on Facebook (Young & Quan-Haase, 2009). Identity is used to depict the meanings that define one's group membership, or claimed characteristics that identify the person (Stets & Burke, 2014). A second element of depicting identity entails the input or perceptions of the self in various circumstances. These perceptions indicate how one comes across to others and the feedback one receives (Stets & Burke, 2014). 74% of students reported that their Facebook profiles were accurate representations of themselves (Stern & Taylor, 2007), suggesting that the strategic structure of the online persona is central to the process of identity construction.

Theoretical Framework

Social media, SNS in particular, have been extensively integrated into the daily lives of youth and has significantly shaped communication, relationships, and identities. This study applies the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) theory (Katz et al., 1973, 1974), elucidating that online users actively choose media that can satisfy one or more needs (diversion, personal relationships, reinforcing values, and surveillance (McQuail, Blumler, & Brown, 1972).

Today, online users connect with their networks via visual content to curate their online identities. Remarkably, social networking users have more control over online self-presentations than face-to-face communication (Solomon, 2016). Nevertheless, adverse effects are triggered during this reciprocal visual content interaction process, including online social comparison.

In 1954, Festinger introduced The Social Comparison Theory, which elucidates that humans have a basic instinct to compare themselves with others to evaluate their abilities and opinions. With the advent of social media, the domains of social comparison have dramatically expanded, creating a bigger comparison pool. Before social media, social comparison occurred with those of closest proximity, such as immediate family and friends. However, with SNS, online users can present and view digitally enhanced photos that adhere to unrealistic standards. Research indicated that social media nurtured negative social comparison among individuals producing negative effects on one's psychological well-being (DeVries and Kühne, 2015).

There are two types of social comparison: downward social comparison and upward social comparison. The downward comparison refers to comparison to other people who are perceived to be less fortunate (Suls et al., 2002); While upward social comparison happens when people compare themselves with those

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who are better than themselves. According to social comparison theory, we base our self-perceptions at least partly on how we think we are doing compared to others (Festinger, 1954).

Research indicated that social media nurtured social comparison, delivering ideal platforms for social comparisons; following this vein, several researchers (e.g., Ozimek & Bierhoff, 2016; Ozimek et al., 2017, 2018; Verduyn et al., 2017) found a positive correlation between social comparison orientation and intensity of Facebook consumption (Ozimek et al., 2022 p. 3666). Furthermore, Wang et al., 2017 found that online users who view selfies and groupies on SNS may have lower self-esteem and life satisfaction than those who rarely view visual content (Wang et al., 2017).

This study utilizes The Social Comparison Theory introduced by Festinger (1954), as it aids in elucidating the trigger of comparison enhanced by visual content found on computer-mediated technologies. Social Comparison Theory explains why social media users are vulnerable to comparison behavior (Chou & Edge 2012; Johnson and Knobloch-Westerwick 2014). Generally, the theory insinuates that individuals are motivated to compare themselves with others similar to them to gauge their ability and performance, particularly to determine their abilities and success.

In developing a sense of one's self-identity, one may engage in self-evaluation through social comparison. Festinger emphasized that individuals compare themselves with others to seek information about the world and their place in it. This theory also includes determining social and personal growth based on how one compares against others.

Even though social media use intensity was found to explain the tendency of teenagers to engage in social comparison, friends - members of a network - can also influence the impact that the effects of social media has on the behavioral outcomes of individuals. The influence of "networks" on teenagers' behaviors can be explained by social learning theory, which postulates that individuals normally learn by observing other people's behaviors within their social group. Generally, friends, family, celebrities, and influencers on Facebook and Instagram provide examples of behavior to imitate (Bandura, 1973, cited in Charoensukmongkol, 2018).

Moreover, previous studies have examined the relationship between the use of SNS and life satisfaction (e.g., Ellison et al., 2007; Steinfield, Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009). Valkenburg and Peter (2007) also found that the more people used social network sites, the greater the frequency of interaction with friends, positively benefiting respondents' self-esteem and, ultimately, their reported satisfaction with life. However, those studies focused on satisfaction in an offline context, and little research has been conducted concerning the Arab World to examine life satisfaction after being exposed to a projected identity online.

In offline contexts, individuals develop self-definition and retain multiple representations of themselves primarily based on their group membership (Giacomin & Jordan, 2017). According to Tajfel (1984), a social identity is that part of an individual's self-concept originating from his knowledge of her/his membership in a given social group -or groups- together. Applying such conceptualization to the understanding of a "group" or a network on a virtual platform domain is defined by the user's social network of friends and followers. The user needs to grant acceptance and belonging according to the standards enforced by the network members.

Goffman's (1959) pivotal work on identity management argues that our self-presentation is made up of those impressions we provide through explicit verbal communication (e.g. Facebook user's profile page), and implicit expressions offered through visual appearance. Following Goffman's notion, Facebook profile images can be seen as a form of implicit identity construction (Zhao et al., 2008) where users display the desired characteristics through visuals. A content analysis of Facebook accounts by Zhao et

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al. (2008) showed that SNS users rely heavily on implicit modes of self-presentation in this scene, with an average of 88.4 photos per account.

Dey (2017) explained that identities were not created in isolation from individuals' offline community influences but emerged through individuals' negotiation between their perceived and performed identities (Dobbins et al., 2021). Manago, 2014 found that social media sites influence identity development through a process called the identity cycle, particularly among youth. Online users negotiated interpersonal relatedness and personal autonomy throughout the exploration of and commitment to identity formation.

As such, Brock (2012) reported how identity and culture mediated individuals' technology use. Individuals went through an identity cycle where they established identities in line with the expectations and standards of SNS's community (Thomas et al., 2017). Kim et al. (2011) denoted another factor in identity management, indicating that individuals from collectivist cultures searched for personal support and belongingness when engaging in social media and with people from similar backgrounds and interests.

Countries Profile

Casablanca has a population of over 3.7 million people and is the commercial capital of Morocco (Casablanca Population Review, 2020). According to Datareportal, there were 31.59 million internet users in Morocco in January 2022, 23.80 million of which are social media. Since the introduction of the Internet, it has been the preferred communication platform by Moroccan youth (Zaid, 2016).

The most remarkable change in Internet use among Moroccans is the growing interest in social media, user-generated content, and domestic news portals (Zaid, 2016, p. 53). Almost 2.5 million are 30 years of age or younger, so Facebook is predominantly a networking tool for the youth. Unlike offline interactions, Moroccans are more likely to communicate in French than Arabic.

Cairo has the fastest fixed broadband connections among Egypt's largest cities, with a 46.91 Mbps average download speed (Speedtest Global Index, 2023). According to Datareportal, there were 75.66 million internet users in Egypt in January 2022, 51.45 million of which were social media users. Moreover, according to Egypt Fixed Broadband Market Statistics and Analyses Report 2019, Egypt has one of the most developed internet markets in Africa regarding the number of users and the availability of services.

BuddeComm is a Telecom, Media, and Technology research and consultancy company. Believes Egypt's geographical position has enabled it to capitalize on the numerous cables which cross through it, interconnecting various parts of Europe with the Middle East and Asia. At the start of 2022, 43.0 percent of Egypt's population lived in urban centers, 57.0 percent lived in rural areas, and 35.5% of the population from 13 to 34 of age (Datareportal, 2022).

Research Methods

The need for self-presentation is influenced by various determinants, including culture, personality, and sociodemographic variables (Ozimek et al., 2022). Arab countries, by nature, tend to have a collective tribal ecology. Family bonds, friends, and acquaintances influence an individual's norms and behaviors, especially within vulnerable age categories like youth.

This exploratory study focused on Facebook and Instagram visual content, including self-posted profile pictures and photo albums. The triangulation method was used for better examination of variables and to fulfill the study's research question. This study has explored the cross-culture experience

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of youth use (Egyptian and Moroccan) of social media and the impact on core aspects of their sense of self, including self-esteem, social comparison, and life satisfaction.

The study's population included all active SNS users ranging from 18-35 years old. The study used a convenience snowball sample of Egyptian and Moroccan youth from the ages of 18-35 with an active social media account (e.g., Facebook and Instagram); each participant must report using Facebook and Instagram for at least one hour per day. As this is an explanatory study, no sampling frame was utilized. The researcher's personal and social networks were used to contact interviewees in Cairo and Casablanca with the help of Moroccan inhabitants.

The research methodology included an online questionnaire administered in the English language, circulating among Egyptians and Moroccans, using snowball sampling over six months. The questionnaire was distributed over social networking sites to ensure users' engagement on social media. The questionnaire granted anonymity and confidentiality. Respondents could contact the researcher via email for any inquiries, elaborations, and concerns. Respondents were provided the option to terminate the questionnaire at any point in time.

Additionally, focus groups and in-depth interviews were conducted using convenience samples to attain qualitative data to provide insight into SNS users' online experience. Procedures for in-depth interviews and focus groups were similar in both countries. Upon initiation, the purpose of the interview was introduced, and consent for archiving data was granted. Interviews were semi-structured, employing open-ended questions for a relaxed, conversational setting; all interviews were conducted privately at a mutually agreed-upon location where confidentiality could be maintained. The interviews lasted for approximately 60-90 minutes long. Respondents did not receive any incentive for their participation.

The interviews were recorded using an audio recording application. Each audio-recorded interview was transcribed and archived by the researcher following completion. Multiple questions examining the same construct and variable were used to ensure internal consistency. Furthermore, field observations in Casablanca were conducted over two weeks to study youth behavior among urban and rural governorates.

Scales and Measures

The independent variable was social media consumption measured using the number of hours spent on Facebook and Instagram, while the dependent variable was the socio-psychological well-being dimensions (the tendency for online social comparison, evaluation of life satisfaction, and self-esteem).

The online questionnaire used in this study was inspired by The Self-Evaluation Maintenance (SEM) model created by Tesser (1980, 1988), which addresses the comparison and competition (better or worse) with the other. The evaluation of self through comparison also includes factors such as the closeness of the relationship and the individual's self-concept or self-esteem. Moreover, the questionnaire borrowed from social media uses an intensity scale developed by Ellison et al. (2007) to assess consumption, and SNS uses and gratification (U&G) patterns (cited in Solomon, 2016).

The online questionnaire aimed to evaluate Egyptian and Moroccan youth's use of SNS and how its visual content may impact their self-representation and life satisfaction decisions. Life Satisfaction Respondents' perceived level of personal well-being was assessed using the Satisfaction with Life Scale developed by Diener et al. (1985). Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement - or disagreement- using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) corresponding to a list of statements.

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The scale measures cognitive judgments of satisfaction with life, also referred to as happiness or subjective well-being (Pavot & Diener, 2008). The questionnaire was divided into four sections: demographics and levels of engagement, social media use and gratification, social media activities, and lifestyle, followed by two statements to measure social comparison and life satisfaction.

The literature, as mentioned earlier, and the discussion have influenced this study's following research question and hypotheses. Research question: Is there a difference in social networking consumption patterns (Facebook and Instagram) among Egyptians and Moroccans? Among these variables: SNSs' uses and gratification, Social Comparison, Self Esteem, and Life satisfaction.

Research Hypotheses

RH1: SNS Users with many friends will report less life satisfaction than others.

RH2: The more time spent on SNS, the lower the reported level of life satisfaction

RH3: SNS users will adjust profile pictures and posted content mainly to meet similar content posted by their corresponding network.

RH4: There are no gender differences between social media engagement and life satisfaction.

RH5: SNS consumption mediates less Self-esteem and psychological distress.

RH6: Visual content (pictures and videos) found on SNS will trigger online social comparison among users.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In-Depth Interviews

This study utilized triangulation; in addition to the online questionnaire, nine participants were interviewed, six of whom were Moroccan and three were Egyptians, and interviews were conducted in Egypt and Morocco. Before conducting in-depth interviews, interviewees were briefed on the data collection procedures, archiving process, duration, and research purpose. They were informed of the right-to-end interview at any time.

One vital variable to assess users' activity and engagement was their activity level in terms of hours, interviewees were asked to indicate how many hours they spend online (using SNS), and all responses declared consumption of above three hours daily. Data from the interviews found that longer use of SNS resulted in elevated levels of depression, loneliness, and more vigorous social comparison; findings showed that Internet consumption isolated individuals from their friends and family, negatively impacting their psychological well-being.

In Casablanca, respondents were socially aware of the visual effect and peer pressure they were being exposed to, yet continued to engage in social media interactivity on SNS with high comparative nature. Across interviews, an inevitable form of social comparison was reported, with an overwhelming portion of participants reporting using social media to view others' profiles and keep up to date with their news.

All participants indicated that upon logging on to social media, they immediately view/browse others' profile pictures, supporting the notion that the need for social comparison is considered the third motive for using Facebook, next to the need to belong and the need for self-presentation (Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012; Ozimek & Bierhoff, 2016 cited in Ozimek et al., 2022 p. 3667).

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The youth believed Facebook was “fake”, “I know some pictures are not true, but sometimes I want to be like them”, Radwan, Moroccan, 19 years old. Upon inquiring about their SNS favorites and most used tools, they were ranked as follows: Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, and last comes, Twitter. The majority posited that Facebook makes them up-to-date with events in general and their network in particular; it is mainly used to follow content rather than post and create content. Instagram was used pending the acquisition of a good “picture”; if not, “I will post an old picture on Facebook or select an old image as my profile picture” Iglal, Moroccan, 31 years old.

Field Observation

Both Moroccans and Egyptian youth engaged in in-depth interviews indicated that SNS users know that any average user can curate the “perfect” digital content. All interviewees admitted feeling pressured to be compared with their friends on social networking sites. Based on the field observation, it is worth noticing that the comparison and attention given to social media tools had a positive relationship with social class.

The higher the social class, the more attention was given to visual appearances and visual content on SNSs. Rural areas admitted social comparison pressure but did not comply with perpetuating the visual content on SNS; this could be due to a lack of resources, but could also be because rural districts enjoy more personal connections with their family members, neighbors, and surroundings, which boots their social connections and decreases the number of online friends beyond the circle of friends and family. If they belong to a circle of online/offline friends, it is harder to “fake” visual content far from the truth.

Urban lifestyle in Casablanca has a faster rhythm than rural districts, leaving less time and room for family gatherings and connections. With fewer offline and face-to-face connections and encounters, online attention is elevated, and social comparison is triggered. Both cultures opted for collective and group images pending on the social class; the middle classes opted for group photos, while the upper classes went for group photos and selfies.

This finding concurs that certain social norms govern social practice within the SNS environment. These social norms are also understood and applied differently by different social groups. For example, Zhao and Jiang (2011) found that cultural differences exist in user profiles. Chinese users are more likely to customize their profile images digitally, and American users are more likely to choose a group photo (Strano & Queen, 2012).

Online Questionnaire

For the snowball questionnaire, 338 responses were received. Moroccans represented a skewed percentage of youths’ cultural representation; this could be a product of the questionnaire’s choice of language, as English is not the first language in Morocco.

It was vital to indicate gender and age variables in SNS interaction and its relation to visual content. Literature found that women tend to be more concerned with the attractiveness of their images and more likely to post images with others, perhaps reflecting offline sex norms about the importance of beauty and popularity (Strano & Queen, 2012, p. 170). Conversely, conferring with the findings of Young and Quan Haase’s study of (2009), this study found that both men and women disclosed approximately the same amount of personal information online and were equally as likely to post pictures of themselves.

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Cross-Cultural Frequencies and Variations

This study asked if there was a difference in social networking consumption patterns (Facebook and Instagram) among Egyptian and Moroccan youths to examine the cross-cultural differences in SNS consumption and its impact on youths’ psychological well-being. It focused on these variables (Uses and Gratification (U&G), Social Comparison, Self Esteem, and Life satisfaction) with SNSs’ consumption.

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the sample’s responses to test research questions. To address the variance in U&G, descriptive frequencies of SNS tools were recorded, and the sample’s response to the gratification question of why they go on these sites and what they consume in terms of content genre, and the number of hours spent on these digital platforms.

The type of content consumed by youth in Egypt and Morocco was nearly similar. However, this could result from the unified age group that shares common traits and interests, a cross-cultural tabulation for the sample’s U&G, including the content preference about consumption and uploading, is available upon request.

SNS Uses and Gratification (U&G)

An active SNS account documents the activity level and engagement state on the two platforms (Facebook and Instagram). The sample’s Cross-cultural engagement level on SNS is presented in Table 1. It is worth noting that the collection of these data took place before introducing more interactive features to Instagram, like videos and stories, which may have helped skew the data in favor of Facebook instead of Instagram. The sample was also asked to estimate their social capital, as the number of friends/followers is predicted to have a direct relationship with the triggers of social comparison.

Table 1. Chi-square test cross-cultural consumption

	Nationality	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-Sided)
Egyptian	Pearson Chi-Square	11.864 ^b	2	.003
Moroccan	Pearson Chi-Square	3.036 ^c	2	.219

Utilizing the SPSS tests, discrepancies in social media consumption were recorded; Egyptian and Moroccan youths provided the same appetite for SNS consumption, with a higher consumption on LinkedIn and Instagram in Morocco than in Egypt. Nonetheless, Egypt has a higher consumption rate on the following SNS platforms: Twitter, WhatsApp, and YouTube. Both countries showed adjacent numbers of social networks size.

Variations in content consumption on SNS were established, showing a significant difference in the type of posts and content produced by youth in Egypt and Morocco. Expanding on the findings of in-depth interviews, Egyptian youth were found to focus on popularity and assuring social attractiveness in presenting pictures in groups and portraying engagement in social activities. As for the Moroccan youth, they are more concerned with personal representations in the form of adventure or spending quality time, with less allocation to group photos.

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A Chi-Square test was conducted for Facebook and Instagram users to explore content consumption across the two countries. For Facebook consumption, the two countries seemed to have less disparity, as Facebook and Instagram were used for nearly the same uses and gratification ($p = > 0.05$), including ‘Entertaining posts (arts & music), Philosophical and self-awareness posts’ in Egypt and ‘News stories, Personal facts, and opinions, Sports’ in Morocco. These findings are supported by studies of (Horky et al., 2021; Loader et al., 2016; Soriano, 2014 cited in Baird, 2022 p.767), who concluded the intersection of online self-presentation and social media use within the contexts of politics, protest, and sports.

In addition, it was also vital to test the disparity in consumption measured by the allocated number of hours, denoting a significant difference between the two countries concerning SNS consumption ($p = < 0.05$). Still, these findings could be since the number of hours in the questionnaire was allocated to Facebook and Instagram, while in Morocco, the sample allocated more time to YouTube and WhatsApp among their favorite list of SNS.

Social Comparison

Tackling the social comparison process, the questionnaire began with measuring the significance of being “seen” and judged by others based on the visual content presented by the user’s network. The sample was asked how often they become concerned with how their friends will comment on or like their pictures on Facebook. Results showed that the level of concern over friends’ feedback on the picture was higher in Morocco than in Egypt, as most Egyptians declared they sometimes feel concerned over how their friends would comment on their visual content. However, Moroccan youth declared they frequently have the feeling of concern.

To assess the youth’s level of self-esteem, the sample was asked to state the frequency of changing and posting profile pictures on Facebook and Instagram. Followed by stating the importance of receiving feedback on their content (pictures and videos). Table 2 presents cross tabulation data for the 5-point Likert scale used to assess the sample’s concern: “How important is it for you to find out what your close friends are thinking about your pictures and videos?” Sample from both countries depicted that it is somewhat important for them to find out their close friends’ evaluation of their content.

Acquiescent to the Social Comparison premises, this study’s findings affirm the power of peer pressure and the need to “belong” and be identified and accepted within a social group. Especially if the pressure is rising from the close social capital circle, as the definition of an individual’s societal role is driven by acceptance and evaluation by others.

If social comparison is triggered by the “want to look alike’, how likely is youth to be impacted by the embodied picture or video? Data from the cross-cultural tabulation explored the tendency of comparison by asking, “If one of your friends posted a good picture of him/herself, how likely would you post a good picture or video of yourself as a response?”

The questionnaire queried the sample on the notion of belonging and whether they feel that most of their network share the same lifestyle. The majority in both countries retorted that they would rarely post a good picture in response to a friend posting seemingly attractive visual content. The accuracy of this answer is subject to question, as the sample normally would attempt to maintain good self-esteem to preserve self-worth.

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Table 2. Cross tabulation importance of network’s feedback

How Important Is It for You to Find Out What Your Close Friends Are Thinking About Your Pictures and Videos?		Nationality		Total	
		Egyptian	Moroccan		
Q14	Not important	Count	42	3	45
		% within Nationality	14.3%	8.3%	13.7%
	A little important	Count	64	7	71
		% within Nationality	21.8%	19.4%	21.6%
	Somewhat important	Count	92	13	105
		% within Q3 Nationality	31.4%	36.1%	31.9%
	Important	Count	65	7	72
		% within Q3 Nationality	22.2%	19.4%	21.9%
	Extremely Important	Count	30	6	36
		% within Q3 Nationality	10.2%	16.7%	10.9%
	Total	Count	293	36	329
		% within Q3 Nationality	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Applying SPSS to social comparison, a Chi-Square test (see Table 3) was conducted to illustrate the cross-cultural difference in youth’s inclination to social comparison based on what they “see” and general exposure to SNS by their friends and network. The test showed no significant difference between the two countries ($p = > 0.05$), confirming -along with in-depth interviews- that the pressure of social comparison is triggered by SNS content with no regard to country or culture.

To better examine the manifestation of online social comparison, Table 4 shows cross-cultural significance using a Chi-square test on the sample’s perception of “others having better lives than they do”. The test showed a clear significance among the two countries ($p = < 0.05$), indicating variance in how the sample evaluates other people’s lives compared to self; this could be generated by the selection of cities (Cairo and Casablanca) where the majority would have similar lifestyle and behavioral patterns.

Table 3. Chi-square tests cross-cultural social comparison

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-Sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.287 ^a	2	.866

Table 4. Chi-square tests cross-cultural better life perception

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-Sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.935 ^a	4	.001

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Self Esteem

Youth have a natural need to belong and sustain current networks. Hence, it was expected that SNS would play a role in maintaining social capital. Yet, the effect of the visual content was never speculated if it would hinder the upholding of relationships, or impact the identity construction process.

Self-esteem levels were evaluated using the Likert scale on statements relating to the attention and feedback they receive on their content, elevating their self-esteem. Conducting the SPSS, a Chi-square test ($p = < 0.05$) of the sample’s cross-cultural significance showed a strong significance between the two countries and how they feel about others based on what they post online.

Evaluating self-worth is a vibrant and fundamental element of self-esteem. Building upon such a notion, a Chi-square test was conducted to measure the sample’s perception of their self-esteem by responding to whether they believe they are a failure or not in life. Results showed no difference in estimating self-esteem and how the sample feels about themselves ($p = > 0.05$), illustrating that regardless of the country, the effect of SNS is similar. Moreover, a T-test was conducted to measure the significance of self-esteem evaluation among countries through a list of statements and questions about self-worth among users’ social networks presented in Table 5.

Table 5. T-test group statistics of self-esteem evaluation among countries

	Nationality	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
How often do you become concerned with how your friends will comment or like your pictures on Facebook?	Egyptian	293	3.038	1.2030	.0703
	Moroccan	36	3.194	1.2380	.2063
How important is it for you to find out what your close friends are thinking about your pictures and videos?	Egyptian	293	2.922	1.1924	.0697
	Moroccan	36	3.167	1.1832	.1972
“I feel that I am a person of worth, at least an equal with others”	Egyptian	288	3.823	1.2549	.0739
	Moroccan	36	3.444	1.2971	.2162
“All in all, I think I am a failure”	Egyptian	293	1.580	.9605	.0561
	Moroccan	36	2.056	1.2861	.2143
“I am shy in face-to-face interactions”	Egyptian	291	2.430	1.2989	.0761
	Moroccan	35	2.371	1.3522	.2286

Life Satisfaction

Investigating cultural differences and their relation to life satisfaction is pivotal in comprehending the impact of visuals on vulnerable identities and their sociocultural conduct. This study utilized The Self-Evaluation Maintenance (SEM) model created by Tesser (1980; 1988). Moreover, the scale developed by Ellison et al. (2007) measured social media use intensity. Life satisfaction was measured using statements rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

A Chi-square test was conducted to measure cross-cultural life satisfaction levels. The test showed a statistical significance between the two countries’ evaluation of life satisfaction ($p = < 0.05$); this could be elicited by the social structure of the two countries, as Morocco tends to orient towards extended

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family, while Egypt has a nuclear family structure, especially in urban cities. Hence, reliance on internal factors – like extended family members found in Morocco- could ease the pressure to measure life satisfaction based on external factors like SNS exposure.

Moreover, offering a reliability check for the evaluation of life by the sample, Chi-Square tests on a single factor of life satisfaction evaluation showed the cross-cultural variance of statements: “I am a happy person” and “I am satisfied with my life,” respectively, all showing a sign of ($P = < 0.05$) on the sample’s life satisfaction levels. Moreover, a T-test was conducted -shown in Table 6 - to measure compiled means of four statements evaluating life satisfaction in Egypt and Morocco.

Table 6. T-test of cross-cultural life satisfaction evaluation

	Nationality	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	f	Sig.
“I have a good life”	Egyptian	293	4.256	.8910	.0521	5.703	.000
	Moroccan	36	3.611	1.1778	.1963		.003
“I am a happy person”	Egyptian	292	3.955	.9921	.0581	1.904	.037
	Moroccan	36	3.583	1.1307	.1885		.066
“I am satisfied with my life”	Egyptian	293	4.065	1.0300	.0602	.978	.014
	Moroccan	36	3.611	1.1027	.1838		.024
Generally speaking, “life is fair”	Egyptian	292	3.428	1.3335	.0780	.395	.041
	Moroccan	36	2.944	1.3298	.2216		.045

Research Hypotheses Testing

Virtual social capital is a construct that incorporates various factors such as trust, the number of friends, and the nature of connectivity/bonds between members of the same network. This study emphasizes the number of friends and followers, its negative effect on life satisfaction, and, correspondingly, the identity structure of SNS users. To test if the size of the SNS network affects life satisfaction, the study postulated RH1: SNS Users with high numbers of friends will report less life satisfaction levels than others.

A Chi-square test was conducted for each platform (Facebook and Instagram) to examine variances in SNS platforms as well. The test showed a significance of ($p = < 0.05$) for both platforms. Moreover, another Chi-square was conducted to exemplify the effect of network size and the number of followers on Instagram corresponding to the effect on life satisfaction, resulting in a significance of ($p = < 0.05$).

Hence RH1 is accepted, elucidating that the more friends an SNS user has, the more s/he will be exposed to visual content that impacts his/her life satisfaction level. In addition, a post hoc ANOVA test was conducted, presenting the sample’s corresponding evaluation of life satisfaction with a significance of ($p = < 0.05$). These findings yielded similar to previous studies concluding that the higher your level of interaction on Instagram, the higher the individuals’ comparisons of both ability and opinions (Yang & Robinson, 2018, cited in Lewin et al., 2022, p. 2).

To evaluate self-reported life satisfaction, this study tested the relationship between consumption levels and their effect on life satisfaction; RH2 stated: The more time spent on SNS, the lower the reported level of life satisfaction. The number of hours spent was used to quantify SNS consumption and

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intensity. To test RH2, an ANOVA test (see table 7) evaluated the consumption in hours and four statements on life satisfaction: “I am a happy person, “I have a good life”, “I am satisfied with my life,” and “generally speaking, life is fair”. ANOVA showed a clear statistical significance of SNS consumption and anticipated effect on life satisfaction with ($p < 0.05$) for the perception of having a good life and evaluating happiness.

However, the sample showed no significance given to the number of hours spent on SNS and its effect on the assessment of life ($p > 0.05$), illustrating that Egyptians and Moroccans may share similar cultural values on how to evaluate the life of others, as this sentence is a reflection on the other rather than the self in the proposed sentences. Furthermore, this finding may have been triggered by religious and/or other social beliefs. Consequently, based on the sample’s evaluation of life satisfaction and their corresponding number of hours, RH2 is partly accepted.

Table 7. Post hoc ANOVA sample’s life satisfaction

Life Satisfaction Criteria		Mean Square	F	Sig.
“I have a good life”	Between Groups	3.402	4.276	.006
“I am a happy person”	Between Groups	5.043	5.370	.001
“I am satisfied with my life”	Between Groups	6.727	6.716	.000
Generally speaking, “life is fair”	Between Groups	5.459	3.083	.028

RH3 aimed to evaluate if SNS users will adjust profile pictures and post content to meet similar content posted by their corresponding network. A Chi-square test was conducted to measure the effect of exposure to visual content on identity and self-esteem to the extent of triggering a counter-action of posting visual content as a response. The test showed a clear significance ($p < 0.05$) between SNS’s visual content and how users respond by changing their profile pictures to seek similar outcomes and/or positive feedback. Based on in-depth interview results and Chi-square findings, RH3 is accepted.

Although examining gender differences was not the scope of this study, it is imperative to document any significance in gender consumption and the corresponding effect on life satisfaction; RH4 proposes that there are no gender differences between social media engagement and life satisfaction. A Chi-Square test (see Table 8) showed no statistical significance in evaluating their lives as good ($p > 0.05$), indicating no differences in how females and males evaluate a good life or the understanding of happiness. Therefore, RH4 is accepted.

Table 8. Chi-square test gender and life satisfaction

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-Sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.938a	4	.139

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Furthermore, an expected outcome of SNS consumption is the potential effect on self-esteem. In addition to RH3, RH5 suggests that SNS consumption mediates less Self-esteem and psychological distress. To measure this hypothesis, Chi-square and ANOVA tests were conducted to measure the effect of the number of hours spent on SNS and the predicted effect on self-reported esteem on: “all in all, I think I am a failure”. Chi-square tests were used to measure the effect on each SNS platform separately.

For Facebook and Instagram, the test showed no significant relationship between the number of hours and the effect on self-esteem ($p > 0.05$). Table 9 shows the combined number of hours spent on Facebook and Instagram and the effect on self-esteem and life satisfaction; the test showed no statistical significance ($p > 0.05$) concerning the number of hours. Based on the results, RH5 is rejected.

Although tests showed no relationship between the number of hours and negative psychological effects on the self, the effect of visual content can be instantaneous and does not require a specific number of hours to manifest itself. Although the number of hours spent on SNS is not directly reflected in users’ behavior, Users may spend a limited number of hours and still consume content layered in messages, inevitably triggering psychological distress regardless of the duration of exposure.

Table 9. ANOVA test for self-esteem, life satisfaction, and SNS consumption

“All in All, I Think I Am a Failure”	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5.217	2	2.609	2.473	.086

SNS are notorious for giving off the impression that other people live better lives than us (Chou & Edge, 2012). People generally present themselves and their lives positively on SNSs, for example, by posting pictures in which they look their best and are having a good time with their friends (Zhao et al., 2008). Most of the time spent on SNSs consists of viewing these idealized SNS profiles, pictures, and status updates of others (Solomon, 2016).

Since visual content on social media involves socially desirable cues that aim to enhance self-presentation, exposure to such content may cause individuals to engage in social comparison. Following this, RH6 postulates that visual content (pictures and videos) on SNS will trigger online social comparison among users. An ANOVA test presented in Table 10 was conducted to measure the effect of visual content and triggering factors of online comparison among SNS users to test this hypothesis. Based on test results and insights from in-depth interviews, RH6 is accepted.

These results confer with the findings of Vogel et al., 2015, who postulated that individuals who display greater levels of overall social comparison spend more time and higher consumption levels on SNS (Lee, 2014, cited in Lewin et al., 2022). Furthermore, time spent on Facebook is related to both directions of social comparison, although individuals displayed a higher overall amount of upward social comparisons on Facebook (Vogel et al., 2014). Jabłon & Zajdel, 2020 and Masciantonio et al., 2021 have concluded that associations between social media and psychological well-being appear to be mediated by the degree one engages in social comparisons (cited in Lewin et al., 2022, p. 2).

The Impact of Social Media Use*Table 10. ANOVA test of social comparison of Facebook and Instagram*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.847	3	4.282	3.346	.002

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Human beings are social animals; they conform to the social norms and pressure of their perceived social group. Social media and virtual networks provide a fertile environment for social comparison and new echelons of peer pressure. The visual content found on social media and SNS has enhanced our understanding of how users interpret media representations and how computer-mediated technologies are consumed and appropriated in contemporary culture and society discourses. Although the user may be treated as a relatively passive decoder of the text, the exposure and contact with visual content will shape his/her values and actions.

Previous studies revealed that interactions between users and visual content (images and videos) increased users' dissatisfaction and indicated its impact on triggering social comparisons (Astatke et al., 2022). Suppose existing literature depicts that a significant portion of a person's identity can be inferred through his or her social network profile. In that case, it is established that there is a strong relationship with visual self-expression conducted on SNSs as means of identity construction.

SNS users construct their identity through various symbolic activities, like posting content, commenting, and using the like button for affirmation. This study examined the experience of social media consumption and interaction with visual content. For the qualitative testing, all participants reported 'looking' at other users' postings every time they logged on. Some females indicated seeking online friends and unknown peers to identify key social and personal success and competence markers. This process may form a core component of how women engage in the ongoing process of refining, transforming, and maintaining a sense of self, self-identity, and self-image. A key factor in this process is engaging in social comparisons, an integral part of how one comes to know oneself.

This study examined how visual content affects users' identity in social comparison, self-esteem, self-representation, and life satisfaction. Research questions elucidating differences in consumption between the two countries showed minor differences in social media U&G, motivation, and gratifications, which could indicate a universal inclination of behavior among this age group. Still, for the type of content that demands their attention, personal disparities played a role in defining the type of content uploaded or searched for on these networking sites.

In-depth interviews result, along with the questionnaire results, endorse the negative effect SNS engagement and consumption have on the self and identity. Nonetheless, no statistical significance was found to relate consumption to a direct effect on youth. However, when denoting the type of negative affect and psychological distress that SNS may have on youth to trigger social comparison, the study found that visual content found on SNS will trigger online social comparison among this vulnerable age group.

This study examined aspects of behavior concerning youth and their online self-presentation; as well as exploring the effect of exposure to visual content, and youth's reported life satisfaction level. Results showed that the bigger the social capital, the less satisfied they will be with their lives. The findings also concluded that in social media engagement and in particular SNS where visual content is dominating

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(Facebook & Instagram), a negative effect will occur on the psychological well-being of the users, and inevitably the well-being of the online user.

Furthermore, to examine the variable of consumption in terms of hours, the study showed that the more time spent on SNS by the youth, the less satisfied they will feel about their life. The more time you spend online, the more you will be exposed to visual content and updates from your network, which will inevitably induce a feeling of shaken self-worth and ingratitude. Such feelings may emerge from the perception that others have a better, healthier, and more successful life. This study also found that youth tend to feel insecure by the visual content found on SNS; they tend to change their profile picture as a response to what they are exposed to visually to boost self-worth and seek positive feedback.

Although not an integral element in cultural variances and literature review, the role of gender in reported life satisfaction level was measured; the study found no significant difference concerning gender role in social media engagement (time spent, content uploaded, or simply browsing network updates) and reported life satisfaction level. This study's findings are comparable to the literature (e.g., Fioravanti et al., 2012), concluding no differences in gender and social media preference and consumption. Drawing a broad line of analysis to the results of this study, no cultural differences were found in effect on social media consumption between Egyptian and Moroccan Youth.

Nonetheless, the study emphasized the potential negative consequences of the consumption of SNS, as the time spent on social media affected the youth's evaluation of self and reported life satisfaction. Also, exposure to visual content was found to trigger a process of social comparison. Psychological distress affects identity directly and profoundly; it entails altering the schemes of posting, uploading, and browsing content. It also alters how you perceive yourself among others and how your self-presentation and identity will be structured online and, consequently, offline.

Users are exposed to the social comparison of enhanced realities or idealized versions of others. Developmental theorists and general practitioners should be attuned to the potential adverse impact on the individual's self-evaluation and sense of self-worth. The novel social engagement patterns on social media can shape understanding and experience of the world. Hence, media literacy is imperative to educate and help users understand the healthy and correct means of consuming media in a digital milieu.

An example of a healthy consumption pattern would include the ability to differentiate between content for entertainment, counterfeit, and reality purposes. Furthermore, education on constructed images may assist users in becoming more knowledgeable about media's effect on self-evaluation. Advancing media literacy will give way to the newly discussed field of study: the issue of visual literacy.

The International Visual Literacy Association defines visual literacy as "a group of vision competencies a human being can develop by seeing and at the same time having and integrating other sensory experiences" (Koltay, 2011, p. 215). The development of these competencies is fundamental to normal human learning. A visually literate user to distinguish and interpret the visible symbols encountered via online environs.

Finally, since psychological well-being is vital to acquire a good life and a balance of feeling safe and behaving properly (Huppert, 2009, cited in Astatke, 2022), a preventative model on media and or visual literacy should be implemented in schools to offer a healthy social media usage pattern, programs, and workshops for students and parents, to help better understand and conceive the potential hazards of SNS consumption and help elaborate on the appropriate means of consumption and critical thinking.

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Study's Limitations

Despite the rich qualitative information gathered in this study, the current research design has several limitations concerning the in-depth interview sample size; only 9 participants were interviewed. Consequently, results are limited in generalization. Additionally, the group was relatively homogenous regarding gender and ethnic identity.

Concerning the Egyptian participants, although there was some variability in participant demographics due to the small, homogenous sample, cultural and socioeconomic implications contribute to the limited generalization. Also, self-reported data affects the accuracy of the results. Finally, due to the language barrier, the online questionnaire was an obstacle to Moroccan youth.

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Chapter 21

Modeling the Impact of Social Media Influencers on Intention to Visit Ecotourism Destinations in the Global South

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ABSTRACT

Social media influencers promote ecotourism by sharing their personal experiences, opinions, and recommendations about eco-friendly destinations with their followers. Moreover, social media influencers can encourage their followers to adopt eco-friendly travel practices, such as reducing their carbon footprint, using public transportation, and staying at eco-friendly accommodations. To investigate the influence of social media influencers on ecotourism, an online survey was conducted with 500 active social media users. The study's results showed that social media influencer expertise, credibility, and interactivity significantly influence the intentions to visit ecotourism sites. Therefore, it can be concluded that social media influencers are crucial in promoting ecotourism by using their large online following to generate interest in sustainable travel and raise awareness about environmental issues. Their efforts can increase demand for eco-friendly travel options and contribute to preserving the environment.

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Modeling the Impact of Social Media Influencers

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a social phenomenon in which people take a momentary vacation from their routine to interact with others from diverse lifestyles, cultures, and experiences (Gössling, Scott, & Hall, 2021). It is a notion that incorporates several variables, making it one of the most important sectors with a significant impact on a country's economic structure. Tourism is some nations' primary income source (Crespi & Lanza, 2020). Tourism is one of the fastest-growing businesses, projected to increase from 1.4 billion in 2020 to 1.8 billion in 2030 (UNWTO, 2021). Tourism contributes 2.8% of the GDP in Pakistan, and 7% comprises associated industries, providing 1.4 million direct jobs and 3.6 million jobs in related industries (Government of Pakistan, 2019). However, the current situation of the tourism region in Pakistan is below average, with Pakistan ranking 121 out of 140 countries in the Global Tourism Index (World Economic Forum, 2021). Regarding commercial enterprise journey and cultural resources, Pakistan ranks 56 out of 140 nations, while in terms of price competitiveness, Pakistan is ranked 37 out of 140 countries (World Economic Forum, 2021).

On the other hand, ecotourism is a blend of biological systems and the travel industry (Zaman et al., 2022). The ecotourism affiliation characterizes ecotourism as mindful travel to lovely normal regions to safeguard the climate and further develop the prosperity of neighborhood individuals. Ecotourism creates an endless, biological inner voice and assists with safeguarding eco-focused values and moral qualities connected with nature. The fundamental motivation for ecotourism is to cause travelers to figure out the significance of not upsetting creatures, plants, and their environments. Ecotourism is a blend of conservation, profit, and local people, with a double objective of preserving biodiversity and promoting sustainable development (Wearing & Neil, 2009).

Pakistan is considered one of the most famous countries with many tourist destinations due to its different topography (Ahmad et al., 2020). Additionally, Pakistan is one of 12 countries rich in biodiversity, owing to its rich cultural heritage (Government of Pakistan, 2018). Using social media platforms for promoting and marketing capabilities benefits companies, including Small and Medium Enterprise Units. This type of advertising offers practical benefits, showcasing client assistance, innovative work, finance, advertising, and HR (Arca, 2012). When used efficiently, social media can be a powerful commercial enterprise device, enabling organizations to attain their clients, emerging the concept of social media advertising (whatis.techtarget.com, 2017).

With an increasing number of people joining social media channels daily, entrepreneurs must use these networks to connect clients, create brands, generate loyalty, enhance sales, and track social media ad performance, among other things. Social media advertising is less expensive than traditional media for targeting the correct customer, generating leads, increasing conversions, generating a higher ROI, and reaching a larger audience. It also aids in attracting and satisfying customers, raising brand awareness and loyalty, and improving SEO (Smith, 2017).

Organizations have multiple advantages that bring daily and widespread benefits, including new social media marketing challenges such as social engagement strategy investing, marketing challenges, winning social media, gaining business and marketing challenges, content-reducing social media organics, and increasing audience engagement. Organizations must analyze social media content, activity, and engagement to succeed and choose the right social network, content, and engagement to connect and influence consumer behavior. Thus, media professionals must understand social media platforms' marketing strategies, consumer perceptions of social media marketing campaigns, and the impression of their brand purchases (Abbas et al., 2022; Arca, 2012; Raza et al., 2020).

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The literature review examined diverse social media marketing and advertising strategies after defining and elucidating the concept and significance of social media advertising. This study investigates various methods and substitutes for social media advertising and marketing. The research will be conducted on three social media platforms to determine the distinctive factors contributing to this channel's success for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). According to Effing and Spil (2016), social media advertising and marketing strategy can be defined as a planning technique to achieve specific goals. This technique involves creating personally-generated content disseminated through web applications to establish a distinctive and valuable competitive position (p. 35). Effing and Spil (2016) identified seven fundamental components of marketing strategy in their research.

With the shift of advertising and marketing organizations toward social media platforms, there is a constant search for an effective online marketing strategy, one of which is influencer marketing (Woods, 2016). The aforementioned marketing policy entails a shift in focus away from a broad-based approach aimed at the entire market and instead emphasizes targeting specific individuals. It is imperative to establish clear definitions of the terms "influence" and "influencer" before delving into examining this methodology. As per the assertion made by Brown and Hayes (2008), influence can be defined as the capability to impact an individual, object, or progression of occurrences (p. 4). According to Brown and Hayes (2008), a social media influencer is an individual who has a considerable impact on customers' purchasing decisions. However, they may not necessarily be held responsible for such decisions. IMC solutions have been specifically developed for the travel and tourism industry. The tool in question is a comprehensive online advertising package that encompasses various components such as Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Search Engine Marketing (SEM), Social Media Marketing (SMM), and crucial online reputation enhancement strategies. It is a powerful and accurate solution for businesses seeking to bolster their online presence. The term "integration" is a pivotal concept in the realm of expertise addressed in the response. The present package encompasses a comprehensive array of instruments. Garrido-Moreno et al. (2020) suggest that promotional strategies such as traditional promotion, press releases, advertising content, sponsored articles, social media exposure, and travel video ads can be employed to promote a product or service.

The development of ecotourism villages in Pakistan adopts an entrepreneurial approach. The village has water resources, rivers, forest reserves, and biodiversity. Networking to increase social well-being and foster a sense of belonging and commitment to life and environmental sustainability is an important part of social entrepreneurship development (Fatima et al., 2021). The purpose of the observation has changed to describe the application of the social marketer image in the development of ecotourism villages in Pakistan. The research was carried out within the framework of public enterprise, using a popular method to explain the application of technical knowledge, era, and humanistic software in ecotourism villages in Pakistan. This research attempted to understand various tourism department strategies to promote Ecotourism and tourism. This research finds out how social media influencers benefit the tourism sector and the environment.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Ecotourism

Ecotourism is a conscientious visit to natural regions that protect the environment and the well-being of the local people. According to a survey conducted by The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) (TIES, 2015), Ecotourism is one of the fastest-growing divisions of the tourism business. The advantages of ecotourism are numerous, ranging from generating foreign cash to preserving cultural heritage (Honey, 2008). Ecotourism can also provide jobs and encourage entrepreneurship, particularly in rural regions (Spenceley, 2012). The Ministry of Tourism uses a variety of marketing tactics to promote ecotourism. Print media, digital marketing, television, radio, outdoor activities, and tourism fairs are examples of these strategies (Ministry of Tourism, n.d.). By adopting these marketing methods, the government can raise awareness and encourage more tourists to participate in ecotourism activities. Ecotourism promotion is a low-cost method of promoting sustainable tourism that fosters ethical and environmentally friendly company activities (Weaver, 2001). Governments may save money and set the road for future generations and companies to follow suit by promoting these practices. This can contribute to a more sustainable future by mitigating the negative effects of tourism on the environment and local communities.

Advantages of Ecotourism

There are many benefits of ecotourism; some are discussed as follows:

Helps Increase Foreign Exchange: Ecotourism aids in boosting the country's exchange rate as it helps attract many nature-loving foreign tourists. As ecotourism promotes sustainable development, nature enthusiasts and environmentalists will develop a greater interest in tourism and increase the number of international visitors.

Development of Infrastructural Facilities: Ecotourism will aid in bringing more income to the country without too much infrastructure, which will help the government to reduce the development cost of the destination, and lower costs and high income. Government profits can be spent on the surrounding infrastructure development.

Balanced Regional Development: Ecotourism supports the balanced development of nearby regions; traditional tourism often emphasizes taking travelers to less developed parts of the country. However, in the context of ecotourism, tourists travel to rural areas as most ecotourism places are far from urban areas. This can lead to an improved balance between national domains.

Generating Employment: Like any other industry, ecotourism affords many employment opportunities, as every ecotourism destination requires the hygiene, meals, and care of a majority of these employees, which in turn creates employment and related jobs, from time to time, even self-employment.

Maintain Peace and Goodwill: Ecotourism helps to build and maintain the country's peace and goodwill as it allows building the country's better image, shows its natural beauty, and displays the sectors and the ways to preserve it.

Popularize Remote Regions Across the Country: Ecotourism helps popularize unpopular or far off regions of the country by introducing tourism.

Helps in Rural Development: A number of the least advanced regions have the most stunning natural environment and assist the area to expand by way of developing rural areas of the country.

Promotion of sustainable development:

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Ecotourism promotes sustainable development, the foundation of the entire concept. It benefits the nation's heritage and culture. Ecotourism conveys the message that prosperity can be generated without harming the environment.

Help Guard Wildlife: Ecotourism revenue is frequently used for natural world conservation, as is not unusual in ecotourism associated with flora and fauna conservation parks.

Ecotourism in Pakistan

The government of Pakistan inaugurated the first ecotourism village in the Kahan Valley of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province in March 2022. This initiative allows visitors to experience the area's natural beauty while promoting the local community's well-being. The village is anticipated to attract tourists from the northern United States due to enhanced transportation and conservation efforts. Ecotourism is a form of sustainable tourism that prioritizes preserving natural and cultural resources while providing economic benefits to local communities. It is a rapidly expanding industry with the potential to generate substantial profits while mitigating environmental impacts. The establishment of an ecotourism village in Pakistan is commendable in light of the region's ongoing environmental degradation. Even though promoting tourism can have economic benefits, it can also have negative effects. The destruction of ecosystems and depletion of natural resources can result from unregulated tourism. The use of flying automobiles and the production of debris can result in environmental hazards with long-lasting effects.

Therefore, it is crucial to adopt sustainable tourism practices and policies that minimize negative impacts and promote the conservation of natural resources. Establishing an ecotourism village in Pakistan is a positive step towards sustainable tourism. However, it is essential to implement sustainable practices to minimize negative impacts on the environment. The promotion of personal spaces can play a vital role in the development of sustainable tourism practices. The adoption of sustainable tourism practices can lead to significant benefits for local communities, visitors, and the environment. Pakistan to Build the World's First High-Altitude Nature Corridor for Ecotourism.

The Ministry of Climate Change has launched an ecotourism initiative to promote sustainable tourism within the country. In a bold move, the ministry is planning to construct the world's first high-altitude Nature corridor, which will be located at an altitude of over 10,000 feet and cover a vast area of 4,000 square kilometers, stretching from Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) to the jurisdiction of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). This significant project will offer local and international tourists a unique opportunity to explore the region's rich biodiversity and exceptional topography. The Nature corridor will also protect the area's awe-inspiring flora and fauna, including the snow leopards, Himalayan brown bears, ibex, markhor (one of the national symbols of Pakistan), Ladakh urial, and blue sheep. Ecotourism is an environmentally-friendly way of promoting tourism, particularly in regions where the natural environment is a primary attraction. As the world continues to grapple with the effects of climate change and the destruction of natural habitats, it is vital to implement policies that support sustainable tourism practices that preserve the sanctity of indigenous lands and livelihoods.

Biodiverse Pakistan Struggles to Boost Ecotourism

Pakistan is often perceived through the prisms of terrorism and safety concerns. However, it is undoubtedly one of the few countries with a unique combination of records and biological diversity. The country has more South Asian nuclear countries. It offers infinite opportunities to observe wildlife, from the

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snow-capped hills in the north to the hot sea waters in the south, and sail in the mighty Indus River and deep-sea Arabian Sea, arousing ecological fanaticism. North Gilgit-Baltistan, which shares a border with neighboring China, features six peaks that soar above 8,000 meters above sea level, including K-2, the second highest in the world. Additionally, the area boasts more than 5,000 glaciers and over 100 lakes of different sizes, making it the largest freshwater reserve in the world. Ecological enthusiasts can also witness over 300 kinds of endangered snow leopards and brown bears in a breathtaking position.

Visitors can sail on the Indian River and observe the helpless dolphin and Indian puffer fish. Crystal glass dolphins can be found in the Indian River, particularly in the northeast and southeast regions of Pakistan, which span 1,300 kilometers (807 miles). Visitors can explore the highlands and reach the park with the range in Khunjerab, Gilgit-Baltistan, where they can witness national species like the Himalayan goats and the northern Churchra close to the Afghanistan border. In the southern and southwest regions of Balochistan Province, there are numerous opportunities to observe the natural world, as parks throughout the country feature a mixture of historical and biological diversity. However, according to local experts, Pakistan has been unable to completely capitalize on its unique biological diversity due to security concerns and a lack of centralized capabilities.

Marketing Strategies Used to Promote Ecotourism

Ecological tourism, responsible for visiting natural areas, prioritizes the protection of the environment and the overall health and well-being of the indigenous people. As a result, it allows vacations to improve their knowledge and understanding through education and interpretation. This sustainable tourism focuses on the journey and tourist boom of society. It is also academic, aiming to provide travelers with environmental information while promoting appreciation of natural habitats. This form of tourism encourages tourists to go to the environment with animals and plants and rich cultural backgrounds as the first tourist attraction. Ecological tourists benefit from the industry's uninteresting and relatively unintentional areas and have the opportunity to interact with biological components in the natural environment.

To find a responsible ecological tourism plan, please find projects that can strengthen the cultural integrity of indigenous peoples' land and minimize the terrible effects of everyday tourism practices. These projects not only promote eco-friendly habits like recycling, and best encouragement behavior, such as recycling, water saving, and power saving but also requires enterprises to create economic opportunities for locals living in this environment. Ecological tourism is the main upward driving force of morality and CSR (corporate social responsibility) driver. Therefore, it is beneficial to have an ecological tourism company because more people engage in activities responsible for the environment, which significantly impacts the environment. Therefore, if you want to create your environmental tourism organization or promote the establishment of the organization, there are some ways to allow you to promote your ecological tourism company on social networks to obtain the remaining results.

The following are the five methods to promote ecological tourism on social networks:

Encourage Conversation

Social networks serve as a platform for individuals to socialize and share information about themselves. In recent years, tourism organizations have witnessed a significant impact on their business due to the widespread use of social media. People frequently visit tourism blogs and social networks to research their next destinations. Thus, ecological tourism companies must engage in discussions on sustainable

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tourism through social media. By leveraging their knowledge and expertise, they can promote ecological tourism by educating all stakeholders and encouraging more individuals to participate in this activity. There are various strategies that companies can employ to foster conversations around ecological tourism. For example, they can hire bloggers to write about sustainable tourism and actively participate in tourism blogs on social media platforms. Creating and distributing articles about ecological tourism to tourists can also help raise awareness and promote the cause. Thus, ecological tourism companies need to engage with social media platforms to promote sustainable tourism. By leveraging social networks, organizations can educate and inspire individuals to participate in environmentally friendly travel practices.

CREATE AN ECOTOURISM DRIVEN CONTENT STRATEGY

Content is the king of social media; however, if the ingredient method is not used for appropriate ecological tourism, your content may not have the preferred impact. Therefore, when promoting your ecological tourism business on social media, please create a content strategy to combine you with the conventional tourism business. Your content needs robust emotional information and should be forced to take action. Infuse e-books, current affairs communication, movies, pictures, and blog articles into your methods.

Make Use of Infographics

An infographic is defined as information/fact that uses visible illustrations to explain or explain ideas. They allow visitors to strict standards that may be difficult or impossible in other circumstances. Through nature, humans can absorb and process information that can be better expressed visually; Therefore, infographics are first-class technologies for marketers to sell goods/products to consumers. The use of ecotourism documents and infographic-sharing activities can have a significant impact on your ecotourism business.

Create infographics to inspire and share your rich professional knowledge of ecotourism benefits. They should teach the environmental and cultural impact, the price impact, and other travelers who want to decide on travel vacations.

Build an Active Community of Eco-Travelers

Sales to people who do not know anything about ecotourism is one thing, and it is a completely excluded market factor for enlightened ecotourists. Creating an active social network with information and knowledge about the first-class environment and cultural tourism will help promote advertising. By developing this vacationer network, you have fostered networking, friendship, your sense of family, identity, unity, exclusion, and cooperation between members of this organization. The community will give you and the different contributors the right to speak so that they can allocate their wishes, expectations, and cases proportionately and make various proposals for each organization member to provide essential insights into the world of ecotourism. This network of ecological travelers can be an excellent asset. It will have followers and supporters and recommend and provide necessary feedback on your company and ecotourism based on their social system.

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Pay for Social Network Advertisement

Finally, if you are starting an ecological tourism company or trying to enter the market, you can pay for advertising on social networks. This can provide more impact for your content, make sure more people see your content and roughly describe the information you pass. According to reports, there were more than 100 million active customers on FB and Instagram in 2019. These social networks are the perfect place to start paid ecotourism ads. Google advertising is also an excellent way to promote your business. By training in these social networking promotion strategies, you can develop your community of followers and build a relationship with your loyal fans to disrupt ecotourism immediately.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social Media Influencers

While social media influencers have the potential to promote ecotourism in Pakistan, they are not the primary catalyst for its growth. The utilization of influencer marketing on social media platforms has the potential to increase public knowledge and interest in ecotourism destinations and promote the advantages of sustainable tourism practices. Nonetheless, additional variables, such as governmental regulations, infrastructure expansion, and community engagement, are imperative in promoting ecotourism. The success of ecotourism is contingent upon a conducive milieu that encompasses robust environmental safeguarding regulations, effectively administered conservation areas, and dedication from indigenous communities to sustainable resource management. Promoting ecotourism destinations can be facilitated by social media influencers, which may stimulate interest and motivate individuals to visit. However, the advancement and sustainability of ecotourism necessitate the cooperation and collaboration of various stakeholders.

The utilization of social media influencers can play a significant role in promoting ecotourism through the facilitation of outreach to a substantial and attentive audience, generation of hype and consciousness, and exhibition of exceptional and genuine encounters. Influencers' endorsements and personal encounters can serve as potent promotional instruments. At the same time, their visual media can provide prospective tourists with a tangible impression of the aesthetic and advantageous aspects of ecotourism locales. Through strategic collaboration with suitable influencers, ecotourism destinations can leverage the influencer's followership, establish trustworthiness, and stimulate tourism to the locality.

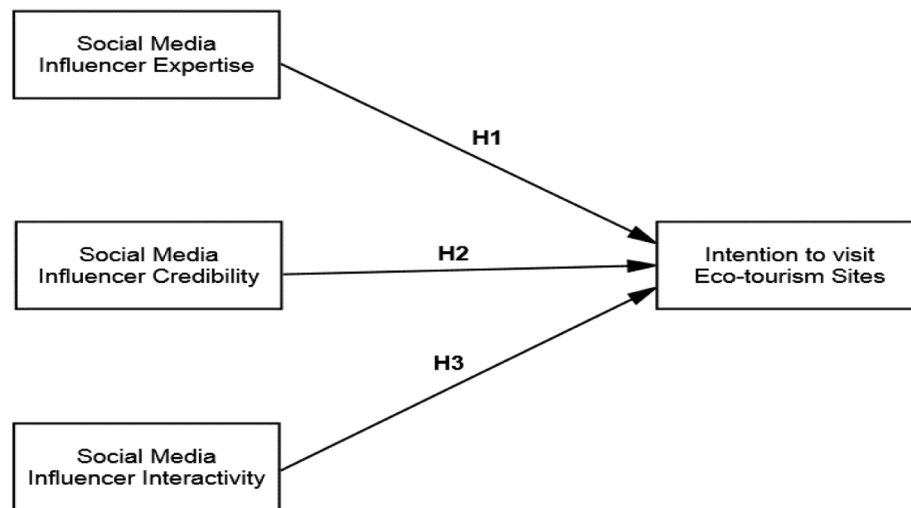
The utilization of social media influencers is crucial in promoting ecotourism due to their extensive reach and ability to engage a broad audience through their content. The individuals can generate aesthetically pleasing and captivating content about environmentally conscious tourism sites, activities, and methodologies. The promotion of ecotourism can potentially heighten consciousness and stimulate enthusiasm for sustainable travel alternatives, thereby potentially increasing the number of individuals who opt for such options (Aktan et al., 2021). Influencers have the potential to utilize their platform to endorse environmentally sustainable practices and increase consciousness regarding the significance of conscientious tourism. The implementation of this measure has the potential to generate a positive effect on the environment and contribute to the conservation of natural habitats for posterity. In the realm of tourism, influencers can showcase conscientious practices and promote environmentally sustainable alternatives to their audience. Furthermore, the content produced by influencers has the potential to

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generate higher levels of engagement and pique interest among audiences, ultimately resulting in a rise in reservations for environmentally conscious tour operators and locations. In summary, social media influencers' substantial outreach and perceived reliability render them efficacious instruments for endorsing ecotourism and advancing sustainable travel behaviors.

The presented theoretical model in this study is based on the elaboration likelihood model, as depicted in the figure. The research put forth three hypotheses regarding the various facets of social media influencers that hold significance in digital marketing, specifically in shaping ecotourism through destination image.

Figure 1. Theoretical model



Influencers are not necessary to promote ecotourism, but they can be useful in reaching a wider audience and increasing awareness of ecotourism and sustainable travel practices. Other ways to promote ecotourism include traditional advertising, targeted marketing campaigns, partnerships with travel companies and organizations, and providing travelers with education and resources (Hui et al., 2023). Ultimately, the effectiveness of any promotion strategy will depend on various factors, such as the target audience, the specific goals and objectives, and the resources available.

Social media influencers can promote ecotourism in Pakistan by raising awareness about the country's natural attractions and the importance of sustainable tourism practices (Khan et al., 2022). Influencers with large followings on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok can reach a large audience and share their experiences and perspectives on ecotourism destinations in Pakistan. This can inspire others to visit these places and support sustainable tourism initiatives. However, it is important to note that social media influencers are not the sole or significant cause of promoting ecotourism in Pakistan. Other factors such as government initiatives, local community involvement, and the quality of infrastructure and services offered in ecotourism destinations also significantly promote sustainable tourism in the country. The study proposed that social media influencers are critical in shaping the intention to visit ecotourism sites. The study-based elaboration likelihood model showed that when people perceived the

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social media influencer as more credible, expert, and interactive in responding to the viewers' queries, there would be more chances of altering their intention to visit ecotourism sites. The elaboration likelihood model noted that the people perceived source credibility and expertized support the higher degree of engagement by providing them shortcuts, and it is hypothesized that:

H1: Social Media influencer expertise will positively influence the intention to visit Ecotourism Sites.

Recent literature suggests that social media influencers significantly influence consumer behavior, including travel decisions (Xiao, Wang and Chan-Olmsted, 2018). According to a study by Ariffin et al. (2019), social media influencers positively impact consumers' intention to visit ecotourism destinations. Another study by Sarmah and Sarmah (2019) found that social media influencers significantly affect consumer behavior toward ecotourism sites. Similarly, a study by Kumar and Manchanda (2021) found that social media influencers' credibility positively affects consumers' intention to visit ecotourism sites. These studies support the hypothesis that social media influencers' credibility positively influences the intention to visit ecotourism sites.

H2: Social media influencer's credibility will positively influence the intentions to visit Ecotourism sites.

Recent literature suggests that social media influencer marketing has become an increasingly popular strategy for promoting tourism destinations and activities (Lee and Eastin, 2021). Interactivity between social media influencers and their followers is a key factor in building trust and credibility, leading to increased intentions to visit tourist destinations. Studies have found that social media influencer interactivity can significantly impact travel intentions, with a positive relationship between interactivity and destination choice (Zaman et al., 2021). In the context of ecotourism in Pakistan, social media influencer interactivity may be particularly important in building awareness and interest in ecotourism sites. For example, a study by Khan et al. (2021) found that social media influencers significantly impacted the intentions of tourists to visit ecotourism sites in Pakistan. Similarly, a study by Ahmad et al. (2020) found that social media influencer marketing effectively promoted ecotourism destinations in Pakistan, with interactivity playing a key role in building trust and credibility. Recent literature supports the hypothesis that social media influencer interactivity will positively influence the intentions to visit ecotourism sites in Pakistan.

H3: Social media influencer interactivity will positively influence the intentions to visit Ecotourism sites.

Research Design

Conducting online surveys has become a standard method to collect responses from social media users about their perceptions of ecotourism's influence on social media. In this study, we aimed to gather valuable data and gain insights into the views of social media users regarding ecotourism. We followed proper research methodology to achieve this goal, including appropriate sampling techniques, sample size determination, and statistical analysis. The study's target population was individuals or organizations who use social media platforms. To ensure a representative sample, we used the continent sampling method to reach a sample size of 500. A sample size of 250 was deemed appropriate using a formula proposed by Mendenhall, Reinmuth, and Beaver (1993), based on the total number of items in the study.

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The study followed the rule of thumb suggested by Hairs et al. (2017), which states that a minimum of five participants per item is required. Google Form Survey was distributed to the sample through online platforms like Qualtrics, Survey Monkey, Facebook, and Twitter. The survey was designed to cover various aspects of ecotourism's influence on social media, and a set of questions were used to gather data from the sample.

MEASUREMENTS

Social Media Influencer Expertise

This research adapted and modified the three-item scale to measure social media influencers' expertise from the work of Lee and Eastin (2021) on the five-point Likert scale anchoring; "1 = strongly disagree 5 = strongly agree". The respondents were requested to assess the social media influencer in the context of their expertise. The items' statements read as follows: "The social media influencer to me ..." (1) "Is skilled in their field (2) Is very knowledgeable in their field (3) Demonstrates a natural ability in their field".

Social Media influencer credibility

This research adapted and modified the five-item scale to measure social media influencers' credibility from the work of Xiao et al. (2018) on the five-point Likert scale anchoring; "1 = strongly disagree 5 = strongly agree". The respondents were requested to assess the social media influencer in the context of their credibility. The items' statements read as follows: "The social media influencer to me ..." (1) "provide reliable information (2) provide credible information (3) provide believable information". These videos provide believable information (4) provide trustworthy information, and (5) provide accurate information."

Social Media Influencer Interactivity.

This research adapted and modified the three-item scale to measure social media influencer expertise from the work of Yuan et al. (2021) and Han, Hsu, and Sheu (2010) on the five-point Likert scale anchoring; "1 = strongly disagree 5 = strongly agree". The respondents were requested to assess the social media influencers' perceived interactivity. The items' statements read as follows: The social media influencer to me," (1) "Social media influencers often communicate with the audience about the product online, (2) I will respond positively to the topic launched by social media influencers. (3) Social media influencers always respond positively to my questions or topics.

Intention to Visit Ecotourism Sites

This study used a three-item scale measuring intention to visit ecotourism sites from the literature Chen and Tung (2014) on the five-point Likert scale anchoring: "1 = strongly disagree 5 = strongly agree". The scale is used to tap the intention to visit ecotourism sites due to exposure to the contents created by social influences, an important domain in this research. The items used to measure intention to visit

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ecotourism sites read as (1) “After viewing content by the social media influencer on ecotourism sites, I predict that I will choose an ecotourism site to visit,” (2) “I am willing to visit ecotourism sites,” and (3) “Given the information in the content by the social media influencer on ecotourism sites, I am willing to visit ecotourism sites.”

RESULTS

The analysis started with the evaluation of the data normality and distribution. Therefore, the Means and standard deviations are reported in Table 1 for all study variables. The descriptive analysis was carried out using the SPSS software, and all variables were computed based on the measurements before this procedure.

Table 1. Descriptive analysis

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social Media influencer Expertise	2.4575	.74431
Social Media influencer Credulity	2.3767	.91405
Social Media influencer Interactivity	2.3517	.95382
Intention to visit Ecotourism Sites	2.3747	.72591

N=500

The analysis was initiated with descriptive analysis and included the data’s normality assessment using the outliers’ analysis. The outliers’ analysis results revealed the data’s abnormality and recommended 30 outliers that were problematic in attaining normality. Statistical analysis for the normality check was performed after obtaining normal data after removing 30 outliers’ cases. Based on the satisfactory values of the Skewness and Kurtosis, the results suggested that the data was normal to proceed with further analysis. The values of the Skewness and Kurtosis are available in Table 2.

Table 2. Normality analysis

Variables	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Social Media influencer Expertise	470	2.096	1.141	.976	2.281
Social Media Influencer Credulity	470	3.968	1.141	.533	2.281
Social Media influencer Interactivity	470	3.025	1.141	.154	2.281
Intention to visit Ecotourism Sites	470	3.052	1.141	.155	2.281

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The analysis was initiated with descriptive analysis, including the data’s normality calculation, followed by the reliability analysis. The statistics presented in Table 3 revealed that all measures were reliably used to measure the variables, namely, social media influencer expertise, credulity, interactivity, and intention to visit ecotourism sites.

Table 3. Reliability analysis

Variables	α
Social Media influencer Expertise	0.859
Social Media Influencer Credulity	0.795
Social Media influencer Interactivity	0.891
Intention to visit Ecotourism Sites	0.827

After the deletion of outliers to achieve normality, a reliability analysis was also satisfactory. Then the analysis was followed by correlation analysis. The correlation presented in Table 4 revealed that all variables of this study, social media influencer expertise, social media influencer credulity, social media influencer interactivity and intention to visit ecotourism sites significantly correlate with each other. The correlation analysis reported in Table 4 is based on Pearson’s test, with significant values.

Table 4. Correlation analysis

Variables	SME	SMC	SMI	IVEC
Social Media influencer Expertise	1			
Social Media Influencer Credulity	.673**	1		
Social Media influencer Interactivity	.762**	.685**	1	
Intention to visit Ecotourism Sites	.655**	.863**	.654**	1

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

Structural Equation Modeling: Discriminant Validity

The widely utilized statistical method, structural equation modeling (SEM), is used to mainly research connections based on structures in this research. SEM includes several mathematical, statistical, and other models. This method is well known to be efficient in detecting latent constructs. This, simply put, is a mix of the multiple regression analysis and factor analysis principles that many of us may already be acquainted with. In actuality, it is a generalization of the linear model. Many different regression algorithms may be tested simultaneously. A SEM model allows for several statistical methods, like path analysis, confirmatory component analysis, and latent growth modeling. This is noteworthy since SEM covers various conventional and complicated models. It also facilitates modeling with latent variables and is excellent in multiple regression and variance evaluation. This research evaluated discriminant validity using the Fornell larcker criterion ratio on AMOS. This approach is superior and recommended

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as the steadfast technique for computing discriminant validity. The HTMT ratio reported that discriminant validity was satisfied in this study. The Fornell larcker criterion ratio values were within the standard values (see Table 5).

Table 5. Discriminant validity

Variables	SME	SMC	SMI	IVEC
Social Media influencer Expertise	(0.678)			
Social Media Influencer Credulity	.32	(0.713)		
Social Media influencer Interactivity	.52	.45	(0.636)	
Intention to visit Ecotourism Sites	.31	.43	.47	(0.729)

Hypothesis Testing

The proposed hypotheses were tested utilizing the path coefficients significance indicator on AMOS. The research employed the bootstrapping technique by utilizing 500 sub-samples. The path analysis provides multiple validations of the results and uses t-values and p-values of the parameters (Hair et al., 2019). The research put forth three hypotheses that aimed to measure the direct impact of (H1) the proficiency of Social Media influencers, (H2) the credibility of Social Media influencers, and (H3) the interactivity of Social Media influencers on the inclination to visit Ecotourism sites.

The findings were derived from the structural model, which was determined to be reliable and appropriate based on various indices used for verification, such as $\chi^2/df=2.78$, TLI=0.96, NFI=0.97, GFI=0.93, and CFI=0.96. The findings indicate that the structural model was deemed valid to evaluate the hypotheses. The findings presented in Table 6 and Figure 2 indicate that the level of expertise exhibited by Social Media influencers directly and statistically significantly impacted the likelihood of individuals intending to visit ecotourism sites ($\beta=0.43$). These results support Hypothesis 1, as demonstrated in Figure 2 and Table 6.

Additionally, the findings have confirmed that the credibility of social media influencers has a direct and significant impact on the inclination to visit ecotourism destinations ($\beta=0.51$), thereby supporting hypothesis H2. The findings ultimately corroborated hypothesis three (H3). The study’s findings indicate a direct and significant relationship between social media influencer interactivity and the intention to visit ecotourism sites ($\beta=0.37$). Concerning the R2 values, the model utilized in the study elucidates 59.8% of the variability in the intentions to visit ecotourism sites. Hence, social media influencers are crucial in promoting the intention to visit ecotourism destinations. The study confirmed that the antecedent of the intention to visit ecotourism sites is positively influenced by all factors associated with social media influencers.

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Figure 2. Structural model main effects

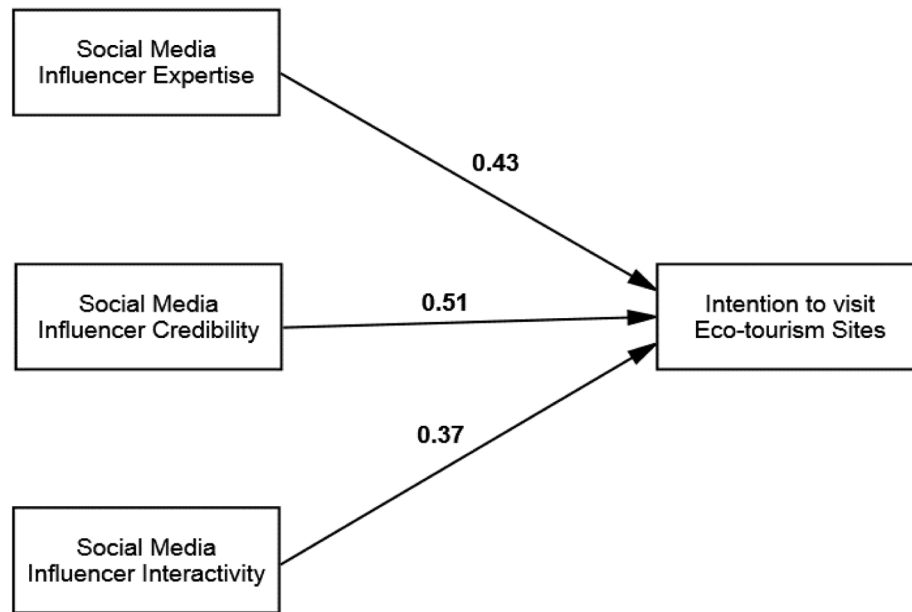


Table 6. Direct effects

Hypotheses Testing	β	t	P	Decision
Social Media Influencer expertise -> IVE	0.43	3.74	0.01	Support
Social media influencer’s credibility -> IVE	0.51	4.22	0.01	Support
Social media influencer interactivity -> IVE	0.37	3.45	0.01	Support

IVE= Intention to visit Ecotourism Sites

Discussion

Social media influencers’ utilization to promote ecotourism is a subject of contention within the tourism sector. Lin and Lee (2021) posit that social media influencers are perceived as efficacious in accessing a substantial and committed viewership and advocating for sustainable tourism practices. Social media influencers can exhibit environmentally conscious destinations that are not widely recognized, thus motivating their audience to engage in responsible and sustainable travel practices. Nonetheless, a critique exists that certain influencers may partake in the practice of “greenwashing,” which involves endorsing destinations or activities as environmentally sustainable without conducting a comprehensive assessment or validating their ecological footprint (Huang et al., 2021). The phenomenon above has the potential to result in tourism practices that are not environmentally sustainable, thereby exacerbating the deterioration of fragile ecosystems.

Influencers must engage in self-education and exercise mindfulness regarding their influence to promote ecotourism responsibly and accurately. According to Lin and Lee (2021), it is imperative for individuals who follow influencers to engage in critical evaluation of the content and messages dissemi-

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nated by these individuals. The significance of this matter stems from the fact that influencer culture has the potential to oversimplify intricate environmental concerns and sustain unsustainable practices, as posited by Shen et al. (2021). The potential of social media as a potent instrument for endorsing environmentally sustainable practices and destinations was acknowledged even during its nascent phase (Wang & Chen, 2011). Entities and persons have conducted trials utilizing social media for this objective. Further research must examine how social media influencers contribute to promoting ecotourism and ensure that their promotional efforts are characterized by accuracy, responsibility, and a genuine commitment to sustainable tourism practices.

Prominent contemporary patterns in digital marketing encompass social media influencer marketing. This research aims to comprehend the impact of social media influencer trends on their reputation and their role as intermediaries in influencing customers' purchasing objectives. The impact of credibility on influencer credibility and customer purchase intention is significant, as posited by the source credibility model (Khan et al., 2022) and supported by hypotheses H3 and H4. Consistent with prior research, the dependability of an influencer and the extent to which consumers trust them have a notable effect on purchase intention (Arli, 2017; Cheung et al., 2012).

Influencers frequently endeavor to generate and disseminate educational content to captivate and maintain their social media followers. Consequently, it is reasonable to assert that the informational value of an influencer's content can substantially impact the propensity of their fans to make purchases. Simultaneously, the significance of influencer content's dependability in shaping influencer credibility and consumers' purchase intention is increasingly crucial, corroborating the previous research findings (Zaman et al., 2022). Hence, it is perturbing that social media users are susceptible to the impact of influencers who provide them with high-quality and captivating content, thereby affecting their inclination to purchase. Furthermore, the significance of influencers' credibility in impacting customers' purchase intention is noteworthy (supporting H2), aligning with the findings of prior research conducted by Hayes and Carr (2015).

Contrary to the current body of literature, it has been found that influencer expertise does not significantly shape influencer credibility and consumer purchase intention. This finding does not provide support for hypotheses H1 and H2. Furthermore, based on prior research findings, the similarity between influencers appears to have no significant impact on said influencers' trustworthiness and purchase intention (without supporting hypotheses H-H3). This suggests that customers prioritize the opinions of other customers over the physical appearance and personality of the influencer—the subject matter of social media influencer posts. In conclusion, concerning the mediating function of trustworthiness, it has been observed that trustworthiness exerts a significant and superior indirect impact on purchase intention, which is in line with the findings of earlier research.

Nonetheless, the study in question deviated from its original focus on influencer advertising, rendering its findings distinct. Although the influencers' exceptional track record, proficiency, and engagement indirectly impact purchase intention through their reliability, as corroborated by H1 and H3, these results cannot be juxtaposed with those of extant literature. In contrast to formulaic speculative assumptions, the impact of expertise and trust on purchase objectives was not directly mediated by trustworthiness, thereby refuting H1 and H2.

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Theoretical and Managerial Implications

The text has not explicitly mentioned the context of social media influencers and ecotourism. However, the text discusses the influence of online entertainment hubs in India on purchase prospects and the role of powerful characteristics in influencing purchase intentions through the mediation of persuasion. In ecotourism, social media influencers can significantly promote sustainable tourism practices and encourage responsible travel behavior among their followers. According to a study by Aslam and Ali (2021), social media influencers' credibility, expertise, and trustworthiness significantly influence their followers' attitudes toward ecotourism and their intention to engage in sustainable tourism practices.

Furthermore, social media influencers can leverage their persuasive power to promote responsible tourism practices and raise awareness about the environmental impacts of tourism. According to a study by Kim and Ko (2021), social media influencers' persuasive messages that emphasize the environmental consequences of tourism positively influence their followers' intention to engage in responsible travel behavior. By identifying unique features influencing fan buying expectations, teams can be more confident that their strong fans will respond to accelerated bidding and sign awareness if any (Lim, Kim, & Kim, 2019). Their selection should be considered with definite qualifications. These trends and discriminators will influence consumers' purchase intentions (Lee & Ko, 2020). In this way, advertisers should try to locate, find, and connect with cited powerhouses to achieve their sales goals (Kim, Ko, & Lim, 2020). Advertisers must consider selecting an appropriate web-based entertainment-only hub to add credibility to offers in influencer buying objectives (Jeong & Oh, 2021). Advertisers should focus more on choosing a powerhouse whose content can depend highly on their followers (Lee & Lee, 2019). Finally, advertisers must recruit a strong force of promotional content materials to provide their audiences with inspirational and engaging content throughout the cooperation process (Chen, Chen, & Lin, 2019).

Limitations and Future Research

The knowledge of this question focuses on the multiple limits of this exam and what the concept should be. In the first place, the sample size of this review is too small to be summarized for India's large population, with the majority of respondents aged between 19-30 years. Therefore, future studies should employ larger sample sizes and draw attention to collectors older than 40, as their perceptions of strong incentives may be explicit. Likewise, those taking the assessment found a place in the metropolis' public presence and were more receptive to innovation and digital entertainment. You may need to keep this in mind for future exams. Era. a. Rustic class is aimed at more Indians. If agencies cannot reach them through strong sales due to mechanical barriers, then the development of printed matter is what India class needs to focus on. It will be an important issue marker to consider along with the showcase. In addition, quantitative tests were used to identify respondents for the survey. Therefore, if probabilistic testing techniques can be applied in future studies to accumulate statistics, at this time, the generalizability of findings can be taken to a new level.

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CONCLUSION

Influencers can reach and engage a large, targeted audience, making them an effective tool for promoting ecotourism destinations and activities. This can include sharing personal experiences, showcasing eco-friendly practices, and highlighting the benefits of ecotourism for both the environment and local communities. However, it is essential for influencers to accurately and authentically communicate the benefits and challenges of ecotourism to ensure their message is aligned with sustainability and responsible travel principles. Influencers can significantly promote ecotourism through their impactful platform and encourage travelers to make more sustainable travel choices.

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Chapter 22

Structured–Deliberative Gossip: A Theory in Understanding Patterns of Political Communication in Society

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ABSTRACT

Ideas and government policies, whatever they are, are ventilated on step-motherly ration and fanned as ‘gossip’, sometimes, to test their popularity or otherwise before they are implemented. Employing deduction from observation, and using longitudinal approach and literature, findings of this investigation reveal that governments in the Global South adopt this communication strategy as an inverted feedback mechanism for policies they are not certain will enjoy public acceptability. The exploratory study stretches the parameters of the usage of the tactics by interrogating earlier theories like grapevine, propaganda. The study lays a foundation of the operational principles and applicability of a new political communication theory, structured-deliberative gossip theory (or grapevine info-filter theory), especially on matters of plebiscites in the Global South.

Structured-Deliberative Gossip

INTRODUCTION

Uncertainty drives anxiety and desperation sometimes in people as well as Governments. In the later, the tangle comes off as a neck-breaking exercise; much of the time attempting alchemy with self-imposed private ideas intended to impress and sedate society to tow authority's path and line of reasoning, in most climes. The means of doing that is often sheath in lots of indecipherable ornaments of spins, free-flying, in the shape of rumor; either as convenient construct of 'truths', or emotive lies and shiny actions and even inactions that model a discretize reality (Gallup, 2016; Serota, Levine, & Boster, 2010; Daza, Vilca, Salinas, Pomereda and Quico, 2021) that people barely remember to question the inner drive of the anticipated goal of the dispatched gossip, which looks a bit like grey propaganda (Baran and Davis, 2006) or the rat bite-and-blow tactics (Onobe, 2012).

Therefore, many of the theatricals that go with subterranean policies are clearly outside the parameters of morality for many ethicists. Hence, George Orwell (1946/2001) says, "Politics itself is a mass of lies, evasions, folly, hatred, and schizophrenia." Oftentimes executive fabrications come off masquerading first as indecisiveness and released later in piecemeal as gossips. However, Meibauer (2018) thinks there are existential benefits of even lies, (white lies) in many pro-social contexts, permissible under certain cultural settings in the broader definition of politeness and manipulation (McGinn 2008; Leech, 2014; Coons & Weber 2014; Stanley 2015). However, to many, truth has not only become complex (Kunne 2003), but appears to have slipped into being a victim and casualty of subversion for the longest. Rogues of truth, because of the exigencies of emerging technologies, earn newer respect and could be autographing as admirable stuntmen, instituting a novel order of elitist game of conquest for most states and actors of guarded thrones.

Latching on available media, many politicians explore the complacency (Carson 2006, 2010; Saul 2012) of society's humanistic tendency in what Levine (2014) describes in his Truth-default Theory as a condescending assumption, actively or passively, that another person's communication is benched on honesty; independent of actual honesty (Clementson, 2017), though. For example, when ideological nurseries are prepared to launch seed plans either by unsettling the statuesque with a mute question or a statement indicating imperatives, a lie may have been cutely adorned to appeal in a manner that violates sincerity conditions; which makes lying independent of declarative sentences (Onobe, 2012) as the prototypical bearers of assertions.

By contrast, Dynel (2015, 2016) applies a Gricean framework and holds that even deceptive irony, metaphor, hyperbole, and meiosis should be acknowledged as genuine cases of lying (Meibauer 2018, p.360). It is the preponderance of this tradition on the political landscape that makes many like Keane (2018, p.1) to surmise that politics is characterized by a symphony of the "art of evasion, befuddlement"; often steep in crass dishonesty.

History recalls for instance that even Plato's fib is, generally, dignified as a 'gallant' art. Similarly elites now canonize Machiavelli's preachment that a successful prince ought to be a great pretender and dissembler. Dishonesty has appreciated as alibi for doggerly, and it is catholicized by a great many in places of authority (Srouf, 2021). As Machiavelli once argues, without empirical justification though that, "Princes have done great things who have held faith of small account, and who have known how, with their cleverness, to trick men's brains, and at the end they have surpassed those who founded themselves on sincerity".

Structured-Deliberative Gossip

The linguistics of double-speak is deeper than it appears (Meibauer, 2018). It no doubt comes across distinct from rumors, although it rides on its crest especially in this age that everything wings freely on social media. What it is exactly seems elusive given all it has hacked, picked and mimicked in its evolutionary trajectory. Should it be described as a lie, dishonesty, rumor, propaganda, conspiracy theory, alternative truth, or post-truth? Its circumstantial alignment gives it mutational pass with no permanent distinct traits or identity. Point is, these synonyms; although they have specificity in technical application, can be operationalized differently Mearsheimer (2011).

What that suggest more than anything is that its' meaning and curious identity of phenomenon could become apparent when investigated as a model for a means to an end rather than the means. Spins, lies, deception, gossip and rumour are veritable instruments used as scaffolding in political communication strategies.

The tradition of passage for most politicians that incubate plans is: well-hatched, well-nursed and groomed ideas take slippery form and in their transition to popularity with the led (masses) place-and-shape-shift, just as orphans. On the course they get adopted, possibly suffer mistreatment, endure step-motherly tolerance and exposure to the harsh elements of destitution before they are embraced as heroic, princely and noble ideas; depending of course on the appraisal yardstick employed. Studies reveal that such ordeal of ambivalence has seized and shaken also the colony of 'truth', (Terkourafi 2010; Swol and Braun, 2013; Bó'rjesson, 2014; Schoubye & Stokke 2016; Wagener, 2019) a turf that has been a martyr; having been denominated and splintered by superlatives like post truth (Harsin, 2018) and many other concepts. According to Keane (2018, p.1), the end of politicians may be, "to disorient and destabilize people. They want to harness people's self-doubts, ruin their capacity for seeing the world ironically, and destroy their capacity for making judgments, in order to drive them durably into submission".

Perhaps there is a swath of field that lies outside the moral framework of truth, maybe demilitarized and bereaved of political correctness open especially for executive appropriation; which begs for exploration rather than a hurried simplistic conclusions by many like Keane's (2018). Literature has not identified truth as human invention or dazzling attribute of nobility without any evocation. It also has not shown that any society's existential, wayfaring evolution must take defined courses or satisfy prescribed outline for recognition and adoption. Rather, Keane (2018) and others see a diametrically polarized wall between political communication/ambition and the grounds of truth. Philosophers like Hannah Arendt, share the opinion that "Truthfulness has never been counted among the political virtues, and lies have always been regarded as justifiable tools in political dealings" (Arendt 1971, 4). Be that as it may, Arendt identifies a veiled tool in lies, what Mearsheimer (2011) sees more as a strategic gibbet in political communication.

Hence more than any previous times, a huge variable in the game of sentiments' manipulation have been the media (Fitzpatrick, 2018). The intervention of the media, particularly its convergent posture, mirrors and melts down walls of distinctions of concepts and surreptitiously harmonizes perceived end for all the means with their expansive frontiers of artificial intelligence and endless innovations of algorithmic auxiliary.

Literature exist regarding truth, spin, lies; deception in meta-literature and disciplines (DePaulo, Lindsay, Malone, Muhlenbruck, Charlton, and Cooper, 2003; Srour, 2021) including theories like, Information Manipulation theory (McCornack, 1992, 2014), Activation-Decision-Construction-Action Theory (Walczyk, Harris, Duck, and Mulay, 2014) and Truth-Default-Theory (Levine, 2014) that explain, for example, a receptors psychological disposition as seed bed. Sometimes, political messages reveal desperation that betrays reason especially when they "employ tricky language designed to discourage reflective thought" (Onobe, 2012, p.12). They are however handicapped in explaining the phenomenon

Structured-Deliberative Gossip

of: why executives' lie, indulge in cover-ups, sponsor rumors/gossips; and why their 'creativity' have become so emblemized in political quarters especially when dealing with publics, internal especially (Alterman, 2004; Mearsheimer, 2011)?

It then becomes intriguing to ruminate in this study concerns like: why government sponsors smokes, propaganda, sophisticated forgeries and sometimes, hostile social manipulation (Mazarr, Casey, Demus, Harold, Matthews, Beauchamp-Mustafaga and Sladden 2019)? Why camouflaged intentions are stealthily sent as dispatch riders garbed sometimes as rumors or any other definition by many political elites on media platforms? Should the trajectory of rumors and double-speak in political communication justify ends? What pattern of deliberation can be evident in politicians' use of gossip and rumor in camouflaged political communication?

This research therefore tends towards instituting a theory the authors dub: Structured-Deliberative Gossip theory (aka Grapevine Info-Filter Theory) to explicate political communication and audience control mechanisms common in most climes, especially in the economies that are post democratic and quasi democratic.

Reconstructing the Nexus Between Propaganda and Power

In itself, propaganda is a cart that carries variant intentions. Usage may not define it in general sense, except the character of its specie. Therefore many people classify it into types, (Rusu and Herman, 2018), namely: white, black and gray (Ngoa, 2011; Rusu and Herman, 2018). Its matrix streams back to the courtyard of ecclesiastical tradition spawned by clerics and pontiffs. According to Pratkanis & Aronson (2001) the word propaganda gained recognition from around 1622 with the establishment of the *sacre congregatio de propaganda fide* – which means, the sacred congregation of propagation (propaganda) of faith. The context of its matrix is intriguing, which clearly was: to defend a certain territorial niche and strengthen the papal ideology that had been poached and pulverized by the Lutheran Protestantism and the Reformation train, period! From that mystical matrix it flowered to other areas like politics.

Although simplistic, the fangs of political propaganda burrow serendipitously (Rusu and Herman, 2018) into the turf of any existing system. The objectives of engaging propaganda according to Harrold Lasswell 1927 mentioned by Severin and Tankard (2001, p.109) are four, namely:

- To mobilize hatred against the enemy
- To preserve the friendship of allies
- To preserve friendship and if possible, to procure the co-operation of neutrals
- To demoralize the enemy...

In the context of these objectives, controversial skills and manipulative strategies targeted at the educated or uneducated, such as embellished lies or half 'truth', by-any-means-necessary nukes are activated (Lenin, 1902; Kenez, 1985). Thus, political propaganda uses a dragnet of communication shrapnel like: symbols, memes and cues, rumours, disinformation etc., volleyed for the purpose of solely manipulating and controlling public opinion sphere via social media supremacies (Severin and Tankard, 2001; Chomsky, 1988).

Common tactics in the armory are: use of glittering generality (Wilson, 1989), a propaganda activity that associates something with a 'virtue word' in order to make people accept, love or approve of it without proper examination of the evidence; card stacking, that is the selection and use of facts or

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falsehoods, illustrations, distractions, logical or illogical statements in order to give the best or worst possible case for an idea, person, policy etc.

It could also use sympathy paddle, which is swimming against the current of popular view and making people see by numerous arguments that detractors are isolating one for target, just as is evident in President Vladimir Putin's integrated strategy in the on-going war between Russia and Ukraine, (Brandt and Wirtschafter, 2022; Kowalski, 2022). Similarly, during General Sani Abacha's junta, Nigeria, in the 1990s; there was a characteristic display of that mantra when the world rose to condemn the hanging, execution, of the playwright and environmental activist, Ken Saro-Wiwa and the 'Ogoni eight'. In the words of the Economist (December 9, 1995 issue), cited in Ngoa (2011, p.246), the Abacha's government "blithely floated on waves of its own phantasmagorical propaganda of being victim of a global conspiracy". However, in locating the ideology of propaganda, perhaps attention needs be paid to a set of beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviors, as well as ways of perceiving and thinking that constitute a set of norms, which dictate what is desirable and what should be done (Jowett and O'Donnell 1999, p.281).

Propaganda of course can be engineered to be adversarial. In international politics, Pan Africanist Marcus Garvey, cited in Oladimeji, (1987, p.254) alluded to it as having a "scientifically arranged" outlook and the result comes off impressive because it "has done more to defeat the good intention of races and nations than open warfare". The reason that is possible is because of its mix of audacity and diplomacy in appropriation by lobbyists and strategists. When they are ruthless, propaganda appears as, what Sir Ian Hamilton (The Soul and body of an Army, X. 1921) cited in Oladimeji, (ibid, p.251), puts it "Inverted patriotism, [that] draws nourishment from the sins of the enemy". If there are no sins, [the onus is squarely on you to] "invent them: the aim is to make the enemy appear so great a monster that he forfeits the rights of a human being" – parenthesis ours.

In adversarial propaganda, objectivity is lean, shortsighted and introspective as the propagandist often insists on the purity of his/her own intentions (Ellul 1973, p.58). In addition, a propagandist hurls accusations at his/her enemy of the very intention that he/she has and of trying to commit the very crime that he himself is about to commit (Rank, 2004). With such a tactic, propagandists can "persuade listeners and 'honest people' that they are being attacked and are justified in taking whatever measures are necessary for legitimate self-defense" (Muchielli quoted in Beyers 2002, p. 3).

The government controls, similarly, the sphere of collective minds with outright flack, a condition for it to sow its real intention into people's mental nurseries. It often exploits the assumption of truth-default state and truth-bias, i.e., the tendency to believe that another person's communication is honest, independently of its actual honesty (Levine et al., 1999; McCornack & Parks, 1986). This strategy fails a stealth test for homeland use because of the decibel of its obvious, self-serving mendacity.

Truth and Tricks in Political Speech: An Evolving Stratagem

Some instances of governmental deception have achieved great notoriety with sparing use of subversion, as was the case in the Non-aggression Pact of Stalin and Hitler – a classical misrepresentations case by the two leaders according to some researchers (Deacon, 1986; Handel, 2012). In the USA there was the Watergate brouhaha and earlier misrepresentations about the conflict in Vietnam. In the UK, the Belgrano affair and the 1985 national coal strike occasioned allegations of misrepresentation or lying. Another example is the discovery in 1994 that the South African government had lied concerning its collaboration with Israel on nuclear development, notably with regard to the exchange of 600 tons of uranium in exchange for 30 grams of tritium. The veneer was there in each of those instances; just eye-patched.

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When truth is denominationalized into subjective tracks, (his/her truth, different from their truth; for example) does it retain its essence or it is, with each dub, devalued into something of less cachet and nomenclature? Can truth be absolute and when it responds to ‘modifications’, or when it becomes factionalized what becomes its status? The solvency of truth continues, therefore, to be debated with spectacles of this incredulous inquisitiveness, especially now that we have retailing platforms of expression generally christened new media.

However, evaluating truth outside the monastery of morality, metaphysics and mysticism (where its virtues of absolutism and omniscience is elevated as a supreme cloud of unknowing by subjects), the characteristics of its essence is less crowded by bets; impressionistic denomination of belief with less-flagellation and a thin ridge of ideological ethnicity. All that is required, without taking anything away from truth and its hallowed frame, is an appreciation of fact as a more tinged and negotiated belt where a weightier payload of evidence is installed as a mortar of reason. In the tradition of our colloquialism, fact has gained acceptable retail value in interpersonal relationships as well as in other human institutions. Interventions are substantiated by facts in human interactions. However, facts remain fickle and subjective, swinging on the pendulum of territorially negotiated opinion and interpretations even in the media courtyard (Hepp 2013; Rawolle and Lingard 2014); depending of course on who has more of it. Like democracy, the more of it anyone can throw around the easier it is to manipulate opinion sometimes.

It is therefore not difficult to see how anything in the ambit of politicians turns out being a nay-yeah pendulum of fair weathered impulses. Chomsky, Mitchell and Schoeffel, (2002, p.42) alluded to this whimsical naming and labeling in the context of what appears to hold a universal definition, but begs questions like: what is democracy, in countries outside the Northern bloc? Are they ‘democracies,’ because the right people are running them; and if the right people *aren’t* running them, then they’re not ‘democracies?’” Obviously, that epistle is no universal truth description or definition of what is democracy, but it sure is a flowery construct of some interest groups that have undergone some vicissitude; after all Hitler’s dictum is that, “a lie thrice repeated becomes a truth”.

So should the question of, what is democracy attract a universal understanding of truth in response or it should squarely be about denominating truth? Whose truth? Like Manji (nd) states, “There’s fact and then there’s truth. Facts alone can’t constitute truth. How one interprets those facts contributes as much to one’s understanding of truth as the facts themselves do”. The quest for gregariousness and enlisting believability makes the definition of truth vulnerable to viral ideological contagion in every subjective quarter.

Paradigms of Illusions in Democratic Deliberation

As a tetchy system of rule, democracy, coast itself around political arrangements of governance in most countries of the world. It is rooted in consonance of collective reasoning and argumentation among free and perceived equal citizens (Mansbridge, Bohman, Chambers, et al, (2012), all though there are different freight patterns and climates to it. In its chest there are the representative and the aggregative troughs, characteristic of a loose cue from the prototype of Athenians and the Spartans’ democratic experiments. Whatever the variant, a coloration of reason and argument represents a democratic turn in some curious ways. The methodology of expressing ‘likes’ and ‘dislikes’, through votes or other means, is a franchise and strong pillar of deliberation in a democracy (Dryzek, 2000). A question that bears repeating: is means or channel of expression so over rated under the convention of talk-centric or vote-

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centric (Chambers, 2003) arrangements - being classical measurement rules of deliberative democracy? No easy answers obviously.

There are proponents of a different approach, those that opportune themselves with the first public mandate to rule and decide to run with that to institute strategic action rather than wait at bumps of deliberation before each action is taken in the course of leadership. For such, especially those with no organic resemblance in tradition and culture of their new adaptation, sloth communication mechanism problematizes speed of delivering quick action. The choice for them is sometimes between adoring the cast (deliberation as a midwife of democracy) and seeing a chance and just going for it.

There are claims that governance should be the domain of “experts” committed to govern for the general good, a profound belief that those with the qualification of experts have superior knowledge or cognition to do it (Chwalisz, 2019). Such thesis encapsulates epistocracy, which implies the rule of the knowledgeable, according to Brennan (2016). But isn’t knowledge-ability relative? Thousands of years ago Plato worried, argues that the best form of government would be rule by a noble and wise philosopher king. Aristotle, on the other hand, thinks it is unrealistic. Well, the debate is not necessarily about the characteristics or qualification of the individual ruler as it is about the smartness, pro-activeness of the exigencies of decision and policy application, especially when the stake is sustainable development.

In many parts of the South, (developing economies) criteria and minimum standard for political office is a baseline entry requirement for semi-illiterates. In Nigeria, for example the entry qualification into active federal and state politics is elementary level education next to kindergarten for a job that involves critical thinking, policy formulation, strategic communication and planning for sustainable development; all of which are clearly beyond the intellectual ambit of untrained and uneducated applicants. Rationally, should a lawyer, an engineer, or a professor; that occupies the office of a governor of a state, subject a scientific model of sustainable development to ignoramuses; foist on him as adviser by quota recommendation of component constituencies of a state he/she rules?

Legislators are not required by the constitution to have any expertise or sense of professional skill, yet they are to make laws for a state, a nation; all because they are senators or House of Assembly members. Even if there is a mix of intelligence and tomfoolery, the wheel of decision will be clogged for speed and effectiveness, invariably. It is the absurdity of this bunch performing an override function, which may be less than optimum that makes democracy a macaque in many developing nations of Africa where the elected operators of the operational manual of democracy cannot be read, understood and used adeptly. Even where the elected intelligencer can operationalize it, the pettiness and politics of territorial interest and myopia will prevent hiring the service of a consultant that can fit a task to advise and operate a task. So one often sees a square peg in a round hole. There have been dissidents in circumstances related to such anomalies.

Mallam Balare Musa a former governor of Kaduna state in Nigeria governed with no cabinet members for nine months. He could not work with those that were foisted on him by the State House. He however, set the tone for the development of the modern state of Kaduna through massive infrastructural and other development footprints (Guardian, 2020 – 27th November). Governor peter Obi was similarly impeached in Anambra State. As Agi (2009) observed, the breed were rascals with contumelious greed. Clearly, their position in leadership and legislation was plainly for avaricious purpose, with nothing resembling patriotic, impersonal ambition in their drive. State budgets were stand down because a governor priced far lower the cost of rehabilitating a Government House and State House of Assembly instead of endorsing an inflated budget, to encourage waste and corruption of lawmakers in his state struggling to survive (Ezemalu, 2017).

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In most democracies in the developing nations as well as some developed democracies, the faltering and macabre steps are legitimate concerns. Speed and smooth dispensation of short-term solutions are abysmal challenges for many democracies. And so, critiques like Brennan (2016) in utter frustration will argue that democracy is not intrinsically just, on procedural grounds at least. The value it retains is cupped purely in its instrumental rationality. Epistocracy may seem to some an appealing alternative, because of its tenets on truth, knowledge and authority; but inherent in the alternative is a gap that might inflame bossiness, which might be synonymous with authoritarianism, making the case for epistocracy seems more difficult than it is appealing.

However, outside whatever predilection there lays a wasteland of strategy unexplored. A break with the rigidity of tradition of implementation might give a vista to strategic opportunity in hybridizing tools for implementing development. Sometimes the pattern of operation may need to crack, be violated if the highest good of all is the utmost intension. Sustainable development could use both short and long term policy blueprint and different deliberation strategies.

However, many alternatives abound for public participatory and deliberative forums to gauge policy plans of governments' soft power and ratify them possibly before they are implemented. Such alternatives are exemplified in innovations like: the Ostbelgien Citizens' Council, Citizens Initiative Review, Citizen assemblies, Randomized appointments to the Social, Economic, and Environmental Council (CESE); Citizen panels, in Belgium, Australia, US and Switzerland, Poland, France, and Canada respectively. Some of these are permanent regulatory institutions while others are ad hoc (Chwalisz, 2019). In many developed economies these ad hoc institutions could become an inherent component of a referendum in order to provide a wider population with informed and balanced argument before a vote on a major policy decision. This could be used as a powerful tool to counter misinformation and disinformation campaigns.

In Nigeria, governments establishes implementation panels after decisions have been reached, whatever their implications. The panels do more of active or passive lobbying. One panel that had a semblance of a national ad hoc committee was the Constitutional Panel set up by the Federal government. Unfortunately, its recommendations apart from the monumental waste to task payers' money in hosting it for the length of time it took, died as quickly as it was born.

The context of communicating policy plan appears illusionary on a rigid template of democratic public participation, particularly in deliberation. Public policies should always be communicated, no doubt, no matter the operational system in vogue because it concerns stakeholders. The problem in developing economies however is the question of when. The time zone of disclosure and pattern or strategy of communicating it in democracies is the major divergent point between many developed and developing economies. This may be linked to their cultural matrix, dynamics and peculiarities of political evolutions of the systems in place.

This is a normal occurrence in developing nations, but not peculiar to them. For example, in war-time democratic politicians have occasionally deceived their own citizens; but only in order to gain an advantage against the enemy, as when the British government and its allies sought to mislead the Germans as to the location as well as the timing of the D Day landings during the Second World War. More problematically, democratic politicians have also denied negotiating with those they have hither-to condemned as "terrorists" or "enemies" in order not to arouse domestic opposition prior to obtaining a peace deal they believe will ultimately serve people's interest. For example, former British Prime Minister John Major repeatedly and vehemently denied speaking with the IRA when making the initial moves that eventually gave rise to the Good Friday Agreement. Like-wise, a prominent politician might feel justified in hiding a terminal illness, say, when his or her leadership is believed crucial to maintain-

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ing domestic morale during an emergency or a crisis (Bellarmy, 2019, p.8). Although Nigeria was not at war, former President Umaru Musa Yar' adua's terminal illness was hidden from Nigerians until his death, as the ex-President, Mohammadu Buhari and President Ahmed Bola Tinu's, health credential and status remains hidden from Nigerians.

At any rate, policy deliberation in governance is not the absence of contention, else it is utter autocracy; rather, it is characteristically purpose-oriented incredulity that saunters to a designed end. The concern is; at what point should contentions, dialectics, become contentment? Not all see reason at the same time. Each man is probably endowed with appropriate cognition organically exercised when the season is ripe. The logic is early risers should not be forced to a wait-lobby with persons with slow cognitive processors or vision. The day breaks differently in different cognitive time zones. People may live in the same location, but habitat different cognitive time zones. If the 'A-listers' are not leading, but advising leadership, they may be trailblazers. Their insight might be helpful, though not that it necessarily has immunity against a crash. No technology, even the most brilliant is immune, and the evolution of every technological breakthrough, so far, is a testament to an unpopular action and trail taken by early seers not all followers.

In democracies in the ideological North, it could be impunity, risking impeachment, to operate without disclosure except under certain defined and constitutionally spelt-out executive privileges. Democracies outside the coast of core North, those borrowing the system, have variously modified the disclosure clock with less consequence on their life's span except for malicious intent.

Severally, plans with infinitely long term implications on stakeholders have been executed with impunity of playing mum to the rest of the moderating arms of governance. The registration of Nigeria, for example, as a full member state of the Islamic Organization Conference (OIC) in 1986 by Ibrahim Babangida was never tabled for discussion before any representative body (Ukpe, 2021; NCEF, 2020). The same tradition and mannerism played out in government voyage during subsidy removal and subsequent jump in prices of petroleum products.

Therefore, eerie reality of political communication in Nigeria is that it is often plagued by inaudibility of public plan. People just have to read in-between the lines to sometimes see the brilliance or otherwise of purpose on the chessboard of guesses. Another example is the current change of currency slammed on Nigeria in 2023. Everybody was surprised at the release of the plan and the alacrity in its implementation. Governments in most developing nation take advantage of the scattered levels of cognition of their followers and further sedate them with one cover up over another to make them tag along, even if the plan is coated with deceit.

Marriage of Gossip and Rumor in the Retailization of Information

Gossip is a market square that gives anybody a couch, the right to the gavel of his/her thoughts, to hold and discharge opinion as he/she pleases with minimal collateral cost on verification (Fehr and Sutter, 2016). As an informal regiment of information and a no-man's land where facts and fables enjoy a truce from critical scrutiny, there are probably no saints; no mortals that do not, in one way or the other, indulge it (Noon and Delbridge 1993, Burt and Knez 1995). In spite of its perceived negative connotation, gossip has redeemable values to society, even though it is unguaranteed for the person trusting sheepishly. There is, nevertheless, a connubial relationship between gossip and rumor. Their boundaries between are unclear though (Gelfert's, 2010). Sometimes the line between them blurs especially when the stake is engineered deliberately to create definite effect in society.

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Like gossip, rumours are expressions and not assertions of belief. According to Dentith (2010) rumours are seen as being representative of unreliable beliefs and so peddlers of rumours lack the authority to put forth such propositions. When organize institutions employ rumors they serve as dispatch riders and early responders to test the acceptability of a proposal. Rumour follows a tradition of a reliable transmission process where the shared content is constantly tested or matched against an individual or a community's existing perception of events. As such, the longer a rumour survives, the greater the tendency for people to think it is true given its survival due to matching pre-existing ideas and beliefs (Dentith, 2010 p.5).

When gossip cape as anxiety inducing rumours they wing fast like wild fire and spread dynamically than sloth and innocuous rumours (DiFonzo and Bordia 2002; Pezzo and Beckstead 2006). Greasy gossip and rumour messages that sparkle with incredulous misinformation appear to have a hypnotic chance of persuading individuals to share them (Coan, Merolla, Zechmeister, and Zizumbo-Colunga (2020); Chuai and Zhao 2020; Coviello, Yunkyu, Adam, Cameron, Massimo, Nicholas, and James (2014); Fan, Zhao, Chen, and Xu, (2014; Stieglitz and Dang-Xuan 2013).

There is a meta-dimensions or purposes to rumour as a controlled inferno. When the import of rumour and gossip is served, it loses its steam and usefulness. The sponsors then pull the leech and starve it of sustenance. Indifference sets in and then all the chase dogs drop the issue from the agenda or a different distraction is introduced (Oh, Kwon, and Rao, 2010; Vosoughi, Roy, and Aral, 2018). All the while that the rumor flourished and the gossip mill ran amok, a government continues to discredit and post denial of the issue in context. Firstly, the fallout reaction of people cum government denials all creates a scenario of post admittance. Secondly, the rumor may be validation of a sort (Hartung, Krohn and Pirschtat, 2019); a way of advertising an issue, a subtle re-enforcement of the matter authorities is in denial of. Plausible denial of a rumor in a case where there is a subterranean intention, sponsored by same government, follows usually a pattern of reverse psychology of endorsement (Froissart, 2010).

This probably points to the difference between the way propaganda, rumour and gossip are variously activated. One thing is clear about propaganda, there are no prevarications or ambiguity in purpose; the principle is obvious, the intentions are overt. Not the same as rumour or gossip. Like smoke and wild fire, the sponsors of rumour or gossip are veiled and covered by layers of iffiest. Many times the veins of their subterranean presence are traceable by using checks like what we call, Best Interest Test Evaluation (BITE) of Forged Orientation Representation in Construct Enforcement (FORCE). This is represented as:

$$G\sqrt{}$$

$$rg \geq bf$$

where G is organized gossip

rg = rumor and gossip

bf = bite force

Governments or authorities make a firework of any issue directly or indirectly. The subterranean intentions are neatly inhumed to keep away from the guessing gaze of society. A rumour, either a promotional rumour or an extinguisher rumour, is sponsored in the media; using known media personalities or hired personalities regarded as expendables with squandered reputation to front it. These days they employ bots, create social media sites and launch the campaign on the platform to spread the message. To determine the Best interest (BITE) value, one ought to work against the major current of the flow of the campaign. The reaction of the covert B interest will throw up an unguarded reactions in the form of defense of the enterprise once a counter move touches its' soul. Opposite attracts, they say.

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Another vital sign to look out for is to evaluate the pattern of the forged orientation and the representation, (FORCE) the constructed imagination and overall narrative tune of the messages. Usually, the interest and the constructed imagination have unification in the agenda of the originator. In Nigeria, when the government plans on removing subsidy on petroleum products, a kite of rumor is sent out over an artificially created scarcity of fuel and other petroleum products. Sometimes a mock rehearsal of the script is pushed out as a totally irresistible gambit, the way former President Ibrahima Babangida was fond of doing (Kolade-Otitoju, Adegbamigbe, Asoya and Farinto, 2016); a pattern that has attracted repeat with successive politicians after him. Thus, the interest of the government to remove part of the subsidy is sometimes met by the exasperation of many Nigerian who rather wish that the issue were tackled once and for all. The government may consider talking about subsidy removal and the modalities when its interest has created the right deliberation opening and narrative for negotiation. It does not always work out though, but it is an instrument that has worked a couple of times.

Structure-Deliberative Gossip Model of Political Communication

There are certain conventions that characterize the operation of this grand theory, namely:

Theoretical Assumptions

- (a) The livewire of gossip/rumour is the sign of first mandate and it is a veritable condition for political manipulation if information is rationed with tact (Goel, Hofman, Lahaie, Pennock and Watts, 2010).
- (b) Every morsel of gossip/rumour, with coloration of authority's sponsorship, is an emissary of authority's agenda.
- (c) The narrative of the rumour/gossip does not have to look like the agenda; it is just a distraction.
- (d) When people engage what is pedaled positively by believe or negatively by doubt a deliberation pathway is surreptitiously opened.
- (e) Reactions of people are symbolic cues and codes that feed intelligence to authority's timing of actual manifestation of agenda.
- (f) A rumour-gossip is a superstructure tool that can create good or bad condition for public. It is dispensable.
- (g) The truster is weaker than the trusted always. Tact, stealth and strategic double speak will give continual adorability to the dribblers who artfully use instrument of deception in combo to proselytize a truster (Zannettou, Sirivianos, Blackburn, and Kourtellis, (2019).
- (h) It is not personal.

Structuring deliberation is a function of negotiation prowess and skills, irrespective sometimes of the tool employed, as some would argue. The game is fraught with trickery, duplicity etc., riding on the crest of gossip and rumor; and society has warmed itself into accepting it as norm, especially capitalist societies in spite of obvious socio-economic and political consequences (Peters, 1987; Strudler, 1995; Srouf, 2021). Condescendingly, it is considered as winsome soft power tactics of a sort because of the vulnerability of people regarded as the ruled. The committal to political rulers and politicians imposes a mental and psychological condition of almost hypnotic trust on the led (Levine, 2014), as a dynamic of truth-default theory. Soft power intelligence can be a handy skill in governance strategy when fol-

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lowing through with sustainable development plans. Democracy has inherent speed breakers to cheek unilateralists.

When recklessness is permissible, so much has to be at stake to justify the action, the degree of paternalism; else it should be sanctioned. Permissibility clause presupposes that an executive officer is a brilliant mind that knows when it is imperative to hit a button of speed or make a move of significant impact. However, alibi that follows such gambit of sheathing real intentions with smokes, because of the perceived overriding benefit to society in spite of its unethicity (Borsellino 2013, Chen 2001, Chen et al. 2013, Erat & Gneezy 2012, Hornung 2016, Levine & Schweitzer 2014) may sometimes be acceptable (Srouf, 2021) if only to serves as a contingency nukes that requires high-level of discretion.

In decent cultures, particularly in some of the developing countries of Africa where there are relaxed strictures on political correctness, what Mearsheimer (2011) describes as strategic lying is explored as a vantage valve for only emergency initiates, with presumed executive privileges when the overriding interest is incontrovertibly public's good (Levine, Kim, & Hamel, 2010). No doubt, excesses and collateral effects in applying soft power, executive powers, before reverting to regulatory czars or democratic checks and balances cannot be ruled out. Apart from playing to the gallery of impeachment, reputational capital can be liquefied so quickly when *prima facie* the drive is for selfish aggrandizement – a pool that has drown many a reckless politician.

Thus to return to the common sphere of reasoning, tact is required. The spinner roller think-tank, kitchen cabinet masterminds, use soft power gossip filters as reconnaissance technique to gauge and engage conversation on a subject that the public is oblivious to. Gossip and rumour validates signals as Hartung, Krohn and Pirschtat (2019) aver, but used in context it is sometimes an implicit justification of an inhumed interest of those applying it. The aim is to harrow the mind and cultivate some favorable disposition towards unpopular policies. The tactics arguably electrifies the ideological hive and stimulate people, shape their perceptions, cognition and preferences by moving them into action without a notice of being 'coerced' in ways that appear contrary to their own basic trajectories and impulses (Ronning, 2014).

Adepts do this by igniting a smoke-signal on the firmament of a subject and set a robust agenda around it. Deliberation and pockets of discourses start to swell in an organic form while the instigators monitor responses and reaction of people. This tradition has a root that snake deeply into how the acceptability or otherwise of a matter is gauged. Euphemistically, many Nigerian traditions of testing one's reaction or gleaning information non-hypnotically are described as 'gently stroking the stomach'. Some psychology and intelligent coding skills is required. It could pass for a quasi-scientific feedback audience response tactics were the investigator retains invisibility while he/she picks reactions and analyzes them against the parameters of some veiled agenda. This is invariably a shade away from the "Galileo Gambit" (Finocchiaro 2015; Johnson 2018). The ploy is deeply rooted in the claim that an idea is true because it has a scent of adversity toothed at the reputation of authority and may therefore enjoy the patronage of sympathy, incentives for rebuttals and stereotype of skepticism against government. However, the model for orbiting back into mass acceptability is what we call: *if god allows*. Diagrammatically, it is:

If: Introduce and fan

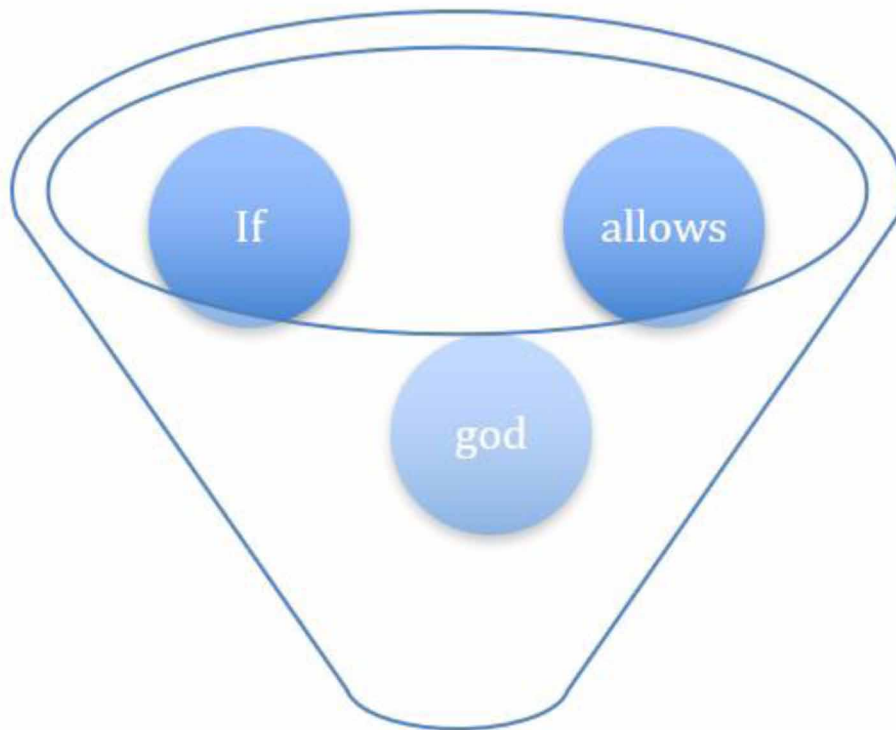
god: Guide Organic Deliberations

Allowss: Aggregate Legitimate Logic of Working Strategies and Sustain

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Figure 1.

Source: Onobe, Okocha and Etukudo, 2023



a) If

A government using a well lubricated gossip machine, the media, social media, surreptitiously introduces an idea it wants to sell in the public sphere. The idea makes its incursion as snippets of unverified rumor, gossiped by a not-so-popular source. The idea in question may have transited from unformed imagination to a prototype. These days a well calibrated and designed messenger bot could lead the vanguard in introducing the idea (Harringer, 2018; Godulla, Bauer, Dietlmeier, Lück, Matzen, & Vaaßen, 2021). At an insignificant cost, spammers – bots that throw ads around private accounts – may be commissioned to run amok on social media and make the gossip go wildly viral. The fanned messages create a strong agenda while algorithms and bots of some other kind like: Salesforce Einstein, Rulai, LivePerson, etc., do the assessment. Before social media, press agents and other persons were paid to sponsor reports or even advertorials, depending on the weight of the idea or the strategy in mind.

b) god – guide organic deliberations

The gossip is stoked by facts with here-and-there ellipsis to sustain the contrived gossip until an assumed sample is reached. Informal and formal deliberations on social media are instituted and organic responses are guided, harvesting samples that reflect the diversity of society and the possible reflection of their polarization in the public space. Algorithms beautifully put up a valiant-hero show and get

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people to line up support for the agenda set in the deliberation. The point of capitulation is entirely the prerogative of the mastermind after a veiled representative sample is reached. Using machine learning technology, the pons, which initially is bots, form alliance with those that have been proselytized. In theory, a unification of bots-man is surreptitiously experienced. Propaganda is copiously used to direct traffic of opinions, and a sizeable number line in tow. There are, in any case, patterns of communication other than speech and words that gain employment in the campaign. Symbolic communication, memes and codes communication are used as other forms. Silence is also impregnated by its strategic use as communication of a sort. The complex nature of the signals is within the interpretative capacity of algorithms. Guiding deliberations in public space is not a passive act. Sometimes manipulations are involved.

b) Allowss: Aggregate Legitimate Logic of Working Strategies and Sustain

Responses that pour in on the databases are coded to reveal pattern of public disposition to the idea government is floating. Legitimate logic is sort to gauge opposition's direction and leaning before hitting them with checkmate flak. The recent currency redesign by the Central Bank of Nigeria was a clear example. First the timing of the idea, the criticism it baited from the opposition, the suspense and pretense of public interest greater in the decision to even the detriment of the ruling party going into a presidential race created an atmosphere of self implosion and seeming self-destruct for the incumbent's party were airtight. The suspense was Hollywood, well crafted; and it suckered in everyone to think the ruling party had no favorite going into Presidential election in the largest black nation in the world. Days after it became clear that mopping up cash from circulation was a mechanism to propel helplessness to the point of desperation in the masses, who without options kowtow to accept the ones that had the money to curry attention and votes.

Many times, the guard and curtain of propaganda is lowered to allow dissenting voices. The idea is a synthesis of the logic of reason of either flank is weighed legitimately against reasoning. It is part of strategic sensitivity and calculation to ensure that the objective of the endeavor is not lost. Sustainability of the initial hunch will depend on a careful sieve and evaluation of the gleaned sampled reaction against the target Best interest. Sometimes, when the consequence outweighs the benefit, the experiment may have to be suspended with an alternative distraction. Most governments have simulated alternative distraction, structured with padded deceit to rescue high-priced expedition. Evaluation of the first launch of camouflaged is keenly monitored and assessed.

Appraising the Theory

This grand theory is a priori, filtered through extant previous theories such as propaganda, truth-default theory, gossip and rumor theories. As a meta-discursive theory, S-D-G retains a certain uniqueness in its own right; essentially to provide explanation to why deceit, double-speak are used in places of authority for some policy transactions. Most of the earlier theories provide linear justification of why the trajectory of concepts should be seen through the spectacle of established pattern. However S-D-G's asset is in its promiscuity, which allows it to look beyond the concepts to the utility of the intention of actions without ethnicity of biases. It acknowledges the complexities of truth, the existential imperative of strategic double-speak, propaganda and situates them as improvised implements exigently allowed for strategic task that they may not be necessarily customized for in the first place.

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Thus, the elasticity and application of the theory, although initially construed to explain certain bureaucrats' evasiveness, takes a wider application to explain context and intent of ideological imagination in public dealings even in private social organizations. Hence, its colouration has a psycho-political communication hue and tinge. Like most assumptions, it may not be absolved of share-serrated juvenility, or even Hedonisms; but no doubt due empirical test may cut it some slack. These researchers goal is to provide a grail of reasoning unclogged by conceptual ethnicity as propaganda, lies, deception, rumour and gossip that it all possesses. The convergence of applicability in SDG provides a new vista of appraising political communication from the implicit rays of contiguous intent that reflect a communal, broad –based interest.

The theory runs its roots deeply through a dialogical-dialectical disciplinary matrix that can be characterized by textures of the communication triadic traditions, namely: rhetorical-semiotic, socio-psychological and cybernetics communication mores (Craig, 1999; 2005, 2007, 2015). It attempts an explanation of speech categorization and techniques encapsulated by a body of research that traces the arteries of conducts like propaganda, lies and deceit. The socio-psychological anchorage focused on implicit intent lining the upholstery of the message and the post-modern technology of the carrier of the signals and its deterministic paraphernalia saddled on artificial intelligence enhancers - bots.

Many of the studies reveal the inherent deficiencies of the labyrinths of the tools that are troughs of structured-deliberative-gossip theory (SDG). The unique selling proposition of SDG is that it is canopy for tools like propaganda, lies and deceptions; cutting a negotiation aptitude as the peak spike of the existential goal of the political communication strategy painstakingly orchestrated.

Previous researches were fascinated on the influencing factors of rumor spreading (Pleis, 2009; Oh, Kwon, and Rao, 2010; Zannettou, Sirivianos, Blackburn, and Kourtellis, 2019). They focused on it as an attractive ploy. SDG however, sees a deeper essence in the integrative use of rumour and gossip. It surmises that the goal is rarely self ward, rather it is more a distractive ploy; an antithetical way of initiating a negotiation, a deliberation that is stealth and strategic in nature with precision mappings on data collection from dissidents and proponents to juxtapose and determine how next to proceed.

Concluding Remarks

What anyone says is often used as a yardstick for evaluating the person. However, a contending benchmark in political sphere in certain quarters is intent, which for many is just as strong as the contents. Therefore a confluence of what is said and what is intended can be summed honesty. The erosion of honesty invalidates what is said and makes it lies, the same way when what is intended contradicts what is said. This common denomination in political communication has had varied implications for democracy and the structure of operation of governance in many nations, particularly the developing nations of the South. Like the people that are governed, governments' stage lies and exudes contemptible excesses. The intent or motive of flagging off a deceit as kite could be the only redeemable opportunity for government expected to operate with the highest ideals of moral principles, even though it is not a saint, to be heard. This study has postulated a theory, SDG, which sets a paradigm of understanding why government sometimes hides intentions behind things it did not mean or does things it did not say. The theory though not excusing unethicity in hushing intent because of the burden of democracy and its demands on disclosure before action, posits that there may be exigencies of operations that warrants discrete executive handling of development concerns with dispatch. The alibi of acting without channel approval (the legislature and judiciary) nevertheless should be only entertained if it appeals to the best

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intention of public good. That may not excuse and exonerate it of consequences from public scrutiny or legislative sanctions, which may be justified in any case. The theory, SDG, sets a new paradigm of looking at old tools like rumour, gossip as deliberative scepters of some governments in developing nations.

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Chapter 23

Media Attention and Offline Political Participation in Pakistan: The Mediating Role of Political Interest and Online Political Participation

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines how media use affects political engagement and uses political interest, online political participation as mediators. This study employed a cross-sectional research design. Data for this study were gathered by considering internet media users. The researchers used a survey method to collect data. The survey questionnaire was disseminated by posting a link to the Google form on various social media platforms (including Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, etc.). Data were collected from 430 participants using convenient sampling from the general population of Pakistan. It was found that media consumption has a major impact on offline political involvement. Furthermore, it was concluded that online political engagement moderates the relationship between media attention and offline engagement. In the analysis, online political participation virtually perfectly mediates the relationship between media attention and offline political participation.

Media Attention and Offline Political Participation in Pakistan

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary age, we live in mediated realities (Williams, 2003). In this mediated world, media play a significant role in representing nations (Ji, Hu, & Muhammad, 2016; Saleem, 2007), framing conflicts (Yousaf, Rahman & Yousaf, 2020), influencing purchasing apparel behavior (Ikhlaq, Yousaf, & Ans, 2021), and building consensus on social issues (Yousaf, 2018) and terrorism issue (Yousaf, Hu & Raza, 2023). The relationship between public media use and political engagement is an urgent research subject in the age of constant media change and the coexistence of different media platforms (Hongna, 2019). Hence, this study investigates the impact of media usage on political participation and treats online political participation and political interest as mediators. Put differently, the research aims to determine if media is a valuable tool and an effective alternative to create awareness of political events and mobilize political participation and how this process is mediated by online political participation and political interest.

Numerous studies show that political beliefs, attitudes, and even political engagement are influenced by the political predisposition and standards of political values evaluation provided by the media (Hongna, 2019). Moreover, the media have developed into a potent tool for disseminating information, serving as an influential voice for those who obtain information and pass it along to others in their professional, academic, and social networks. This demonstrates that the public supports the media's function and the changes it brings about. Electronic media first encourages individuals to support political activists, vote for their parties, and reinforce previously held or shifting ideas. It demonstrates how frequently opinion leaders use this popular media to disseminate information to the general public. Every activity, including press conferences and political commercials, has a unique method of forming beliefs or altering preexisting ones. Information and communication technologies significantly altered the globe more than ever. For instance, social and political discourse, communication methods, and interpersonal connections have all changed due to new media technology.

Scholars in political science, sociology, media and communication, and international relations have undertaken several studies on various facets of social media use (Ahmad, Alvi, & Ittefaq, 2019). Moreover, social networking sites (SNSs), which provide access to political information and involvement, have grown in significance in the political sphere due to social media. People who regularly discuss politics in their daily lives are likely to regularly use social media for political awareness and knowledge. In addition, a fundamental presumption for engaging in the democratic process is the democratic ideal that "informed citizenry" and citizen involvement are essential. As a result, citizens must regularly read newspapers and watch television news to stay updated about current events. Thus in the contemporary age where most communication is mediated, one of the main pillars of participatory democracy is the media. In addition, our understanding of the social world is significantly shaped by the news media. It performs the function of reality definition for the public (Takeshit, 1997). The world around us is out of reach, out of sight, and out of mind for most people. Considering how little we have personally seen the world; we do not know much about what is happening there. As a result, news media significantly mediates between the outer world and the images in our heads (Lippmann, 1922). The editors of our newspapers and the news directors of our television stations play a significant role in directing public attention to the issues, challenges, and opportunities through their daily duty of selecting and presenting news (Cohen, 1963).

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Social media and the internet significantly impact citizens' participation in politics and their social lives. Politicians (candidates, elected officials, and party members), it is claimed, have a place to remain active where they can shape and sway public opinion through digital communication and social media. Subsequently, social media positively affects political information transmission and campaign success (Hamid et al., 2022). Therefore, researchers are now paying closer attention to how social media affects political engagement due to the rising use of these platforms across all demographic groups. For instance, numerous studies have demonstrated the crucial role social media plays in disseminating political news and information, maintaining in touch with like-minded individuals, and mobilizing various political activities (Kim et al., 2020).

Scholars have high hopes for the democratic participation of young adults via social media. It has been asserted that social media, in particular, can create new connections between political figures and young adults, enable social interaction about political issues, bring people together, improve the expression of political opinions, equalize engagement, and foster participation and increase voter turnout or promote social cohesion (Matthes, 2022). For example, online petitions and comments on politicians' posts are two examples of new forms of action and engagement that have emerged because of social media. Research have demonstrated that social media can impact political engagement through various methods such as cognitive elaboration, informational acquisition, and political conversation (Halpern et al., 2017). It is noted from the fact that politicians now use social media to conduct their campaigns, and activists use it to raise awareness of political concerns and organize demonstrations. Likewise, youth uses social media platforms to spread their political beliefs and to learn more about politics (Muzaffar, 2019). Therefore, this essay investigates the influence of media usage on offline political participation and explores how this relationship is mediated by online political participation and political interest.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Media Attention and Offline Political Participation

Media inform us about the world around us. This applies to our knowledge of nature, society, and history (Bal & De, 2000). Mass media is a form of communication that operates on a large scale, reaching and encompassing everyone in public to a greater or lesser extent. The word medium has a plural form called media, which denotes a channel or mode of transmission. Ultimately, mass media, primarily print and electronic media, including social media, serve as means of communication in modern society. The type of political engagement taken into consideration also affects how media consumption and political engagement are related (Holt et al., 2013).

Web 2.0 is a term that was first used in 2004 to describe a new way that software developers and end users started to use the World Wide Web; that is, as a platform where all users continuously modify content and applications in a participatory and collaborative manner rather than being created and published by individuals (Effing et al., 2011). The creation and exchange of user-generated contents are made possible by a series of Internet-based applications known as "social media," which builds on the conceptual and technical underpinnings of Web 2.0. This description makes it quite evident that social media is not a brand-new class of web technologies. Consequently, web 2.0 is heavily utilized in social media (Trottier et al., 2011). This under-generated content has many consequences including the evaluation of government performance (Raza et al., 2022).

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The young population has access to the Internet and social media platforms through various online organizations, pages, and profiles (Bimber & Copeland, 2013). Over time, its application in politics has grown significantly. Both politicians and the general public have used it throughout political campaigns, protests, and talk shows. The public's awareness of their political rights increased, which compelled reputable political organizations to act correctly (Ghani et al., 2020). Popular social media platforms are used by political parties to sway their target demographic. In addition, technology has bridged the gap in communication through different mediums, for instance, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and so on (Alam & Yousaf, 2021).

Facebook: Facebook is a well-known online communication tool that lets users interact with anyone in the virtual world. It has also developed into a venue for a variety of political activities. Facebook is a powerful medium for political socialization since it allows people to discuss specific subjects and exchange political news. Facebook is a valuable platform to disseminate political activities (Shehzad et al., 2021).

Twitter: There is much academic interest in Twitter because of its distinctive layout and information-dissemination capabilities. Some regular Twitter users with public accounts believed their audience to be the general public, while others believed it to be friends, family, or other interested parties. Other studies found that conversations are frequently structured by political hashtags, which is why Twitter is so important for the spread of information (Mitchelstein et al., 2021).

Moreover, social media is an excellent medium for knowledge transfer. Social media encourages and makes it easier for the general population to participate in political processes. The US presidential election in 2008 is a prime illustration of this since diverse political viewpoints were discussed with the public via social media. The researcher additionally stresses social media monitoring in a political context and discusses the impact of social media usage on political engagement from the perspective of political groupings (Stieglitz et al., 2012). Over and above that, political parties and organizations frequently use social media for political objectives since it is an effective tool for election campaigns. It is suggested that social media have impacted a significant portion of the youth population and that this effect has changed their political behavior. It is noted that a rise in social media usage is associated with improved political awareness, political rights, and voter power. Social media use and civic and political participation often have a good link. Online political campaigns are closely linked, which increases public trust in elected officials (Shehzad et al., 2021). The Internet offers a platform through which political organizations and elected officials can contact voters and inform them of their positions. In order to increase political interest and participation, it may also make political information easily accessible to citizens. This makes it easier for people to learn about politics and increase their involvement in politics. The internet effects target particular demographic and certain types of political participation rather than all individuals. The internet only serves to energize people who are already interested in politics; it will not compel politically disinterested people to become more active. Web campaigning also affects voters (Bimber et al., 2014; Jiang, 2016). For instance, a report in the Washington Post on the US 2018 presidential election used Facebook campaigns to win the election. Political organizations and politicians can interact with their constituents and directly communicate using social networking platforms (two-way communication). Hence, voters are then provided a platform to voice their ideas and be heard through social networking sites (Muntean, 2015; Robertson et al., 2010) discovered that Facebook significantly influences the voting decisions of young people.

Furthermore, Banaji & Buckingham (2010) found that young people used social networking sites to find political information, especially information that traditional media could not find. These findings are linked in that people use social networking sites to learn about political organizations and candidates,

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interact with them, and express their opinions. Social media can make people feel more accessible and alter their political beliefs by exposing them to alternative viewpoints shared by friends, family, and co-workers (Schleffer & Miller, 2021). Additionally, social media can “activate latent attitudes, which encourages people to act. By allowing people to hear other people’s thoughts and offering political leaders broad audiences, social media, to varying degrees, play a crucial role in political participation. In this sense, the media allow for public opinion to span many people and a large territory.

H1: Media attention influences offline political participation.

Influence of Online Political Participation on Offline Political Participation

Over the past 20 years, the emergence of online technology has sparked a wave of empirical studies on online political participation. Additionally, it sparked a discussion among the academic circle on defining political involvement in the digital age. Whether passive and expressive online actions constitute political participation or are merely a prelude to it, scholars disagree (Ruess et al., 2021). There is an ongoing discussion about how individuals are more inclined to engage in political activity online, how this increases political engagement, and how confirmation bias may stymie political participation (Sung & Jang, 2020). People can participate in politics through the internet, a crucial tool. Due to access issues and skepticism about the importance of online activities, this statement may have been controversial in the early stages of social science research on the Internet. However, in modern times, it is so commonplace that it is hardly even worth mentioning, much less in this journal. Millions of people have proven to be drawn to meaningful activities with significant political outcomes in “the real world” thanks to the internet and the various applications it makes possible, such as influential online petitions, large-scale mobilization for protests, or collaborative policy development (Friess et al., 2021). Moreover, online participation includes; emails to a representative of the government, Internet petition signatures, editorials sent via email and online donations to a political cause (Aaron et al. 2009). The amount of social media use and how it affects political engagement revealed a strong relationship between social media use, time spent using it, and Internet connectivity. Theoretical involvement seeks to influence the public’s attitudes and behaviors toward political issues in a free-choice setting, whereas political persuasion seeks to persuade others to do the same (Shehzad et al., 2021). Furthermore, involvement has changed due to Facebook’s growing influence on political activity. Posting and commenting online, joining and building online organizations, planning protests, engaging in online conversations with friends, and “liking” a political figure or party’s Facebook profile to express political preferences have become very common.

Therefore, using Facebook for online political participation significantly impacts young people. Research shows that Facebook information sharing encourages civic engagement (Dauda et al., 2017). The Facebook groups talk about politics and support social networks. Due to their networking capabilities, these groups demonstrate the potency of online engagement. To swiftly and efficiently spread political news, Facebook users build social networking groups (Shehzad et al., 2021). Furthermore, politically engaged individuals who engage in online engagement are not fundamentally different from those who engage in political activism offline. Internet usage has not only increased political participation’s diversity. Second, the stratification of political participation based on socioeconomic and demographic factors does not differ significantly between online and offline modes (Nam, 2012). Moreover, similar to offline involvement, e-participation can be divided into distinct clusters of similar activities. From a more substantive standpoint, this disaggregation demonstrates that, despite taking place in a more constrained context than offline activities, political web-based activities nevertheless form unique practices. The mere

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ease with which one can transition from filing an e-petition to approaching a politician or offering to assist a party does not cause these behaviors to converge and form a monolithic scale of action (Gibson & Cantijoch, 2013). There have been worries that as digital technologies grow more commonplace in people's lives, conventional offline political involvement may decline due to Internet use. Others have made similar arguments that social media, in particular, will have a negative impact on offline political participation because it enables low-cost, low-commitment forms of political expression that let people feel involved even if they are not, thereby limiting their actual participation. However, researchers also suggested that based on research, online and social media use is frequently linked to offline political activity. It positively affects online activities and participation (Boulianne, 2009).

H2: Online political participation influences offline political participation.

Mediating Role of Political Interest Between Online Political Participation and Offline Participation

Different criteria have been used to define political interest. It is seen to be motivating in that engagement with politics is sparked by interest (Luskin, 1990). The most effective predictor of the political behaviors that keep democracy functioning is often political interest. The primary driver of political motivation is political interest, which indicates the conceptualization skills necessary for engaging in the democratic process. Political interest is a prerequisite for responsible and democratic citizens' desirable qualities (Rebenstorf, 2004). It is an acknowledged fact that politically engaged people are more knowledgeable about politics, more likely to vote, and more likely to take other political actions.

Additionally, those already politically interested are more easily mobilized and are often much more affected by efforts to promote political participation (Prior, 2010). Moreover, it is not necessary to have a political interest to be a ruling-class member. Some become politically aware or active because of a sense of civic responsibility. Others simply respond "yes" when prompted. Some people are paid for their services to governance, while others believe that getting involved in politics is essential to protect their wealth. Membership is not contingent on having a political interest.

H3: Political Interest mediates the relationship between media attention and offline participation.

Offline Political Participation

Political participation is "broadly defined as any action a citizen takes to influence their political system. Citizens can participate in politics in various ways that do not include running for office". Political participation discusses the relationship between the state and society and touches on issues like how individuals and various social groups organize to advance their political agendas, how citizens participate in politics, how they are represented in the political system, and how they have an impact on state policy (Lafenwa, 2019). Citizens' actions that impact politics can be broadly referred to as political participation. Voting, protesting, contacting public officials, boycotting, attending party rallies, guerrilla gardening, blogging, volunteering, participating in flash mobs, signing petitions, purchasing fair-trade goods, and even protesting by committing suicide are just a few of the actions that fall under the category of participation (Deth, 2021). Moreover, Traditional definitions of political engagement center on voting, running for office, or attempting to sway organizations and people in positions of political power; these typically entail some collective action (Lafenwa, 2019; Lilleker & Ozgul, 2021).

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Furthermore, political participation can be carried out online or offline. It is crucial to examine who engages in online and offline political involvement to determine whether social disparities in Internet adoption are a barrier to the Internet's potential for expanding participation to all social groups. According to several studies of offline political participation conducted in Britain and the United States, political involvement is not evenly dispersed among the population. While there has been a decrease in the gender pay gap in Britain, it has been observed that those with higher levels of education, older age groups, and wealthier backgrounds consistently have higher rates of political participation than those with lower levels of education, younger generations, and those in lower socioeconomic status (Dutton, 2006). Moreover, there is a difference between offline and online political participation, such as offline activities include; calling, writing, or meeting with a government representative, submitting a paper petition, utilizing the postal service to send a letter to the editor, contributing to politics in person, over the phone, or by mail, meet in person, send a letter or newsletter in print, or call a civic or political organization to communicate (Aaron et al., 2009). Moreover, offline or traditional participation has been regarded as crucial to democratic processes, including participating in political campaigns and rallies, working for political parties or candidates, and voting, particularly during elections (Mohamad, Abdu, & Halim, 2018). Moreover, online participation includes; Emails to a representative of the government. Internet petition signatures. Editorial sending via email. Online donation to a political cause (Aaron et al., 2009).

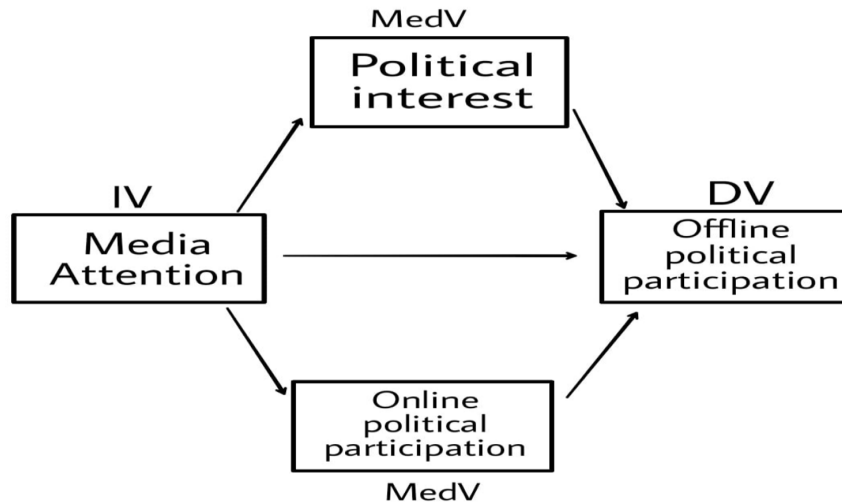
Forms of Political Participation: There are many different ways to get involved in politics. The following are a few forms of political participation:

Voting: Possibly the most popular way to participate in politics is by voting. Voting for candidates and issues gives citizens regular opportunities to shape the political system in different democracies worldwide. Citizens can vote for candidates, amendments, ordinances, referendums, or levies in pure and representative democracies. Registered voters in democracies decide local, state, and federal matters through voting in elections. Voting is crucial because it enables citizens to select representatives who most closely reflect their ideals. It has been shown that citizen mobilization through social networks increases voter turnout. Additionally, conversations in non-political online venues, such as lifestyle forums, can spur political mobilization. When taken as a whole, these findings lend credence to the idea that social media use by everyday people plays a significant role in political engagement in the modern world (Bossetta, 2016).

Protest: Protests are a practical way to engage in politics. A political system's citizens and groups can express their displeasure with the government through a wide range of tactics in political protest (Chong, 2001). In addition, a protest, also known as a demonstration, remonstrance, or remonstrance, is an open declaration of opposition to, or disapproval of, political thought or conduct. Furthermore, social mobilization and political transformation have demonstrated that group participation on social media websites correlates with group behavior offline. Numerous studies have discovered an association between increasing online activity, often on Facebook and Twitter and later rises in protest participation. The pro-democratic movements are among them (Gallacher et al., 2021).

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Figure 1. Conceptual framework



RESEARCH DESIGN

The researchers used a cross-sectional research design to examine how media use affects offline political participation and the function of political interest and online political participation as mediators. A survey method was used to collect the data. An online survey was used to gather data from the study's target audience. Users of online media were considered when collecting data for this study. Given the aforementioned forecast, the study's questionnaire was distributed online.

Sample Size

The survey was distributed by sending a link to the Google form on several social networking sites (such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) The Google form link to the survey was posted on various social networking sites. Data on 429 adults, including 174 men and 233 women, were gathered between 8 to 13 September 2022.

Measures

To quantify media attention, we utilized three items on a Likert scale with five possible responses (never=1, seldom=2, sometimes=3, often=4, and always=5). Three items on a 4-point Likert scale (not at all=1, very little=2, occasionally, =3, and a great deal=4) were used to gauge political interest. We used Masiha et al. (2018), scale to measure political participation. Political engagement was divided into online and offline participation. The level of political participation online was evaluated with six items on a 5-point Likert scale (strongly disagree=1, disagree=2, neutral=3, agree=4, and strongly agree=5). Likewise, six items on a 5-point scale were used to gauge offline political participation. Last, demographic data on the sample's gender, age, and background were also gathered and processed.

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RESULTS

Reliability Analysis

The scale’s reliability was measured by using Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha=.86$) was .86. This is an excellent reliability coefficient. The benchmark value that is recommended is .07.

Descriptive Analysis Results

The data were normally distributed. Before performing the primary analysis, the data were screened for normality using the software SPSS 24.0. After this, we performed a descriptive analysis. Data were collected from 442 respondents. Among these 442 respondents, six did not report their age; three respondents did not disclose their gender and four did not share their background.

Table 1. Demographic of the respondents

		Age	Gender	Background
N	Valid	436	439	438
	Missing	6	3	4

Hypotheses Testing

After descriptive analysis, we used inferential statistics to test our hypotheses. We used multiple regression-based techniques to test the influence of predictive variables on the outcome variable and mediating role of political most inept and online political participation.

Table 2. Zero-order correlation among the five variables

Variables	Media Attention	Political Interest	Online Political Participation	Offline Political Participation
1. Media attention	-			
	424			
2. Political interest	.481**			
	.000	427		
3. Online Political Participation	.391**	.427**		
	.000	.000	421	
Offline Political Participation	.275**	.381**	.710**	
	.000	.000	.000	422
	419	421	416	

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Testing DIRECT INFLUENCE

Table 3 shows the direct influence of the predictor variable on the outcome variable.

Table 3. Statistical output verifying the basic relationship between predictor (media attention) and the outcome variable (offline political participation)

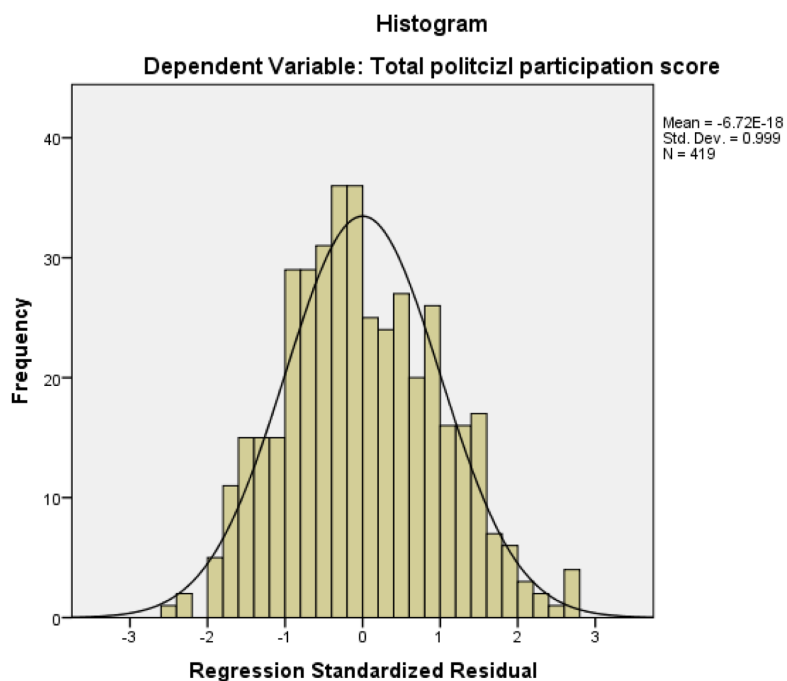
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	10.745	.878		12.240	.000
	Total Media attention score	.571	.098	.275	5.836	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Total political participation score

Note: Dependent variable variable=outcome variable

A simple linear regression was used to investigate the predictive ability of media attention to predict one’s offline political participation. A significant model emerged ($F(1, 417) = 34.055, p \leq .0005$, $\beta = .57, p \leq .0005$, two-tailed). These findings support Hypothesis (H1) that posits media attention significantly influences offline political participation.

Figure 2.



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Table 4. Influence of attention on offline political participation

ANOVA						
	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	886.561	1	886.561	34.055	.000 ^b
	Residual	10855.950	417	26.033		
	Total	11742.511	418			
a. Dependent Variable: offline political participation						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Media attention						

Testing Indirect Hypothesis (First Regression)

Interpretation: The next step is to do simultaneous regression in which the predictor (media attention) and the mediating variable (online political participation) are included in the analytical model as a predictor of offline political participation. In essence, all we are doing in this analysis is that we added the mediating variable to the previous analysis reported in Tables 5 (a) and 5 (b). Our hypothesis H2 *states* that online political participation *mediates the relationship between media attention and offline participation* is supported. In other words, online political participation significantly mediates the relationship between media attention and offline political participation. In our study, online political participation almost perfectly mediates the relationship between media attention and offline political participation. This finding is in line with Baren and Kenney (Baren & Kenney, 1986).

Table 5a. Statistical output of the independent variable (media attention) predicting the mediating variable (first regression)

Model 1		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.254	.333		12.777	.000
	Media attention	.417	.037	.481	11.255	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Political Interest						

Table 5b. Statistical output of independent variable (media attention) and mediating variable (online participation) predicting the dependent variable (offline political participation)

Model 2		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.346	.722		6.023	.000
	Media attention	.031	.078	.015	.399	.690
	online political participation	.688	.037	.704	18.624	.000
a. Dependent Variable: political participation						

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Table 6a. Statistical output verifying the basic relationship between predictor (media attention) and mediating variable (online political participation)

Model 1		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	8.867	.855		10.373	.000
	Media attention	.822	.095	.391	8.661	.000

a. Dependent Variable: online political participation

Table 6b. Statistical output of independent variable (media attention) and mediating variable (political interest) predicting the dependent variable (offline political participation)

Model 2		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.445	.991		7.515	.000
	Media attention	.246	.107	.118	2.306	.022
	political interest	.777	.123	.325	6.328	.000

a. Dependent Variable: political participation

Interpretation: The next step is to perform simultaneous regression in which the predictor (media attention) and the mediating variable (political interest) are included in the analytical model as a predictor of offline political participation. In essence, all we are doing in this analysis is that we added the mediating variable to the previous analysis reported in Tables 6(a) and 6(b). Our hypothesis H3 states that political interest mediates the relationship between media attention and offline participation. In other words, political interest significantly mediates the relationship between media attention and offline political participation.

Discussion

This research used a cross-sectional design (media attention, online political participation, political interest, and offline political participation) to examine the effectiveness of media attention on offline political participation by treating political interest and online political participation as mediators. This study possesses three hypotheses. Moreover, the finding of this study supported three hypotheses. These findings are similar to the previous literature that found that media has been proven to be a fantastic tool for spreading knowledge and stimulating and facilitating widespread public participation in political processes (Stieglitz et al, 2012). Moreover, social media significantly impacts the youth population, and this influence has altered how they behave politically. Increased social media use is linked to increased political power, political rights, and voter knowledge. Social media use and involvement in politics and civic life are closely related. The strong connection between online political campaigns and public faith in elected officials (Shehzad et al., 2021). According to a study, online and social media use is usually linked to offline political involvement, and there is a favorable relationship between online participation

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and activities (Boulianne, 2009). Online political participation has broadened political participation while also increasing its variety. Second, there are no discernible differences in the stratification of political engagement based on socioeconomic and demographic criteria in offline and online modalities (Nam, 2012).

Furthermore, already politically engaged people are more inclined to being mobilized and are frequently considerably more impacted by initiatives to encourage political participation (Prior, 2010). Moreover, political interest, a characteristic that denotes the conceptualizing abilities required for participating in the democratic process, serves as the primary motivator of political motivation. Political interest is a requirement for the desirable characteristics of the responsible and democratic citizen (Rebenstorf, 2004). However, these findings also contradict some previous studies that digital technologies become more prevalent in daily life. In modern culture, mass media (print, electronic, and social media) serve as communication. Strong correlations between social media use, time spent using it, and Internet connectivity were found when examining how much social media use affects political activity. Political persuasion aims to convince others to act similarly, whereas theoretical involvement aims to change the public's attitudes and behaviors toward political issues in a free-choice situation (Shehzad et al., 2021). According to a study, online and social media use is usually linked to offline political involvement, and there is a favorable relationship between online participation and offline activities (Boulianne, 2009). Radio, television, and social media are the primary sources of information for most people on national and international affairs (Ott, 1998). Media platforms have the power to improve democracies by reflecting public opinion. By exposing users to opposing opinions expressed by friends, family, and colleagues on social media, people can feel more liberated and change their political beliefs (Schleffer & Miller, 2021). The Internet allows political groups and elected officials to communicate with citizens and explain their ideas. It may also make political information accessible to citizens to boost political interest and engagement. As a result, people will find it simpler to learn about politics, which will boost their interest in politics (Bimber et al., 2014). The tendency for people to participate in political activities online, how this will boost political engagement, and how confirmation bias can hinder political participation are all topics of continuing discussion (Sung & Jang, 2020). Media coverage significantly influences offline political engagement. Online political participation almost perfectly mediates the association between media attention and offline political activity. Furthermore, there is a significant mediating role played by political interest in the relationship between media attention and offline political activity. It means political participation offline was directly impacted by media attention. Online political participation also acts as a mediator between media attention and offline political activities. Additionally, various mediating political interests have a direct impact on the connection between media attention and offline political activity.

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Chapter 24

Mediatization of Ubuntu: Towards a Philosophical Approach to Media Practice in Africa

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ABSTRACT

News, in the tradition of the West, is majorly individualized, leaning strongly towards personality responsibility cult. It stands aloof from the communalization that is the central ideology of African metaphysics. In other fields and spheres, Ubuntu has enjoyed a veiled renaissance as a pivotal theme of identity outlook that resonates with many traditions of reasoning in Africa. The media protocol in Africa has been outside that experimentation. The study is a philosophical interrogation of personality-celebrity-prominence as a news marker/source, foist on Africa in contradistinction to Africa's pristine worldview. As a concept paper, this research functionalizes the applicability of Ubuntu in news practice in Africa, suggesting that determinant and validity like prominence with Western predisposition and cognition should be seen beyond the prism of celebrities. It holds that prominence, as subject of news source, should be broadened within the context of community testament as validation of communal personality rather than individual persons.

INTRODUCTION

The media in Africa like other spheres of society have apprenticed under the operational system of their principal, the West. Hence, the ideology of what is defined as news is a franchise yoked to Western yardstick and qualifying benchmark. Thus, in principle, Africa was cannibalized and conscripted by the French general expansionist political economic system of operation – assimilation; although in different European countries, arguably, there are insignificant shades and veneers of other systems of rule like the British's patent of indirect rule. Ideologically both Implicitly mirror each other.

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Society in many cases is, therefore, cued to exhibit characteristics that are traits of how media's operational mold re-engineers communication patterns that midwife, in turn, critical agenda of behavior and constitution of communities within its enclave. While it is admissible to reason that there are overlapping spheres of intersecting tendencies in influence by the constituents - society, the media hold a principal share of the influence wheel; much of which is inadvertently buried in the cultural traditions of the West.

This critical capital has its design coordinates in values of nucleuses, a tradition that has a different vertebrate from Africa's news sociology, obviously. The former tends towards the celebration of individuals. That watered culture strayed easily into news determinants and nourished 'prominence' as an important news indices. The same tradition pollinized it to a model that became amplified in Harold Laswell's trite definition of news being, "who" said what to "whom" through what channel with what effect. That lone celibate outlook, with probably veiled potential consequences, problematized news and its' pouched versions; which may have undermined it as a feeble transmission of vital and sustainable information that it appears in the eye of many these days. Could that deficiency be part of the vulnerability and nursery of disinformation that is running rampant? Who are the most hit?

From the myriad maladies of credibility that are constantly hauled at news reporters, the media, no doubt, are currently spotlighted by a flurry of society-wide concerns about how they trade information around. Much of that being believability related, hence a great many of there merchandise is become pretty difficult to sell and sustain in a complex world plagued by ethical epidemic of disinformation or, as it is popularly described, fake news. As with every failed trust issue the thinning confidence in media messages, backed by a sustained barrage of charges that truth and facts no longer resides with media professionals, is simultaneously met with the ire of embattled campaign by a bruised breed of media professionals. These appear poised to hold the fort of pristine tradition and defend it against sweeping generalization that news business is credibility bankrupt (Ricketts, 2012; de Beer, Pitcher, and Jones, 2017; Berger, 2018). Is the much bickering symptomatic of media evolution in the quarry of other global events and development, or it goes deeper than it seems? With Thomas (2014), it is imperative to ask, what is the complexion of the underlining issue that most journalism scholars, in Africa especially, have chosen to look away from?

The mutational nature of the challenge makes it tricky to hit (start) from the hip. An overview of the dichotomous issues is necessary as it may provide the dimensional implications of media hydra-hegemony on news ecology and production in the South standing at a critical crossroad in their evolution. Fact is, the news media generally appear to be facing dramatic upheavals because of differing gravity weighing hard on them (Beckett and Kyrke-Smith, 2007) such as the deep and disturbing decline in respect of media freedom at both the global and regional levels. Incidentally, the context of media freedom has always been engaged from a linear perspective, characterized by the rightness or otherwise of ambient condition; but rarely from its cortex, the autoimmune disorder evident in the internal constitution of its values.

Calls for press freedom as a thorny issue appears to eddy endlessly as media professionals have made the mantra a monument of wonder and a reflexive tryst of wreath where sage ideology is only fondly wished, but never reached and attained. Beyond just nostalgias, there is rarely internalization of the phenomenon within the context of cultural specificity and values. And are values fall casualties in such circumstances? Perhaps there is a binomial relationship between values and actualities. Koljonen (2013) submits that, values and facts are intrinsically linked in the opinion of 'liquid' journalists.

The consequence reveals the sobering reality that the soul of journalism, African journalism particularly, in its reactions and sentiments generally appears to have been voodooed into a coven and trapped. The call for media freedom had been sadly an outward expression of an internal reality of servitude that

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exposed media workers to epidermal dejection from society. What chance of defense do they have with society and government when a horde of other replacement appears to have been found in citizen journalism (Ireton and Posetti 2018)? Already there is a swathe of position occupied by essentially authoritative personalities that even believe the media are a tribe of liars or just some boogie entertainers. That may be a cliché describing the mutual mistrust and the cat-mouse relationship between government and the media, even though that has become sadly putrefying of late (Ireton and Posetti 2018).

However, this perceived inflammability between media and a distraught society is deeply associated to the salient issue that almost escapes notice; which is a lack of clear understanding of the culture that incubates much of what is defined as news, the ambient values and the tradition that spawned it before misinformation and disinformation spritely jumped into the fray of deviancy and affected its understanding. The path of redemption for pristine journalism, particularly in Africa, should lead to the cultural matrix for ideological exorcism from elemental captors. This article is therefore saddled with the task of philosophically debriefing the context and spirit of Lasswell's maxim of news, particularly the element of "who" within the frame of Africa's communal philosophy tied organically to the social values and constitution of 'beingness'. It identifies nuances and a fracture that has been left untreated in news cognition.

So, the questions strung to these objectives are: what is the value of 'who' in Africa's social context of news value? How will the overview of that outlook define news reporting ideology in the Global South? What are the likely implications of that cultural paradigm shift on journalism practice in Africa and the cognition of news negotiation generally in the Global South?

News and Culture-Centrism

There are many approaches to journalism. What defines the news profession, like information, is deeply rooted in its cultural ecology and ethics. The sociology of news production and the ambiance of its routine operation comports with cultural norms of the profession. Culture is characterized into two parts according to Idang (2015, p.100): the tangible and non-tangible. Thus, "what a people hold to be true, right or proper with regard to those things," in the predilection of Antia (2005, p. 17), explains much of the cultural peculiarities by which they become identified. In journalism, news is arguably framed around traditions of a dominant culture (Hofstede's, 2001; Zhou, 2008; Kim and Kelly, 2008; Hanusch 2009). And as experts have severally honed it, the style, form and role of journalism are shaped by the society, politics and culture within which the profession is understood and practiced (Williams, 2006, p. 46).

The dominant culture may be parasitic in the context of Schwartz's (2004) definition as what has become a "rich complex of meanings, beliefs, practices, symbols, norms and values prevalent among people in a society" (p.34). However, where these indices are not organically spawned then the incubus culture becomes scrounging and drains the essence of the original identity of its host; in the end the host is sufficiently emasculated to depend on it. That switch of place is not mutual, but hegemonic and reflects the reality of the globalization on peripheries of so-called states in alliance with what I describe as ideologies on steroids – i.e., ideas that are outside the confluence of organic realism, this may be relative though.

A benign approach of news ideal in the context of public representation as presented by Beckett and Kyrke-Smith (2007) is the seductive argument that, News-making is a shared and incorporative process in which all are involved. Thomas (2014) crude shock when beguiled audience reaction exposed that

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subterfuge of the applicability of the mantra led to what she calls a journalistic journey through a not-too-interrogated incredulity to quiz, “What is going on here” (p.19)?

What is going on is that the rule stick for definition is patently corrugated. The ideological ‘othering’ (Africans) live in limbo – they are inebriated with the consciousness of an identity dilemma: neither belonging to the West that is not accepting them and the uneasiness of feeling alienated from what is traditionally their ribbon of identity in news (Kasoma, 1996), which they gave up. Ideally, the basic African culture of news situates truth and facts in what is community existential rather than individualized elite scoops. News and its production procedure are communalized, pretty much like the Asians’ value, both of which, according to Ravi (2005) are in contra distinction to the West’s that is highly individualistic.

The closest representation of news scribes in African news ecology is a community *Town Crier* (Village Crier it should be ideally) whose news source and information is community-centered. The idea is derived from a pool of society’s collectivist ideology that found expression in Africa’s traditional information system. Its hub is society-centric sentiments woven on the tapestry of “compassion, reciprocity, dignity, harmony and humanity in the interest of building and maintaining a community with justice and mutual caring” (Fourie, 2008, p. 62).

In that framework news is seen as sacred rites with community stake and partnership, the goal being for building and maintaining society with justice; although the application is multi-dimensional. This idealism was an everyday reality in many African communities, but rarely so now.

It may have been struck by an elitist conspiracy that imposed a complex, suggesting weakness of mass society through blackmails and manipulations that polishes the atomization of communal strength trimmed to personality representation. Social cooperation that draws on the force of communality is viewed as a mob movement, a tyrannical hegemony of majority that may breed anarchy in states.

Therefore, the sly fractionalization of Africa’s identity imposed a new false estate of solo-elitism, which consequently diseased the socio-communal nexus and ligaments in its worldview. The fatality from that disorientation in social operation is a rascality of classical misrepresentation trolls – fake news – inflicting incalculable pains on the world. Tony Bennett penned a nostalgic dirge that inspires contemplation along the line of this discourse and I am compelled to quote him.

Once upon a time, it is argued, social relationships were communal and organic in nature. People knew where they were. Their place within the order of things was clearly fixed and legitimated by a universally binding system of beliefs and values... The development of industry, in breaking up traditional social relationships, has thrown men and women into isolation and self-reliance, the promise of freedom having turned into the living nightmare of anomie and alienation. Democracy has turned into its opposite as new forms of tyranny, playing on the fears and isolation of a social atomized population, have established themselves. And culture, in being spread, has degenerated into moral and aesthetic barbarism. (Bennett, 2005, p. 33)

Humanization of News in Afro-Idealism

In Africa, news is humanity more than it is an objectification of issues that owe existence to fringe treatment outside the ambit of the essence of collectivism. Although that philosophy appears to have been submerged in a morass of assimilated news considerations, and passed into a mythic relic in parts of Africa; shades of that outlook is dimly represented in a generic philosophy of Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu – which literally transliterates as, ‘a person is a person because of others’ (Nussbaum, 2003).

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Recognized as the African philosophy of humanism conjoining the individual to the collective through 'brotherhood' or 'sisterhood', according to Swanson (2007, p. 55), Ubuntu is short for an isiXhosa proverb in Southern Africa and is a social philosophy of experimental everyday living that reflects existential code of ethics and shares the coloration of Africanism. According to Shutte (2001) is "not thinking mainly of a political experiment, but of an ethical one, an experiment in trying to live by values that have been hidden or forgotten" (p. 4).

This epistemic philosophy has been in existence for thousands of years in most countries of Africa and glows at the core of intrinsic values of traditional culture, which quite frankly appear to be fighting to mitigate other interest that beat hard at its bank in post-modern civilization.

As a philosophy that borders on fringe African alternative media theory, Ubuntu once influenced and inflated the way Africans saw and produced news, although media anthropologists of Western supremacy are otherwise inclined and may have chosen to rather see the epistemology of African news from the skewed prism of the ideological North. The cultural superscript and incorrigible tendency of bias in Western pane of viewing filters Ubuntu philosophy through the segregated prism of othering; hence they interpret it to be, 'living in each other's spirits' and 'I am because we are'. This corruption of view cheats on the essence of the philosophy.

In perspective, therefore, Tutu (1999) explains the essence of the philosophy; admitting though, that its grail may be difficult to conceptualize within the puerility of Western linguistics and language frame, which lacks the lubricating adage and depths of cultural cognition. Thus he says Ubuntu:

Speaks of the very essence of being human. When we want to give high praise to someone we say, "Yu, u nobuntu"; 'Hey, so-and-so has ubuntu". Then you are generous, you are hospitable, you are friendly and caring and compassionate. You share what you have. It is to say, "My humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in yours." We belong in a bundle of life. We say, "A person is a person through other persons." It is not, "I think therefore I am." It says rather: "I am human because I belong. I participate, I share." A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed, or treated as if they were less than who they are. (p. 31)

In and from the perspective of globalization, the erosion of such social value in news production has been replaced by the deification of authority figure and personalities. A pertinent consideration in news value, encapsulated as prominence, especially information source, has become one of the core decimal for deciding among a few other subordinating elements what information should be baptized as fact or caricatured as figment of mischief-making imaginations. The Global North escalates the value of prominence and phenomenizes personality hyped by economic and social capital as invaluable determinants of contents.

On the other hand, the Ubuntu sublimity remains antithetical to the individualized prominence in a way. It de-solemnizes the Global North's ideology of news value seeded by Harold D. Lasswell (1940) that news is, "Who, said what, in which channel, to whom, with what effect (Sapienza, Iyer and Veenstra, 2015), viewed particularly in the context of individualist supremacy. This is particularly instructive, especially where the corporeal variable - "who" - is seminally personified in celebrities; profiled as stars because of their pumped-up economic biceps and net/finance worth. Although Lasswell's thesis somewhat reflects dominantly individualized celebrity journalism (Bell, 2009), certain scholars consider that blast

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an essential definer of media production (Biagi, 2013; Brereton, 2001; DeFleur, 1998), while others suggest that it may just have been situational and scruffy because of its linear orientation (McQuail, 1985).

Sometimes the question asked: is received news values blight on the African furnace of communal news production or a blessing, given especially that communication technology (an inescapable appendage of globalization) has not been effectively managed (Deuze and Futunati, 2010; and Mabweazara 2010)? May be it is the crisis of culture steered with the inebriating elements of dominant global culture, dubbed oxymoronically globalization.

Whatever it is, culture is flux. Like everything, it is not immobile and enduring. It undergoes frequent modifications because of the variability and dynamism of interrelationship, contacts and absorption of other peoples' cultures; a process that is generally akin to assimilation. Thus, Institutionalized knowledge (and news production as one such knowledge domain) is often subject to medley of influences that range anywhere from bequeathed legacies of colonialism, geopolitics and proximal political pressures. Almost as expected, the culture of collective patency of information in Africa waned after information ownership passed to, or became assumed by, individual authors and personalities (personal news sources); more like the re-capitalization of news on personality's credentials. Whatever happened to community news sources, going back to patent right of messages reserved incontrovertibly for the community, not individuals in the community; on classical sustainable development concerns?

The reduction of news momentum from communal property rights to personality wares (invariably a microcosm of the ideological brawls between the Balkanized representation of capitalism and socialism and everything in-between) abridges the tide and problematizes the production of news to something far less steamy and communally convolute. This translates to something like the trappings of celebrity pond of ideas that today's news comes out to look like. So, instead of iridescent torrent of information, credibility issues of all shades burden communication; one of which may be disinformation, misinformation or what is easily tagged fake news.

The reason for the concomitant information dysfunction may be understood in this narrative. When political communication is cocooned in and around authority figures (politicians and celebrities), prioritized as 'exclusive' primary news source, inverted politics is compromisingly diced; issues become bifurcated along interests and political leanings, and an undeclared axis is invariably pronounced. Those considered to be on the other side of the divide become opponents and a fight field is consequently declared. Classism sprouts from such fertility - those that so-called know versus the so-called ignorant. Superiority complex soon develops and with it the contest of who holds the mace of information and who wants it so badly, to the extent of adopting valiancy. In that milieu fake news is fertile and familiarly organic.

It is in a condition like this that facts and the soul of reason becomes a terrifying casualty in both the conventional and digital media. For many, much of the mooching about disinformation in Nigeria and other parts of the Global South may be symptomatic of this seemingly nebulous complex. This is not contending that parts of the media are guilty of recklessly traducing society. Were that to be the case the consequences are grave as the casualty is on journalists and journalism.

To nestle therefore the concern of security of humanity and journalism, lots of theories and models individualize communication in society, particularly from the prodigious pedestal of perspective. However, the ambiance of a message is hugely important as it more often than not serve as the collateral of message credibility. Gans (1979) gives credence to this by alluding that a man's position on a matter is often colored by where he/she is standing to view a subject. Correlated to Gan's (1979) spectacle thesis is Tuchman's (1978) reducible philosophy that, News is a window on the world. The view through the window depends upon whether the window is large or small, has many panes or few, whether the glass is

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opaque or clear, whether the window faces a street or backyard. With communalism, the vista on issues and their implications are more expansive. It is doubtful to say the same of individualism characterized by dominant media viewing panes on the world and issues (Tomaselli 2003; Xu 2005; Alia, 2009; Grixti, 2011, Hanusch, 2013).

Ubuntu Information and News Philosophy: Towards a Positional Determinism

There are shadowy apparitions of Ubuntu (collectivism) media theory and philosophy across the globe, around Global South countries especially (Alia 2010; Molnar and Meadows 2001; Wilson and Stewart, 2008; Pietikäinen, 2008; Ka'ai-Mahuta, 2010). Contextualized to the Afrocentricity of news value, personality prominence as a value for selecting news and source validity barometer is Eurocentric 'ism' and it reflects celebrity journalism, which may be feudalistic. Thus Asante (2009) reasons that, Afrocentricity creates, among other things, a critique of human communication and social history in the search for a unique standing place for agency. Such an action is at once a liberalizing and a liberating event, marking both the expansion of consciousness and the freeing of the mind from hegemonic thinking.

The Afrocentricity of news culture, devoid of trappings of neo-imperial subtlety, may be akin to public journalism, if that is understood in the light of Habermas (1962) sprout thesis of public sphere ideology. Habermasianism sees journalism as ligament, connecting society to state; in a broader context of its relativity to Afrocentricity, it serves as the ultimate context of journalistic operations (Ahva 2011). However, the divergence of public journalism from Afrocentricity is its coloration of American hegemonic value (Haas, 2007) of atomizing news as creation of prized subjects and personalities in society; consequently reducing interpretation of issues in every case to linear prisms of capitalists and power representatives. Although public journalism was invented through serial research of some sort, Ahva (2011, p.120) avers that it has not been part of a logically developed, historically formed, and internally coherent theory or philosophy of journalism. In a sense, it belies the pathway of accessibility, transparency and connectivity in relation to the public sphere of Habermas' (Habermas 1998; 2006) spectacle, where claims for a more diverse, deliberative, active and connective journalism (Ahva 2010) can be realized.

Habermas ideology is evident testimonial to the humanity of interactivity and the supremacy of collectivism over individualism. It is a negotiated balance and denominator that measures relevance and as Taylor (2004, p.99) avers, it is "hard to conceive society without it". Society's sustainability can be gauged easily by measuring issues on its multiple discursive domains when emphasis is placed on collectivist planks of reasoning. In the world of fakery and disinformation running rampant, dispassionate identification of information and communal tagging of credibility to the outlook of es- spirit-de-cop may be an ideal dream for communalizing information source and prominence.

In that regard, Nyamnjoh (2005) remonstrates that any brand of journalism therefore that is skewed narrowly towards an individual and is indifferent as well as "insensitive to the centrality of group and community interests" is, more often than not, deficient; impaired and disoriented from the very soul that spawned it and the patriotism, the distinction it applauds and revels ever so superlatively.

All the same Habermas idea is patronizing of society-hub journalism. Many scholars trace the foundations of community media to theories of communitarianism. Some identify the values and roles of community media as offering a geographic or conceptual commonality, nonhierarchical or horizontal organizational structures, citizen access to facilities and participation in content production, and a clear and distinctive profile in opposition to the state and the market (Brevini 2015).

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Habermas hones serendipitously the scent of Afrocentricity in his treatise for which he was criticized. Much of the criticism against the position of Habermas seems all so centered around the fact that, according to Ahva (2011, p. 121), he sees the public sphere as something unified, singular and therefore exclusive. Be that as it may, the grail of Habermas thesis is aptly represented by Papacharissi, (2002) who whets the idea of ‘public’ in a commentary. To him it presupposes ideas of citizenship, commonality, and things not private, but accessible and observable by all. Well, in the West that seems an idealized machination that can be characterized as hubristic at best.

Such misty existence, if it ever existed, as much as in a nebulous form - and that nostalgia, by the way, rings true even for present day communities in Africa – it may have been eclipsed by the deluge of capitalism (Carey, 1995; Bennett, 2005) with its wittily subliminal privatization force. That has rendered impotent whatever was a mass culture; a public sphere, even in places like Africa where it was a unifying hub of communal outlook.

Capitalism with its edgings of commercialization and clusters of feudalized economic empires glorifies individualized residency of ideas and privatization of the intellect/opinion – what should be the ideal wealth of nations - while communities gravel and are beholden on them as celebrities/ important icons of repute in society. Thus, in many places the cult of celebs is regarded as a certified network of hijackers of public opinion, tyrannically dictating the navigational map of collective existence with hordes of society tagging along in reverent belief on the self-acclaimed superstars.

The opium decimating the trust concern on journalism may have been shared innocently on the threshold of some theoretical assumption or applications of media practice. Apart from the individuality cult that general media culture foists on adorned personalities revered as newsmakers over communities, some theories may have been polished to adulate source monolithic sophistication. News agenda in literature is usually a capsule of gilded personalities functioning as locomotive, piloting a train of willy-nilly followers, the opinion leaders. And the pedestal for that orbital elevation is in degrees, two-step, three steps etc (Choi, 2014). With the social media in clear lead of the pack, new kinds of leadership have also been created with a portfolio described as social medial influencers – SMI – that wield a formidable control than can be imagined (Gillin, 2008; Stansberry, 2012; Feng, 2016; Hilbert, Vásquez, Halpern, Valenzuela and Arriagada 2016). There is scarcely a corresponding attention or research-rich delicacy on the shades of communal influence. Therefore, is the silence conspiratorial to subordinate in perpetuity community to personality cults?

Before the conventional or digit-social media, communities exist and conduct their affairs the way they so please, within the ambit of national institutions of territorially bound societies (Volkmer 1999; Paterson and Sreberny 2004). To say, think and believe otherwise (that public sphere started existing at the advent of modernity) is to pouch egregiously on existential community tradition and way of life shared by African societies especially, on the one hand and to; on the other, post deniability that soothes the ego of modernist apologists. The spheres “created” by conventional media and social media are a poor reflection of the restful paternal existence of realities before the advent of industrial and digital era. This should be the matrix of the narrative. The sentiment, therefore, of eldership and the respect it commands in African social values demand that prominence be accorded to the communal institution.

To be clear therefore, Africans had their social-political order (Shaw, 2009). As a result of the political aggrandizement of the colonial conquistadors it was rubbished as obnoxious. The anthropological hierarchy of social and political dispensation of facts had a meta tapestry that is rooted in oracles, believed to be the information custodian, repository and source of facts / truth. In them causality of truth as victim of subjective egomaniacal interest may have not only been insignificant, but symptomatic of

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fractured figment of unstable-mindedness. However, with growing popularity of libertarian opinionates the sacredness of facts has been terribly violated by those that subscribe to the populism of indiscretion co-existing with the smoldering sparks of facts.

Ubuntu-Centric News Agenda

When news is born it is midwived by a personality that is usually as big as the reputation of the character that is profiled as the protagonist of the sensation. Incidentally people believe in the organism of individuals than in the biologic interrelation and existence of populated *Homo sapiens* (Senghor, 1964). The tone of news is cast on the railings of “who says what to whom through what media with what effect.” Hence, the populist alley in situating Harold Laswell’s thesis is the tendency to lean on individualistic staff rooted in soloist capitalism base and interpretation. It is the first convenient inorganically saturated milk of mainstream media orientation served generously around the world and indiscreetly consumed by African media scholars and practitioners alike.

The element of “who” is ordered around individual prominence in direct contrast to the African worldview of communalism represented by the philosophy of Ubuntu. As an orientation to life, it stands in contrast to rampant eccentricity, insensitive competitiveness, and unilateral decision-making. This outlook is in the subliminal arteries of African society, pervasive at all ages, in families, organisations and communities living especially in a clime. This is encapsulated in the belief that, “People are not individuals, living in a state of independence, but part of community, embodied in relationships and interdependence” (Turaki 2006, p.36).

In general, the outlook of Africans is humanist, community-based and socialist in nature, from family to social relations. In this commune-centric worldview, Africans relieve their conception of human beings and their relationship with the community that represents the ethics that horizontally define their social behaviours. The definition of “who” in Laswell’s theory of news, in its purest African sense, should not be construed outside the ambience of cultural communalism. Thus, source - who in journalism - will be less of personality and more of community-centric as it is in values hidden or exiled out of memories (Shutte, 2001; Auchter, 2017) even in Africa and among Africans.

But then, communitarianism can be problematized if it is not contextualised and conceptualized. There are contrarians that are averse to recognising a community according to Auchter (2017): the individualist version that underlies liberalism and capitalism and the collectivist version that underlies socialism and communism. They can be differentiated according to the priority that is given to the importance of the individual or to society as a whole.

Aggregations of most erudition in Africa seem to have a hard time distinguishing between these and the African idea of community. African conception of community is no doubt different from Europeanized collectivist theories like socialism and communism. The strain is that Negro-African construct of collectivism is rooted in communalism as it is, according to Senghor (1964, p.49); stemmed in, “communion of souls than an aggregate of individuals”. To functionalize the communal spectacle of African perspective of news agenda hyped by the mental fixation of prominentizing capitalist-celebres at the expense of clan, people and communities should be de-steamed.

Initiating meaning in the canvas of traditional interpretation and Meta outlook of life, the individual is not a lone wayfarer; he or she enjoins corporate existence. As a tree in the forest of clannish existence, he/she owes his/her existence to other people and the conception of people encompasses metaphysical corporates that parenthesises past and contemporaries. It is therefore absurd to see man only as an island

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of sage importance without the organic body of surrounding human sea of subsistence. The import of this in news pattern should create a consciousness of the webby nature of existence and the commonality of the issues that challenge existence.

Journalists' oriented in this philosophy see Issues from their affective perspectives and the dynamics of solution. News leads as well as news pitches of reports are conscripted as constituents of a large body of samples, opinion; which is significantly representative and organic to a milieu. This is not asking or advocating a zombie consensus, it is more a communal variety of approach that has the pulchritude of a rainbow coalition. This news production outlook and paradigm cherishes pluralism and like Tavernaro-Haidarian (2020, p.2) avers "strives for meta-consensus"; 'which involves the mutual recognition of the legitimacy of the different values, preferences, judgments and discourses held by other participants' (Curato, Dryzek, Ercan, Hendricks, and Niemeyer, 2017).

This is why Africans see a thicket not a tree. A common aphorism in Nigeria is that a tree cannot make a forest. In the cosmology of ranking, shouldn't the forest be of more prominence in its agronomic and curative wealth/potency than a tree in it? Mbiti (1969, p.108) submission that "The individual can only say I am, because we are: and since we are therefore I am" gets a constructive relevance when retooled by media workers. Thus, Ubuntu takes a definitive uniqueness in choreographing people as essentially other- oriented rather than selfish; and suggests that the more we consider others, the more fully human we become.

"Through the lens of Ubuntu, the media are not seen as gatekeepers and watchdogs of power" as Tavernaro-Haidarian (2020, p.3) avers, "but rather as mediators for the purpose of nurturing consensus among members of society as well as between people and the government. In pursuing common solutions to social problems, citizens look towards themselves rather than (only) toward the political elite".

Among the contradistinction between the outlook of Global North and Ubuntu is the faded utility of objectivity in news demands (Fourie, 2001). This is because personal positions are not segregated and held out with ringing attention and significance, per se. The reason is, the wall of classism that separates the common masses from the prominent figure is broken down under Ubuntu. The philosophy emphasizes synthesis and filtration of shared position. The journalist's insight is similarly respected because s/he is human, sharing that humanity with all others, and has a stake in collating, interpreting and generating contents on a matter of grave consequence to all. This means expressing "one's perspective without being wholly identified with it or defending it at all costs" Tavernaro-Haidarian (2020, p.3). The import of this is that the collectivist spectrum and plane is widened, allowing citizens mobility from passivity to active participation in the process of self-governance (Wasserman 2013; Carey, 1997).

However, deriving from an oral tradition, the philosophy and theory is still evolving (Wiredu 1980) and may, for the moment, be construed as an archetype. In this evolutionary stage it is not inerrant and there may be some valid criticism and even misappropriation (see Tomaselli 2009), but this does not vitiate the principles it embodies.

The media have the conferral power to elevate a person and a position to prominence. It therefore should be the responsibility of the culturally oriented and philosophical student of journalistic anthropology to rightly situate within the consciousness of the African epistemology what anyone says within context of communal realism rather than project the isolationist pedestal of prominence that makes a personality a media celebrity.

In the context of African traditional life, which is fairly shared by other traditions outside Africa like some Asian traditions, the individual has a spiritually corporate existence and seen not to exist alone. He owes his existence to other people, including those of past generations and his contemporaries. He is

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simply part of the whole: past, present and future – epitome of the ecology of existence. A community therefore makes, creates, or produces individuals; for the individual depends on the corporate group. Whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual. The individual can only say: “I am, because we are; and since we are therefore I am.” This is a cardinal point in the understanding of the African view of man (Mbiti, 1969, pp. 108–9).

The import of this collectivist interpretation reverberates in most part of Africa (Tomasello, 2010), although it appears a tough sell for society outside Africa that don’t share the same anthropology (Broodryk 2002; Mokgoro 1997). The contest against systematizing the theory of communalism is its fluidity and widely accommodative idea and fecundity. The concept of family is tissue by unlimited boundaries of brotherhood and naturehood, richness in variety that is, unfortunately, emasculated by the nucleus system of human relationship epitomized in Global North tradition. This system of relationship is cast on representation of opinion and may have remotely influenced reportage and attribution of ideas in the West.

African’s idea of representation is often by a ring or colony of impersonal eldership or council of elders, which is the most authoritative attribution in matters of salient interest in the African communication system. The veracity of such information source or opinion ratified by council of elders, chiefs, community heads etc is almost impeccable; brilliant with little or rare elements of personal aggrandisements, deliberate misinformation or fakery; unlike what is common with individualistic media sources.

This is where the interface of the communalism becomes necessary in treating the defying challenge of fake news. The Salvific prowess of lodging source authority in communities rather than personality de-patronizes the cult of celebrity importance that feeds scandals, gossip and the whole spectrum of fake news (pseudo journalism). Personal serving intents for manipulating news and information will be starved of steam and means of sustenance.

Fake news and disinformation are symbols of a larger societal problem, which is the manipulation of public opinion to affect the real world (Gu, Kropotov, & Yarochkin, 2017). This phenomenon of sprucing falsehood as news has generated, according to Kalsnes (2018), grave concerns in many countries. In the conceptualization of many scholars, the fabrication goes by many aphorisms - information pollution (Wardle & Hossein, 2017), media manipulation (Warwick & Lewis, 2017), or information warfare (Khaldarova & Pantti, 2016).

The blithe approach to the malaise, such as simplistic solutions; censorship of free speech, is stitched by promulgation of laws attempting to abolish fake news in different countries from America to Zaire, and other legislative manoeuvres and fiats. The cancerous effect of fake news is that it devalues and delegitimizes voices of expertise, authoritative institutions, and the concept of objective data—all of which undermines society’s ability to engage in rational discourse based upon shared facts (Information Society Project, 2017).

That is reason for example the European Commission appointed 38 experts to a new High Level Group on fake news and online disinformation to advise the commission on how to understand and tackle the phenomenon of fake news and disinformation (HLEG, 2018). Germany introduced a new law in January 2018 to combat hate speech (BBC, 2018); France Emmanuel Macron has proposed a law to ban fake news on the Internet during the French election campaign (Nielsen, 2018). In Italy, the government has launched an online service aimed at cracking down on fake news (Guiffida, 2018). In the US a variant of corporate approach is experimented by giant communications industries - Facebook, Twitter, Google, Youtube. The strings are emasculating the financial capital of sites notorious in running fake news. Fake

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news is like rhizomes, it is rhizomatic. The treatments that are prescribed to deal with it including fact-checking organizations springing up may not get the job done other than gloss over.

So far the efforts are not yielding the commensurate desired results because they avoid the roots and canter on pruning the branches, it seems. A more critical approach that evaluates information and sources, accountability, and ethical codes of conduct (Kalsnes, 2018, p.) from a communal angle may be an alternative approach. It is here that we situate the Ubuntu mediatization.

Part of the worry of functionalizing Ubuntu in media reportage is that attribution may be footnoted in the morass of communal ascription. While that may be true, lime-light and the glamour drive, which could encourage and feed fat the buzzing fad of manufacturing and fabrication of reports or stories will wither quicker than other modalities mentioned.

It remains undeniable that the philosophy gives man some audacity to maximize his or her fullest potentials in a community. It offers the wealth and capital of freedom that even libertarianism may not guarantee. An individual is free to express opinion, association is ensured because of the philosophies' solidarity and socialization tendencies with others. What it implies for journalism is that reporters don't have to think and act detached and alienated from the subject they are covering (Jepchirchir, 2020;). This is particularly instructive in a world full of crisis and conflicts. It in this regard it draws affinity with journalism of empathy, what Bell (1998) originally describes as attachment. He encourages, "emotional journalism over objectivity; attachment over neutrality" (Bell, 1998, p.105).

Nonetheless, media practitioners like journalists who are first responders to news breaks will be detached from harming and being part of the cause of conflicts around their world. Therefore, the context of news report assessment by the new ethical consciousness becomes obligation to report only what is thoroughly deliberated from the perspective of the likely impact it may have on a community (Fourie, 2001). Clearly, the philosophy of Ubuntu emboldens and repositions the grail of what journalists' social responsibility should be and standardizes it onto an elevated pedestal.

Ubuntu Reporting

De-Sensationalization

The context and reporting style should reflect realism, it should de-emphasize the 'glamor' of sensationalism or any excitation from hubris. The point is, glamorizing that in report dehumanizes someone, rapes the person of dignity and affects the biology of commonness that all members of the community shares. In a sense, it is a triumph of attrition. A reporter's engagement should be discrete and promotional of virtues instead of viruses. If ills are not ventilated by reportorial displays, they are starved to extinction. This consideration is a sacrifice tailored to the interest of health and the sensibility of humanity, development and sustainability.

Quotes and Attribution

The weight of facts and truth is not personality; it is integrity. A more enduring symbol of supra oracle is the name of a community. While a community accommodates saints and sinners, it has a self-antiseptic tendency to remediate and swig off excrement of the elements of ignominy in its custody as it possesses dynamism and exfoliates everything that is tenant in its realm. That being the case, its urbanity and self-absolving potency makes it a good representational personality for authority of reports by journal-

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ists. The challenge and patriotism is that its unifying persona, characterized by anonymity, will invariably make unhealthy competition and ego to shrink. The shared stake in the communalized source will provoke selfless patriotism of allowing the glory, honor and dignity to become the canopy of authority rather than a personality.

Sub-Objectivity

The legacy inherited from Anglo-American tradition of journalism has a loony binary and the bi-polar creation playing a reporter. S/he is imprisoned in his or her mental home, never to be expressive. S/he operates with a complex of being a tool, a less approached slave of society's merchants of means and thoughts. That delusionary personality lives doubting his judgment and operating without a mind, and with time extends that incredulity to society. For what it is worth, this legacy is debilitating.

Ubuntu reporter is different in cognition. S/he operates with functional faculties that share the dignity of collective humanity in society. Therefore s/he can be heard as s/he can hear others and put all samples of opinion in a sieve of reasonable opinion. In the end, the gratification in the exercise of communal sharing of ideology is the outcome becomes a collective endeavor with the blessing and popularity of the community. The present tradition of mental vegetation is part of reason there is protest over the unrealistic ideals of sideline sitting to watch the world go round. As Williams (2006, 47) avers, such values are not only becoming obsolete, but "an anathema in a world in which Anglo-American journalism is seen as the best and only way of organising practice" The reporter can take a subjectively-objective position because his responsibility is more than just a conduit, he is a mixer and a filterer as much as possible; ensuring that only what is roundly a representation of the finest opinion is laid out, with the source being community.

This treated and tender application of reporting is ambitious, adventurous as it is crusading. It tends towards therapeuticizing a whole new way of negotiating meaning for a course that is practically existential for viewing an old tradition with a new spectacle. This assumes a superlative implication in this digital age because news has transited from linear to multiple viewing plane, especially that the status of audience has changed from consumers to pro-sumers; where meaning has to be negotiated to reflect the dynamism of audience composition. Old media operation and representation is clearly inadequate in the circumstance and so needs to transit to the new reality. A new media responsibility is required to match the new tune of content creation and generation, hence this Ubuntu evolutionary spine that is, admissibly inconvenient, but nevertheless suggested for the binary or better still multi-nary fusion: subjectivity-objectivity plane or sub-objectivity.

Timeliness

Ubuntu reporting sees time as a holistic strip of revolving development not a segmented bump that spills off different events. Therefore the pressure of deadline is relaxed and made less stringent. News subsists as a menu. Africans take their time to cook their meals and they are delicacies in their rights. To do otherwise is to stimulate constipation in the bowels of the consumers. Similarly, news production in the context of information treatment needs to be shepherded with such dignity; it needs to allow every stakeholder in the communal fireplace to generate heat and steam for information that will concern community.

The African communication system in most communities operated a town square where everyone had a right to share in a matter of public interest. Technology in this digital era can still be wired for a

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condensed meet that will have a reminiscent coloration of ancient practice remodeled and re-engineered. Ubuntu news demand moves from the plane of personal exclusivity to communal uniqueness, the breeding into a unique mutation. This demands an extension of the life expectancy of news. The parameters and limitation of 24 hours life span is unrealistic for news that is procedural. The point is with new media technology, the break of news should not be the crucial news. What is, essentially, is the crucible of reactive mutation of that break; and 24 hours is certainly not its life expectancy. To catch it, reporters must become like some immersive storm chasers; running through the labyrinth of individualized affect and community silo-reaction.

Invariably, the concern for Ubuntu journalists should, therefore, not be a generalized 24 hours time window; but a treatment of unique news content's merit. All meals, after all, have different cooking time and so should individual news item merit its specificity in gestation, considering its acuties.

CONCLUSION

The Africa of today is a shade away from the pre-raped Africa that was denuded when its human and intellectual resources were ferried away to the West Indies and many foreign museums and in its place commodities and alien values/cultures were handed to it. Those reconstructed reasoning subsist till this day. The real African outlook is imprisoned in semiotic penitentiary and discredited adjectival characterization that appear dim and dull for any reasonable bright appreciations by even Africans.

The African seeks foreign imageries, theories and conceptual registries to structure, understand and represent their societies. The snug fit is not there, from the system to the structure. The Ubuntu media philosophy is one such glossed over interpretative frame that is organic and therapeutic to societal ailments like the cancer of fake news plaguing society and the globe. Africa and the Global South needs a renaissance, a return to adulation of what is culturally a legacy. It needs to relearn the appropriative rights of 'Kolarizing' its principles, values and philosophies. The media sphere is one virgin place, so expansive for that experimentation. The question then is will it acculturate itself to the philosophy and worldview? Ubuntu and its bridal pulchritude wait as the charm of the continent of Africa and other inclined developing nations to take the hand of the media.

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