



SSHRA Conference Proceedings 2023

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Presidential Note

Dear SSHRA members, conference participants, scholars, practitioners and students, we introduce you the latest edition of SSHRA Conference Proceedings prepared under the supervision of Eurasia Research. The aim of this compilation is to present, share and promote individuals as well as papers and other scientific achievements provided at our international conferences. SSHRA organizes interdisciplinary scientific conferences within social sciences and humanities field to connect scholars, researchers, experts, practitioners and students across the globe. These events are great opportunity to present and discuss scientific results, share own experiences, improve own research skills as well as to networking and get new connections within international scholar community. In this edition of SSHRA Conference Proceedings you will find brief information on our association scope of activities, profiles of Keynote Speaker at our conferences as well as list of participants and abstracts of presented papers. I am sure that this compilation is a good summary for the achievements of our conferences. It is also an opportunity to recall the good vibes associated with attending SSHRA conferences. All our members, scholars, researchers, practitioners and students are cordially invited to attend the upcoming SSHRA conferences. We especially invite you to participate in the recently launched new conference series: “SoRes” – International Conference on Interdisciplinary Research in Social Sciences and “BuPol” – International Conference on Business, Economics & Policy.

Best Regards,

Assoc. Prof. Marek Matejun, Ph.D., D.Sc.

President of Social Science and Humanities Research Association (SSHRA)

Department of Entrepreneurship and Industrial Policy,

Faculty of Management, University of Lodz, Poland

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I.



Social Science and Humanities Research Association (SSHRA) is an international community of researchers, practitioners, students, and educationists for the development and spread of ideas in the field of social sciences and humanities.

SSHRA is promoted by Eurasia Research. SSHRA aims to bring together worldwide researchers and professionals, encourage intellectual development and to create opportunities for networking and collaboration. These objectives are achieved through academic networking, meetings, conferences, workshops, projects, research publications, academic awards and scholarships.

The driving force behind this association is its diverse members and advisory board, who provide inspiration, ideas, efforts and drive collaborations. Scholars, Researchers, Professionals are invited to become a member of SSHRA and join this ever-growing network, working for benefit of society and research with the spirit of sharing and mutual growth.

- Salient Features:
- 15000 + and growing network of professionals
- Professional and Experienced team
- Conferences in Asia, Europe & Africa
- Events at reputed institutes and grand venues
- Life-time membership
- Strong Social Media Platform for networking
- Young Researcher Scholarships
- Research publication in international journals

II.

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III.

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IV. Preface

Social Science and Humanities Research Association (SSHRA) is a global group of scholars, academicians and professionals from the field of Humanities and Social Sciences for encouraging intellectual development and providing opportunities for networking and collaboration. This association achieves its objective through academic networking, meetings, conferences, workshops, projects, research publications, academic awards and scholarships. The association is driven by the guidance of the advisory board members. Scholars, Academicians, Professionals are encouraged to freely join SSHRA and become a part of this association, working for benefit of academia and society through research and innovation.

For this conference around 40 Participants from around 9 different countries have submitted their entries for review and presentation.

SSHRA has now grown to 17000 followers and 10000 members from 80 countries. Membership in our scholarly association SSHRA is chargeable.

List of members: <https://sshraweb.org/membership/list-of-members/>

Membership Application form link: <http://sshraevents.org/membership?association=sshra>

Proceedings is a book of abstracts, all the abstracts are published in our conference proceedings a day prior to the conference.

You can get our conference proceedings at: <https://sshraweb.org/conference/proceedings/>

We hope to have an everlasting and long-term friendly relationship with you in the future.

In this context we would like to share our social media web-links:

<https://www.facebook.com/eurasiaresearch/>

You will be able to freely communicate your queries with us, collaborate and interact with our previous participants, and share and browse the conference pictures on the above link.

Our mission is to make continuous efforts in transforming the lives of people around the world through education, application of research & innovative ideas.

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If the contents of the proceedings are used for further work, these are to be referenced following good scientific practice. The recommended citation is:

Author Surname, First Initial. Second Initial. (Year). Conference paper title. In Editor First Initial. Editor Surname (Ed.), Proceedings Book Title (pp. page range of paper). Place of Publication: Publisher.

V. Publication Process

All accepted original research papers in the English Language will be published in selected journals as per the publication policy, as available on the conference website. Once you receive the Invitation/ Acceptance letter that means your full paper is also accepted for publication in an International Journal, if you follow the communicated editorial instructions/ guidelines.

The journal publication will be peer-reviewed, checked for plagiarism, indexed, archived, open access, referenced by CrossRef and will carry ISSN number and DOI.

Even if your full paper is not yet ready, you may participate in the desired conference with your abstract. The abstract must contain the following:

- Article Title
- Full Names/ Emails/ Affiliations of the authors
- Abstract in 100-300 words
- Keywords
- You may update your submitted abstract/ title/ co-authors/ submit your full-paper on a later stage (before the conference).

You may submit your full original paper for publication in the conference journal, when it is complete, till the conference date. The last date of submission is the conference day itself. While submitting the full paper, please provide the following in the email:

Full paper in MS Word format. (Ideally, a research paper should be 2500-3000 words).
Details of 2 reviewers with their names, affiliations, contact numbers and email IDs (If possible, send two emails for each reviewer).
Duly filled and scanned the 'Consent to Publish' form with a handwritten signature.
We follow the following steps for publication in our associated International Journals. The publication process takes around 70 days, starting from the end of the conference.

A list of registered papers is sent to all the participants of the conference within a week's time after the conference. Please see, if your paper is included in the list. If not, please write back to us for inclusion. This list would also mention for any deficiency/incompleteness found in the submitted paper. You would be given 10 days to return your complete papers/ required information.

After this, the editorial team would send all complete papers for review (usually 5-7 reviewers). The review process takes around 30 days.

Following this, our editor would send the editorial comments/ suggestions to the corresponding author. Please improve the paper as indicated in the review and send it back to us within 10 days.

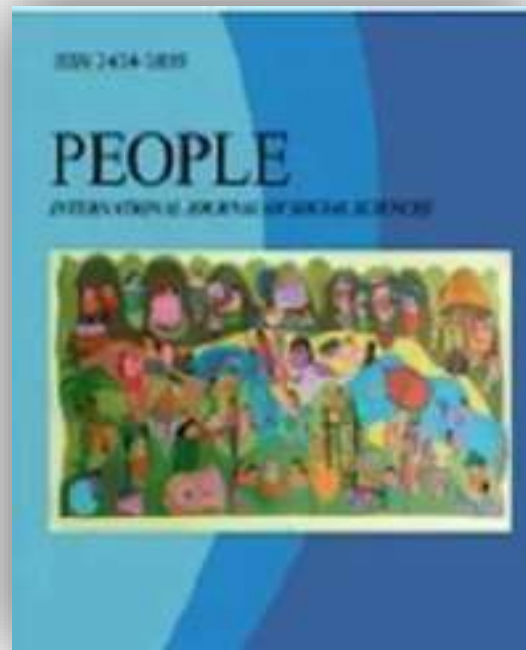
If the paper received is complete in all regards as per the comments/ suggestions, it would be sent for final publication, else we would send it again to you and finally, 5 days would be given to you for its improvement.

Finally, the paper is published and the authors are informed about the published paper by email, which contains the paper URL, DOI, Citation, and other related information.

If you fail to meet the deadlines/ correct the paper as per review comments, the paper may be rejected or it will be postponed for publication in the next issue. Normally, the entire process takes around 70 days.

Authors may request the conference secretariat for withdrawing their paper, for publishing it elsewhere (in the journal of their choice). In such cases, the requested papers are removed from the publication process. The withdrawal requests may be given to the conference secretariat before the commencement of the publication process (7 days after the conference).

Publishing



VI. Acknowledgment

Our sincere thanks go to our outstanding supporters who made this great and interesting conference possible.

VII. SSHRA Institutional Members



T.C.
Istanbul
YENİ YÜZYIL
ÜNİVERSİTESİ



Art@Malu



UUM
Universiti Utara Malaysia



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VIII. Keynote Speakers 2023

Some special thanks go to our outstanding Key-Note speakers, not only for their inspiring and highly interesting presentations but also for their input and contributions in the discussions and Q&A sessions during the conference:

Effective Critical Strategies for Preventing Recidivism among Juveniles



Dr. Saralah Devi AP Mariamdarani is from the field of Correctional Science, attached to Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) as Senior Lecturer for the past 15 years. She was born in Port Dickson, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia; a middle-class family and with hard work has reached this level. Being in this field has given her a great opportunity to meet the criminal offenders, especially the young generation, understand their psychology, and listen to their problems and thereafter work on correctional methods for them. She works closely with Police and Prison officers and the focus is on young prison inmates. Collating her research work, 3 books have been published, 45 Articles in Proceedings, 35 Chapters in Books, 67 articles in peer-reviewed journals and some Scopus and WOS (Q3, Q4) publications. Apart from being a senior lecturer, she has expanded her career for community service by offering free counseling sessions (Registration number; 3421 & Licensed counselor; 02916). Joint venture with Police, Prison and Financial industry specialists, she has been conducting workshops for youths on awareness of criminal activities, severity of the crime and the related penalty. This is also part of her contribution to producing a crime-free young generation who will be leading the country. Keeping up with current trends, cybercrime has become her recent research area and a grant has been applied from the Ministry of Education. This research explains a study of financial crime – money mules among Malaysian university students and unveil the motivation factors and a systemic approach to address this crime. She welcomes those who are interested in knowing about correctional science or to participate in the workshops. Prior to that she has registered as a Life Member with Lembaga Kaunselor Malaysia (Malaysia Counselor Association), International Teaching Education & Learning Research Association (TERA) & International Social Sciences Humanities Research Association (SSHRA).

Prof. Madya Dr. Saralah Devi AP Mariamdarani
Associate Prof., Psychology & Counselling Programme
School Of Applied Psychology, Social Work & Policy,
College of Arts & Sciences, Universiti Utara, Malaysia

Wellbeing in OECD Countries: Towards a Definitional Framework of Wellbeing in Public Health and Health and Social Care Research and Policy



Dr Vincent La Placa is Associate Professor of Public Health and Policy and Associate Head of the School of Human Sciences for Student Success, University of Greenwich. Dr La Placa has presented research at a variety of national and international conferences and is also an Honorary Fellow of the Eurasia Teaching and Research Association (TERA). He co-edited the book, “Wellbeing: Policy and Practice”, with Anneyce Knight and Allan McNaught, published in 2014. He has recently co-edited the book, “Social Science Perspectives on Global Public Health”, with Julia Morgan, published in 2023.

Dr. Vincent La Placa
BA MA SFHEA PhD, Associate Professor,
Public Health and Policy, Associate Head of School for Student Success,
School of Human Sciences, Honorary Fellow and Advisory Member of Eurasia Research Teaching and Education Research Association (TERA),
Faculty of Education, Health and Human Sciences, University of Greenwich, Royal Naval College, Park Row, London

The Best Organizational Depiction purely depends upon Qualitative Perceptual Leaders



Dr. Rudrarup Gupta is a high-end Academic Scholar, Researcher, Thought-Provoking Educationist, Reviewer, Editor and the masterly educational accelerator in all over the globe. He has already been able to re-entrench the desired academic richness not only for the booming researchers but for the phenomenal educational splendor, which shall undoubtedly be the victorious path way in all the regards. Dr. Gupta has already flourished his brilliant artistic intellect for “Research Education” through his adroit academic magnification within a very short while. He is an exemplary academic researcher in the era of our modern educational synthesis and he is exclusively desirous to entrench the infinite value of educational research for the booming researchers and their superlative future in deed. Most notably he is in a prior position to restyle an astounding path way of education alongside the encyclopedic spunk of research in our coming days. Dr. Gupta has invented his exclusionary metamorphosis of leadership through his emblematic inclusions of various chapters which have already been applauded in some expressive Books. Dr. Gupta feels “EDUCATION IS THE SUPERIOR REFLECTION OF ROBUST CONCEPTUAL IMPLEMENTATIONS”. Dr. Rudrarup

Gupta has really focused upon: a. Skill developments and its high-end occupational impacts, b. Management Basics and its impactful significance for his aspiring students in a very befitting manner.

Dr. Rudrarup Gupta

Faculty of Tagore School of Rural Development & Agriculture Management and Guest Lecturer,
JIS College of Engineering, Kalyani, Nadia; Sustainable Cosmos Ambassador,
Global Change Maker & SDG Expert, Green ThinkerZ Society, India;
Registered Overseas Author, Lambert International Publishing House, Germany;
Guest Cricket Commentator and Match Analyst of International Cricket, Sports Flashes, One & Only Radio Broadcaster of BCCI

Finnish and Filipino University Business Students' Perceptions of Leaders Based on Visual Cues



Jari Martikainen holds a Ph.D. degree in Art History from the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, and D.Soc.Sc. Degree in Social Psychology from the University of Eastern Finland. Currently he works as a University Lecturer in Social Psychology at the University of Eastern Finland. His recent research focuses on visual and social representations of leadership, migration politics, populist communication as well as visual and arts-based research methods.

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Reducing Energy Dependency of V4 countries



Csizmazia (also Lee) earned his M.Sc. in Management of Information Systems and Management of Production from Vienna University of Economics and Business (Austria, Europe). He is a dual citizen and speaks Korean fluently. He is a faculty member of the Academy of Advanced Studies, Glocal Education Center, Kwangwoon University, Seoul since 2012. His teaching spans from introduction into programming and computer related subjects (for undergraduate students) to specialized level programming (data analytics, edge computing) at graduate degree level. Besides teaching, he assists foreign students at the Kwangwoon University. Since 2019 he also supports Korean students in a bilingual way in their preparation for internship mainly in the USA within the frames of the k-move project, which is run by the Korean government. His research focuses on policies in higher education, knowledge-driven economies, designing policies for SMEs and startup and for logistics. His current research is to create an interactive map that supports a geographical implementation of future policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions on the road between manufacturers and first tier suppliers that can be applied in most of the countries of the EU.

Assoc. Prof. Roland A. Csizmazia

Assoc. Prof., Faculty Member of the Academy of Advanced Studies
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Generation Marketing, Z Generation, CSR Activities



Dr. Habil. Garai-Fodor Mónika is having an academic career as an educator of the Tessedik Sámuel College as an assistant lecturer in 2003. During 2009-2016. She was vice-head of department of the Budapest Economics University (formerly Budapest Economics College), Institution of Marketing, as a college associate professor. Currently she is an associate professor at Obuda University Keleti Károly Faculty of Business and Management and she is the vice-dean of the faculty as well. Her main research and teaching areas are consumer behaviour, marketing communication, and marketing research. Apart from her duties in higher education she works for the business as well. She was lead researcher of the Radar Research International Marketing Advisor Co. Ltd., and she was the country director of communication by the Continental Hungaria Co. Ltd. for four years. Currently, she is an expert at the Profession Conference Organiser Co. Ltd., president of the Employer Branding Committee, furthermore, member of the Hungarian PR Committee's Employer Branding Section.

Dr Habil. Garai-Fodor Mónika

Dean, Associate Professor Keleti Károly
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Budapest, Hungary

How Artificial Intelligence Will Transform Businesses?



Dr. Maria Teresa Matriano
Assistant Professor, Department of Management Studies
Center for Post-Graduate Studies, Doctor in Business Administration
MBA, Masters of Arts in Learning and Teaching, Middle East College
Al Rusayl, Knowledge Oasis, Muscat, Oman

Dr. Maria, being an academican for twenty years, has been involved both in university and collegiate teaching, research writing and publication. She has served as Training Institute Administrator for twenty years drafting academic policies while doing collaboration with members of higher education. Dr. Maria has expertise in teaching Entrepreneurship, Strategic Management, and the MBA dissertation writing. She has acquired certification from Oman SME-MOHE as a Certified Entrepreneur Educator.

Parents' Acceptance toward Their Children with Special Needs



Dr. Wong Kear Kyii
Department of Education, Faculty of Social Studies, University of Selangor, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Dr. Wong Kear Kyii is the administrator of Enabling Learning Center for children with special needs. He is a certified Autism Specialist. He teaches special needs children literacy and social communication skills. He is an Honorary Advisory Member of the scholarly Social Science & Humanities Research Association (SSHRA). He conducts educational seminars addressing issues on student discipline management and issues related to special needs children.

Navigating the Digital Transformation Landscape: Implications for Management Practices in the Era of Technology Disruption



Dr. Abdelhak Senadjki is an esteemed Associate Professor of Economics at the Faculty of Business and Finance at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) in Malaysia. With his academic expertise and research experience, he has established himself as a well-respected scholar in the field of Economics. Dr. Senadjki holds a PhD from Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) for his thesis titled 'Vulnerability to Poverty: A Study of Rural Population in Kelantan and Terengganu, Malaysia,' which he completed in 2013. He also received his Master of Economic Management from USM in 2008, and a bachelor's degree in Economics from University of Algiers in 2003. As an accomplished academican, Dr. Senadjki has received the USM fellowship from 2010 to 2013, during which he served as an academic researcher. His research interests include Energy Economics, Developmental Economics, Housing Economics, Health Economics, Employee Creativity and Innovation, and Organisational Culture. Dr. Senadjki has served in various leadership roles, including Head of Programme (Postgraduate Studies) from 01/01/2017 to 31/12/2018, Acting Head of Department of Economics from 01/02/2020 to 31/05/2020, and the Head of Postgraduate Programme PhD (Economics) from 23/03/2022 to date. Dr. Senadjki has contributed significantly to the academic community through his research and publications. He has published widely in various local and international refereed journals, WOS, Scopus, chapters in books, and research papers. His academic expertise is highly sought after, and he serves as a reviewer for several refereed journals, including the Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research, Journal of Development Career, International Journal of Social Economics, The Social Science Journal, Cogent Economics and Finance, Cogent Food and Agriculture, Journal of Poverty, Health Education and Behaviour Management, Sage Open, Academy of Accounting and Finance Studies Journal, Journal of Advances Management Research, International Review of Economics and Finance, Sustainability, Urban Science, Scientia Iranica, Sage Open, Social Responsibility Journal, Organizations and Markets in Emerging Economies, International Journal of Housing Markets and Analysis, Housing Studies, and others. Dr. Senadjki's contributions to the academic community have not gone unnoticed, and he has received several international and national awards. These awards include the 2019 Emerald Literati Awards, FIIB Business Review High Impact Research Award, Top Reviewer Awards (Cogent Economics & Finance), Best Papers Awards, Best Presenter Awards, and others. In addition to his academic achievements, Dr. Senadjki is also a Train-The-Trainer (TTT) Certified Trainer, showcasing his commitment to teaching and mentoring the next

generation of scholars.

Dr. Abdelhak Senadjki
Associate Professor of Economics, Faculty of Business and Finance,
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Evolving Priorities in Teaching and Learning: Where Are We Now? Where Are We Going?



Dr Danielle Tran is Director of Education at University of Arts, London. She previously held the post of Associate Professor of Higher Education Learning and Teaching at the University of Greenwich. Before that, Danielle worked at other UK HEIs including Brunel and Middlesex University. She is a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy [AdvanceHE]. Her research interests include identity and belonging, reflective practice, and decolonising teaching and learning.

Dr Danielle Tran
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Critical Pedagogy in Public Schools in Chile. A Multimodal Ethnographic Informed Study of Rural and Urban Public Schools, Teachers' Pedagogy and the Links between Pedagogical Practices and Students' Critical Thinking



Paulina Moya Santiagos is a Doctoral Candidate in Education at the UCL Centre for Applied Linguistics at the UCL Institute of Education. She is an EL Teacher and she holds a TESOL MA from the UCL Institute of Education. In Chile, she was a public-school teacher for thirteen years. Also, she has been a university lecturer for fifteen years working at prestigious private and public universities in Chile and in the UK teaching EAP, educational policy, Hispanic languages culture, second language learning, methodology, and General Linguistics among others. Additionally, she is an associate postgraduate lecturer at Andres Bello University where she leads the Methodology and Creativity II module for the MA in TEFL. Currently, she works as a Postgraduate Teaching Assistant for the Culture, Communication and Media Department at UCL. She also works as a Spanish Tutor at the University of Warwick in the Hispanic Studies Department. Her doctoral research is a multimodal ethnographic informed study which aims to explore and elucidate what makes some Chilean public-school students highly politicized and so committed to social struggles and whether there is a link between this commitment and the pedagogy applied by their teachers.

Paulina Moya Santiagos
PhD (C) In Education Department of Culture, Communication and Media Institute of Education, University College London, London

Leveraging on Problem and Project-Based Learning for 21st Century Skills



Dr. Deepak L. Waikar has been involved in education, training, research, and management fields for more than three decades. He started his professional career as an Assistant Director at the National Power Engineers Training Institute in India after his post-graduation from the Institute of Technology, Banaras Hindu University in India. He has been associated with the premier institutions, polytechnics, colleges, and academies in India and Singapore as well as with British and Australian Universities offering courses in Singapore. He has authored/co-authored books, book chapters, research articles, and policy papers on power, energy, management, sustainable development, leadership, and education related topics. He has served on various committees in professional bodies such as Chair of the Institute of Electrical & Electronic Engineers (IEEE), Power & Energy Society (PES) Chapter, Singapore, and Chair of the IEEE Education Society Chapter Singapore. He is a recipient of the IEEE-PES Outstanding Power Engineers' Award 2003 and SP Green Buddy Award 2004. Dr. Waikar has been associated with Singapore Certified Energy Manager's programme for more than a decade. He has also been an advisory committee member of the Indo-Universal Centre for Engineering Education (IUCEE). He has served as Editors and Reviewers for the conferences and journals. He has also been invited as an external examiner for assessing Master and Doctoral Thesis. He has delivered hundreds of invited keynotes, plenary, panel session presentations on power, sustainable and clean energy, education, management, sustainable development, and leadership related topics at the international conferences, seminars and forums in North & South America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and Asia. He has also been invited to give captivating & impactful inaugural, valedictory, and guest speeches for conferences, seminars, graduation ceremonies, and similar events of colleges, institutions, and universities. As a Managing Partner of EduEnergy, Singapore from January 2014 to May 2023 he was involved in providing a range of advisory, training, coaching, mentoring, and consultancy services for colleges, institutes, organisations, and individuals. Dr. Waikar has conducted hundreds of students, faculty, and management

development programmes (Face-to-face, Online, & Hybrid Modes) on various topics such as Sustainable & Clean Energy, Synergising Problem & Project Based Learning & Design Thinking for Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship, Nurturing Resilient Researcher-pro Mindset in Self, Transition to Net Zero, Strategies for Infusing Blended Learning, Designing Smart Career Portfolio, Trainopreneurship, and Transforming Higher Education. Dr. Waikar has coached and mentored hundreds of students & faculty members on career profiling & planning. He has voluntarily conducted several guest lectures for rural schools and colleges. He is a Senior Member of IEEE USA, a Life Member of the Institution of Engineers, India, and a Mentor for Teaching & Education Research Association (TERA) Fellowship Program with Ph.D. from the National University of Singapore, M.S. from the University of Saskatchewan, Canada, and M.Tech. from the Banaras Hindu University, India, and PD Certificate in University Teaching from the University of Newcastle, Australia. He obtained PG-DBM and B.E. degrees from the Nagpur University, and the Government Engineering College Aurangabad in India, respectively. His research interests include Sustainable Energy Development, Re-inventing & Transforming Tertiary Education, & Smart Education. His hobbies include cricket, chess, and poetry.

Dr. Deepak L. Waikar

Vice Chair, The IEEE Education Society, Singapore Chapter,

Adviser, Indo-Universal Centre for Engineering Education (IUCEE), India

Mentor for Teaching & Education Research Association (TERA) Fellowship Program

Former Managing Partner, EduEnergy Consultants LLP, Singapore and Former Associate Faculty for Overseas Universities in Singapore

Education, Training and the Future of Work: Issues and Challenges in Southeast Asia



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Airil Haimi Mohd Adnan is currently on special attachment to the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia as Senior Principal Assistant Director. A senior academic at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia, he is also Professor (III) at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines and recently inducted as Research Fellow at the Human Resources Development Corporation of Malaysia. As a multiple award winning researcher, writer and multidisciplinary social scientist with 23 years' of experience in the field of education, he supports the Education 4.0 movement and is holding / has held Visiting Scholar / Research Fellow / Adviser positions in Brunei, Indonesia, Singapore, and New Zealand. He has also produced 150+ international proceeding papers, journal articles, book chapters and books; written 500+ academic articles for ASEAN newspapers and magazines, and appeared 200+ times on ASEAN television and radio.

Dr Airil Haimi Mohd Adnan

Senior Lecturer, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Visiting Scholar, Indonesian Open University & Cosmopoint University-College, Malaysia

The Internationalization of Higher Education: Prospects, Challenges, and the Way Forward



Assoc. Prof Dr. Radzuwan holds a PhD in Education from the University of Nottingham, United Kingdom, and he pursued postdoctoral studies at the University of Leeds, exploring Applied Linguistics in an educational context. He is interested in researching teacher education, professional development, and contemporary discourse in online settings. He was nominated by Clarivate Analytics (Web of Science) for the Malaysia Research Star Award in the category of Research and Innovation Excellence (Researcher in Arts and Applied Arts) in 2019, 2021 & 2022. He is the Minister Counsellor of Education at the Embassy of Malaysia in Amman, Jordan and responsible for the internationalization of Malaysia's tertiary education in Jordan, Turkiye, Kuwait, Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine.

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Digital Dilemma: Navigating Youth Mental Health in the Age of Social Media



Dr. Abdelhak Senadjki is an esteemed Associate Professor of Economics at the Faculty of Business and Finance at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) in Malaysia. With his academic expertise and research experience, he has established himself as a well-respected scholar in the field of Economics. Dr. Senadjki holds a PhD from Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) for his thesis titled 'Vulnerability to Poverty: A Study of Rural Population in Kelantan and Terengganu, Malaysia,' which he completed in 2013. He also received his Master of Economic Management from USM in 2008, and a bachelor's degree in Economics from University of Algiers in 2003. As an accomplished academician, Dr. Senadjki has received the USM fellowship from 2010 to 2013, during which he served as an academic researcher. His research interests include Energy Economics, Developmental Economics, Housing Economics, Health Economics, Employee Creativity and

Innovation, and Organisational Culture. Dr. Senadjki has served in various leadership roles, including Head of Programme (Postgraduate Studies) from 01/01/2017 to 31/12/2018, Acting Head of Department of Economics from 01/02/2020 to 31/05/2020, and the Head of Postgraduate Programme PhD (Economics) from 23/03/2022 to date. Dr. Senadjki has contributed significantly to the academic community through his research and publications. He has published widely in various local and international refereed journals, WOS, Scopus, chapters in books, and research papers. His academic expertise is highly sought after, and he serves as a reviewer for several refereed journals, including the Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research, Journal of Development Career, International Journal of Social Economics, The Social Science Journal, Cogent Economics and Finance, Cogent Food and Agriculture, Journal of Poverty, Health Education and Behaviour Management, Sage Open, Academy of Accounting and Finance Studies Journal, Journal of Advances Management Research, International Review of Economics and Finance, Sustainability, Urban Science, Scientia Iranica, Sage Open, Social Responsibility Journal, Organizations and Markets in Emerging Economies, International Journal of Housing Markets and Analysis, Housing Studies, and others. Dr. Senadjki's contributions to the academic community have not gone unnoticed, and he has received several international and national awards. These awards include the 2019 Emerald Literati Awards, FIB Business Review High Impact Research Award, Top Reviewer Awards (Cogent Economics & Finance), Best Papers Awards, Best Presenter Awards, and others. In addition to his academic achievements, Dr. Senadjki is also a Train-The-Trainer (TTT) Certified Trainer, showcasing his commitment to teaching and mentoring the next generation of scholars.

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The Terminator: A.I. and How It Will Impact Our Future



Kenneth Lee is a Professor of Asian Religions at California State University, Northridge in the Department of Religious Studies. Born in South Korea and raised in Los Angeles, Dr. Lee teaches courses in Asian religions, Buddhism, and introductory courses in religion. He earned his A.B. in Psychology from Occidental College, M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary and M.Phil. and Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies from Columbia University. His book, *The Prince and the Monk: Shotoku Worship in Shinran's Buddhism*, SUNY Press, traces the evolution of Shotoku worship in Japanese Buddhism.

Dr. Kenneth Lee
Affiliation: Professor, Asian Religions, California State University, Los Angeles, California

IX. List of Online Conferences

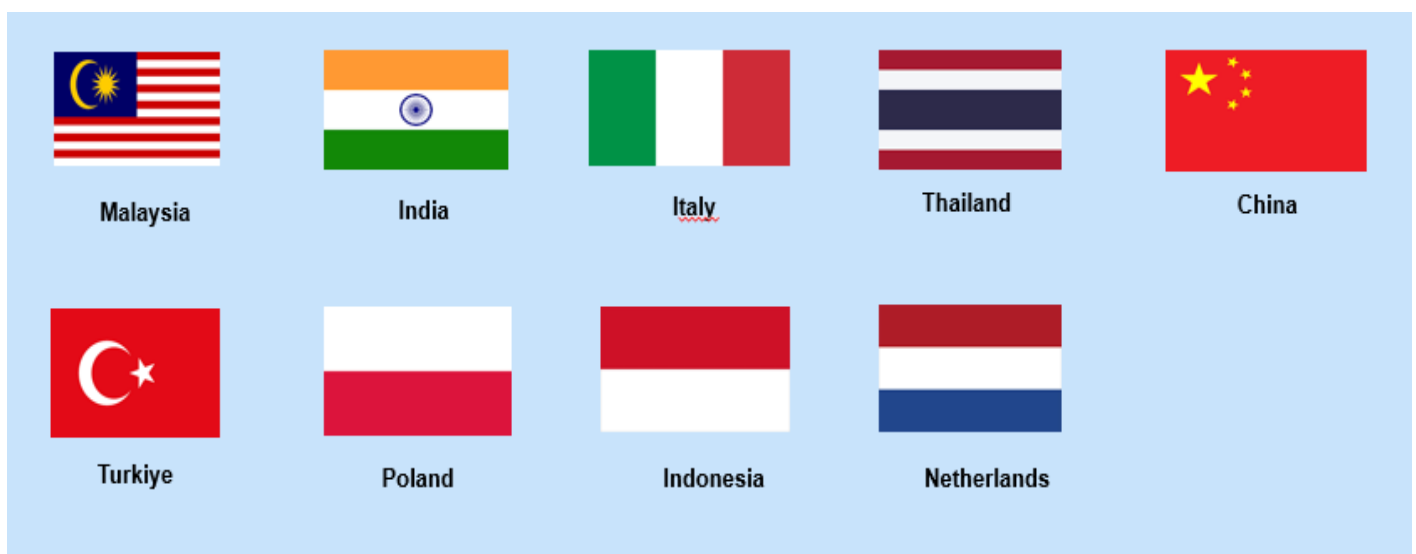
Online Live International Conference

13th September 2023

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Online Live International Conference

27th September 2023

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Eurasia Research Online Live International Conference
27th September, 2023
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06th October 2023

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Online Live International Conference

17th October 2023

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Online Live International Conference

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Online Live International Conference

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|  <p>Indonesia</p> |  <p>Malaysia</p> |  <p>Ghana</p> |

Online Live International Conference

18th December 2023

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| <p>Upcoming online conference 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">ParisTokyoDubaiLondonSingaporeBostonSydney | <p>Participants from 08 Countries</p> <p>Contact us: Phone: +91 7290808650 Email: convener@eurasiaresearch.info https://sshraevents.org/ https://sshraweb.org/</p> | <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Networking Experience• Certification• Proceedings• Publication• Safety |

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Online Live International Conference

19th December 2023

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Eurasia Research Online Live International Conference
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X. List of Full Papers

Figurative Language in Men Perfume Advertising Slogans

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Nakontheip Tipayasuparat

“English for Professions” Master Degree Program, Rangsit University, Thailand

Abstract: The purposes of this study were (1) to analyze slogans from men perfume advertising and (2) to interpret the meaning of figurative language found in the slogans. Twenty-seven slogans were selected from four websites on the Internet as the data. The slogans were analyzed using six types of figurative language: hyperbole, metaphor, metonymy, oxymoron, pun, and symbolism. The results from the analysis show that, among the six types of figurative language, metaphor has been found the most (74.08%), followed by hyperbole (7.41%), pun (7.41%), oxymoron (3.70%), metonymy (3.70%), and symbolism (3.70%). The findings are expected to be beneficial for other researchers who want to investigate the figures of speech used in aspects of advertising language for further research studies.

Keywords: Figurative Language, Figures of Speech, Slogans, Advertisements, Perfumes

1. Introduction: Presently, it is quite difficult for sellers to advertise or sell perfume without the use of a slogan. Slogans are a familiar feature of advertising; about two-thirds of all the ads in our global link database include slogans (www.millwardbrown.com, 2011). A slogan is essential to perfume advertisements because good slogans will help customers to instantly recognize the company's products that make them reach customers widely. Moreover, some slogans describe the properties of that perfume that can drive sales more than regular advertising. Therefore, it is a good idea for entrepreneurs and perfumers to have catchy and meaningful slogans with unique features. In luxurious advertising products: perfumes, cosmetics, and jewelry, uniqueness is preferable (www.brandingchamp.com, 2019). To design a good perfume slogan, advertisers need to consider the use of language and excellent structural features, which may not be like the commonly used language. The word should be used to convince potential consumers to feel that they want to buy the product or use the service. Thus, slogans are used in the language to emphasize the idea because it has to reinforce the selling point of the product, service, and the personality of the brand more clearly. It can also save advertising costs and time wasted because consumers can remember products (www.brandingchamp.com, 2019). Because perfume is a beautiful thing, the language used in the perfume slogan often relies on beautiful words or phrases. Also, slogans need other language techniques to help with elaboration, like figurative language. Figurative language is essential in a variety of ways, both helping to penetrate target audiences and boost sales, especially the slogan in perfume advertisements that are widely used. According to Glucksberg (2001), although the figurative language is useful, for non-native English-speaking customers, it may not be interpreted in the slogans as the advertiser expected. The language of the slogans requires an appealing speech and figurative language, which uses all types in creative writing. To prevent misinterpretation, customers should understand the basic concepts of figurative language to be able to visualize the intended messages that the advertiser wants to communicate. Therefore, the study of figurative language in advertisements is necessary. It helps not only with interpretation but also with the understanding that results in sales and profits of perfume companies. The interpretation of figurative language in men perfume slogans is valuable because the customers need to comprehend both the slogan and the advertiser's thoughts. Moreover, men's perfume is not just men's use. Some women prefer to use this, as well. These reasons make the men's perfume industry quite boundless and motivate the researcher to bring this topic to study, using figurative language as a framework. The data include 27 perfume advertising slogans from 4 websites: www.perfume.com, www.fragranceadvisors.com,

www.harpersbazaar.com, www.fashionbeans.com. Those interested in words of advertising can gain more insight into the use of figurative language and may obtain more interesting linguistic points through the content analysis of the data. The principal objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To analyze the figurative language used in the slogans of men perfume advertising
2. To interpret the meaning of the figurative language used in 27 selected men perfume advertising slogans

2. Procedure: This part presents the research methods that cover data resource, data collection, and data analysis.

3. Materials: In terms of data to be analyzed, twenty-seven men perfume advertising slogans were selected from 4 web sites: https://www.perfume.com/mens_top_10/3, <https://www.fragranceadvisors.com/best-cologne-men/>, <https://www.harpersbazaar.com/uk/beauty/fragrance/g25710/best-male-fragrances/>, and <https://www.fashionbeans.com/article/best-mens-fragrances-of-all-time/>.

4. Data Collection: After the researcher collected all the men's perfume advertising slogan from the website, the researcher analyzed the types of figurative language and interpreted the meaning as a qualitative study with descriptive. After that, the researcher classified and rechecked the results.

5. Data Analysis: The data were analyzed systematically using the following steps:

5.1. First, to understand the main point of the slogan, the researcher collected the slogans on the websites. The data from the slogans of men perfume advertising were classified into 6 types of figurative language: hyperbole, metaphor, pun, oxymoron, metonymy, and symbolism.

5.2. Second, the research sample was examined, and the figurative language was interpreted to understand the contextual meaning of figurative language as well as how the figurative language was used in the slogans of men perfume advertising.

5.3. Third, the frequencies of the occurrences of the different types of figurative language used in the slogans were presented in percentage.

5.4. Fourth, a report and a conclusion, discussion, and recommendations were written based on the results of the data analysis.

6. Figurative Language

Figurative language is an intentional departure from the standard order, construction, or meaning of words to gain strength and freshness of expression, to create a striking effect, to describe by analogy, or to discover and illustrate similarities in otherwise different things (Surapeepan, 1996: 33). Rosa and Eschholz (1982) define figurative language as "the language used in the creative sense rather than in the literal sense". Figurative language is most commonly used in poetry and is commonly used in everyday language. Through verbal communication, the writer can use figurative language to enrich the prose and to emphasize the idea to explain the meaning to the reader. Marius (1991) lists some reasons why figurative has become so dominant: "it expresses other possible meanings" rather than their literal meaning. It draws on a common experience that links a writer to her readers.

Figurative language compares two different things. It describes something to something already familiar (Madden, 2002). For instance, "He is as quiet as a church mouse." It means that the person is frigid. Some academician presents their definition of Figurative language. Perrine (1992) reveals that Figurative language defines as a way of saying something other than the ordinary method. Danziger and Kronrod (2013) argue that figurative language uses words and expression which use the disguised meaning. Heller (2011) defines figurative language and speech as referring to the modifications of words that are overly meaningful and show connotations, and provide the connotative expressions.

Based on the definitions above, the researchers concluded that the figurative language is an expression that communicates the meaning of a word, including that it can be compared with one another, which has a hidden meaning that recipients are familiar with. Consequently, it is about having a hidden meaning beyond the apparent meaning. In addition to finding figurative language in literature or songs, it can also be found in other

educational approaches, such as academic writing, speeches, an advertisements.

7. Results:

Table 1: *Types of Figurative Language in Perfume Slogans*

| No. | Perfume | Slogans | Types of Figurative Language |
|-----|--|--|------------------------------|
| 1. | Jaguar Classic Black Eau de Toilette | A thrilling experience | Metaphor |
| 2. | Z Zegna | The scent for a new day | |
| 3. | Kenneth Cole Signature | It's your scents of distinction. | |
| 4. | Bentley for men Azure | Always with attitude. | |
| 5. | Terre d'Hermes | The strength of the origin | |
| 6. | Tabac Original Eau de Toilette | A man has character, or not. | |
| 7. | Lacoste Pour Homme | Style on skin | |
| 8. | BOSS Number One eau de toilette | An air of success | |
| 9. | Davidoff Zino Eau de Toilette Spray | The fragrance of desire | |
| 10. | Lacoste Challenge Eau de Toilette | Never resist the call of the game. | |
| 11. | Guerlain Homme Eau de Parfum Intense | For the animal in you | |
| 12. | Armani Code Giorgio Armani | The ultimate code of seduction for men | |
| 13. | Yves Saint Laurent Kouros Silver | The new fragrance for living gods | |
| 14. | Artisan Acqua by John Varvatos | The past and the future, artfully interwoven | |
| 15. | Horizon by Davidoff | Reach your horizon | |
| 16. | Chantilly Collection Royale by Houbigant | Some men put love into words. He put it into a bottle. | |
| 17. | Guerlain l'Homme Ideal Eau de | The ideal man is myth | |

| | | | |
|-----|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| | Toilette | | |
| 18. | Nuit d'Issey Noir Argent | Under the moon's shadow | |
| 19. | Creed Aventus | The promise of the future | |
| 20. | Kenneth Cole Mankind | Be the evolution | |
| 21. | Safari for Men Eau De Toilette | Safari, a world without boundaries. | Hyperbole |
| 22. | Emporio Armani Stronger with You | Together we touch the sky | |
| 23. | Y Eau de Toilette | Everything starts with a Why. | Pun |
| 24. | Dior Homme Eau de Toilette | I'm your man. | |
| 25. | Fahrenheit Eau de Toilette | What never ends begins here | Oxymoron |
| 26. | K by Dolce & Gabbana | Own your crown | Metonymy |
| 27. | Musk by English Leather | The civilized way to roar | Symbolism |

It can be seen from the table above that there are six types of figurative language employed in 27 slogans of men perfume advertising; this includes hyperbole, metaphor, pun, oxymoron, metonymy, and symbolism. The classification of all slogans will be shown in the next table.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage of Slogans as Classified by Figurative Language Types

| Types of Figurative Language | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Metaphor | 20 | 74.08% |
| Hyperbole | 2 | 7.41% |
| Pun | 2 | 7.41% |
| Oxymoron | 1 | 3.70% |
| Metonymy | 1 | 3.70% |
| Symbolism | 1 | 3.70% |

The table above presents the frequency and percentage of figurative language found in men perfume advertising slogans. It can be seen that metaphor was the most remarkable figure of speech used in the slogans (74.08%), followed by hyperbole and pun (7.40%), while oxymoron, metonymy, and symbolism are found the least in the slogans (3.70%).

8. Discussion: The types of figurative language in the slogans of women perfume advertising are classified into metaphor, hyperbole, pun, oxymoron, metonymy, and symbolism. The result showed that the most frequently used figures of speech in men perfume advertising slogans is metaphor with 74.08 percent. Metaphor is one of

the techniques used in almost all elements due to the ease of understanding, communication, and memorizing for readers in comparison with other figures. The same results are found in the study of Tantrakul (2012). According to the results, metaphor was found in 20 slogans. Among the group, all the tenors are perfumes; however, the vehicles can be superficially categorized into 2 big types, which are concrete reality: a tennis game (liveliness, spirit of sports), the earth (origin of everything), and a car (modernity); and abstract images: atmosphere of success, morning (freshness), and horizon (freedom). Some of the vehicles are explicit; these include air of success, character, attitude, distinction, and seduction. As most people realize that, aside from expressing their individuality and style, enhancing their mood, evoking memories, and offering comfort, fragrance can boost their personality, a number of words related appearance or personal traits are shown in the data. Nevertheless, some vehicles are implicit, carrying deep meaning, and need interpretation from the readers. Examples include animal (wild instinct), horizon (freedom), moon shadow (mystery), and mankind (evolution).

Therefore, it can be said that metaphor has hidden the meaning that makes the readers interpret or imagine the explicit messages. Moreover, it makes the slogans interesting for readers because figures of speech create meanings that go beyond literal meanings and provoke the imagination. In addition, all of these slogans can be profoundly divided into 3 types of common meanings: a slogan that compares perfume as a turner to something that is the vehicle. For example, the slogan compares perfume to the morning, attitude, starting point, character, style, including comparing perfume to a kind of sport. The common point of the second meaning is the slogan compares perfume wearing to different feelings, such as the smell of success or the scent of seduction. And the third ordinary meaning of the ultimate meaning is the slogan compare perfume users to certain advantages, such as comparing perfume users as Greek gods and compare perfume users as ideal men. In conclusion, for each type of ordinary meaning, slogans often use a vehicle as something that is not often materialistic. It is allowing the reader to interpret or imagine the meaning by himself. These make the slogans are more interesting when it uses to compare male identities such as style, attitude, desire to look sexy, fresh, appealing, natural or independent.

The second to highest types of figurative language found from the analysis were hyperbole and pun; among 27 slogans, 2 were hyperbole, and 2 were pun with 7.4% each. According to the results of hyperbole, it can be found in 2 slogans of women perfume advertising: "Safari, a world without boundaries." from Safari for Men Eau De Toilette and "Together we touch the sky" from Emporio Armani Stronger with You. These two slogans share similar meanings. When the user wears this perfume, the image will open, and the limits will disappear. Hyperbole is an exaggeration technique to emphasize text. It is included in trope. It is bold or the extravagant exaggeration of fact or possibility (Myers, 1997). It gives overstatement of something and makes it more significant, more important, or worse than it is. In other words, hyperbole is exaggerating or overstatement toward something or someone.

Moreover, pun also shares the same rank. According to the results of pun, it can be found in 2 slogans of men perfume advertising: "Everything starts with a Why." from Y Eau de Toilette and "I'm your man." from Dior Homme Eau de Toilette. Pun in both slogans comes from perfume names. Why comes from Y, the name of the perfume. Man comes from homme in French language, meaning men. Therefore, the words "Why" and "Man" come from the name of the perfume. Pun is an exemplary language or mental work and should be used as a paradigm in language playing. It depends on the similarity of the forms and the differences in their meanings. A pun evokes different meanings in the context that everyone uses differently. Pun is also one of the most common forms of speech play to make the phrase or sentence more interesting. As Sherzer (1985) argues that today puns are most often considered to be intentionally humorous, inappropriate for serious discourse, but highly appropriate for advertising.

9. Recommendations for Further Studies: This study may provide guidance for future researchers. It is recommended that future research should study other types of cosmetics such as lipstick, mascara to observe the descriptions of different genres of products. It is also recommended that future research should investigate other types of advertising, for example, business advertisement, and advertisement from the airline industry or food products to see the differences in each type of business. And it is possible for future research to use the same corpus, which is men perfume slogans, with different theoretical frameworks of analysis: speech act, or

stylistics.

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11. Appendix (Examples of data analysis):

Advertising 1: Jaguar Classic Black Eau de Toilette



Figure 1: Metaphor used in Jaguar Classic Black Eau de Toilette advertising

Metaphor is used in this slogan of this advertising, "A Thrilling Experience." Jaguar Fragrances, as a prestige brand, stylishly symbolizes the Jaguar attributes of style, performance, and modernity. The slogan compares the perfume to a car. The brand of Jaguar Fragrances is the same as a Jaguar car. Jaguar is a UK luxury car manufacturing company with a production base in Coventry in England. Jaguar is a name that is guaranteed to spark the imagination of car enthusiasts that must be excellent and outstanding design. Cars can be compared

to vehicles that can take a man to exciting new experiences and delivers a thrilling vibe. Thus, it can be interpreted that the Jaguar Classic Black is like a vehicle that leads you to the stirring experiences after spraying this perfume.

Advertising 2: *Y Eau de Toilette*



Figure 2: *Pun used in Y Eau de Toilette advertising*

The slogan of this advertising is based on pun "Everything starts with a Why." The slogan used the playing of the word "Why." It can be conveyed in three meanings. The first meaning conveys "Y" to the brand of this perfume is Yves Saint Laurent, and another meaning can be conveyed "Why" is the question. In which we will do one thing, we must first find a reason to ourselves why we do it. Therefore, we can do that, and these things make it consistent with the slogan. YSL has chosen Alexandre Robiquet, who has an extraordinary history as a model because Mr. Robiquet is a research assistant and a student from Stanford University who researches on machine vision. This perfume represents a modern image, suitable for Y perfume designed with Generation Y as the primary target, which the meaning of the last Y is Generation Y.

Advertising 3: *Fahrenheit Eau de toilette*

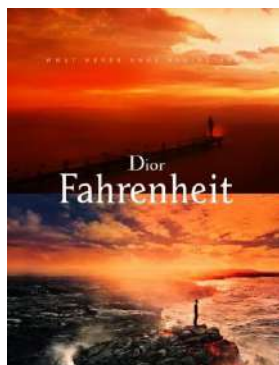


Figure 3: *Oxymoron used in Fahrenheit Eau de toilette advertising*

Oxymoron is used in this slogan of this advertising "What never ends begins here." From the image of the advertisements that often use images of the sea that makes the look of the perfume come out as a perfume that looks like a natural combination of cold and heat represented by blue and orange colors. The picture of the ocean is often used to show that everything is created from the sea, including the natural cycle from the sea. The sentence shows words with opposite meaning: the words "ends" and "begins" carry contrasting denotation. End means a final part of something, especially a period of time, an activity, or a story. On the other hand, begin means start. So, it can be interpreted that two different opposite words are being used in the same sentence.

Understanding the Influence of Sales of Luxury Products in the Fashion Sector that have been made by French Companies

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Abstract: The purpose for this bachelor dissertation is discovering impact in selling luxury products in the fashion sector by French companies, the level of significance that luxury products have, how to improve the business practices that have been carried out by French companies, and also how to carry out a plan to attract the attention of customers. Using these findings, the research offers a number of actionable marketing strategy recommendations aimed at increasing the number of potential customers and building a sustainable brand image (Dubois, 1994). The research is quantitative research with existing research data. This research was conducted by knowing how many customers are interested in luxury products that have been sold by French companies. This requires a careful plan to get a lot of customers in order to get big profits. Data analysis was carried out by presenting interesting data in detailed, in depth and easy to understand sentences. The results of the research describe how many customers are attracted to luxury products especially fashion products and profits from sales of luxury products in the fashion sector that have been made by French companies. This also requires careful preparation in order to get the best results. It is not an easy thing to reach the target. Everything requires a process to get the desired target. Sometimes, running a sales business such as selling luxury products is difficult. It needs sufficient process and readiness to get the desired goal.

Chapter 1: Introduction: 1.1. Background: Currently, economic development has progressed very rapidly. This creates increasingly fierce competition in the business world. Every company competes to be able to create products that are different from its competitors in order to attract consumer attention. Currently, customers are getting smarter in choosing the product that they feel interest in. Customers can compare products with one another from the internet. This certainly provides opportunities for the company that produce luxury products in the fashion sector. The emergence of intense competition makes every company to always innovate in making new products in order to attract the attention of consumer (Crane, 1997).

Selling luxury products in the fashion sector to customers is something that companies especially French companies do. By selling luxury products in the fashion sector to customers, the company gains a large advantage in doing business. Even though running a business is not easy, companies do step by step to achieve what they want, especially French companies. Marketing is an interesting thing and is important in doing business. Plans are also one of the important things in running a business. This will create an increase in customers who are attracted to the luxury products sold by French companies. It will also be beneficial for French companies in developing their business.

French companies also got a few clients for the first time, but they are considering how to obtain customers more successfully. Consequently, the company obtains as many clients as feasible. The intent of French companies is to earn a great deal of money from clients who are drawn to things like luxury products that the company offers. The effort of French companies was not in vain and generated positive benefits. Doing business is not always as easy as one might think. An excellent objective requires a lengthy procedure. French companies saw their failure to be equivalent to failing to get the profit they desired. French companies are attempting to turn things around by considering ways to overcome this issue. After that, French companies were able to successfully solve this issue.

French companies themselves are one of the famous companies that focus on luxury products in the fashion sector. The quality of the luxury products of French companies is unquestionable. The quality of luxury products is top class (Dubois, 1994). That is why customers out there are attracted to luxury products owned by French companies. Luxury products owned by French companies are not only sold in France but also in various countries such as the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, etc. In other words, French companies have many branch stores in France and also in various countries. Every day the shops of French companies are never empty of

visitors from customers who are interested in luxury products. French companies must know how to promote luxury products to customers such as placing advertisements on social media and various places. French companies also need a good plan to run their business properly.

The demand for luxury products will increase more than before. Luxury products, especially in the fashion sector, are often considered the best in terms of quality. Interest in luxury products cannot be separated from the role of factors in an individual (Chung, 2014). One of them is the need and uniqueness. Needs and uniqueness factors are also one of the determining factors in the interest in luxury products (Dubois, 1994). French companies need to know what their customers want such as increasing quality towards luxury products. The concept commonly used by French companies is that customers will favour a product that has quality, good performance, and is the most innovative. So that various other companies also have to spend a lot of energy to create these products in order to be able to meet market needs and be able to make continuous improvements to their customers. Basically, customers will not interest if the product quality is poor (Chung, 2014). In other words, customers want the best quality product. French companies must add value to luxury products especially in the fashion sector such as providing products of the highest quality. French companies must know what they want from their customers. This is because it makes it easier for French companies to run their business.

1.2. Problem Statement: The demand for sales and product performance especially luxury products in the fashion sector has been identified as one of the main factors in the developed world which is changing very fast at this time (Kapferer, 2018). Companies, especially French companies, do well in selling luxury products in their operations. This is because it has a high product image. There are other factors that may affect sales results and product performance especially luxury products in the fashion sector such as customer desires. One of the desires from customers is to have luxury products especially fashion products such as bags, jewelry, shoes and many more with the best quality. Product performance is decided by the quality of product shown and the display of customers (Chung, 2014). Marketing techniques can benefit the company in product sales and revenue. The direct link between sales and product performance has not been sufficiently demonstrated in any way. Every company can use it to increase sales that have been made. Sales of luxury products are determined by the product quality delivered and service as well as marketing techniques by creating a momentary mood for the product. This will be the beginning of research in conducting research and become one of the foundations of this research. This study will test the effect of selling luxury products that have been carried out by French companies. The results of the research that has been done can be used by other things for future research.

1.3. Research Questions: The initial research background and gaps have helped in identifying several specific questions that need to be answered to determine the impact on sales of luxury products in the fashion sector by French companies. Answers to these emerging questions will lead to the findings of this research. The analysis and conclusions of this research will be used to answer the following questions:

- Q1: How do French companies make a positive impact on luxury products?
- Q2: How do French companies attract their customers?

1.4. Research Objectives: It is conducted in the research to understand the effect of selling luxury products in the fashion sector to customers by French companies. Also, French companies need to know how to improve their product and gain a lot of customers. This research can find out how to develop sales of luxury products carried out by French companies. It analyzes the characteristics and performance features of luxury products to be sold to customers (Kapferer, 2018). By conducting this research, it is possible to obtain information about the profits that French companies get in selling luxury products. One of the advantages obtained by French companies is getting a lot of customers.

1.5. Scope and Limitations: This research focuses on the influence of sales of luxury products in the fashion sector that have been carried out by French companies. Data collection will be taken from 100 respondents from all customers who are interested in luxury products. This research will not take other problems that are not considered as an influence on the performance of luxury products. There are other respondents who are not interested in luxury products. This is not included in the scope of the research conducted. Surveys or questionnaires will be given to respondents as part of the research materials. Each respondent receives the same survey or questionnaire to answer. This research approach will make it possible to know the impact of sales that have been made by French companies. It will be profitable for French companies to get a lot of customers and income from sales of luxury products. This research will be conducted to determine the behavior

of customers towards purchasing luxury products. This research also helps to make it easier to get information about selling luxury products.

Chapter 2: Literature Review:

2.1. Concept of Luxury Products: This section explains the important ideas used in this investigation conceptually (Moldavska, 2017). It explains how French companies achieve their goals. It is not easy to achieve their goals. The conceptualization discussion is based on the studied literature (Thomas, 2020). It will explain how French companies get a lot of revenue from customers who are attracted to luxury products in the fashion sector. French companies will do it step by step to achieve success to achieve their dream targets. French companies need to think about how to get customers effectively. French companies learn how to build businesses effectively and correctly. French companies should also consider strategies to gain profits from their business.

2.1.1. Customers Attitudes towards Being Attracted to Luxury Products: Conventionally, customers perceive luxurious goods as a means of their prosperity and wealth (Kale, 2016). Luxury product consumption is regarded as something that is liked by customers. Although several research describe customer attitude related to interest in luxury products in the fashion sector, there is still a lack of deeper research regarding understanding customer attitudes towards luxury products in the fashion sector sold by French companies especially young people who are interested in luxury products. Learning about customer attitudes is necessary to understand their experience with luxury products (Chung, 2014). This is the importance of exploring the experiences and customers attitudes towards the consumption of luxury products (Kale, 2016). Stores of luxury products owned by French companies are always bustling with customers. Customers who visit luxury product stores usually always see products they find attractive (Shahid, 2022).

Employees of French companies always behave in a generally professional manner such as greeting friendly customers who come to a luxury products store. Employees of French companies properly explain luxury products to customers. It is not easy to get a lot of customers. French companies need strategies to attract the attention of customers such as promoting luxury products through social media. No identity of a luxury product can ignore the service elements that support the product. Few things will sink a luxury product into the minds of customers faster than having to talk to an automated system instead of a real person. It is also possible to wait about three weeks or even one month for a complaint to be answered. The expenditure incurred on luxury goods means that there is an element of top quality service expectation (Kale, 2016). It also establishes a connection between the consumer and the luxury product. Luxury product loyalties are derived from repetitive favorable experiences. Communication should not only happen when things go wrong. It has to happen when things are right to solidify that all is right and that more opportunities are provided to strengthen.

2.1.2. Achieve the Desired Goal for French Companies: One of the goals that French companies want to achieve is to create high value for luxury products in the fashion sector. The pricing power exercised by French companies leverages various brand elements such as heritage, country of origin, craftsmanship, rarity, and prestigious clients. Promoting luxury products through advertisements that emphasize emotional satisfaction can be effective for getting the attention of customers, but word of mouth from customers is also important (Kapferer, 2018). French companies selling directly to customers will bring them huge profits. This provides French Companies in terms of controlling the price of luxury products well, getting good experience from customers, and getting more knowledge in doing business especially in the luxury field. French companies need good materials for luxury products and ready to sell to customers. French companies must captivate their customers through emotional experiences and resonate with target audiences (Crane, 1997). This causes customers to be attracted to the luxury products sold by French companies. It takes step by step to get the result that French companies want. French companies must know what they want from their customers. That would make it easier for French companies to achieve the desired results, such as earning huge revenues from customers who are interested in luxury products. The name of a company will be bigger than before. French companies need the right strategy to achieve the desired targets for French companies. It is not easy for French companies to do all of that.

2.1.3. High Quality for Luxury Products: Luxury products must have high quality materials and have strong durability to be sold to customers (Kapferer, 2018). High quality for luxury products leads to satisfaction

customers need and want. All company especially French companies need high quality products for luxury products especially fashion products. This is because it makes it easier for French companies to get as many customers as possible and get a lot of income from those customers. It also makes customers more interested in luxury products from French companies. French companies need to know how to develop luxury products to high quality products. Customers want high quality luxury products and services from top professionals. Although not all luxury products have phenomenal quality products, the vast majority of luxury products in the luxury market maintain higher prices. This is because the quality of luxury products is top class. Some see luxury products as investments that retain value over time with some increasing in value with age. Luxury products identify customers in a certain way that more common products do not. The appearance of a luxurious product must convey its specialness and uniqueness (Dubois, 1994). Clients are eager to associate themselves with luxury products that celebrate their individual sophistication with outstanding aesthetics and design. The aesthetics conveyed by a luxurious product should convey its underlying qualities. Luxury customers do not spare the opportunity for luxury and are demanding that the products they stand behind do the exact same thing but in a different way. Economic and social etiquette is very important to luxury customers and connects with brands that feel the exact same way. When luxurious products share their social responsibilities, help enhance their communities, and do great things in their industries, customers are able to conveniently support luxury products (Chung, 2014). Luxury products that stand out amongst the rest have to balance the principle line of servicing customers while inventing something genuinely new and appealing for them to desire or rather need. Luxury products are considered to show income elasticity which is a measurement of how responsive the request for goods is to changes in the income of customers.

2.1.4. Making Luxury Products More Attractive: French companies can introduce luxury products especially fashion products to customers with good pictures, formats, language and physical form of products. This is one of the keys to providing a shopping experience to customers (Chung, 2014). This can help to increase sales of luxury products in return. French companies can make a good impression on their customers by selling luxury products. Making a good impression can be done through a website or retail store. For websites, French companies must ensure that customers can access via desktop and mobile phone. French companies have to create websites for their customers that are elegant and easy to use. For physical stores, French companies have to make the interior and exterior neat and create a friendly atmosphere by interacting with customers. This will give French companies a big advantage in selling luxury products. French companies must maximize customer satisfaction. This is because it is crucial to stabilize existing income. By being able to maximize customer satisfaction, French companies can carry out sales of luxury products smoothly. Retaining customers is more difficult than getting new customers. This is because customers feel less interested in a product being sold.

2.1.5. The Promotion of Luxury Products: Promoting luxury products to customers is one of the important things in increasing the revenue that will be received by French companies. Promoting luxury products can use marketing strategies to increase sales (Kapferer, 2018). When it comes to launching luxury products especially fashion products, French companies can gain interest and attention by promoting luxury products to customers. Designing luxury products also helps in more effective sales. Providing more information about luxury products in the fashion sector will help customers feel more interested. French companies can promote luxury products through social media websites. It is a great thing to get interest from customers. Allowing customers to order luxury products through social media or websites will get more customers (Chung, 2014). This is because social media or websites can persuade customers by showing a more side about luxury products. Communicating with customers on social media can maintain a better relationship.

2.2. Theoretical Framework: The theoretical framework is devoted to a discussion of the theoretical stance of the research (Thomas, 2020). The theory has been selected based on available and relevant data. The theory is supported in research data. This section also introduces and describes the available data under the existing study. It will describe how French companies attract the attention of their customers to luxury products especially fashion products. It also illustrates how French companies make as much as they earn from selling luxury products.

2.2.1. The Context of Negotiation: Every business must require the negotiation with customers. Similarly, the

same thing done by French companies to their customers. French companies and customers need an agreement in negotiation. In order to get an agreement between the two parties. To sell their luxury goods, French companies must employ the raise bar technique. Raise the bar approach is a famous expression that reflects proven research indicating that when someone places an agreement on a product (Banarjee,2022). The opening from negotiations will then have a direct influence on the result of negotiation. For performing better when done, the organization must increase the bar. This method should be used by French companies when negotiating with customers they encounter. French companies will earn much from their customers using this strategy. Many customers are interested in luxury products especially fashion products. The shop of French companies seems to be filled with people interested in luxury products especially fashion products and are rarely empty. The shop of French companies is crowded from opening to closing. The luxury product business carried out by French companies needs a big process to get many customers.

2.2.2. Developing a Plan for Customer Acquisition: The secret to create a successful customer acquisition plan is knowing what customers want (Nwankwo, 2014). It is a great plan to help prospects find a product or brand. There is also a service from employees of French companies helping customers to choose the desired luxury product especially fashion products. This method is quite effective and efficient to get customers who are interested in luxury products in the fashion sector from French companies. This engages customers in terms of awareness and interest in luxury products from French companies. This is also the process of getting customers interested in luxury products. The idea in carrying out a customer acquisition plan is to persuade and involve potential customers to become increasingly interested in luxury products especially fashion products from French companies. This is important for French companies in developing their product business properly and carefully. French companies must make good use of this customer acquisition plan. With customer acquisition plans, French companies have had to make adjustments based on performance in selling luxury products. This will allow French companies to grow more consistently. French companies must know the types of customers who are interested in luxury products.

2.2.3. Creating a Strong Relationship with Customers: One of the most important things in strengthening relationships with customers is making a connection with them. This can be done through the promotion of luxury products, advertising and other tactics (Rhee, 2012). The key for connecting with customers is getting their attention and creating interactions with them. This is done so that customers are interested in luxury products especially product fashion from French companies. French companies must have empathy for their customers in order to understand and serve them. Maintaining strong relationships with customers requires effective communication. The communication with customers can be done via email, social media, and other channels (Thekkat, 2021). French companies can further strengthen their relationship with their customers by showing appreciation for them. This will make customers more interested in luxury products in the future. Getting feedback from customers is also important for providing input to French companies. With feedback, this can find out the opinions of customers about what needs to be fixed. This is done so that companies can grow rapidly. The feedback can be done with a survey on the website. It could also make a change by increasing value for French companies. Understanding the point of view from customers can help strengthen the relationship.

2.2.4. Building Trust for Customers: To get a lot of customers, it requires a sense of trust in customers. Building trust with customers will give benefit for French companies in selling luxury products. One of the best ways is to show luxury products for customers. The trust of customers is important to develop the value of product especially luxury products. This is because it can help French companies attract and retain loyal customers. The sense of trust from customers will affect the impact of success carried out by French companies. With a sense of trust from customers, it will lead to more sales of luxury products in the fashion sector. It will also allow French companies to grow and thrive in sales of luxury products. It is also necessary to know what kind of luxury products are wanted from customers. Making and serving luxury products can also build a sense of trust among customers (Nwankwo, 2014). French companies can find regular customers in the sale of luxury products. Gaining the trust of customers can demonstrate the value of French companies (Rao, 2021). The value of a company, especially French companies, can be seen from the actions that have been taken. With the value of the actions taken, French companies will gain benefits such as increasing the number of their customers.

2.3. Empirical Support: This section presents previous research that are some ways relevant for the study. The

goal of the section is conducting the theory from the study with the documentation from other researchers (Paul, 2008). This is a source of knowledge obtained from observation and experimentation in conducting research (Verschooren, 2019). This section will support research in collecting data. This was done to observe how French companies get a lot of customers in selling luxury products especially fashion products.

2.3.1. Obtaining Dan Keeping Costumers: For French companies to be successful and profitable in business, they must win and retain customers. Without customers, French companies are clearly not profitable which is why they are not successful. The first step that must be taken for the French companies is to convert visitors who come to luxury product stores into returning customers. The second step is that the company must find a way to retain customers. French companies have to get information about what customers like. Information should be easily understood and accessible. It is important to remember that customers are the main focus in making a profit. French companies have already achieved success in their businesses such as selling luxury products in the fashion sector. French companies also started from scratch. The process of pursuing the success that the company seeks also appears to take quite a long period of time. Initially, the firm, like many French enterprises, attempted to establish a modest business selling things such as luxury goods to its consumers. French companies execute their business step by step to accomplish their intended goal. French companies also have the goal to achieve as well as possible. The goal is having stores in various places and getting a lot of customers. With a known goal, this will make it easier for French companies to sell luxury products. Customers and the company have a mutually beneficial relationship that is not harmful to either party (Chung, 2014). Luxury products will be an attraction for customers. Luxury products can be marketed by French companies to customers. Customers seek for luxurious items while simultaneously considering the best price to pay. This is because interested in premium things. French enterprises are likewise working hard to build more visually appealing homes. It is really tough to reach the targets desired by French companies. Nothing is impossible in business. This is due to the fact that every vendor does something, and there are possibilities that must be caught and leveraged. French company sells luxury products to customers to earn a lot of money. French companies must set the right price to sell to customers.

2.3.2. Offering a Discount for Customers: Customers are still looking for value in luxury products. French companies should launch discounts on luxury products. This is quite effective and efficient in selling luxury products in the fashion sector. It can also lower the cost of luxury product prices. An example of offering a discount is reducing the cost of a luxury product by about 20% or 30%. Customers see discounts as an opportunity to save money and enjoy products such as luxury products or services from employees of French companies. It is possible that the products sold today will not be the same in the future. Offering discounts is a powerful way to publicize a product or brand to customers (Rhee, 2012). With discounts, customers will build awareness and interest in luxury products. It is an efficient way to reach customers while keeping the acquisition cost from customers under control.

2.3.3 Providing a customer service: Providing service to customers is one of the most important things in selling luxury products especially fashion products. It is based on the experience of customers to suit the individual needs and preferences of customers. Providing service often makes customers feel appreciated. This can make customers more interested in luxury products especially fashion products from French companies. This also makes customers loyal to luxury products. French companies must provide services by documenting data and interactions with customers. Then, utilizing information from the results of documentation and interactions to serve customers. Providing services for customers can be done by communicating with customers through communication channels. This also involves accessing data about customers to provide recommendations on which luxury products are good or resolutions regarding the selection of luxury products. Customer experience is one of the most important things in choosing a product, especially luxury products (Amatulli, 2020). Providing customer service makes customers feel more connected and engaged with French companies. The feeling that customers have ensures the opportunity to reduce disputes with French companies. Customers will be pleased to be associated with company's especially French companies. Customers will do their part to share their happy experience with others.

2.3.4. Creating the Customer Loyalty Program: Having the customer loyalty program is one of the best ways to keep customers interest in luxury products sold by French companies. The customer loyalty program is held for customers who always like with products especially luxury products (Cowan, 2017). The more customers who

are interested in luxury products especially fashion products, the more profits French companies get. The advantage that French companies get in holding customer loyalty programs is to increase the revenue received by French companies, increase sales of luxury products, and enable the growth of the luxury product business in the fashion sector carried out by French companies. With the customer loyalty program, customers can get the benefits and points offered by French companies. In exchange, customers earn points for discounts, free luxury products, gifts, and inside facilities. The goal is to build trust between customers and French companies. The idea of running the customer loyalty program is to forge a deeper relationship between customers and French companies. This will also help increase interest in luxury products from customers. The existence of the customer loyalty program can enable French companies to offer desired luxury products without undermining the value of luxury products.

2.3.5. Personalizing interactions with customers: French companies can personalize interactions with customers. One of their strategies is to persuade customers to become more interested in luxury products especially fashion products. French companies will get some benefits from pursuing this strategy. Customers will feel like talking to real people. This will create a personal relationship between customers and French companies. This will make customers enjoy more with the luxury products sold by French companies. This interaction can be done by sending messages via email or using online chat. Customers can have conversations with French customers about ordering and prices of luxury products. Knowing how to talk to customers is one of the keys to personalizing customer interactions (Gupta,2023). Personalized interactions can also strengthen bonding and establish relationship between customers and French companies.

2.4. Hypothesis:

- H1: *The context of negotiation between customers and French companies can be mutually beneficial*
- H2: *Customer acquisition can make customers more interested in luxury products*
- H3: *Strong relationship with customers can benefit in selling luxury products*
- H4: *Building trust with customers will make it easier to sell luxury products*

2.5. Research Framework:

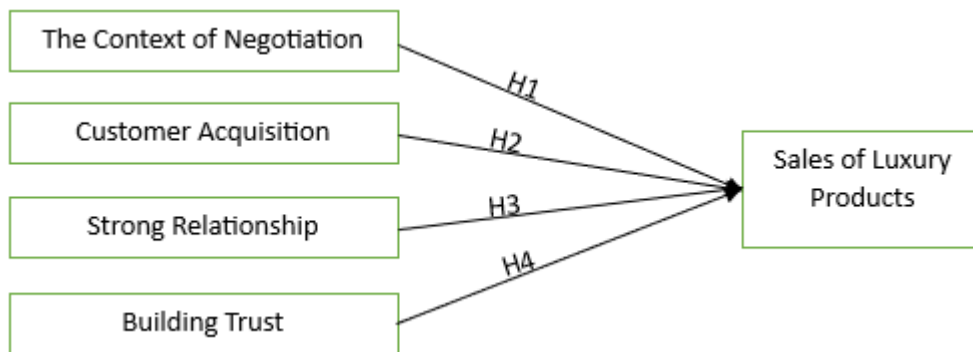


Figure 2.1: Research Framework

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology:

3.1. Research Methodology: The methodology relies on purpose of this study being conducted. This is because it can answer research questions in research problems properly and correctly. Research problems need to be addressed in conducting research. Besides that, the research intends for testing the theory about how customers are attracted to luxury products in the fashion sector. The theory test also incorporate direct efficiency measures as has been done in previous research on customer behavior. In addition, the study was expanded to include the influence of control variables to identify performance measures (Patton, 2019). Therefore, the conclusive research emerges as the best choice in conducting research among others. The emphasis on research design is very important for studying situations or problems regarding. Moreover, the conclusive research is a research design to answer the questions in this study.

The assessment framework in conducting this research is based on the theory that has been developed which is a theory that is widely used in empirical work to examine the behavior of customers who are attracted to luxury products in the fashion sector from French companies. The assessment framework is one of the important

things in conducting this research (Flick, 2015). This is because it can develop and also facilitate the research that is being carried out. In addition, the aim for assessment framework is finding out a result in conducting research and knowing the impact of selling luxury products to customers by French companies. Therefore, the choice for the conclusive research design is the right choice. This is because the conclusive research design is the best approach used to test theories or deeper explanations.

The methodology can also describe mechanisms or reasons for this study. It is particularly useful for analyzing research. One of the criticisms of concentration relates to variations in the interpretation of research results. For example, the benefits that can be obtained from the large number of customers who are interested in luxury products from French companies. The hypothesis regarding the advantage of many customers' claims that this leads to higher levels of concentration is the result of better efficiency (Huntington-Klein, 2021). Regardless of how the results were interpreted, this research put a lot of effort into using the quantitative method. It can use a quantitative technique to respond to research questions based on what is currently known. However, the inability to have a deeper understanding of the issue in the study is the element for limiting quantitative empirical studies in this respect. In addition, several variables in the research questions need to be answered with a quantitative approach. This is the use of a widely accepted conclusive research that is highly suitable for research to explain significant results. Considering the explanation above, it is preferable to use the quantitative method to investigate how many customers are attracted to luxury products from French companies.

3.2. Data Collection: The main tool for collecting information in practical research is a questionnaire. This is because it can determine the sample and type of questions. In the study, each respondent was asked to answer a list of similar questions mixed up to avoid bias. Initially, the questionnaire designs were coded and mixed from a certain topic based on a uniform structure (Baker, 2003). As a result, questionnaires generate valuable data necessary to achieve research objectives. Responses were provided for each statement from the questionnaire. The perception from respondents is summarized for generating scores in filling out the questionnaire. It will help to get information about the actual level of effectiveness in selling luxury products especially fashion products to customers.

3.2.1. Survey Questions: The set of survey questions is designed for each variable and demographic questions from the background of respondents. The response uses Likert scale starting from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) for the variables and multiple choice for the demographic question. The measurements used in this research are divided into 5:

| Number | Statement | Description of Statement |
|--------|-------------------|--|
| 1 | Strongly Disagree | Respondent is strongly disagreed with the statement |
| 2 | Disagree | Respondent is disagreed with the statement |
| 3 | Neutral | Respondent is neutral with the statement |
| 4 | Agree | Respondent is agreed with the statement |
| 5 | Strongly Agree | Respondent is strongly agreed with the statement |

3.2.2. Variables: The objective of this study is to find out how many customers are interested in luxury products especially fashion products from French companies. Prior to related research, it has used common steps to make information available to the public (Kaliyadan, 2019). This research also adheres to the same approach. However, this is supported by research involvement for choosing trustworthy. Throughout the process of research identification, variables that reflect the distinctive characteristics of French companies have received a strong focus on selling luxury products. A detailed discussion of this analysis is creating framework for the study. These are the variables to be analyzed as follows:

| Variable | Label | Item | Reference |
|----------------------------|--------------|---|------------------|
| The Context of Negotiation | CN1 | French companies can get benefits from the negotiation with customers | Banarjee,2022 |
| | CN2 | It requires an agreement between French companies and customers in the negotiation matters | Banarjee,2022 |
| | CN3 | Negotiating for luxury products especially fashion products with customers can help French companies become more efficient in selling luxury products especially fashion products | Banarjee,2022 |
| | CN4 | Customer behavior is one of the most important things for French companies to know what is wanted from customers | Banarjee,2022 |
| Variable | Label | Item | Reference |
| | CA1 | Customer acquisition gives impact to luxury products especially fashion products | Nwankwo,2014 |

| | | | |
|----------------------|--------------|--|--------------|
| Customer Acquisition | | | |
| | CA2 | With customer acquisition, it will make it easier for French companies to get a lot of customers | Nwankwo,2014 |
| | CA3 | It will help customers in choosing the desired luxury product especially fashion products with the services from employees of French companies | Nwankwo,2014 |
| | CA4 | French companies will be recognized easily when they do sale of luxury products especially fashion products to customers | Nwankwo,2014 |
| Variable | Label | Item | Reference |
| Strong Relationship | SR1 | By strengthening the relationship, it creates a connection between French companies and customers | Rhee,2012 |

| | | | |
|----------|--------------|--|--------------|
| | SR2 | The strong link between French companies and their customers can be achieved through the promotion of luxury products especially fashion products, advertising and other tactics | Rhee,2012 |
| | SR3 | The key for connecting with customers is getting their attention and interacting with them | Rhee,2012 |
| | SR4 | Keeping solid contact with customers can be done by effective communication through email, social media, and other channels | Rhee,2012 |
| | SR5 | Customer feedback is one of the most important things for developing sales of luxury products in the fashion sector which has been carried out by French companies | Rhee,2012 |
| Variable | Label | Item | Reference |
| | BT1 | The trust of customers is one of the most important things in selling luxury products especially fashion products | Thekkat,2021 |

| | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|---|--------------|
| Building Trust | | | |
| | BT2 | Building trust with customers can help French companies attract and retain loyal customers | Thekkat,2021 |
| | BT3 | The sense of trust would lead to more sales of luxury products in the fashion sector | Thekkat,2021 |
| | BT4 | Good service can build a sense of trust among customers | Thekkat,2021 |
| Variable | Label | Item | Reference |
| Sales of Luxury | SLP1 | Sales of luxury products especially fashion products can attract the attention of customers | Cowan,2017 |

| | | | |
|----------|-------------|--|------------|
| Products | | | |
| | SLP2 | Sales of luxury products especially fashion products can maintain the income owned by French companies | Cowan,2017 |
| | SLP3 | Sales of luxury products especially fashion products have to offer something special to get attention from customers | Cowan,2017 |

3.3. Data Analysis: The data collection tool in this research is distributing questionnaires in the form of a number of structured questions that had to be answered by respondents. In the questionnaire, there are several questions related to the respondent's identity such as name, age, gender, etc. There are also specific questions related to the research topic. Data analysis in this study includes validity and reliability tests.

3.3.1. Validity Test: The validity test concerns whether results are indeed what they seem to be (Vu, 2021). Prior to the actual data gathering, these are checked during the planning stage to verify timetables. Every question has already undergone testing in the related academic discipline. Before the actual data collection, changes were made to measure the meaning of theoretical ideas and consistency in language use so that the validity test of questionnaires may also assist in identifying questions that are unclear and redundant that are irrelevant. In making decisions on testing, the validity test uses the r table limit with a significance of 0.05. This is one of the important things to develop research that wants to research about the influence of sales of luxury products in the fashion sector that have been made by French companies.

3.3.2. Reliability Test: The reliability test relates to the consistency of responses with repeated actions that produce the same results at all times and across observers (Vu, 2021). The three criteria used in measuring retest reliability are reliability, alternative form reliability and internal consistency reliability. In general, it is used to test reliable measurement methods and visible instruments. The criteria for reliability testing are if the alpha value is more than 0.60, it means the statement is reliable and conversely, if the alpha value is below 0.60, it means the statement is not reliable. Confidence intervals are determined in conducting a study to obtain results in the research. This can be used to find data about customers who are interested in luxury products especially fashion products from French companies. This could see the progress of French companies regarding how many customers they get. It can also find out the advantages of French companies in selling luxury products especially fashion products. This is quite effective for searching for information data.

3.4. Sampling: The analysis unit for this research is desirable criteria from customers for luxury products in the fashion sector. This research uses an approach regarding customer behavior in their interest in luxury products especially fashion products from French companies. This is done to obtain information about customers and also see current trends regarding luxury products. The sampling refers to the procedure to be used in selecting

items for the sample (Berndt, 2020). Determining the appropriate sampling method is often one of the most important steps in conducting research. However, French companies need to think about strategies in selling luxury products. This choice is also strengthened by the research objective to observe the sale of luxury products by French companies. This study also aims to observe the development made by French companies in selling luxury products over time. The sampling theory is not only appropriate for finding ideas about a good sample, but often the guidance that offers sampling methods is indirect or abstract regarding what suitable samples can be made of and what the samples can reflect.

The sample for this study is about 100 respondents which includes customers who are interested in luxury products especially fashion products from French companies. The study population consisted of such a large number of customers that it was not possible to have all of them participate in the study because sampling of the results was unavoidable. Sampling or sample means part of the population where research will be conducted. Sample design is one of the important things in research. This is done to carry out a specific plan and obtain samples from a specific population. It refers to the technique or procedure used in selecting items to the sample. To select the population of customers who are interested in luxury products from French companies, customers are included as more potential criteria based on random and purposive sampling.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

4.1. Overview: It describes the impact from sales of luxury products in the fashion sector that have been carried out by French companies. As a result, it has aggregated information from multiple primary sources in conducting research. Most of the information that has been collected is about customers who are interested in luxury products especially fashion products from French companies. Therefore, it must use a variety of research approaches to assess information from enthusiasts of luxury products. It will also explain the results of research using various information that has been collected. The discussion of this research will be included in this chapter.

4.2. Demographic and Correspondents: The total of 100 participants were interviewed for primary data purposes. This has been achieved using a simple random sampling process which ensures the choice of sample is easy. As a result, it can show the following demographic characteristics of respondents:

| The Characteristics of Demographic | | Frequency |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Gender | Male | 58 |
| | Female | 31 |
| | Prefer not to say(unknown respondent) | 11 |
| | Total | 100 |
| Occupation | College Student | 52 |
| | Office Worker | 27 |
| | Students | 21 |
| | Total | 100 |
| Age Range | <18 years old | 21 |
| | The age of 18-30 | 53 |
| | >30 years old | 26 |
| | Total | 100 |

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics

According to a survey that has been conducted, the study identifies customers and enthusiasts of luxury products by occupation and gender. The result was 58% respondents of men, 31% respondents of women, and 11% respondents of unknown. Out of 100 respondents who answered the survey, the respondents were 52% from college students, 27% from workers, and 21% from students. People who are generally involved as enthusiasts of luxury products in the fashion sector were selected as respondents. After that, responses from surveys can grow active participation on social media. By this result, this shows that students tend to be more interested in luxury products especially fashion products compared to office workers and school students.

4.3. Results: For situations like this, French companies ask respondents to fill out the questionnaire. The questionnaire was created to determine customer interest and performance of luxury products in the fashion sector. The survey approach is used to collect opinions from the respondent base. The information and data that have been collected will be discussed in the next section.

4.3.1. The Context of Negotiation: The context of negotiation regarding luxury products in the fashion sector between French companies and customers has already been resolved as evidenced by agreements with both parties. The findings will be discussed as follows:

| No | Questions | Mean | Reference |
|-----------|---|------|---------------|
| CN1 | French companies can get benefits from the negotiation with customers | 4.10 | Banarjee,2022 |
| CN2 | It requires an agreement between French companies and customers in the negotiation matters | 3.96 | Banarjee,2022 |
| CN3 | Negotiating for luxury products with customers can help French companies become more efficient in selling luxury products especially fashion products | 4.24 | Banarjee,2022 |
| CN4 | Customer behavior is one of the most important things for French companies to know what is wanted from customers | 4.06 | Banarjee,2022 |
| X1 | | 4.09 | |

Table 4.2: The Context of Negotiation Mean

Based on the table above, it shows that only 8% of respondents strongly agree that French companies will gain experience from negotiations that have been carried out with customers. 64% of respondents seem to agree that the negotiation can make it easier for French companies. The remaining 26% of respondents neutral and 2% of respondents disagree about French companies can get benefit from negotiations that they have been made with their customers. Only 31% of respondents felt neutral about an agreement between the two parties 47% of respondents seem to agree with this statement. 20% of respondents strongly agree and 2% of respondents disagree that it requires an agreement between French companies and customers to negotiate. 27% of respondents felt neutral that the negotiation could be more efficient in selling luxury products. 52% agree with this statement. 20% of respondents strongly agree and 1% of respondents disagree that negotiating luxury products with customers can help French companies sell luxury products more efficiently. In addition, 8% of respondents are neutral about statements about customer behavior. Meanwhile, 62% of respondents seems agree. 30% of them strongly agree that customer behavior is important for French companies to find out what is wanted from customers.

4.3.2. Customer Acquisition: Before making efforts to sell luxury products, French companies are considering undertaking customer acquisition developments. This can help find out what customers want and develop luxury products especially fashion products. It can also provide services to customers according to their interests. As a result, an analysis of customer acquisition can be presented as follows:

| No | Questions | Mean | Reference |
|-----|--|------|--------------|
| CA1 | Customer acquisition gives impact to luxury products especially fashion products | 3.92 | Nwankwo,2014 |
| CA2 | With customer acquisition, it will make it easier for French companies to get a lot of customers | 3.80 | Nwankwo,2014 |
| CA3 | It will help customers in choosing the desired luxury product | 4.03 | Nwankwo,2014 |

| | | | |
|-----------|--|-------|--------------|
| | especially fashion products with the services from employees of French companies | | |
| CA4 | French companies will be recognized easily when they do sale of luxury products especially fashion products to customers | 3.83 | Nwankwo,2014 |
| X2 | | 3.895 | |

Table 4.3: Customer Acquisition Mean

Based on the table above, it shows that 24% of respondents are neutral regarding the statement. Moreover, 60% of them agree and 16% of them strongly agree that customer acquisition has an influence on the product itself. 22% from respondents are neutral that customer acquisition can make it easier for French companies to get a lot of customers. 10% from respondents disagree regarding this statement. 46% of them agree and 22% of them strongly agree that French companies can get a lot of customers by acquiring customers. 18% of respondents are neutral that services from employees of French companies can help customers in choosing the desired luxury product especially fashion products. 57% of them agree and 24% agree about the statement. After that, 1% of the respondents strongly agree that customers can choose the desired luxury product especially fashion products with the service from employees of French companies. 22% of respondents neutral with the statement that French companies can be recognized easily by selling luxury products to customers. 49% of respondents agree with the statement and 21% strongly agree and 8% disagree that selling luxury products to customers can make French companies easily recognizable.

4.3.3. Strong Relationship: This section will examine one of the most important aspects of the strong relationship between French companies and their customers. As a result, this raises questions about the approach of French companies to the target customers. The collected information will be described as follows:

| No | Questions | Mean | Reference |
|-----------|--|-------|-----------|
| SR1 | By strengthening the relationship, it creates a connection between French companies and customers | 4.00 | Rhee,2012 |
| SR2 | The strong link between French companies and their customers can be achieved through the promotion of luxury products especially fashion products, advertising and other tactics | 4.04 | Rhee,2012 |
| SR3 | The key for connecting with customers is getting their attention and interacting with them | 4.04 | Rhee,2012 |
| SR4 | Keeping solid contact with customers can be done by effective communication through email, social media, and other channels | 4.18 | Rhee,2012 |
| SR5 | Customer feedback is one of the most important things for developing sales of luxury products in the fashion sector which has been carried out by French companies | 4.38 | Rhee,2012 |
| X3 | | 4.128 | |

Table 4.4: Strong Relationship Mean

According to the survey results that have been conducted, respondents seem to have different viewpoints about strengthening the relationship between French companies and customers can make connections for both parties. 11% of respondents were neutral towards this statement. On the other hand, most of the respondents strongly agree that this can create connections between French companies and customers by strengthening relationships with a total of 15% of respondents strongly agree, while 74% of them agree about this statement. 12% of respondents strongly agree with the statement that strong relationships between French companies and customers can be achieved by promoting luxury products especially fashion products, advertising and other tactics. On the contrary, 76% of respondents agree. At last, 12% of them neutral regarding this declaration. 17% of respondents strongly agree and 59% of respondent agree about the key to connect with customers for getting their attention and interacting with them. Meanwhile, 23% of them neutral regarding this statement. Only 1% of them disagree that the attention of customers and interacting with customers is the key to connect with them.

10% of respondents are neutral that maintaining solid contact with customers can be done with effective communication via email, social media and other channels. Meanwhile, 17% strongly agree and 73% of respondents agree with the statement that effective communication can maintain solid contact with customers.

2% of respondents are neutral that customer feedback is also important for developing sales of luxury products in the fashion sector. Meanwhile, 53% strongly agree, and 44% of respondents agree and 1% respondent disagree with the statement that effective communication can maintain solid contact with customers.

4.3.4. Building Trust: French companies need to build trust with their customers. This could make it easier for French companies to sell luxury products especially fashion products to customers who are interested in. As a result, the information gathered about building trust between French companies and their customers can be presented as follows:

| No | Questions | Mean | Reference |
|-----------|---|-------|--------------|
| BT1 | The trust of customers is one of the most important things in selling luxury products especially fashion products | 4.21 | Thekkat,2021 |
| BT2 | Building trust with customers can help French companies attract and retain loyal customers | 4.13 | Thekkat,2021 |
| BT3 | The sense of trust would lead to more sales of luxury products in the fashion sector | 3.99 | Thekkat,2021 |
| BT4 | Good service can build a sense of trust among customers | 4.05 | Thekkat,2021 |
| X4 | | 4.095 | |

Table 4.5: Building Trust Mean

10% of respondents seem neutral about important customer trust in selling luxury products especially fashion products. Additionally, the other 59% of respondents agree. Meanwhile, 31% of respondents agree about this statement strongly agree regarding this statement that the trust of customers is important for French companies to know what customers want. 14% of respondents are neutral about building trust with customers being able to help French companies attract and retain loyal customers. 59% agree regarding this statement. Moreover, 27% of them strongly agree regarding this statement. 23% of respondents neutral that the trust will lead to increase sales of luxury products in the fashion sector. Meanwhile 1% respondent disagree, 52% of them agree regarding this statement and 24% of respondents strongly agree about this statement that more selling luxury products can build the sense of trust between French companies and customers. Based on 23% of respondents neutral from the survey, good service can build a sense of trust among customers. Meanwhile, 49% of them slightly agree and 28% of respondents strongly agree with the building a sense of trust among customers can be done by providing a good service.

4.3.5. Sales of Luxury Products: In this part, customers who are asked about sales of luxury products can give an attractive appearance. As a result, the information regarding this part will be provided and explained as follows:

| No | Questions | Mean | Reference |
|----------|--|------|------------|
| SLP1 | Sales of luxury products especially fashion products can attract the attention of customers | 4.21 | Cowan,2017 |
| SLP2 | Sales of luxury products especially fashion products can maintain the income owned by French companies | 4.13 | Cowan,2017 |
| SLP3 | Sales of luxury products especially fashion products have to offer something special to get attention from customers | 3.99 | Cowan,2017 |
| Y | | 4.11 | |

Table 4.6: Sales of Luxury Products

Most of the respondents with 12% strongly agree that sales of luxury products can attract the attention of customer. Meanwhile, 73% of respondents agree with this statement. In addition, 15% of them neutral that customers feel attracted to luxury products especially fashion products. 13% of respondents neutral that sales of luxury products can maintain the income owned by french companies, while the other 22% somewhat strongly agree with this statement. Furthermore, 65% of them agree that French companies can maintain their income by selling luxury products especially fashion products. 66% of respondents agree about sales of luxury products especially fashion products have to offer something special to get attention from customers. 34% of them strongly agree about the statement.

4.3.6. Validity Test:

| No | Statement Item | Coefficient Correlation | R-Table | Conclusion |
|--|--|-------------------------|---------|------------|
| <i>The Context of Negotiation</i> | | | | |
| 1 | French companies can get benefits from the negotiation with customers | 0.646 | 0.196 | Valid |
| 2 | It requires an agreement between French companies and customers in the negotiation matters | 0.783 | 0.196 | Valid |
| 3 | Negotiating for luxury products with customers can help French companies become more efficient in selling luxury products especially fashion products | 0.767 | 0.196 | Valid |
| 4 | Customer behavior is one of the most important things for French companies to know what is wanted from customers | 0.818 | 0.196 | Valid |
| <i>Customer Acquisition</i> | | | | |
| 5 | Customer acquisition gives impact to luxury products especially fashion products | 0.606 | 0.196 | Valid |
| 6 | With customer acquisition, it will make it easier for French companies to get a lot of customers | 0.865 | 0.196 | Valid |
| 7 | It will help customers in choosing the desired luxury product especially fashion products with the services from employees of French companies | 0.716 | 0.196 | Valid |
| 8 | French companies will be recognized easily when they do sale of luxury products especially fashion products to customers | 0.787 | 0.196 | Valid |
| <i>Strong Relationship</i> | | | | |
| 9 | By strengthening the relationship, it creates a connection between French companies and customers | 0.664 | 0.196 | Valid |
| 10 | The strong link between French companies and their customers can be achieved through the promotion of luxury products especially fashion products, advertising and other tactics | 0.772 | 0.196 | Valid |
| 11 | The key for connecting with customers is getting their attention and interacting with them | 0.680 | 0.196 | Valid |
| 12 | Keeping solid contact with customers can be done by effective communication through email, social media, and other channels | 0.809 | 0.196 | Valid |
| 13 | Customer feedback is one of the most important things for developing sales of luxury products in the fashion sector which has been carried out by French companies | 0.274 | 0.196 | Valid |
| <i>Building Trust</i> | | | | |
| 14 | The trust of customers is one of the most important things in selling luxury products especially fashion products | 0.880 | 0.196 | Valid |
| 15 | Building trust with customers can help French companies attract and retain loyal customers | 0.856 | 0.196 | Valid |

| | | | | |
|----|--|--------------|-------|-------|
| 16 | The sense of trust would lead to more sales of luxury products in the fashion sector | 0.885 | 0.196 | Valid |
| 17 | Good service can build a sense of trust among customers | 0.909 | 0.196 | Valid |

Table 4.7: Validity Test Result for the Context of Negotiation, Customer Acquisition, Strong Relationship, and Building Trust (X)

Based on the above table consisting of 17 sales of luxury products variable statements (X), all statement elements have greater the R-value than the r-table value calculated based on the calculation of df (degrees of freedom) = $N - 2 = 100 - 2 = 98$, so R-table is 0.196. Therefore, it can conclude that all statements are valid and that this study can measure variables for the context of negotiation, customer acquisition, strong relationship, and building trust.

| No | Statement Item | Coefficient Correlation | R Table | Conclusion |
|----|--|-------------------------|---------|------------|
| 1 | Sales of luxury products especially fashion products can attract the attention of customers | 0.910 | 0.196 | Valid |
| 2 | Sales of luxury products especially fashion products can maintain the income owned by French companies | 0.903 | 0.196 | Valid |
| 3 | Sales of luxury products especially fashion products have to offer something special to get attention from customers | 0.854 | 0.196 | Valid |

Table 4.8: Validity Test Result for Sales of Luxury Products (Y)

Based on the above table consisting of 3 statements for luxury products variable (Y), all statement items have greater the R-value than the value in the r-table calculated based on the number of df (degrees of freedom) = $N - 2 = 100 - 2 = 98$, so the r-table is 0.196. So, all the statements are valid. It can say that this study can measure sales of luxury products variables.

4.3.7. Reliability Test:

| No | Variable | Cronbach Alpha | Critical Value | Conclusion |
|----|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------|
| 1 | The Context of Negotiation | 0.744 | 0,60 | Reliable |
| 2 | Customer Acquisition | 0.740 | 0,60 | Reliable |
| 3 | Strong Relationship | 0.667 | 0,60 | Reliable |
| 4 | Building Trust | 0.904 | 0,60 | Reliable |
| 5 | Sales of Luxury Products | 0.862 | 0,60 | Reliable |

Table 4.9: Reliability Test Result

From the table above, this can be seen from worth of Cronbach Alpha for every study variable exceed prescribed Cronbach Alpha worth (0.60). For the details, the value for sales of luxury product and all variabels are > Cronbach Alpha worth (0.60). It can be concluded that all variables used in this study are reliable. Based on the results of the validity and reliability tests that were performed, it can be resumed that the instrument of research is legitimate and reliable to further steps.

4.3.8. Hypothesis Test: The hypothesis testing can be obtained by using the regression results. Hypothesis testing will use the T-Test.

Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | ,516 | ,353 | | 1,463 | ,147 |
| | The Context of Negotiation | ,004 | ,015 | ,006 | ,306 | ,761 |
| | Customer Acquisition | -,038 | ,017 | -,051 | -2,205 | ,030 |
| | Strong Relationship | ,002 | ,014 | ,003 | ,160 | ,873 |

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------|------|-------|--------|------|
| Building Trust | ,750 | ,017 | 1,020 | 43,199 | ,000 |
|----------------|------|------|-------|--------|------|

a. Dependent Variable: Sales of Luxury Products

Table 4.10: T-Partial Test Result

From the table above, the results of regression coefficient are:

1. The coefficient of regression for the variable to the context of negotiation (X1) is 0.306, the significance level is 0.761, which is greater than 0.05. Based on the above results, it can conclude that Ho1 was accepted and Ha1 was rejected. It means that there is no impact or significant contribution from the context of negotiation to luxury products
2. The regression coefficient for the variable of customer acquisition (X2) is -2.205, the significance level is 0.030, which is less than 0.05. From the above results, it can be assumed that it can conclude that Ho2 was rejected and Ha2 was accepted. It means that there is a positive impact or significant contribution from customer acquisition to luxury products.
3. The regression coefficient for the variable of strong relationship (X3) is 0.160. The significance level is 0.873, which is greater than 0.05. From the above results, it can be assumed that it concludes that Ho3 is accepted and Ha3 is rejected. It means that there is no impact or significant contribution from strong relationship to luxury products.
4. The regression coefficient for the variable of building trust (X4) is 43.199 with the significance level is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. From the above results, it can resume that Ho4 was rejected and Ha4 was accepted. It means that there is a positive impact or significant contribution from building trust to luxury products.

Based on table 4.10 above, the regression results can also be stated as follows.

The coefficients are: the context of negotiation (X1) is 0.004, customer acquisition (X2) is -0.038, strong relationship (X3) is 0.002 and building trust (X4) is 0.750. The constant value of regression is 0.516. The multiple regression equation is $Y = 0.516 + 0.004 X1 - 0.038 X2 + 0.002 X3 + 0.750 X4 + e$. These mean that:

1. If the independent variables are 0 or constant, then sales of luxury products will become 0.516.
2. If the variable of the context of negotiation increases one point while other independent variables are assumed constant, then sales of luxury products will increase 0.004 point.
3. If the variable of customer acquisition increases one point while other independent variables are assumed constant, then sales of luxury products will decrease 0.038 point because there is negative sign (-) in the coefficient.
4. If the variable of strong relationship increases one point while other independent variables are assumed constant, then sales of luxury products will increase 0.002 point.
5. If the variable of building trust increases one point while other independent variables are assumed constant, then sales of luxury products will increase 0.750 point.

4.4. Discussion: After investigation and analysis of collected primary and secondary data, the study about the influence of selling luxury products that have been made by French companies has found that customers have an important role in sales of luxury products.

The data was collected from 100 respondents who are interested in luxury products. Those who have experience purchasing luxury products. It uses a simple random sampling strategy for data collection. This is because it does not know the entire customer base of luxury products. Research shows that enthusiasts are highly attracted to luxury products.

According to the T-test, the first hypothesis, customers from the context of negotiation contribute not significantly to luxury products especially fashion products. However, the efficiency of communication may be affected by knowledge which existed before to the advertised product (Amatulli, 2020). The context of negotiation has aspects that people adopt when spending time with companies such as French companies and an approach to customers to remember product performance. Therefore, French companies carry out sales of luxury products in the fashion sector to establish product awareness programs to show maximum exposure to their customers. Additionally, French companies built a program by selling luxury products to maximize exposure to their customers. In addition, the online presence of French company does not affect customer awareness or name recognition.

The second hypothesis, customer acquisition has no impact on luxury products in the fashion sector, is proven and accepted as the T-Test result is -2.205 with level of significance is 0.030 which is deficient than 0.05. It can reveal a large body of evidence for hypothetical correlations and showed how design elements of online services generate specific sets of customer value judgments that influence customer acquisition. French companies examine the willingness of their target customers to make it easier to sell luxury products and also create an effective program. It is stated that service can help luxury products to improve the performance of employees of French companies by getting a large number of customers. Most of companies are not involved in traditional advertising, but preferring to keep their latest existing programs and learning about new services and product features (Carcano, 2013). Furthermore, feedback of customers about customer acquisition can influence the development in sales of luxury products. The customer acquisition impact will be greater when customers are attracted by luxury products especially fashion products.

The third hypothesis, strong relationship has no impact on luxury products in the fashion sector, is proven and accepted as the T-Test result is 0.160 with level of significance is 0.873 which is above than 0.05. This means that a strong relationship with luxury products has no contribution. There are many ways to advertise luxury products on the internet. It describes the different methods and tools available with the advantages and disadvantages. Email and social media are all examples of strong relationship between the company and customers. Products can be seen by their appearance to better meet the wants and expectations of their customers (Shahid, 2022). Most of companies like French companies usually cultivate relationship with customers to gain profits in sales. Expanding ears of companies to hear additional conversations, these efforts offer opportunities to reach larger customers.

Finally, the last hypothesis, building trust has a big impact on luxury products in the fashion sector, is proven and accepted as the T-Test result for customer acquisition is 43.199 with level of significance is 0.000 which is deficient than 0.05. However, French companies need a variety of trust from customers to facilitate the sale of luxury products. This will help with investment and can calculate the reach that will result from selling luxury products. Making ads about luxury products will make it easier to get a lot of customers (Cowan, 2017). The advertisement for luxury products can be developed by companies especially French companies. This is done to reach more customers and more precise prices. By creating advertisements for luxury products, it can make more customers interested in luxury products. This can also keep customers interested in luxury products especially fashion products. It will get profits from creating ads about luxury products.

Chapter 5: Conclusion: The first goal of this study is knowing the effect of selling luxury products in the fashion sector to customers by French companies. As a result, it found that French companies could improve luxury products especially fashion products by leveraging social media. French companies are also believed to have a significant presence in activities related to its website and social media. Customers engage through social media which are powerful tools for building interactive relationships. From the presence of social media, it can be concluded that this is the most influential in selling products through online. French companies have succeeded in selling luxury products especially fashion products through online and offline. Selling luxury products especially fashion products by online can be done through social media, while selling luxury products by offline can be done by selling luxury products especially fashion products at a store.

The second aim from the study is finding out aspects that influence luxury products in the fashion sector owned by French companies. After conducting research on the survey or questionnaire, customer feedback can help French companies reach more customers and target audience which is the main reason for the performance of luxury products in the fashion sector. It also found that reaching a wider audience improved the performance of luxury products in the fashion sector. This can evaluate what should be developed from luxury products in the fashion sector. As a result, customer feedback can encourage French companies to know what customers want.

The main goal of this study is understanding the effect of selling luxury products in the fashion sector to customers by French companies. After using hypothesis tests to look into various variables in the research, it discovered that sales of luxury products especially fashion products had a significant impact for French companies. The effort from French companies is doing as much as possible to sell luxury products especially fashion products to customers. Customers can spend time with French companies by negotiating for luxury

products especially fashion products. Thus, this is creating the context of negotiation between both parties. The context of negotiation encourages customers to interact directly with French companies by making them spend more time with luxury products especially fashion products, get acquainted with its features, and engage with its performance. Secondly, customer acquisition is a widespread business technique. It is described as keeping an eye on internet conversations to observe what people are saying about a product, organization, or sector. Quantifying the relationship between customer evaluations and financial success, which is indirect and needs statistical modeling, is a little tricky. Thirdly, the strong relationship has no impact towards sales of luxury products in the fashion sector according to the hypothesis results. Lastly, building trust measures have an impact on how well French companies perform. This is done by building trust between French companies and customers.

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Appendix: A1. The Questionnaire Form

“Understanding the influence of sales of luxury products in the fashion sector that have been made by French companies”

Understanding the influence of sales of luxury products in the fashion sector that have been made by French companies

I am Viky Pahlevi, a management student who focuses on marketing, currently conducting research entitled understanding the influence of sales of luxury products that have been made by French companies. Therefore, the support and participation of friends is needed to take the time to fill out this questionnaire honestly. All information provided will be kept confidential and only used for academic purposes. Thank you for your support and participation in filling out this questionnaire.

viky_pahlevi@sbm-itb.ac.id [Switch account](#)
Not shared

* Indicates required question

Sex *

Male

Female

Prefer to not to say

The Context of Negotiation

1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neutral
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

French companies can get benefits from the negotiation with customers *

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

It requires an agreement between French companies and customers in the negotiation matters *

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

Occupation *

College Student

Office Worker

Students

Age *

< 18 years old

18 - 30 years old

> 30 years old

Next Clear form

Negotiating for luxury products with customers can help French companies become more efficient in selling luxury products especially fashion products *

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

Customer behavior is one of the most important things for French companies to know what is wanted from customers *

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

Back Next Clear form

Customer Acquisition

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

Customer acquisition gives impact to luxury products especially fashion products *

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

With customer acquisition, it will make it easier for French companies to get a lot of customers *

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

It will help customers in choosing the desired luxury product especially fashion products with the services from employees of French companies *

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

French companies will be recognized easily when they do sales of luxury products especially fashion products to customers *

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Back

Next

Clear form

Strong Relationship

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

By strengthening the relationship, it creates a connection between French companies and customers *

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

The key for connecting with customers is getting their attention and interacting with them *

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Keeping solid contact with customers can be done by effective communication through email, social media, and other channels *

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

The strong link between French companies and their customers can be achieved through the promotion of luxury products especially fashion products, advertising and other tactics *

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Customer feedback is one of the most important things for developing sales of luxury products in the fashion sector which has been carried out by French companies *

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Back

Next

Clear form

Building Trust

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

The trust of customers is one of the most important things in selling luxury products especially fashion products *

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Building trust with customers can help French companies attract and retain loyal customers *

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

The sense of trust would lead to more sales of luxury products in the fashion sector *

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Good service can build a sense of trust among customers *

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Back

Next

Clear form

Sales of Luxury Products

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

Sales of luxury products especially fashion products can attract the attention of customers *

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Sales of luxury products especially fashion products can maintain the income owned by French companies *

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Sales of luxury products especially fashion products have to offer something special to get attention from customers *

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Back

Submit

Clear form

The Utility of Cafes in Town Focusing on the Two Functions of 'The Third Place'



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Abstract: This study reconsidered the function of town cafes as 'the Third Place' from the two perspectives of (1) "a place for exchange" and (2) "a place for emotional support" for city dwellers and clarified the following based on users' awareness and state of mind. (1) In Japan, it was found that many people use cafes as a place to work alone or recover as a "my place" type, and that the "my place" type tends to use chain cafes. (2) Those who use cafes as a place for socializing in the traditional 'Oldenburg type' chose privately owned cafes and were found to be highly dependent on them. (3) People who use cafés tend to have higher wellbeing-related indicators, especially those who use privately owned cafes, than those who use chain ones

Keywords: The Third Place, Café, Well-Being, Regional Exchange

1. Introduction

The concept of "the Third place" proposed by Oldenburg (1989) has recently come into common use that is not a "first place" (home) or a "second place" (work or school). According to Oldenburg himself, "the Third place" is "the core environment of informal public life," characterized by (1) neutrality, (2) egalitarianism, (3) conversation as the main activity, (4) accessibility and convenience, (5) regulars, (6) modesty, (7) playfulness, and (8) another home. The "social place" is where the focus is on interaction. He also mentions that "cafés" and "cafés" run by individuals (Independent) in particular function as "the Third place". In Japan, cafés are used as a place for people to socialize and rest, and in 2008 there were about 290,000 such establishments. However, the number has begun to decline, plummeting to approximately 200,000 in 2017 and the number of Independent cafés, not the company, has decreased by 60% in the 20 years since 1996. It is not difficult to imagine that many privately owned cafés were hit and decreased by the Covid-19 disaster, although statistics do not yet show the impact of the disaster at this time. The loss of "the Third place" in the city could have a negative impact on the vitality and ties of the community, as well as on the mental health of urban residents. According to this background, this study aims to clarify the following:

- Function as a "place for interaction among city dwellers"
- Function as a "a place for emotional support"

To reconsider the two aspects of cafés, especially the Chain cafes and Independent cafes that are frequently used by Japanese, to clarify the utility of these two functions in terms of user's consciousness and state of mind, and to clarify how the decrease in the number of cafés affects urban life.

2. Literature Review & Conceptual Framework

In recent Japanese studies related to "the Third place", it has been expanded beyond Oldenburg's original definition. For example, Motoyanagi (2018) found that the usage patterns of the third places in cafes can be divided into three types in addition to "(1) Interaction with shop staff and other customers" assumed by Oldenburg: "(2) Spending time with friends" and "(3) Relaxing alone", indicating that the third places are not only for interaction with people, but also for "spending time alone (= "My place type")". Niwa et al. (2011) and

Hatakeyama et al. (2015) also pointed out that Japanese cafes are used for study and work purposes. Furthermore, Ueda et al. (2022) focused on Independent cafes and found that there are two functions (ways of use) of "the Third place as "Oldenburg type" and "My place type," suggested through quantitative surveys of Independent cafes' owners. Thus, in Japanese academic research, the function of a place for interaction among city dwellers with others is not essential, and places to spend time alone are increasingly included in the concept of "the Third place". Considering this trend, this paper also includes the concept of "the Third place" not only "Oldenburg type" but also "My Place type".

3. Data

Customers with cafes in Tokyo that they frequented using before Covid-19 as a "comfortable place to be" were sampled by Internet research from March 14 to 16, 2023, and responses were received 553 samples. A summary of the survey is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Internet Survey Data

| Item | Contents |
|-------------------------|--|
| Method of investigation | Distribution and collection via the Internet |
| Terms and conditions | Residents of Tokyo and 4 prefectures who used the cafes as a "comfortable place to stay" in Tokyo. |
| Effective Date | March 14-16, 2023 |
| Respondent | Men and women from 20s to 80s |
| Number of samples | 553 samples |

4. Methodology

In conducting this study, it was necessary to understand the state of mind of users, especially in "comfortable place to be", so it reviewed relevant research in existing studies and found the following two indicators as follows:

(1) Measurement indicators (13 items) related to sense of "Place where one belongs ". (Table 4.1)

(2) Measurement indicators (15 items) to measure the state of "Well-being". (Table 4.2)

Questions (1) was edited using the results of Kawamura et al.'s "Research on the Influence of Town Places on Quality of Life and Attitudes Toward Community", in which psychological measures regarding town places were extracted from an analysis of a large sample.

Question (2) was prepared based on the "PERMA -Profiler", which are based on Seligman's theory, one of the measures of "Well-being".

The scale for (1) was a 5-point scale: "very applicable," "somewhat applicable," "neither applicable nor not applicable," "not very applicable," and "not applicable at all," For (2), the scale was 10, ranging from "1 (to a lesser extent or frequency)" to "10 (to a greater extent or frequency)". In addition to gender, age, place of residence, marital status, presence or absence of children, and occupation, the respondents were asked about their basic information requirements.

Table 4.1 Measurement indicators of "Place where one belongs".

| Measuring indicators | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| I have someone who listens to me | Diversity |
| I can have time to myself | Environment for thinking |
| Calmness | Feel like an indispensable place |
| Affectionate | I can be who I am |
| Feeling liberated | I feel like I'm part of a group |
| Feeling ties to the community | Work, study, etc. |
| Feeling that I have a role | |

Table 4.2 Measurement indicators of "Well-being".

| Category | Measuring indicators |
|-----------------|--|
| Positive motion | How often do you feel happy (enjoyment) |
| | How often do you feel positive (positivity) |
| | How satisfied you usually feel (satisfaction) |
| Engagement | How often do you feel absorbed in what you do (absorbed) |
| | How excited or interested you feel about different things (excited) |
| | How often do you lose track of time when you are doing something you enjoy (concentration) |
| Relationship | How often do you receive help and support from others when you need it (Acceptance of support) |
| | To what extent do you feel that you are loved (sense of being loved) |
| | How satisfied you are with your own relationships (Relationships) |
| Meaning | The extent to which you live a life of purpose and meaning (meaningful life) |
| | The extent to which you feel that what you do is important and worthwhile (value of actions) |
| | To what extent do you feel that you have direction in your life (life direction) |
| Accomplishment | How much time do you feel you are on track to achieve your goals (time to achieve) |
| | How often you can achieve the important goals you set for yourself (frequency of achievement) |
| | How often you can fulfil your responsibilities (responsibility) |

5. Result:

5.1 Questionnaire's basic information

Tokyo was the most common place of residence (52.6%), followed by Saitama (18.8%) and Kanagawa (17.8%). In terms of marital status, 43.9% of the respondents were never married, while 56.1% were married. 53.2% had children, while 46.8% had no children. The most common occupation was company employee, accounting for 52.0% of the total, including office workers (26.9%), technical workers (14.0%) and others (11.1%); the second most common occupation was part-time worker (12.6%) and the third was full-time housewife (househusband) (12.1%). (Table 5.1)

Table 5.1 Questionnaire's basic information (n=494)

| Category | | Number of cases (%) | Category | | Number of cases (%) |
|-----------|--------------------|---------------------|------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Gender | Male | 238(48.1) | occupation | Civil servants | 14(2.8) |
| | Female | 256(51.9) | | Management/officer | 12(2.4) |
| Age | 20s | 88(17.8) | | Company employee (clerical) | 133(26.9) |
| | 30s | 95(19.2) | | Company employee (technical) | 69(14.0) |
| | 40s | 100(20.2) | | Company employee (other) | 55(11.1) |
| | 50s | 108(21.9) | | Self-employed | 19(3.8) |
| | 60s and over | 103(20.9) | | Freelance | 14(2.8) |
| Residence | Saitama Prefecture | 93(18.8) | | Housewife | 60(12.1) |
| | Chiba Prefecture | 53(10.7) | | Part-time job | 62(12.6) |
| | Tokyo | 260(52.6) | | Student | 15(3.0) |
| | Kanagawa | 88(17.8) | | Other | 6(1.2) |
| Marriage | Unmarried | 217(43.9) | | Unemployed | 35(7.0) |

| | | |
|----------|---------------|-----------|
| | Married | 277(56.1) |
| Children | With children | 263(53.2) |
| | No children | 231(46.8) |

5.2 Purpose of using cafes

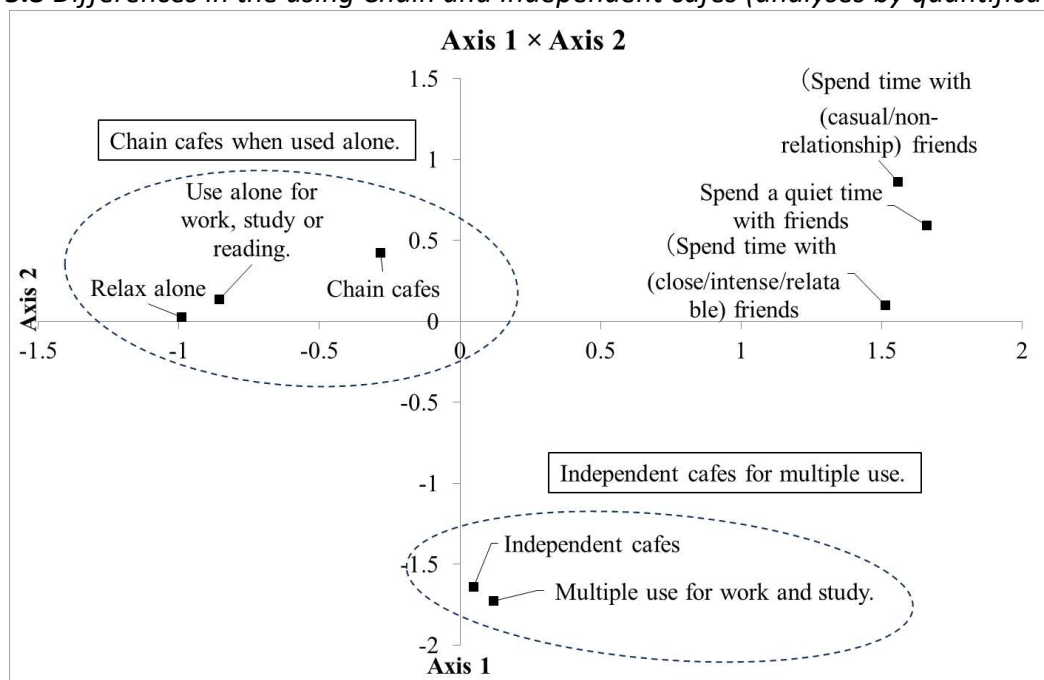
When asked which cafes in Tokyo they visited "most frequently" as "a comfortable place to be", 439 (88.8%) were Chain cafes and 55 (11.2%) were Independent cafes, indicating that Chain cafes were used more frequently. In terms of the purpose of use, 2/3 of the cafes were used for "My Place-type" activities such as 'relaxing alone', while "Oldenburg-type" activities such as 'spending time with friends in a close relationship' only accounted for about 20% of all cafes used. However, the proportion of "Oldenburg-type" use was slightly higher among users of Independent cafes. (Table 5.2) This indicates that Japanese frequently tend to be used cafes for relaxing alone.

Table 5.2 Purpose of using the most visited cafes as "a comfortable place to be"

| Purpose of using café | total | | Chain | | Independent | |
|---|-------|------------|-------|------------|-------------|------------|
| | Count | Percentage | Count | Percentage | Count | Percentage |
| Relaxing alone | 329 | 66.6% | 290 | 66.1% | 39 | 70.9% |
| Used by one person for work, study or reading | 169 | 34.2% | 151 | 34.4% | 18 | 32.7% |
| Used by more than one person for work or study | 26 | 5.3% | 24 | 5.5% | 2 | 3.6% |
| Spend time with (close/intimate) friends | 102 | 20.6% | 87 | 19.8% | 15 | 27.3% |
| Spend time with (casual/non-relationship) friends | 98 | 19.8% | 88 | 20.0% | 10 | 18.2% |
| Number of respondents | 494 | 100.0% | 439 | 88.8% | 55 | 11.2% |

Furthermore, when the differences in use between Chain and Independent cafes were examined using Quantification III for all cafes frequented in Tokyo, "relaxing alone" and "used alone for work, study or reading" were closely related to Chain cafes, while "used with several people for work or study" was closely related to Independent cafes. (Table 5.3). This indicates that in Japan, the using cafes as "the Third place" was found to be different, divided between the "My Place-type" for Chain cafes and the "Oldenburg type" for Independent cafes.

Table 5.3 Differences in the using Chain and Independent cafes (analysis by quantification III).



5.3. Sense of "Place where one belongs."

5.3.1 General Tendency

We asked respondents how they felt about the cafes (n=494) they visited most frequently in Tokyo as a comfortable place to be. The highest percentage was 82.6% for "calmness (sense of relaxation)," followed by 77.1% for "having time to myself (sense of freedom)." (Table 5.4)

5.3.2 Difference between Chain and Independent café

The items that showed particular differences between the averages of Chain and Independent cafes were "I can get more done at work or study (place to work)" for Chain cafes, and "There are people who listen to me," "Feeling connected to the community (ties to the community)," "I feel attached to it," and "I feel like it is an indispensable place (sense of dependence)" for Independent cafés. (Table 5.5). These indicate that while Chain cafes are used as a place to work, Independent cafes are valued as a place with strong emotional ties, with high levels of dependence as a place to accept oneself and feel connected to the community.

Table 5.4 Comparison of "Sense of "Place where one belongs."(n=494)

| Sense of "Place where one belongs | All | | Chain | | Independent | |
|---|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| Calm down (feeling of relaxation) | 408 | 82.6% | 363 | 82.7% | 45 | 81.8% |
| Have time to yourself (freedom) | 381 | 77.1% | 341 | 77.7% | 40 | 72.7% |
| I can organize my mind (thinking environment) | 262 | 53.0% | 236 | 53.8% | 26 | 47.3% |
| There are people from all walks of life (diversity) | 248 | 50.2% | 228 | 51.9% | 20 | 36.4% |
| I feel liberated (liveliness) | 222 | 44.9% | 195 | 44.4% | 27 | 49.1% |
| I can get more done at work or study (work place) | 217 | 43.9% | 198 | 45.1% | 19 | 34.5% |
| I feel attached to it (sense of attachment) | 206 | 41.7% | 176 | 40.1% | 30 | 54.5% |
| I feel like it is an indispensable place (dependence) | 189 | 38.3% | 163 | 37.1% | 26 | 47.3% |
| I can be myself as I am (sense of self) | 133 | 26.9% | 118 | 26.9% | 15 | 27.3% |
| There are people who listen to me (sense of acceptance) | 128 | 25.9% | 109 | 24.8% | 19 | 34.5% |
| There are my friends (sense of community) | 110 | 22.3% | 96 | 21.9% | 14 | 25.5% |
| I feel I have a role to play (sense of self-usefulness) | 94 | 19.0% | 82 | 18.7% | 12 | 21.8% |
| Feeling connected to the community (community ties) | 91 | 18.4% | 74 | 16.9% | 17 | 30.9% |

Table 5.5 Comparison of mean difference of "Sense of "Place where one belongs."

| Sense of "Place where one belongs | All | Chain | Mean difference | | Judgement |
|---|------|-------|-----------------|---------|-----------|
| | Mean | Mean | Difference | p-value | |
| Calm down (feeling of relaxation) | 4.16 | 4.22 | 0.05 | 0.321 | |
| Have time to yourself (freedom) | 4.07 | 4.00 | -0.07 | 0.199 | |
| I can organize my mind (thinking environment) | 3.51 | 3.44 | -0.08 | 0.012 | * |
| There are people from all walks of life (diversity) | 2.79 | 2.74 | -0.04 | 0.009 | ** |
| I feel liberated (liveliness) | 3.31 | 3.31 | 0.00 | 0.010 | * |
| I can get more done at work or study (work place) | 3.25 | 2.96 | -0.28 | 0.012 | ** |
| I feel attached to it (sense of attachment) | 3.21 | 3.47 | 0.26 | 0.062 | |
| I feel like it is an indispensable place (dependence) | 3.19 | 3.44 | 0.24 | 0.004 | ** |

| | | | | | |
|---|------|------|------|-------|----|
| I can be myself as I am (sense of self) | 2.94 | 3.04 | 0.10 | 0.006 | ** |
| There are people who listen to me (sense of acceptance) | 2.50 | 2.82 | 0.32 | 0.000 | ** |
| There are my friends (sense of community) | 2.59 | 2.84 | 0.25 | 0.001 | ** |
| I feel I have a role to play (sense of self-usefulness) | 2.51 | 2.69 | 0.18 | 0.006 | ** |
| Feeling connected to the community (community ties) | 2.48 | 2.76 | 0.29 | 0.000 | ** |

5.4. Well-being

5.4.1 General Tendency

Users of cafes that they "frequented" in Tokyo as "a comfortable place to be" (371 Chain cafes and 182 Independent cafes, for a total of 553) were asked about their "Well-being", and those users who selected a high rating of 4 or 5 were summarized. More than one-half of the total respondents selected 4 or 5 for all items, indicating that café users tend to have high "Well-being". (Table 5.6)

5.4.2 Difference between Chain and Independent café

In addition, the fact that the mean values for all items tended to be higher for Independent cafés than for Chain cafés indicates that Independent cafés users tend to have better "Well-being". (Table 5.7)

Table 5.6 Comparison of "Well-being"

| Well-being | | ALL | | Chain | | Independent | |
|------------------|--------------------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|-------------|-------|
| | | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| Positive emotion | Satisfaction | 356 | 64.4% | 221 | 59.6% | 135 | 74.2% |
| | Enjoyment | 339 | 61.3% | 213 | 57.4% | 126 | 69.2% |
| | Positivity | 322 | 58.2% | 201 | 54.2% | 121 | 66.5% |
| Engagement | Concentration | 357 | 64.6% | 220 | 59.3% | 137 | 75.3% |
| | Engrossment | 338 | 61.1% | 217 | 58.5% | 121 | 66.5% |
| | Excitement | 330 | 59.7% | 213 | 57.4% | 117 | 64.3% |
| Relationship | Relationships | 333 | 60.2% | 208 | 56.1% | 125 | 68.7% |
| | Sense of being loved | 323 | 58.4% | 199 | 53.6% | 124 | 68.1% |
| | Acceptance of support | 296 | 53.5% | 185 | 49.9% | 111 | 61.0% |
| Meaning | Meaningful life | 329 | 59.5% | 208 | 56.1% | 121 | 66.5% |
| | Value of action | 300 | 54.2% | 188 | 50.7% | 112 | 61.5% |
| | Direction in life | 295 | 53.3% | 178 | 48.0% | 117 | 64.3% |
| Accomplishment | Sense of responsibility | 338 | 61.1% | 212 | 57.1% | 126 | 69.2% |
| | Time to Achievement | 300 | 54.2% | 191 | 51.5% | 109 | 59.9% |
| | Frequency of Achievement | 294 | 53.2% | 182 | 49.1% | 112 | 61.5% |

Table 5.7 Comparison of mean difference of "Well-being"

| | Well-being | Chain | Independent | Mean difference | | Judgment |
|------------------|--------------------------|-------|-------------|-----------------|---------|----------|
| | | Mean | Mean | Difference | p-value | |
| Positive emotion | Satisfaction | 6.05 | 6.62 | 0.57 | 0.002 | ** |
| | Enjoyment | 5.97 | 6.44 | 0.47 | 0.008 | ** |
| | Positivity | 5.82 | 6.38 | 0.56 | 0.004 | ** |
| Engagement | Concentration | 6.13 | 6.77 | 0.64 | 0.000 | ** |
| | Engrossment | 5.97 | 6.33 | 0.36 | 0.039 | * |
| | Excitement | 5.93 | 6.31 | 0.38 | 0.036 | * |
| Relationship | Relationships | 5.83 | 6.47 | 0.64 | 0.001 | ** |
| | Sense of being loved | 5.86 | 6.53 | 0.67 | 0.000 | ** |
| | Acceptance of support | 5.60 | 5.97 | 0.37 | 0.037 | |
| Meaning | Meaningful life | 5.89 | 6.31 | 0.42 | 0.021 | * |
| | Value of action | 5.61 | 6.07 | 0.46 | 0.012 | * |
| | Direction in life | 5.65 | 6.31 | 0.67 | 0.000 | ** |
| Accomplishment | Sense of responsibility | 6.05 | 6.48 | 0.44 | 0.015 | * |
| | Time to Achievement | 5.53 | 5.97 | 0.44 | 0.017 | * |
| | Frequency of Achievement | 5.67 | 6.10 | 0.43 | 0.011 | * |

Bilateral verification * : P<0.05 ** : P<0.01

6. Conclusion

6.1. Role of town cafes

The purpose of this study is to reconsider the function of town cafes as "the Third place" from two perspectives: (1) Function as a "place for interaction among city dwellers" and (2) Function as a "a place for emotional support." The survey clarifies the utility of these two functions in terms of user's consciousness and mental states. The method was based on the analysis of an Internet questionnaire survey. It was found that for many Japanese users, cafes are used for their Third place as a "my place-type", to work or recover alone, and they tend to use Chain cafes. Those who use cafes as a traditional "Oldenburg-type " that is "place for socializing", were found to be particularly likely to choose Independent cafes and putting highly dependent feeling on them. This indicates that the existence of Independent cafes in the city plays a certain role for many people, both as a "place to socialize" and as a "place to feel at home".

6.2. Benefits of Cafes for Sense of Community Attachment and Quality of Life Promotion

The survey showed that Independent café users tend to be more highly attached to the community and satisfied with their daily lives than Chain café users, with particularly positive trends regarding their outlook on life among users of Independent cafes. This suggests that the presence of Independent cafes in the city contributes to the promotion of local relationships and fosters a sense of attachment to the community.

6.2 Benefits of Cafes for People's Mental Health

The results of the analysis showed that the indicators of well-being, which represent people's mental health, tended to be high for both type of café users, and higher for Independent café users than Chain on all the indicators. This suggests that the presence of cafes in the city, which people like to visit frequently as "the Third place" other than home and work, contributes to the well-being for city dwellers, especially for individual cafe users.

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Potential Factors Influence Failure of the Village-Owned Business, the Entity Village Autonomy of Indonesian Government's Program



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Abstract: This study investigates the variables that might impact the village-owned business (BUMDes) failure. A qualitative study explores the variables that might impact (BUMDes) Failure. Exploration of factors which has the potential to affect the Failure of BUM Villages are arranged based on a qualitative study by collecting data and information using interviews with characters BUM Desa management figures, key related to the management of the village-owned business (BUMDes) Village. This research was conducted in Central Java Province with a failed sample of BUMDes in 10 districts in Indonesia, namely Pekalongan, Tegal, Purbalingga, Banjarnegara, Banyumas, Brebes, Cilacap, Jepara, Demak, and Surakarta uses a qualitative approach. This research technique uses a purposive sampling technique. Data collection technique Observation method, interview method, and documentation method. The interview technique that has been conducted was a semi-structured interview, which means that the informants had been informed in advance. First, an overview of the questions to be asked. Using triangulation validation of the basic data comprehension, integrated related data, identified patterns, and produced thematic data. The findings of this study suggest that the following variables may have an impact on BUM Desa's Failure: (1) Pandemic-related government regulations, (2) flexible business models, (3) unprofessional governance in the village-owned business (BUMDes), and (4) the vision of the village-owned business (BUMDes) Not yet visionary, (5) Low Community Involvement, (6) Low Human Resource Capacity and Skills at the village-owned business (BUMDes), (7) Effective village leadership, (8) Agility-deficient village leaders' mindsets, (9) Precarious macroeconomic conditions, (10) Harmful externalities from government policies, and (11) Unfavorable village local political climate.

Keywords: Village-Owned, Failure, Development

Introduction: Villages basically have assets that can be utilized to maintain and accelerate economic recovery. Since the launch of the village fund, each village has been required to establish a business entity which is expected to be an economic driver so that the village has its own source of income to finance various activities. Village autonomy is a regional government policy given to village governments to further optimize their potential, so that they can maximize village income for development and community welfare. Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) were established pursuant to Article 23 of Law (UU) Number 32 of 2004 concerning Regional Government, which states that villages can establish village-owned enterprises according to village needs and potential. The 2022 Village Potential data shows that there are 60,911 BUMDes units spread across 58.28 percent of villages throughout Indonesia. The remaining 41.72 percent of villages do not yet have BUMDes. Even though the number of villages that already have BUMDes is relatively high, the government is faced with the problem that there are still many BUMDes that are not operating properly. Based on data from the 2021 Ministry of Village Village Investment Forum, thousands of village-owned enterprises (BUMDes) in Indonesia are inactive. It was recorded, out of 45 thousand BUMDes, 15 thousand of them were stalled. Of the 30 thousand active BUMDes, his party conducted random monitoring of 8 thousand BUMDes. As a result, 200 of them did not work, the rest had not contributed. In Indonesia there are 4000 BUMDes that are growing, however, 93 percent are in unfavorable condition. Even though the existence of BUMDes with its business units should be a solution to the economic problems faced by the agricultural sector in the village. Until 2022, the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration (Kemendesa PDTT), Abdul Halim Iskandar, said that the number of BUMDes in Indonesia has reached 57,273 BUMDes, of which 45,233 are active BUMDes and 12,040 are inactive BUMDes. Among those that are active, there are 15,768 BUMDes that have been affected by the pandemic to the point of closing their businesses (kontan.co.id, 2021). Of the many BUMDes, it is stated that some of them are really alive but many are in suspended animation, most of them are located outside the islands of Java and Sumatra. Research on the failure factors of BUM Desa has also been carried out, but the discussion is not that deep. This can be seen that only three factors can be uncovered, such as capital issues (Sutardi et al, 2017; Ni Wayan et al, 2017; Nugroho, 2020), low quality human resources (Candraningsih et al, 2018; Dewi et al, 2018; Nurjanah et al. al, 2020; Haerudin & Lina, 2021; Sukriani et al, 2018; Gunaya et all, 2017; Posi & Mahendra, 2021), and finally the limitations of using Accounting Information Technology and Systems (Leni & Musmini, 2020) so that deeper exploration is needed regarding the factors that led to the failure of BUM Desa. Therefore this study tries to fill in an exploratory study of the factors that cause BUMDesa failure.

Research Method: This exploratory research on the failure of BUM Desa was carried out in villages that already had BUMDes and engaged in public services to the community, ranging from savings and loans, tours, and other commercial services. The research philosophy used is interpretivism. This philosophy of interpretivism is based on the novelty of the phenomenon that will be examined in the object of research where this pandemic is an unexpected situation that puts heavy pressure on BUMDes that have just started their business services (Saunders et al., 2016). Furthermore, the approach used to support this research is inductive with the research methodology to be chosen is a mono-method qualitative study. The monomethod qualitative study approach is the use of a single data collection technique, namely qualitative, because the nature of the research is more exploratory (Saunders et al., 2016). This research is qualitative research that is exploratory in nature so that the variables studied will be determined through a literature review and initial interviews. Next, from these 2 activities, significant variables will be determined in causing a slowdown in the performance of existing BUM Desas. In general, if you refer to the literature discussing BUM Desas, several things that are of concern in determining the performance of BUM Desas are the governance of BUM Desas, the professionalism of BUM Desa managers, the commitment of village heads, and community participation. Data Processing and Analysis Techniques After the data has been collected, the team will conduct a thematic analysis to see patterns that occur starting from the results of data tracking through desk studies and in-depth interviews. The steps we will take are as follows:

- a. Transcribe interview data
- b. Perform data summarization and triangulation to check the validity and reliability of data
- c. Coding through a thematic analysis approach:
 - 1) Identify shared understanding of the available data (data comprehension)
 - 2) Perform integration of connected data (integrate related data)
 - 3) Identify key themes from existing patterns (identify key theme of patterns)
 - 4) Develop thematic descriptions of the data that have been integrated (produce thematic descriptions of the data)
 - 5) Develop theoretical frameworks for the compiled patterns (develop theories)
- d. Drawing conclusions
- e. Convey preliminary conclusions findings
- f. Compile reports according to output targets.

The validation will use triangulation. Triangulation will use support from secondary data such as government regulations as well as formal information published by the Ministry of Village, PDTT and other scientific articles. In addition, the triangulation process will also be carried out by submitting the results of a summary of the data to be informed back to the resource person to ensure that the transcription and conclusion of the information conveyed is as intended.

Research Instruments and Stages: The research instrument that will be the initial guide is a list of questions for the interviewees.

Table 1: Research Instruments

| No | Research Purposes | Research Questions | A list of questions |
|----|--|---|---|
| 1 | Identify factors that make BUMDesa performance not optimal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are the factors that influence the performance of BUM Desa so that it is not optimal? ● How these factors relate to each other? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Can you tell us about the decision-making process for choosing a business that will be run by a BUM Desa? |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| 2 | Find out how much influence politics has in influencing village welfare in the governance of BUM Desa | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the political elements that influence the governance of BUM Desa? • How does the village political atmosphere affect village welfare? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the distribution of power in village organizations? • How is decision making delegated in the village? • What is the role of the village head in the management of BUM Desa? |
| 3 | Knowing Good Governance and Management Professionalism of BUM Desa | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does BUM Desa have good organizational governance standards? • How does BUMDesa realize professionalism in operations (HR, etc.)? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does BUM Desa have AD/ART? • How is the implementation of AD ART? • What is the role of supervisory institutions? • What is the system for recruiting, managing and improving the performance of BUM Desa employees? |
| 4 | Identify citizen participation in realizing village welfare through BUM Desa operations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the role and involvement of community members in each BUM Desa Program? • How do the community members react to the performance of the BUM Desa? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you know there are BUM Desa? • How do you think the performance of BUM Desa? • Are you interested in participating in BUM Desa activities? |
| 5 | Identify the phenomenon of the tourist village as BUMDesa business model framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the things that make BUM Desa interested in implementing the tourism village concept? • How is the availability of village assets in accommodating the wishes of BUM Desa to become a tourist village? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the reason for this village to become a tourist village? • Are there other assets owned by the village that are not related to tourism? |

This description will produce findings that have the potential to cause the failure of BUM Desa performance. These findings will then be categorized in the next section. Then, after the findings have been categorized, the research team will develop a framework model of the findings which are thought to be the combination that caused the failure of BUM Desa.

| Regency | Number of BUMDES categories in 10 districts in Central Java | | | |
|--------------|---|------|---------|---------|
| | Base | Grow | Develop | Proceed |
| Banyumas | 26 | 85 | 19 | 5 |
| Purbalingga | 52 | 67 | 17 | 5 |
| Pekalongan | 71 | 66 | 3 | 3 |
| Tegal | 45 | 77 | 14 | 2 |
| Banjarnegara | 66 | 72 | 4 | 0 |
| Brebes | 50 | 95 | 13 | 0 |
| Cilacap | 30 | 100 | 5 | 2 |
| Jepara | 51 | 58 | 14 | 2 |
| Demak | 74 | 75 | 6 | 2 |
| Surakarta | 35 | 72 | 17 | 10 |
| Total | 500 | 767 | 112 | 31 |

Discussion Result: The analysis and discussion stages in Chapter 4 begin by providing a description of information regarding the current situation in each BUM Desa. This description will produce findings that have the potential to cause failure of the performance of BUM Desa. These findings will then be categorized in the next section. Then, after the findings have been categorized, the research team will develop a framework model of the findings which are suspected to be a combination in causing the failure of BUM Des.

Categorization of BUM Desa Failure Factors: Based on the identification of the current situation in each village visited, there are several categories of problems that can be classified. Classification that was successfully identified namely: Government Regulations Regarding the Pandemic •The PSBB and PPKM policies require that business units that invite large numbers of visitors must be temporarily closed.

Adaptabilitas Model Bisnis BUMDesa: •Not many BUMDesa business units have been initiated from business embryos. Many business units are decided without considering the village's asset potential.

•BUM Desa relies on priority revenue from the tourism business unit. Since the pandemic, with social restrictions in place, tourism business units have been unable to receive visits at all and have had no income at all. The additional business units available are also tourism support units such as providing food, parking, souvenirs, and the like, so they are also affected when tourism is closed.

•BUM Desa business units other than tourism have not been able to support BUM Desa revenues.

•Several BUM Desa business units are still not strong because they still need sustainable funding injections. This is related to the selection of business units that are not in accordance with village assets and village finances.

•The dependence of the BUM Desa business unit on the village's local consumption sector where local consumption capabilities are also limited due to the pandemic. BUMDesa governance that does not comply with statutory regulations.

•Legality of BUM Desa businesses and business units that have not yet been prepared but have launched their services.

•Accountability in the management of BUM Desa management.

•Accountability, especially integrity issues in BUM Desa's financial reporting.

•BUM Desa management is not ready to face change when there is a change in top management of the business unit.

•The village head's intervention in the management of BUM Desa in certain contexts can be justified, in order to upgrade BUMDesa to become more advanced and independent.

•The village head personally manages the BUM Desa business unit with his family.

•Family members of the village head intervene in BUM Desa decisions.

•Transparency and accountability for BUM Desa financial reports for businesses managed by the village head.

•The village head dares to take measurable risks but does not comply with the statutory provisions that should be related to BUM Desa.

•The BUM Desa management approach is dominated by family aspects rather than professionalism. The vision of BUMDesa that is not yet visionary.

•Pragmatic approach to focus on economic profit rather than social benefit. One way to do this is to hire operational employees from outside the village.

•Business management approach that prioritizes financial benefits. Low Community Participation

•Low community commitment in maintaining assets belonging to the BUM Desa business unit.

•Low community participation in taking part in activities carried out by BUM Desa.

•The sense of belonging from the community around the BUM Desa business unit is very low. Low Human Resource Capacity and Skills in BUM Desa.

•BUM Desa administrators do not have motivation because BUM Desa is unable to guarantee the continuity of its welfare.

•The capacity of the BUM Desa Director is inadequate due to age factors and previous work background.

•The Director of BUM Desa is considering a new profession outside the village.

•The focus of the Director of BUM Desa is divided on personal interests outside the BUM Desa.

- Local human resource capacity has not been able to keep up with local government expectations for adequate hospitality service standards.
- Old BUM Desa Management Human Resources.

The leadership:

- The leadership of the village head is not optimal.
- The Director of BUM Desa has no initiative because of the high dominance of the village head.
- The push and pull of the spirit of business between the elder team (village head) and the young team.
- The village head is too dominant in managing other things in the village.
- High degree of dependency on the Village Head. Mindset of the Village Head who is not agile
- The lack of initiative for ideas from the village head makes it easy to be pressured by other parties.
- The business idea initiatives available are not based on community desires and local asset ownership.
- The views of the BUM Desa director and the village head differ on the use of village funds.
- Initiatives and ideas from parties involved in managing BUM Desa are not optimal.
- The village head is less observant in finding and taking advantage of opportunities.
- Village heads have low networking skills so they are able to invite investors to invest and only hope for village assistance and funds. Unstable Macroeconomic Conditions
- BUM Desa businesses have been affected because business partners have been affected by the pandemic, such as delays in principal loan payments. Negative Externalities of Government Policy
- Pressure from government programs for the selection of BUM Desa business ideas makes the BUM Desa program unable to run optimally.
- There is no capital available to increase the scale of the prepared business units.
- Pressure in the allocation of business unit selection for BUM Desa. Village Local Political Atmosphere
- Challenges from political opponents who lost during the Pilkades hampered efforts to develop BUM Desa businesses.
- Director of Bumdes makes BUM Desa a political tool to become village head (Trojan horse).
- Business analysis is carried out only for momentary proof, not on the basis of sustainability, more towards utilization for other missions.

Modeling BUM Desa Failure: Based on the elaboration of the categorization of the failure factors of the BUM Desa, then a model is created that can describe the relationship and influence between categories or variables on the failure of the BUM Desa. The design for modeling the failure of BUM Desa is as follows.

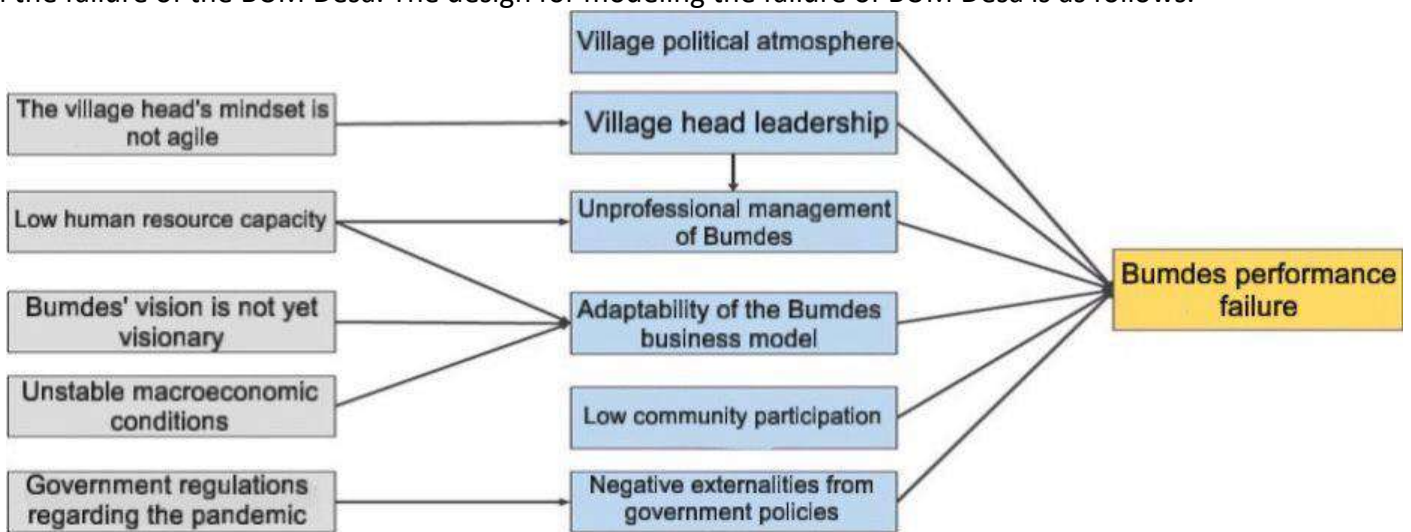


Figure 3: BUM Desa Failure Modeling

From this modeling, it can be illustrated that the failure of BUM Desa has the potential to be influenced by 11 factors that are interconnected and influence both directly and indirectly. These eleven factors include Government Regulations Regarding the Pandemic, Adaptability of the BUM Desa Business Model,

Unprofessional Governance of BUM Desa, Unvisionary Vision of BUM Desa, Low Community Participation, Low Capacity and Skills of Human Resources in BUM Desa, Village Head Leadership, The village head's mindset is not agile, macroeconomic conditions are not yet stable, negative externalities from government policies, and the local political atmosphere in the village are less conducive. The village head's leadership has the potential to be influenced by the mindset of the village head who is not agile. Unprofessional BUM Desa governance has the potential to be influenced by the leadership of the Village Head and the low capacity of the human resources managing the BUM Desa. Then the adaptability factor for the BUMDesa business model has the potential to be influenced by the low capacity of the human resources managing the BUM Desa, the vision of BUM Desa that is not yet visionary, and unstable macroeconomic conditions. If you look at the current conditions, negative externalities from Government policies have the potential to be influenced by Government regulations related to pandemics.

Conclusion: The main objective of this research is to explore the factors that have the potential to influence the failure of BUM Desa. Exploration of factors that have the potential to influence the failure of BUM Desa was prepared based on a qualitative study by collecting data and information using interviews with key figures related to the management of BUM Desa. The results of this research indicate that the factors that have the potential to influence the failure of BUM Desas are as follows:

- (1) Government Regulations Regarding the Pandemic,
- (2) Adaptability of the BUM Desa Business Model,
- (3) Unprofessional BUM Desa Management,
- (4) BUM Desa Vision who are not yet visionary,
- (5) Low community participation,
- (6) Low capacity and skills of human resources in BUM Desas,
- (7) Village head leadership,
- (8) Village head mindset that is not agile,
- (9) Poor macroeconomic conditions Unstable,
- (10) Negative Externalities from Government Policies, and
- (11) Local Village Political Atmosphere that is not conducive.

It is necessary to mitigate risks caused by the failure factors of the BUM Desa.

Accountability Policies and Organizational Factors on the Performance of Regional Apparatus

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Abstract: The quality of service to the community is an indicator of the success of an institution as a service organization. Current public service regulations are dispersed, and many regulations are sectoral in nature so that public services in each region in Indonesia need to be constantly evaluated. The research was conducted to examine how accountability policies and organizational factors affect the performance of regional apparatus in local government agencies. The research was conducted in four provinces in Indonesia in Java. Research using one hundred and seventeen respondents. Analysis using a structural equation model. The results of the study show the positive influence of accountability policies and organizational factors on the performance of regional apparatus. These results provide an indication that organizations must fully support device work to provide the best service.

Keywords: Accountability Policy, Organization, Regional Apparatus Performance, Service

I. Introduction: At present, agency services can be carried out optimally. Post-covid-19 conditions provide flexibility for agencies to provide services directly, not only from digital platforms. The post-covid-19 period in

2023 provides the flexibility to be closer to the community in terms of service. Government agencies which are also organizations, have performance that will be measured by how well they perform their services. The services provided by the organization reflect its performance. Factors that need to be taken into consideration to improve agency performance are the accountability policies implemented and organizational factors. Internal factors are strengths within the agency to be able to reflect how regional government officials are performing in each region. Previous research shows that the performance of government agencies through their infrastructure shows that several factors are involved, such as accountability policies and organizational factors, with one indicator being management's commitment to support and leadership. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to these factors.

II. Literature Review:

a. Public Service Performance: Giving its people and the broader public quality services is one of the government's most crucial responsibilities. Delivering public services to the public means that the government provides services to the public through its public entities and agencies. The act of delivering public activities or advantages, which might range from the delivery of tangible public commodities to the provision of intangible public services, is known as providing public service. This explains how performing public service refers to actions taken by government workers to create and carry out laws that serve the needs of their constituents. Recent studies from the literature suggested that the main causes of the subpar and poor public services performance included a lack of accountability, poor communication, corruption, and mismanagement. Despite several attempts at legislative reform, the issue of subpar service delivery performance has not significantly improved. In essence, the efficiency, efficacy, and fair accessibility and delivery to all members of the public in a specific constituency are what determine what defines good or poor public service performance.

b. Public Accountability: Despite several attempts at legislative reform, the issue of subpar service delivery performance has not significantly improved (Käyhkö, 2012). In essence, the efficiency, efficacy, and fair accessibility and delivery to all members of the public in a specific constituency are what determine what defines good or poor public service performance. Legitimacy, the social foundation for public governance, and the fact that "new public managers" are fundamentally public workers serve as a starting point for defining common responsibility. A moral conundrum has arisen as a result of the new circumstance, particularly in light of the fact that the distinctive nature of public administration is not always grasped in relation to the ultimate goals of public and private actions. For example, according to Bourgon (2010, 200), public results are the collective successes of all agents, whether they come from the public or private domains or civil society. Additionally, the transition from traditional public administration to performance-based public management has had a significant impact on the fundamental principles of organizational ethics (for example, Frederickson and Ghore, 2005). The fundamental shift in. The paradigm change in public management has resulted in, among other things, decentralized managerialism and an empowering of the population as a consumer through results agreements (Halachmi, 2011).

c. Organizational Factors: According to Halachmi (2011), organizational performance refers to an organization's actual output or results as compared to its expected outputs (or aims and objectives). Richard claims that three particular elements of business results are included in organizational performance: Shareholder return (total shareholder return, economic value contributed), Product market performance (sales, market share), and Financial performance (profits, return on assets, return on investment). Experts in a variety of areas interested in organizational performance, including strategic planners, operations managers, financial managers, legal advisors, and entrepreneurs (owners) organization's). Organizations vary in the relative influence of a number of factors in relation to their organizational goals and the tools and strategies chosen to achieve them. These factors determine the structure, goals and activities of the organization, which can be grouped into external factors, that factors from the favourable environment are not within the control of the organization but affect the structure and development of the organization. They were Economic factors, Socioeconomic factors, compared to Political - administrative factors; and internal factors that organizational features, including purpose of the organization, organization tool, personal selection factors. In the organizational literature,

accountability or being accountable, is conceptualized both as a mechanism and as a virtue. They further suggest that to understand organizational accountability, it is necessary to investigate the assumptions underlying accountability such as the origin of the organizational understanding regarding what is appropriate behaviour, the effect of a change of mutual expectations, the role of internal and external audiences, and the presence of organizational social and normative pressures (Mir, 2020). Accountability, which is used in a wide variety of fields, contexts and disciplines as fulfilling a formal obligation to a person in authority (Çayak, 2023). Accountability, in the simplest terms, is a process for holding individuals and organizations responsible for performance (Huisin, 2021). Organizational performance is multidimensional, connected to its goals and objectives, and may be defined as an organization's ability to use its resources efficiently, and to produce outputs that are consistent with its objectives and relevant for its users. Earlier studies have considered financial and non-financial performance to be elements of organizational performance. The performance here means the outcome and the number of workforce. Further, it can be the outcome accomplished by a person, team, organization, or process (Mahfouz, 2019). Departments in the company such as marketing, operations, human resources, and strategy will be judged according to their contribution to organization's performance (Lee, 2022). The research hypothesis is presented as follows: H1: Accountability policy has positive effect to Performance H2: External factor of organizational has positive effect to performance.

III. Research Method: This research is quantitative research. Data was collected through questionnaires which were distributed to government agencies as many as one hundred and seventeen respondents. The research time is semester one in 2023. The variables used in the research are accountability policies and organizational factors as independent variables, and performance as the dependent variable. This research uses structural equation model analysis.

IV. Result and Discussion: One hundred and seventeen respondents were given questionnaires to complete as part of the investigation. The respondent profile's findings are as follows.

Table 1: Respondent Gender Profile

| Gender | Total | Percentage |
|--------|-------|------------|
| Male | 45 | 38% |
| Female | 72 | 62% |
| Total | 117 | 100% |

Table 2: Respondent Age Profile

| Age | Total | Percentage |
|-------|-------|------------|
| 20-30 | 20 | 17% |
| 31-40 | 39 | 34% |
| 41-50 | 34 | 29% |
| > 50 | 24 | 20% |
| Total | 117 | 100% |

The research results are presented as follows:

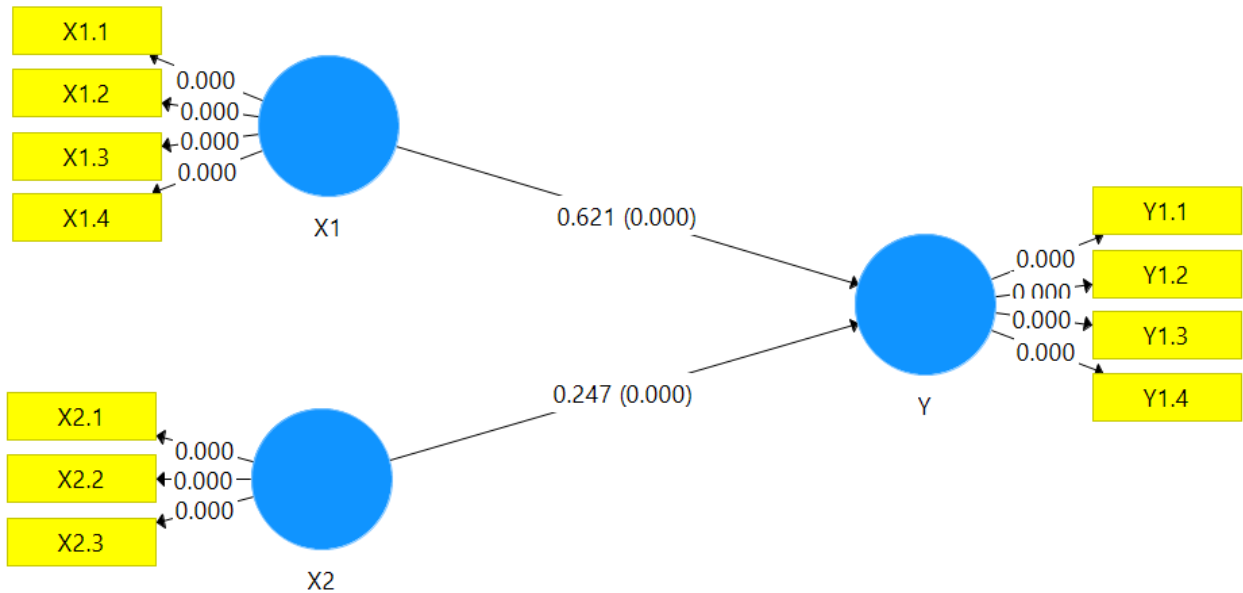


Figure 1: SEM Model

Table 1: Outer Loadings

| | X1 | X2 | Y |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| X1.1 | 0.828 | | |
| X1.2 | 0.870 | | |
| X1.3 | 0.886 | | |
| X1.4 | 0.839 | | |
| X2.1 | | 0.844 | |
| X2.2 | | 0.836 | |
| X2.3 | | 0.914 | |
| Y1.1 | | | 0.877 |
| Y1.2 | | | 0.850 |
| Y1.3 | | | 0.896 |
| Y1.4 | | | 0.788 |

Every indicator in the external loading possesses values greater than 0.708. When each outer loadings surpasses the specified threshold, it indicates that the construct clarifies more than 50% of the variability in the indicator, implying that the item's reliability is acceptable (Sarstedt et al., 2021).

Table 2: Construct Reliability and Validity

| | Cronbach's Alpha | Composite Reliability | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) |
|-----------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| X1 | 0.878 | 0.916 | 0.733 |
| X2 | 0.835 | 0.899 | 0.749 |
| Y | 0.875 | 0.915 | 0.729 |

The variables exhibited Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.835 to 0.878, all surpassing the 0.70 threshold. This indicates a robust level of internal consistency for the constructs, which aligns with the suggestion made by Sarstedt et al. (2021). As proposed by Hair et al. (2021), greater composite reliability values correspond to enhanced reliability. Within this study, all variables illustrated composite reliability values exceeding 0.70, ranging from 0.899 to 0.916, signifying a substantial level of reliability. To evaluate both convergent and discriminant validity, the study employed the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) metric. The AVE values for all variables in the investigation fell within the range of 0.729 to 0.749, exceeding the prescribed minimum threshold of 0.5 for establishing convergent validity, as recommended by Sarstedt et al. (2021). The AVE quantifies the dispersion of variance between a construct and its indicators, an important aspect of establishing

convergent validity.

Table 3: Path Coefficients

| | Original Sample (O) | Sample Mean (M) | Standard Deviation (STDEV) | T Statistics (O/STDEV) | P Values |
|-------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| X 1 -> Y | 0.621 | 0.624 | 0.063 | 9.815 | 0.000 |
| X 2 -> Y | 0.247 | 0.250 | 0.069 | 3.569 | 0.000 |

Table 4: R Square

| | R Square | R Square Adjusted |
|---|----------|-------------------|
| Y | 0.631 | 0.625 |

Demonstrated in Table 3, it is evident that X1 exerts a positive and significant effect on Y, as denoted by the X1 to Y P-values being less than the significance level of 0.05. Similarly, X2 exhibits a positive and significant effect on Y, with P values less than the 0.05 significance level. As Miles (2014) explains, the Adjusted R Square value signifies the fraction of variability in the dependent variable attributable to the independent variables across the entire population. In the context of this research, X1's adjusted R Square value is 0.625. This result implies that X1 and X2 collectively account for roughly 62.5% of the observed variance within the population.

Table 5: F Square

| | X1 | X2 | Y |
|----|----|----|-------|
| X1 | | | 0.664 |
| X2 | | | 0.105 |
| Y | | | |

Cohen (1988) classified effect size of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 as representing small, medium, and large, correspondingly, for exogenous latent variables. Within this study, X1 demonstrates an effect size of 0.664, indicating a large effect on Y. On the other hand, X2 displays an effect size of 0.105, suggesting a small to medium effect on Y. This research result shows that the H1 and H2 are accepted. Both the accountability policies and also external organizational factors reflected by external factor are accepted. Here means that the apparatuses needs the support from organizational to keep their performance high. It is necessary to investigate the assumptions underlying accountability such as the origin of the organizational understanding regarding what is appropriate behaviour, the effect of a change of mutual expectations, the role of internal and external audiences, and the presence of organizational social and normative pressures (Mir, 2020). In the organizational literature, accountability suggest that to understand organizational accountability. Accountability, which is used in a wide variety of fields, contexts and disciplines as fulfilling a formal obligation to a person in authority needs to be fulfilled. So many factors affect the performance and support of organization is a must. Performance is multidimensional, connected to its goals and objectives, and may be defined as an organization's ability to use its resources efficiently. The result supported the previous research (Lee, 2022).

V. Conclusion: Research contributes to improving the performance of regional apparatus requiring rules and policies that can be implemented. Support from the organization is also important considering that working conditions will greatly influence service performance.

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Determining Business Intelligence Adoption Stages Using the T-O-E Framework for Apparel SMMEs in Durban, South Africa



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Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to provide a better understanding of the determinants of business intelligence (BI) adoption stages. It develops and empirically tests a conceptual model for assessing the determinants of BI diffusion of innovation stages namely, evaluation, adoption, and usage in the context of small, micro, and medium enterprises (SMMEs). Drawing on data from 161 SMMEs the influence of technological, organizational, and environmental factors on BIS adoption stages were analyzed using the PLS-SEM method. The paper provides empirical insights about how technological, organizational, and environmental

factors affect individual BI adoption stages. The paper includes implications for managers and solution providers to understand the influence of various determinants to more effectively conclude the adoption process. The findings from this study were that none of the three adoption stages namely evaluation, adoption and usage are significant for the apparel SMME sector in Durban. Which indicated that there is no conclusive evidence that BI is being evaluated, adopted or used by respondents. The recommendations for future research would be to investigate if SMMEs really need BI for the sustainability of their businesses. A recommended objective for this study would be to identify the success measures of SMMEs utilising BI in comparison to SMMEs who have not implemented BI.

Keywords: Business Intelligence, Diffusion of Innovation, SMMEs, Technological-Organizational, Environmental (T-O-E) Framework

1. Introduction The primary aim of Business Intelligence (BI) is to equip business managers and analysts with the essential tools and resources required to proficiently carry out comprehensive business analysis. (Passlick et al., 2023). Moreover, smaller enterprises frequently encounter difficulties in effectively employing business intelligence (BI) as a result of their restricted technical proficiency in converting data into actionable insights to facilitate informed decision-making in business activities. Choi et al. (2022) argue that the adoption of Business Intelligence (BI) is imperative for businesses of various scales, as it facilitates improved decision-making by enabling the acquisition of comprehensive information.

Business Intelligence (BI) plays a crucial role in improving business performance, increasing profitability, and achieving a sustainable competitive advantage, while also prioritising customer satisfaction.

SMMEs commonly encounter difficulties in attaining a sustainable competitive advantage, alongside a range of constraining elements, as highlighted by Mkhize (2022). One plausible resolution for smaller enterprises involves the emergence of pioneering technologies specifically designed to facilitate and augment business operations, thereby bolstering their competitiveness. The correlation between the level of effectiveness demonstrated by an innovation, such as Business Intelligence (BI), and the likelihood of effectively addressing challenges within businesses is positively correlated. As a result, this enhances the probability of the implementation of these innovations. The objectives of this study are to:

1. Determine the factors influencing the evaluation of BI by apparel SMME's in Durban, South Africa.
2. Determine the factors influencing the adoption of BI by apparel SMME's in Durban, South Africa.
3. Determine the factors influencing the usage of BI by apparel SMME's in Durban, South Africa.

For this reason, the investigation into the adoption of innovative technologies, specifically Business Intelligence (BI) systems, was initiated in response to inquiries regarding the generalizability of the findings obtained from the study conducted by Msomi et al. (2020). The researchers exhibited a specific interest in the potential of these innovations to exert a positive influence on the sustainability of small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs).

Furthermore, Llave et al (2018) put forth a research study aimed at investigating the readiness and competencies of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) within the discipline of business intelligence (BI). Becerra-Godínez et al (2020) highlighted the lack of a conclusive approach for the integration of business intelligence (BI) in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as a considerable proportion of enterprises within this sector have yet to leverage these advanced technologies. Currently, there is a dearth of academic research concerning the subject of business intelligence (BI) and analytics in the specific context of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) (Llave, et al., 2018).

However, there is a significant lack of scholarly research regarding the adoption and utilisation of business intelligence (BI) tools in small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) that operate within the apparel industry. As a result, there has been a subsequent inquiry into the implementation of business intelligence (BI) tools within small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) operating in the apparel retail sector.

Kikawa, Kalema, and Carol (2019) argue that the South African government's emphasis on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) stems from their capacity to create employment opportunities, a crucial consideration given the nation's high levels of unemployment. The utilisation of Business Intelligence (BI) tools is crucial for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to function at their maximum efficiency. The classification of business

intelligence (BI) tools is determined by their methodology of delivering information, their capability to generate reports, and their capacity for statistical, ad-hoc, or predictive analysis. In addition, the process of selecting a suitable Business Intelligence (BI) tool capable of integrating various disparate business and financial systems is a viable endeavour, as it enables the provision of a cohesive view of the organization's overall performance.

Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) are crucial catalysts for the economy, assuming a critical function in stimulating innovation and advancing the creation of novel items and socio-economic progress (Kikawa, Kalema, and Carol, 2019). According to Bordeleau et al. (2020), it is argued that there is a notable need to enhance the expansion, dissemination of knowledge, and competitiveness of small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs). According to Ain et al. (2019), there has been a historical focus on business intelligence solutions and technologies that were primarily intended for large organisations. As a result, these solutions were not accessible or suitable for small, medium, and micro-sized enterprises (SMMEs).

This article is structured as follows: after the introduction, there will be a concise overview of the literature pertaining to the technology organisation-environment (TOE) framework in relation to the various stages of Business intelligence adoption. The subsequent section will encompass the research methodology, which will encompass a comprehensive analysis of the results and conclusions. Additionally, this section will also address the limits of the study and provide recommendations for future research endeavours.

2. Literature Review

The SMME sector necessitates a continual enhancement in management efficiency as a result of the increasing cost pressures. In order to fulfil these requirements, it is imperative to employ a diverse range of tactics, methodologies, and apparatus. The implementation of business analysis tools, such as Business Intelligence (BI), is a viable approach in the field (Rikhardsson & Yigitbasioglu, 2018).

Therefore, comprehension of the elements that influence the adoption and user acceptance of Business Intelligence (BI) has been a subject of interest for both researchers and practitioners in many organisations, regardless of their size. In this regard, two prominent theoretical foundations have been identified and utilised by scholars and professionals alike (Puklavec, Oliveira, & Popovič, 2018). The diffusion of innovation (DOI) theory and the technology-organisation-environment (TOE) paradigm are recognised concepts in the field. The DOI theory and TOE framework are commonly employed as foundational theoretical frameworks in a range of organisational inquiries and theories (Nguyen & Vu, 2022).

Previous research has examined the adoption of e-commerce from the standpoint of organisations. The study conducted by Putra et al. (2020) revealed that various factors related to technology, organisation, and the environment significantly contribute to the adoption of e-business among enterprises in Indonesia. These factors include perceived benefits, compatibility, trialability, complexity, and observability in relation to technology; financial resource, innovativeness, and management support in relation to organisation; and competitive pressure, government support, and vendor support in relation to the environment. According to Dahbi et al. (2019), the adoption of e-commerce is driven by various factors, including technological, financial, cultural, and organisational settings. Among these factors, the technological context is identified as the most significant influencer. The existing body of literature has devoted considerable emphasis to the technological, organisational, and environmental factors as the primary drivers of e-commerce adoption within the business sector.

Cho et al., (2022) assert that various well-known models are employed to elucidate the process of innovation adoption within the business context. These models include the technology acceptance model (TAM), diffusion of innovation (DOI) (Hiran, 2020), and the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) (Saliman et al., 2021). Moreover, the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework, as suggested by Tornatzky et al. (1990), has garnered substantial empirical support across several studies in elucidating the factors influencing the adoption of diverse technologies inside organisations (Maroufkhani et al., 2022). The validity of this concept is rooted in a comprehensive framework for adopting innovation in a flexible manner, considering significant factors such as technology, organisation, and the environment.

2.1. Theoretical Background

2.1.1. The DOI Framework

The theory of Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) characterises the process through which an innovation is gradually disseminated throughout a social system. The adoption of an innovation is regarded as an integral element within the broader process of dissemination. The DOI hypothesis considers various factors, such as the psychological and personal traits of potential adopters, as well as their perceptions of technology, in order to analyse the process of diffusion or adoption (Tabim, et al., (2021). According to Schiffman and Wisenblit (2019), the diffusion of innovations is a macro-level phenomenon characterised by the gradual acceptance of an innovation within a social system. This innovation can take the form of a new product, service, idea, or practise. The DOI theory conventionally has five distinct steps, including knowledge, evaluation (sometimes referred to as the persuasion stage), adoption (often known as the decision stage), usage (also referred to as the implementation stage), and confirmation. Nevertheless, studies on innovation diffusion often focus on three key stages: evaluation (persuasion stage), adoption (decision stage), and use (implementation step) (Tabim et al., 2021). The evaluation stage might be characterised as the persuading phase before to adoption. The process of integrating the innovation commences with the business doing an evaluation of the innovation. This phase centres on the identification and prioritisation of the demands and challenges that the business encounters. In this particular case, the assessment would involve determining the potential of a business intelligence tool to provide assistance (Puklavec, Oliveira, and Popovič 2018).

During the adoption phase, a determination is made regarding the potential of the innovation (in this instance, Business Intelligence) to address the challenges encountered by a business. In essence, the adoption of corporate Intelligence (BI) entails the deliberate decision to utilise BI tools and strategies with the aim of enhancing corporate performance. The decision to implement business intelligence (BI) has been observed to generate significant differences between organisations that use BI and those that do not, particularly in relation to their internal resources and external environments. The adoption phase is considered a crucial milestone in achieving widespread utilisation of technology (Hameed, Counsell, & Swift, 2012; Puklavec, Oliveria, & Popovic, 2018). The usage stage refers to the act of accepting, adapting to, and employing the innovation within the organisation (Zhu, Kraemer, & Xu, 2006). This implies that within the DOI theory, adoption and usage are considered as separate and distinguishable phases. In this scenario, Business Intelligence (BI) would be widely employed as a fundamental component of the organization's operational efficacy. This phase is centred on activities related to the adaptation and preparation of the organisation for the extensive implementation of the innovation. Moreover, it conducts a trial in order to validate and showcase the adoption of an innovation by an organisation and its staff (Rogers, 1995; Hameed, Counsell, & Swift, 2012).

Tabin et al. (2021) argue that the innovation-decision process model exhibits limitations due to its exclusive focus on the technological components, neglecting other relevant factors. Hence, it is recommended to employ a combination of the D-O-I model and the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of vertical integration.

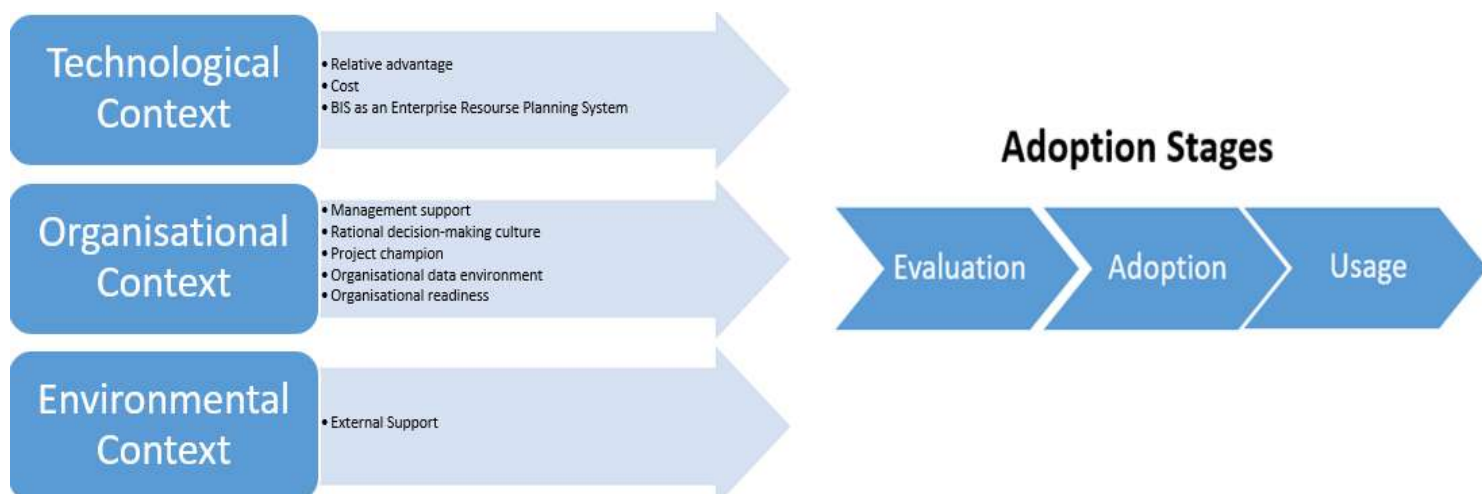
2.1.2. TOE Framework

The TOE framework was originally introduced by Tornatzky et al. (1990) as a comprehensive model for understanding the behavioural goals and implementation of innovation within organisations. The primary advantage of this behaviour model lies in its ability to consider the influence of various factors, both internal and external, on the decision-making process of adopting new practises. Specifically, this model takes into account three distinct contextual groups: technology, organisation, and environment. The technical context encompasses both established technologies currently employed by firms and emerging technologies that hold relevance for these firms. The organisational context pertains to the attributes of a firm, such as its scope, size, and resources. On the other hand, the environmental context encompasses the domain in which enterprises operate, encompassing factors such as industry, competitors, and government (Tornatzky et al., 1990).Tajudeen et al. (2018) employed the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework to examine the influence of various factors on social media usage. Specifically, they investigated how technology-related factors (such as relative advantage and compatibility), organisational factors (including top management support and entrepreneurial orientation), and environmental factors (such as institutional pressure) affect the utilisation of social media for the purpose of understanding customer needs and enhancing organisational communication

and public relations. The findings of their research indicated that these factors have a significant impact on social media usage in the aforementioned contexts. El-Haddadeh et al. (2021) conducted a study in which they developed a model based on the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework. This model was specifically designed to effectively elucidate the adoption of big data analytics and the subsequent generation of value in relation to the achievement of sustainable development goals inside enterprises operating in the United Kingdom. The findings of their research revealed that various factors, namely technology (specifically the perceived benefits and complexity of the technology), organisation (including organisational readiness and the capability of the information technology infrastructure), and environment (such as government policy, regulation, and competitive pressure), have a significant influence on top management support, adoption, and the creation of value. In a recent study conducted by Khan et al. (2021), the authors examined the behaviours of firms in relation to the adoption and usage of mobile payment systems. They utilised the extended Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework to investigate the factors that influence firms' behavioural intentions and actual usage. The study found that relative advantages, compatibility, top management support, and competitive pressure were identified as facilitators of behavioural intention and actual use among firms in both China and Pakistan. Similarly, the study conducted by Mahakittikun et al. (2021) aimed to construct a research framework that examines the relationship between company performance and mobile payments within the context of Thai firms, with a particular focus on the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework. The findings of their study demonstrated the significant importance of relative advantage, innovativeness, mobile payment knowledge, critical mass, competitive pressure, and external support in facilitating cost reduction, sales growth, operational development, and improvement of customer relationships. Consistent with the organization's inclination towards embracing innovative practises, previous research endeavours have provided a comprehensive comprehension of the utilisation of e-business through the use of the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework. In a study conducted by Chatzoglou and Chatzoudes (2016), it was shown that the adoption of e-business is driven by antecedents based on the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework. These antecedents include factors such as information technology infrastructure, internet skill, firm size, and government backing.

2.2. Conceptual Framework and Empirical Review

According to Puklavec, Oliveira, and Popovič (2018), there is a lack of comprehensive research on the aspects and processes related to the adoption of business intelligence (BI) in small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs). The existing body of research on business intelligence (BI) adoption has primarily focused on large-sized companies. This research aims to identify organisational variables specific to small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) that may impact the development and implementation of a framework for BI adoption in this context. The existing body of literature appears to provide substantial evidence in favour of adopting the Theory of Everything (TOE) framework, which builds upon and extends the assertions put out by the Theory of Initialism (DOI). Therefore, it is advisable to conduct additional research on the topic of innovation adoption using the TOE theory as a theoretical framework. Figure 2 depicts the comprehensive set of elements that necessitate consideration within each of the three settings outlined in the TOE framework. These criteria have been generated from a study conducted by Puklavec Oliveira, and Popovič (2018).



(Source: Mavutha et al., 2023)

2.2.1. Technological Factors

The Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) hypothesis posits that the adoption of technology is influenced by several factors. These factors include compatibility, relative advantage, observability, trialability, and. In addition, the adoption of technology is facilitated by the possession of information technology skills and financial resources. Puklavec, Oliveira, and Popovič (2014) utilised the constructs of cost, relative advantage, and business intelligence system (BIS) within the context of enterprise resource planning (ERP) to investigate the adoption of business intelligence (BI) by small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) and its subsequent influence on company performance. The primary benefit of a technology such as Business Intelligence (BI) is in its ability to enhance operational efficiency. According to previous studies on information systems (IS) adoption, the relative benefit of business intelligence (BI) has been identified as a significant predictor (Thomas and Espadanal 2014; Tsai, Lee and Wu 2010; Premkumar and Roberts, 1999; Oliveira, and Thong, 1999 as quoted in Puklavec, Oliveira, and Popovič 2018). The favourable perceptions on the advantages of business intelligence (BI) have a direct impact on the level of software adoption inside small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs). In light of the requirement for business owners/managers to ascertain the benefits of business intelligence (BI) prior to contemplating its implementation, it is imperative that any favourable impact on BI adoption in this context be duly acknowledged during the evaluation phase. Nevertheless, the theory posited by Puklavec, Oliveira, and Popovič (2018) was refuted in their study, which examined the relationship between relative advantage and BIS adoption during the adoption phases.

The adoption of Business Intelligence Systems (BIS) continues to face significant obstacles, with cost being a prominent barrier (Hameed et al., 2012). In order to make informed decisions, organisations must carefully consider the costs and benefits associated with implementing BIS (Puklavec, Oliveira, and Popovič, 2014). This entails evaluating the long-term advantages of their BI investment in relation to the immediate expenses incurred (Chong and Chan, 2012). Puklavec, Oliveira, and Popovič (2018) conducted an observation and found that their understanding of the factors influencing the stages of Business Intelligence (BI) system adoption for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) contradicts the notion that cost serves as a predictor for BIS adoption. Although the researchers initially hypothesised a positive correlation between cost and all stages of adoption, their findings indicate that cost does not have a statistically significant impact on explaining BI assessments and usage. However, it does have a substantial negative relationship with adoption.

2.2.2. Organisational Factors

In this sense, management support means top managers encourage advanced technical innovation. BIS adoption is positively connected with managerial support. Senior management in SMMEs often makes choices, therefore BIS adoption should have their full backing. Further research suggests that management support may be a key element in BI adoption because it provides valuable resources for the new innovation (Premkumar and Roberts, 1999; Hwang et al. 2004; Ramamurthy et al. 2008; Tsai, Lee and Wu 2010). Prior research has shown that managers serve as change operators during innovation adoption in SMMEs, supporting the premise that management support is crucial (Ifinedo 2011). BIs are unlikely to be adopted if management is not convinced. Chan and Chong (2012) note that management support may be crucial in all three BI implementation stages. According to Puklavec, Oliveira, and Popovič (2014), management support positively affects BIS appraisal, implementation, and use. Puklavec, Oliveira, and Popovič (2014) found that management assistance positively impacts appraisal and utilisation in SMEs. No significant association was discovered with adoption.

A rational decision-making culture values monitoring, evaluating, and assessing quantitative data across the firm. This culture encourages data and information utilisation for work processes and analysis (Kulkarni, Robles-Flores, and Popovič 2017). Previous research found that company culture accelerates BIS adoption (Gu, Cao and Duan 2012). Popovic et al. (2012) found that fact-based decision-making culture affects BIS use, while Frambach and Schillewaert (2002) found that SMMES become aware of technological innovations and develop an evaluation strategy during the adoption process. Puklavec Oliveira and Popovič (2018) predicted that a culture of logical decision-making in businesses benefits the evaluation stage. But rational decision-making culture has a

negative and significant link with evaluation, but not with adoption and use. The company's data environment is also important. Puklavec, Oliveira, and Popovič (2018) define an organization's data environment as its access to information about data quality, availability, and loading for BIS input. Organisational data environments require data resource management to reduce costs, expand access to previously inaccessible data, analyse and distribute information through IT applications. Poorly managed data environments affect accessibility, quality, integrity, security, and information standards. A poorly managed data environment could cause problems when implementing BIS (Popovic et al. 2012). BIS relies significantly on data integration. Puklavec, Oliveira, and Popovič (2018) state that using the organisational data environment is beneficial, but evaluation and adoption are not. Organisational readiness may be a key factor in determining the BI adoption behaviour of SMMEs, not just during the adoption stage but also during the assessment stage (Ifinedo 2011; Grandon and Pearson 2004; Quaddus and Hofmeyer 2007). This is due to better prepared SMMEs being less threatened by the BIS. Furthermore, within the implementation stage, businesses that can afford more advanced BIS are more likely to experience greater benefits from use of BI (Puklavec Oliveira, and Popovič 2014).

2.2.3. Environmental Factors

External assistance is essential for environmental BI adoption. Adoption and usage of technical innovation require external help. Quaddus and Hofmeyer 2007; Premkumar and Roberts 1999. If a vendor or third-party can help businesses prepare for the risks of implementing new technologies, outsourcing and third-party support have a big impact on BI adoption. As more SMMEs use BI, they gain greater external support. The absence of internal IT expertise in SMMEs hinders the implementation of sophisticated BI. External support supports BI acceptance, implementation, and use. Puklavec Oliveira and Popovič (2018) found that none of the three phases of adoption related to external help are relevant for the environment.

The customer demand, competitive, and regulatory environments affect SMMEs' BI adoption. The regulatory environment affects an organization's technology adoption (Al Bar and Hoque 2015). The swift rate of technological advancement engenders novel contenders, markets, commodities, and corporate tactics over an expanded network. The rapid advancement of technology engenders unpredictability and intense competition for businesses. The dynamic nature of consumer preferences, market demands, pricing strategies, and supply chain management presents both advantageous prospects and challenges. The potential for flexibility, cost-effective networking, financial savings, and rapid communication is attainable. The challenges of information security and business order loss have been identified by Ali, Miah, and Khan (2017).

External factors—environmental contexts—influence company BI adoption. These include customers, competition, market structure, industry traits, and government rules (Hatta et al. 2015). Strong rivalry can force a company to pursue novel business tactics, yet copying other companies' strategies may cause it to eventually adapt and resemble others. Each organisation must have a unique competitive edge (Ifinedo 2011). Customers in the environmental setting indicate the firm's desire to improve customer services with BI and clients' desire to adopt BI (Boonsiritomachai, McGrath and Burgess 2016). Environmental factors including market and industry characteristics affect technology adoption. These causes include market complexity needs and industry organisation activities to declare innovative standards and promote acceptance. Competitive pressure and market trend expectations may force organisations to implement innovations (Chong et al. 2009).

Business partners may influence innovation adoption because new technology improves their interactions and transactions (Ifinedo 2011). BI adoption also faces rational trust, the notion that one organisation will not exploit another's flaws. Legal constraints may also impact adoption due to environmental factors (Puklavec, Oliveira, and Popovič 2014). Without restrictions, organisations are subject to fraud and hacks, which can delay technology adoption. Government support, defined as "help offered by the authority to foster the development of BI technologies in firms," also affects this industry (Ifinedo 2011). If SMMEs have vendor or outside support for the innovation, they are more likely to try it. Vendor and government support predict BI adoption most (Basole, Seuss and Rouse 2013).

3. Research Methodology

The methodology was established to achieve several goals and subgoals. The study sought to explore how

micro-small apparel businesses in the wider eThekweni region implement BI.

3.1. Research Design

This research used a quantitative cross-sectional design to analyse population data at a certain time. Simkus (2021) notes that analytical cross-sectional studies examine two parameters' associations. Dos Santos et al. (2021) note that quantitative business research is most common. Quantitative approaches offer numerical data for statistical analysis of trends. Descriptive cross-sectional studies characterise and analyse the prevalence and distribution of one or more outcomes in a population. This quantitative cross-sectional study examined a population at a specific moment. This study used descriptive and analytical cross-sectional designs. Analytical cross-sectional studies examine the relationship between two variables to characterise and evaluate the frequency and distribution of one or more outcomes in a specific population. Descriptive cross-sectional studies measure a trait's prevalence, extent, or severity across a demographic (Simkus 2021). A cross-sectional study is chosen because it is cheaper and faster than other types of research. Surveys can reveal population features and suggest relationships (Thomas, 2021).

3.2. Population and Sampling

The eThekweni Micro Enterprise Support established the Informal Economy Support Programme (IESP), a first for South Africa, hence the researcher chose the region as the population sample. This is a specific business support project that helps micro and informal enterprises (MIEs) grow and create jobs in innovative and cost-effective ways. Although the informal sector is crucial to joblessness and economic growth, MIEs have received little support until recently, making the IESP strategically significant.

This study used non-probability sampling. Dos Santos et al. (2021) list six non-probability sampling types: quota, purposive, convenience, theoretical, opportunistic, and snowball. This study used purposeful sampling from these numerous methods. McCombes (2019) defines purposeful sampling as judgmental sampling in which the researcher uses their experience to identify a sample that will best serve their study goals.

Purposive sampling aims to strategically sample cases/participants to answer research questions, according to Aardt et al. (2021). The researcher can make sure the sample has enough variation in essential traits (Aardt et al. 2021). For this study, the researcher visited firms in several market segments to gather data on attributes. The companies visited varied from high-end La Lucia to low-income Umlazi. The starting sample for this study was 200 apparel businesses registered at the KZNFC in 2019. Overall, 132 apparel companies were interviewed.

3.3. Data Collection and Data Analysis

A Likert scale questionnaire survey was used to obtain data from participants in a cross-sectional study.

(1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) somewhat disagree, (4) slightly agree, (5) agree, and (6) strongly agree. The researcher visited several micro-small garment business owners in eThekweni to collect data. We conducted a pilot study to ensure content and face validity. Many colleagues and associates were invited to read the questionnaire. Research specialists and academicians were among these. After making a few changes, the researcher submitted the questionnaire to several possible responders to assess for understanding, ambiguities, and completion time.

This quantitative study used descriptive and inferential statistics. Data was analysed and presented using frequency and cross tabulations. This section describes how the data was prepared and the numerous tests used to assess it. Data analysis was done with SPSS 13.0. The study used numerous tests to reach its goals. Results were shown in tables and charts.

3.4. Validity

The researcher employed an exploratory factor analysis to assess the constructs of the questionnaire and determine the extent to which each item contributes to the key constructs. The scale components for this study were chosen based on their previous effectiveness in assessing the research concept, in order to establish face validity. The concept of face validity pertains to the assessment of the clarity and comprehensibility of a given question. A preliminary inquiry was conducted to explore the aforementioned items. The researcher sought validation from other specialists in order to ascertain the accuracy of the questionnaire.

3.5. Reliability

Cronbach's alpha assessed composite measure reliability. Any Cronbach's alpha coefficient below 0.6 indicates poor internal consistency and reliability. Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019) recommend values above 0.7 to suggest internal consistency in group statements. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sample adequacy test was reliability tested. This test determines if the sample fits the model and each variable. Lower fractions make factor analysis easier. KMO returns 0–1.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

Durban University of Technology (DUT) ethics committee approved this investigation. Participants received a letter requesting permission to perform the study in their workplace, a letter of information, and a consent letter at the start of the survey. Every participant was given a defined research purpose. The topic may not be controversial, but participants were given anonymity and confidentiality.

4. Data Analysis and Findings

4.1. Exploratory Factor Analysis – Dependent Variables

To obtain unified composite measures for both dependent variables, a component analysis with promax rotation was utilised to identify clusters of items within each construct. Composite measures were derived by computing the mean of the agreement scores for the elements comprising the composite factor.

The reliability of the composite measure was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The coefficient for Cronbach's alpha ranges from 0 to 1, and any number below 0.6 is generally seen as indicating inadequate internal consistency or reliability. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019), values exceeding 0.7 can be considered indicative of internal consistency among statements within a group. The results for the three dependent constructs in this study (evaluation, adoption and usage) are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of the exploratory factor analysis

| Construct | KMO | Percentage variance extracted | Items retained | Cronbach's alpha |
|------------|------|-------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Evaluation | .823 | 74.15 | 1.1 – 1.5 | .929 |
| Adoption | .839 | 62.29 | 2.1; 2.3-2.6 | .879 |
| Usage | .787 | 72.83 | 3.1 – 3.6 | .938 |

As demonstrated by the data presented in Table 1, it is apparent that all three composite measures exhibit a high level of reliability, as indicated by their Cronbach's alpha values over .7. Furthermore, a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) assessment of sample adequacy was conducted to assess the suitability of the factor analysis. A Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value greater than 0.7 suggests that the factor analysis has achieved a satisfactory level of success. In the course of factor analysis, items that exhibit either cross-loading or insufficient loading are eliminated.

4.2. Exploratory Factory Analysis for Independent Variables:

4.2.1. Technological factors

Exploratory factor analysis with promax rotation was applied to the items under technological factors. Items that either cross loaded or did not load strongly onto any factor were dropped. Two factors were extracted which account for 78.49% of the variance in the data. Rotation converged in three iterations. The technological factors that were examined in Table 2 are perceived relative advantages and costs.

Table 2: Factor Analysis for Technological Factors

| Construct | KMO | Percentage variance | Items retained | Cronbach's alpha |
|------------------------------|------|---------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Perceived relative advantage | .648 | 54.25 | 1.2 – 1.4 | .877 |
| Costs | | 24.24 | 2.2 & 2.3 | .851 |
| TOTAL variance extracted | | 78.49 | | |

***Extraction method: alpha factoring**

***Rotation method: promax with Kaiser normalization. A. Rotation converged in six iterations**

Table 2 summarises the factor analysis for the two technological factors which are perceived relative advantage and costs. It is evident that both composite measures exhibit a high level of reliability, as indicated by their alpha coefficients exceeding .7. Furthermore, a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) assessment of sample adequacy was conducted to assess the suitability of the factor analysis. The KMO was >.6, which was adequate.

4.2.2. Organisational Factors

Factor analysis was then conducted on the four organisational factors which are organisational readiness, rational decision-making culture, management support, and organisational data environment. Cronbach's alpha was run on the four constructs on organisational factors. These composite measures were all found to be reliable (alpha >.7). Furthermore, a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) assessment of sample adequacy was conducted to assess the suitability of the factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was found to be greater than 0.6, indicating an acceptable level of adequacy. While doing factor analysis, items that exhibited either cross-loading or insufficient loading were eliminated. The rotation converged in six iterations. Four factors were extracted which account for 85.78% of the variance in the data. The results are summarised in Table 3. Construct validity (convergent and discriminant validity) are also shown.

Table 3: Factor Analysis for Organisational Factors

| Construct | KMO | Percentage variance extracted | Items retained | Cronbach's alpha |
|----------------------------------|------|-------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Organisational readiness | .631 | 54.664 | 4.1 – 4.3 | .880 |
| Rational decision-making culture | | 12.235 | 2.1- 2.3 | .878 |
| Management support | | 9.764 | 1.1- 1.2 | .952 |
| Organisational data environment | | 7.121 | 3.1 – 3.2 | .709 |
| TOTAL variance extracted | | 85.78 | | |

***Extraction method: alpha factoring.**

***Rotation method: promax with Kaiser normalisation. A. Rotation converged in six iterations.**

Table 3 outlines the factor loading for the organisational factors that were retained once the factor analysis had taken place, along with factor loadings.

4.2.3. Environmental Factors

Factor analysis was applied but there are only four items which is actually too few items. Nevertheless, Cronbach's alpha was used to determine which items would result in a reliable composite measure. Two items under the heading of environmental factors were found to be reliable (alpha >.7).

Table 4 shows the factor analysis for the environmental factors to prove the reliable composite measure.

Table 4: Composite Measure for Environmental Factors

| Environmental factors | KMO | Percentage variance extracted | Items retained | Cronbach's alpha |
|-----------------------|------|-------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| External support | .500 | 80.124 | 1.2 – 1.3 | .890 |

4.2.4. Existence of Factors in the Businesses

Prior to addressing the objectives, a final analysis was carried out to determine any significant agreement or disagreement as to the existence of the independent and dependent factors in the businesses. The results are presented in Table 5, indicating any significant agreement or disagreement as to the existence of the independent variables and dependent variables.

Table 5: Significance of Independent Variables and Dependent Variables

| Variables | Statements | Significance | t | Mean | Std Dev | df | p |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------|--------|---------|---------|--------|
| Independent | Perceived Relative Advantage | Agreement | 24.450 | 4.9563 | .75340 | 1.45625 | p<.005 |
| | Costs | Agreement | 6.714 | 4.1406 | 1.20686 | .64063 | p<.005 |
| | Organisational Readiness | Agreement | 7.467 | 4.1708 | 1.13639 | .67083 | p<.005 |
| | Rational Decision-making Environment | Agreement | 17.438 | 4.8667 | .99137 | 1.36667 | p<.005 |
| | Management Support | Agreement | 4.524 | 4.0281 | 1.47649 | .52813 | p<.005 |
| | Organisational Data Environment | Disagreement | -4.712 | 3.0813 | 1.12419 | -.41875 | p<.005 |
| | Environmental Support | Disagreement | -5.256 | 3.0036 | 1.18824 | -.49375 | p<.005 |
| Dependent | Evaluation | Agreement | 1.715 | 3.6850 | 1.36452 | .18500 | .088 |
| | Adoption | Agreement | 1.673 | 3.6575 | 1.19103 | .15750 | .096 |
| | Usage | Disagreement | -.647 | 3.4281 | 1.40450 | -.07187 | .518 |

According to Table 5, the first five constructs for the independent variables show significant agreement, which indicates that respondents agree that perceived relative advantage, costs, organisational readiness, rational decision-making environment, and management support are influencing factors for the adoption of BI. However, the participants disagree that organisational data environment and environmental support are influencing factors for BI adoption. None of the three dependent variables namely evaluation, adoption and usage are significant, indicating that there is no conclusive evidence that BI is being evaluated, adopted or used by respondents.

4.3. Regression Analysis

4.3.1. Adoption

In order to fulfil the objectives of this study, a regression analysis was utilised to examine the impact of the independent variables (technological, organisational, and environmental factors) on the three dependent variables (evaluation, adoption, and usage).

Table 6 shows the results of the regression analysis for the dependent variable adoption to test the effect of the independent variables.

Table 6: Regression Analysis for Adoption

| CONSTRUCTS | R ² | F | df1; df2 | p-value | B (regression coefficient) | t | p-value |
|-------------|----------------|---------|----------|---------|----------------------------|-------|---------|
| T_Percieved | .827 | 103.824 | 7; 152 | <.001 | .256 | 3.861 | <.001 |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|-------|--------|-------|
| Relative Advantage | | | | | | | |
| T_Cost | | | | | -.235 | -4.047 | <.001 |
| O_Organisational Readiness | | | | | .787 | 15.489 | <.001 |
| O_Rational Decision-making Culture | | | | | -.209 | -3.303 | .001 |
| O_Management Support | | | | | .099 | 2.069 | .040 |
| O_Organisational Data Environment | | | | | .638 | 10.610 | <.001 |
| E_Environmental Support | | | | | -.247 | -5.542 | <.001 |

These seven independent variables/factors account for 82.7% of the variance of adoption ($R^2 = .827$), $F(7, 152) = 103.824$, $p < .001$. The results indicate that the factors that significantly predict adoption are perceived relative advantage ($\beta = .256$, $p < .001$); organisational readiness ($\beta = .787$, $p < .001$); management support ($\beta = .099$, $p = .040$); and organisational data environment ($\beta = .638$, $p < .001$). Factors that influence adoption negatively are cost ($\beta = -.235$, $p < .001$); rational decision-making culture ($\beta = -.209$, $p = .001$); and external support ($\beta = -.247$, $p < .001$).

However, by examining the individual constructs, such as the seven constructs employed to assess adoption, it becomes evident that each exhibit distinct differences. Rational decision-making culture and management support are not significant for adoption ($p = >.001$), while cost is significant for adoption it was also found to have negative relationship ($p = <.001$). Therefore, even though respondents have agreed to be able to make financial plans to adopt BI. Cost still remains a constraints for them, as there isn't much funding available for such innovations particularly in micro-small businesses.

4.3.2. Evaluation

The findings of the regression analysis for the evaluation of the dependent variable and its relationship with the independent variables are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Regression Analysis for Evaluation

| IV | R ² | F | df1; df2 | p-value | B (regression coefficient) | t | p-value |
|--------------------------------|----------------|---------|----------|---------|----------------------------|-------|---------|
| T_Percieved Relative Advantage | .811 | 120.497 | 7; 152 | <.001 | -.054 | -.750 | .455 |
| T_Cost | | | | | -.047 | -.758 | .450 |
| O_Organisational Readiness | | | | | .417 | 7.625 | <.001 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|-------|---------|-------|
| O_Rational Decision-making Culture | | | | | | -.704 | -10.322 | <.001 |
| O_Management Support | | | | | | .448 | 8.664 | <.001 |
| O_Organisational Data Environment | | | | | | .818 | 12.638 | <.001 |
| E_Environmental Support | | | | | | -.030 | -5.542 | .538 |

Based on the results from the respondents, these seven independent variables/factors account for 81.1% of the variance of evaluation ($R^2 = .811$), $F(7, 152) = 103.824$, $p < .001$. Organisational readiness ($\beta = .417$, $p < .001$); management support ($\beta = .448$, $p < .001$); and organisational data environment ($\beta = .818$, $p < .001$) are all significant predictors of adoption. Factors that influence evaluation negatively are perceived relative advantage ($\beta = -.054$, $p = 0.455$); cost ($\beta = -.2047$, $p = 0.450$); rational decision-making culture ($\beta = -.704$, $p < .001$); and external support ($\beta = -.030$, $p = .538$). However, when you look at the constructs individually, perceived relative advantage, cost and environmental support do not significantly impact the difference in variances ($p > .001$). Rational decision-making culture has a significant variance to evaluation ($p < .001$), even though the relationship is negative.

4.2.3. Usage

Table 8 presents the outcomes of the regression analysis conducted to examine the impact of the independent variables on the dependent variable, utilisation.

Table 8: Regression Analysis for Usage

| IV | R ² | F | df1; df2 | p-value | B (regression coefficient) | t | p-value |
|------------------------------------|----------------|--------|----------|---------|----------------------------|--------|---------|
| T_Perceived Relative Advantage | .811 | 93.284 | 7; 152 | <.001 | -.187 | -2.287 | .024 |
| T_Cost | | | | | -.027 | .381 | .704 |
| O_Organisational Readiness | | | | | .410 | 6.552 | <.001 |
| O_Rational Decision-making Culture | | | | | -.613 | -7.850 | <.001 |
| O_Management Support | | | | | .626 | 10.573 | <.001 |
| O_Organisational | | | | | .620 | 8.370 | <.001 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--------|---------|-------|
| Data Environment | | | | | | | | |
| E_Environmental Support | | | | | | -0.644 | -11.752 | <.001 |

The results indicate that these seven independent variables/factors account for 81.1% of the variance of usage ($R^2 = .811$), $F(7, 152) = 103.824$, $p < .001$. Organisational readiness ($\beta = .410$, $p < .001$); management support ($\beta = .626$, $p < .001$); and organisational data environment ($\beta = .620$, $p < .001$) are all significant predictors of adoption. Factors that influence adoption negatively are perceived relative advantage ($\beta = -.187$, $p = 0.024$); cost ($\beta = -.027$, $p = 0.704$); rational decision-making culture ($\beta = -.613$, $p < .001$); and external support ($\beta = -.644$, $p < .001$).

The overall p value shows significant variance as a result of the 7 factors. However, the first two factors, being perceived relative advantage and cost, do not seem to indicate a significant variance as individual constructs. Therefore, individually they do not significantly impact the difference in variation.

5. Discussion

5.1. Sub-objective 1: Determining T-O-E factors that influence the evaluation BI

With regards to evaluation of BI in the micro-small apparel sector in eThekweni region, analysis revealed that from the seven independent variables; organisational readiness, management support and organisational data environment were all positive determinants of evaluation. This is expected, when an organisation has identified certain challenges and is ready for innovative developments, it will most likely evaluate the systems available to solve the challenges at hand. Management support is important for evaluation as it encourages staff to adapt to new ways of working for increased business performance. Having a data-driven business culture is expected to be one of the major influencing factors for evaluation of BI.

Results indicated that factors that cause hindrance to evaluation were perceived relative advantage, rational decision-making culture and external support. These findings agreed with the challenges found in the literature regarding evaluation. Therefore, one might conclude that micro-small apparel businesses take a conservative attitude towards BI because of their perceptions towards new technological advances and the weight of the risk that might be associated with them. This may be because owner/managers in the micro-small apparel sector do not have a formalised approach or process of identifying business needs that ensure their understanding of how new technology could meet business objectives, which results in the negative relationship of perceived relative advantage and rational decision-making culture with regards to the evaluation of BI. With regards to external support, a finding is that there is not any support from BI vendors and marketers with regards to the importance of BI for micro-small businesses. The results discussed in Chapter 4 indicated that the majority of the respondents disagreed with the statements that “Business Intelligence providers promote the use of Business Intelligence software by offering free training sessions”.

However, this study found that perceived relative advantage, cost and external support were not significant with regards to evaluation, implying that respondents probably did not understand the benefits, or have sufficient knowledge of BI prior to this study. This suggests that they were not aware of the advantages, costs or any external support with regards to BI. On the other hand, a rational decision-making culture was proven to be significant to evaluation, although it had a negative relationship. A suggestion would be that some SMMEs are still not yet able to justify the feasibility of evaluating BI. This supports findings by Afolayan and de la Harpe (2019) who stated that SMMEs do not have a formalised approach or process for identifying their business needs. As such, SMMEs are unable to see the benefits of evaluating BI.

5.2. Sub-objective 2: Determining T-O-E factors that influence the adoption of BI

According to Jaklica et al. (2018), the perception of relative advantage has been identified as a positive factor that influences adoption. The authors argue that when owners/managers have a positive perception of the use of business intelligence (BI) and its compatibility with the organisational work environment, it is likely that their appreciation for BI will be strengthened. According to the study conducted by Jaklica et al. (2018), it was observed that there is a positive correlation between the level of organisational support, management

incentives, visibility of business intelligence (BI), peer support, and employees' perceptions towards the adoption of BI in the company. The results of this study align with previous research, as it was seen that the perceived relative advantage had a favourable impact on the adoption of micro-small apparel businesses. According to the study conducted by Nguyen, Newby, and Macaulay (2013), it was shown that the rate of technology adoption tends to decrease as individuals perceive higher levels of risk and uncertainty. The issues that arise are to comprehending the hazards inherent in technology, the diverse array of technological options and remedies, as well as the dynamic nature of technology. Furthermore, the study conducted by Mittal et al. (2018) revealed that small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) exhibit a cautious approach towards technology adoption due to their apprehension regarding the potential hazards involved. The issue of uncertainty pertaining to the return on investment (ROI) of the technology is a matter of worry, as stakeholders seek to comprehend the potential outcomes and associated dangers involved. It is interesting to observe that the perceived relative advantage has a positive correlation with adoption, despite its negative correlation with appraisal. The underlying premise for this assertion is that prior to the commencement of this study, a significant proportion of the participants have limited or negligible understanding of Business Intelligence (BI). Nevertheless, subsequent to the researcher's comprehensive elucidation of the notion of Business Intelligence (BI) and the subsequent explication of its associated advantages, the individuals in question began to develop a heightened level of curiosity and engagement towards this particular technological domain. This study additionally identified managerial support as a favourable influential element in the adoption of business intelligence. This outcome is anticipated, as the absence of managerial backing impedes employees from embracing such initiatives, which necessitate extensive planning and preparation for implementation, including the allocation of time for staff training. Prior research has proven the significance of management assistance in facilitating the effective adoption and implementation of innovations within small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs). This is attributed to the role of managers as agents of change throughout the adoption phase (Ifinedo, 2011). If the management team lacks conviction regarding the implementation of a business innovation, it is probable that this innovation will not be implemented. According to Chan and Chong (2013), the significance of management support is highlighted in relation to the several stages of business intelligence (BI) adoption. According to Hameed et al. (2012), the factor of management support is defined as the explicit and proactive endorsement from top management in facilitating the implementation and progress of a technical breakthrough. Hence, there exists a favourable correlation between the implementation of a Business Intelligence (BI) system and the level of support provided by management. Given that decision-making in small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) is often carried out by senior management team members, it is imperative that the implementation of a business intelligence (BI) system get their steadfast endorsement. The findings of this study align with the research conducted by Puklavec, Oliveria, and Popovic (2014), which concluded that an information sharing culture, also referred to as the organisational data environment, is considered a significant factor in the adoption of business intelligence. Hence, it is imperative for businesses to have a comprehensive organisational data environment that facilitates the effective implementation and integration of new practises and technologies. Furthermore, the researchers discovered that the readiness of the organisation played a significant role in the decision to adopt. This finding aligns with the results of the aforementioned study on micro-small apparel enterprises, which concluded that the level of organisational readiness positively affects the adoption of business intelligence. There are several factors that exert a negative influence on the adoption process, including cost, the presence of a relational decision-making culture, and the availability of external help. However, by examining the individual constructs in relation to the seven constructs employed for assessing adoption, it becomes evident that they exhibit distinct differences. The statistical analysis indicates that there is no significant relationship between rational decision-making culture, managerial support, and adoption ($p > .001$). The link between cost and adoption has a substantial variety, albeit demonstrating a negative correlation. The underlying premise pertaining to this discovery would be that the implementation of Business Intelligence (BI) or any other cloud-based technology necessitates financial resources, which are lacking among the bulk of micro-small firms in the garment sector. Although the participants expressed their ability to develop financial strategies for implementing Basic Income (BI), it remains a potential barrier for them, therefore resulting in a negative correlation. The study's findings also revealed that the participants held the belief that implementing business intelligence (BI) would yield cost-effective outcomes

for their respective firms. This observation appears to counter the unfavourable association previously established. However, it is evident from the respondent's perspective that they see business intelligence (BI) to have a significant advantage in terms of cost savings and profit maximisation for their company.

Previous studies have concurred with the cost-related inhibitors identified in this study as factors that hinder the adoption of business intelligence (BI) systems. The expenses encompassed the initial setup and support, along with the expenditures and duration associated with training staff members to effectively operate the system (Nguyen, Newby, & Macaulay, 2013; Mittal et al., 2018; Antoniadis, Tsiakiris, & Tsopology, 2015). According to the findings of Kulkarni, Robles-Flores, and Popovič (2017), the existence of a rational decision-making culture inside an organisation is characterised by a demonstrated commitment to the utilisation of quantitative data for the purpose of measuring, testing, and assessing decisions. This particular cultural environment promotes the utilisation of information and data to bolster work operations and conduct analyses, alongside the implementation of advanced methodologies.

5.3. Sub-objective 3: Determining T-O-E factors that influence the usage of BI

Researchers established that access to a number of diverse data sets results in the availability of information that can support insight into business trends (Kiron and Shockley 2011). The data from this study indicates that the utilisation of a Business Information System (BIS) holds significant importance for organisations. According to Mulani (2013), the concept of an information culture highlights the significance of transforming data into a valuable resource for businesses. This involves obtaining appropriate data in a timely manner and presenting it in a visually appropriate format. Moreover, it emphasises the need for decision makers to have access to intelligence rather than simply being inundated with more information. Previous research has identified both organisational culture and information culture as significant factors influencing the utilisation and adoption of business intelligence. An information culture encompasses the principles of information transparency, which involves the disclosure and dissemination of information, as well as the practise of openly disclosing and presenting information pertaining to errors and failures. Furthermore, researchers established that developing a data driven approach as part of the organisational culture may positively influence BI usage (Grublješič, T. and Jaklič 2015; Mulani 2013). These findings are similar to the results of this study, which indicated that factors which are predictors of the usage of BI are organisational data environment, organisational readiness, and management support and . When the organisation is ready for a technological advancement and managers support the need for BI software to improve business operations, this will result in an organisational data environment (Kiron and Shockley 2011; Ali, Miah and Khan 2017; Mulani, 2013).

This study found that factors that influence the usage of BI negatively are perceived relative advantage, rational decision-making culture, and external support. The assumption to these findings concurs with those found by Skyrius et al. (2016) which indicated that in most SMMEs top management would initiate the usage of BI, without emphasising the value of BI to their staff, which hinders the process of BI implementation. Most SMMEs still use Microsoft Excel for data management which leads to inaccurate information. The rationale behind this is that utilising systems that rely on incomplete, inaccurate, or questionable data renders them unsuitable for effective management tasks, resulting in diminished user trust. Consequently, the relative advantage of these systems cannot be definitively ascertained, particularly when small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) continue to encounter challenges with their current reporting systems. In addition, these findings could also suggest that the absence of a detailed, consistent and documented intelligence strategy causes a lot of uncertainty and misconceptions (Skyrius et al. 2016). Uncertainty and misconceptions cause a lack of direction, which could lead to a set of unrelated data that will not be of great benefit to the organisation. There seems to be a relation between perceived relative advantage and a rational decision-making culture. Where there is a negative influence of perceived relative advantage, a rational decision-making culture also happens to have a negative influence. This could suggest that the perceptions that an organisation has of BI will determine their decision on whether to implement BI or not. Another obstacle to the usage of BI is complexity. For instance, less complexity in a technology will lead to greater adoption benefits, proving that business managers and owners may be reluctant to use BI due to its high level of complexity. BI models are frequently very complex since they incorporate mathematical functions to forecast patterns in business performance and offer solutions for various problems the company can encounter. Boonsiritomachai, McGrath and Burgess (2016), established that the

complexity of BI has a big impact on how widely it is used by SMMEs.

In relation to external assistance, the present study reveals that enterprises operating within the eThekweni micro-small apparel sector assert that business intelligence (BI) providers in the area do not actively engage in marketing BI software through the provision of incentives to encourage adoption. Furthermore, these providers do not promote the utilisation of BI software by offering complimentary training sessions. The participants have additionally expressed that governmental regulations do not provide adequate support for the implementation of basic income (BI), as well as for the comprehensive consideration of all relevant elements during the adoption procedure. Previous research findings suggest a positive correlation between the level of external support and the use of business intelligence (BI) by small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs). Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) face a significant obstacle in the adoption of advanced Business Intelligence (BI) due to their limited internal IT specialist resources (Lee and Larsen, 2009). The results of this study also demonstrated that external support exerts a detrimental impact on all three dependent variables, specifically evaluation, adoption, and usage. In support of these findings, a study by Puklavec Oliveira, and Popovič (2018) also established that external support is non-significant to all three adoption stages. Lack of regulations leaves companies vulnerable to external fraud and cyberattacks, which can prevent the adoption of new technologies. Government support, which is defined as “help offered by the authority to foster the development of BI technologies in firms,” is another factor that is relevant to this industry (Ifinedo 2011). If SMMEs have sufficient vendor or outside backing for innovation, they are also more willing to take a chance and try it. The highest predictors of BI adoption are vendor support and government assistance (Basole, Seuss and Rouse 2013).

6. Conclusion

With regards to the evaluation of BI, the findings from this study match those of previous studies worldwide. In the eThekweni region, most individuals had not tested BI. Since most of these businesses are sole proprietorships with 1-5 employees, limiting resources may be the hinderance. A trial run may take them a long time. It is interesting that perceived relative advantage does not affect appraisal since most respondents had examined BI benefits and practicality. Contrary to the results, SMMEs do not see the relative benefit of BI evaluation. Afolayan and de la Harpe (2019) observed that SMMEs cannot evaluate BI to help their business due to a lack of knowledge and comprehension. Due to their fast-paced production and customer demands, micro-small apparel owner/managers may not have time to train one or two staff members on new technological systems. The results showed that cost had a negative link with adoption, but most respondents said they could make financial plans to implement BI and that it might be cost-effective for their organisations. Despite these findings, several firms still lack finance. Several studies found that positive owner/manager perceptions of BI and how it fits into the organisational work environment reinforced their willingness to adopt BI. Jaklica et al. (2018) also found that peer support, management incentives, organisational support, and BI visibility, improves employee perceptions of BI adoption. . This study found that organisational data environment, organisational readiness, perceived relative advantage, and management support positively influenced adoption.

Usage results support previous findings that a data-driven BI culture influences managerial data insights and analytical decisions. BI use is heavily influenced by organisational culture and data settings. Organisational data environment involves transparency, open reporting, and error and failure disclosure. Developing a data-driven culture and management support significantly impact BI utilisation, as supported by prior studies (Grublješič and Jaklič, 2015; Puklavec, Oliveira, and Popovič 2018). It's intriguing that perceived relative advantage negatively affects usage and appraisal but positively affects adoption. The notion is that adoption differs from usage because innovation advantages drive adoption. But when BI is deployed. The abundant information that comes with BI implementation and ease of use could contribute to this detrimental association. Previous study has highlighted confusion and misconceptions about perceived relative advantages, which can lead to lack of direction and organization-wide decision-making.

Given the integration of empirical research findings described within this research it is pertinent to explore the necessity of business intelligence (BI) for small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs), despite its well-documented advantages for larger businesses. Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) have demonstrated a propensity for assessing and opting to adopt Business Intelligence (BI) solutions. Nevertheless,

a notable proportion of SMMEs have encountered difficulties in effectively executing BI within their operations. Hence, it is strongly recommended to conduct a study to examine the necessity of Business Intelligence (BI) for the sustainability of Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs). One suggested research objective for this study would be to ascertain the success metrics of small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) who employ business intelligence (BI) systems, in contrast to SMMEs that have not adopted BI.

7. References

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Empirical Study: Role of Leadership, Organization Culture and Employee Engagement on Adoption of Continuous Improvements by IT



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Abstract: Continuous Improvements (CI) is well-known for its significance in driving and facilitating processes and products improvements in organizations. CI is a form of continuous thinking and management that occurs over time. For decades, large organizations used CI to improve and streamline process and workforce. CI thinking and adoption is critical for IT functions to improve aspects such as innovation, team productivity, service reliability, and cost optimization. The role of organization culture, leadership, employee engagement become key for adoption CI by IT functions for providing services to ensure stability, scalability, and sustainability to business functions through right tools, technologies, and services. There is need for research on the influence of trio namely leadership, organization culture and employee engagement on adoption of CI in the context of IT. Organization culture, leadership, and employee engagement are three interrelated components that play a crucial role in the success and sustainability of any organization. The aim of this study is to evaluate leadership, organization culture and employee engagement, its influence on adoption of CI by IT function using

a quantitative approach. This study engages IT stakeholders at different level, software engineers to senior IT leaders, from Information Technology Service Providers, global companies which have their global IT development centres in India to ascertain their views on factors that influence adoption of CI by IT. The finding of the study is that organization culture has a strong influence on adoption of CI in IT. This study can provide critical insights to management in streamlining IT practice, design organization mechanisms for better adoption of CI in IT.

Keywords: Continuous Improvements IT, Influencing Factors, Information Technology, organization culture, leadership, employee engagement.

1. Introduction: Continuous improvement (CI) plays an important role in organizations, functions, and teams to rediscover and streamline processes and products to make them more efficient, CI ultimately leads to better quality, speed, and efficiency in daily operation, improves way of working (Nair & Demirbag, 2018). CI contributes to faster delivery, cost reduction, and increased customer satisfaction (Fernandes & Alves 2018). CI is often a popularly practiced mechanism in the manufacturing industry (Koren and Shpitalni 2010). Several industries have improved efficiency, productive, and reduced cost by adopting CI as a practice. Through CI organizations can get rid of non-value add work, waste referred to a “Muda” by making incremental changes to their processes, procedures, and practices. For decades many industries have focused on incremental process and procedural improvements. Business functions such as procurement, supply chain, manufacturing, shop floor, finance, logistics, etc., are implementing CI to be efficient, deliver value to the organization and customers. IT is no exception to CI; it is essential for IT teams to continuously focus on CI as a practice and culture. Over the past many years there has been multiple studies on continuous improvements, adoption, methodology in various industries. However based on multiple references from past literature it is found that there is still additional research required on key factors and their influence on adoption of CI by IT . Hence it necessitates a study in the context of IT industry. This study is conducted in Indian cities which are popular for IT services. India is chosen as it is one of the most sought-after IT offshoring destination for companies across the world. According to National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), Indian IT services industry is expected to reach market size of US\$300-350 billion by 2025 (Matharoo, 2021).

Significance and Objective of research: The objective of this research is to find answer to the following questions:

- (1) Is Leadership important and does it influence the adoption of CI in IT
- (2) Does employee engagement influence the adoption of CI in IT
- (3) Does Organization Culture influence the adoption of CI in IT. This research is significant because many multinational companies (MNC) have their inhouse centres (GIC) or global development centres (GDC) in India.

Hence, by studying the India IT sector, it is possible to understand various multinational scenarios and hence it is possible to generalise the outcome to global IT industries. Further, this research can help IT management and leaders to know key factors and design their organizations, teams appropriately to enable effective adoption of CI by IT.

2. Literature review: LEAN is a process of continuous improvement techniques and activities used in manufacturing or service. Organization looks at increasing value to customer, removing waste and enhancing operations. Lean can be applied to variety of processes and procedures. . Lean six sigma is not just limited to manufacturing operations. It can be applied to development of products and services (Magodi et al., 2022). IT involves products and services, and hence lean principles can be extended to IT, referred as LEAN IT. Lean in IT can be and applied for the development and management of IT products, solutions, and services. Lean methodology can be classified into 3 simple ideas:

- customer value delivery
- remove non-valued work
- continuous improvement.

Continuous Improvements (CI) identify ways to optimize and streamline work, thereby reducing waste in

process, procedure, and workflows. CI practice became popular when LEAN, kaizen, agile started picking up popularity in the industry. An organization's history, heritage can create a set of ingrained behaviours, processes, and structures that may no longer be relevant or effective in a changing environment but are difficult to change (Siggelkow & Rivkin 2005). The downside to these years of history is the accumulation of waste created due to practices, behaviours for a long period of time without much change. Waste can be in the form of accumulated bureaucracy or processes which contribute to longer lead times and inefficiency. The waste or non-value-added work can be generated by non-value adding activities (Magodi et al., 2022). It is assumed that for "change for good" to be successful, encouraging employee participation to continue to improve work and their workplace is essential (Prayuda, 2022). CI is a perpetual means for companies to remain relevant, competitive, cost-effective, and lean. There are many factors that can influence and improve organizations' CI effectiveness. One such factors that impedes improvement in organizations is resistance to change (Erceg et al., 2018). It's important to understand various factors such as the above mentioned and their impact on CI through further review of literature to understand how each of the factors influence adoption of change, innovation, or improvements in organizations. This knowledge can aid in application of these factors in context of this research scope.

2.1. Leadership Involvement (LI): Leadership is hard to clearly define and articulate. What leadership means depends on the context of multiple factors like organization, culture, organization objectives, employee self-awareness etc. However, leadership can be looked at as an aspect of how well a leader manages their staff and leads them towards organization goals. Leadership styles play a significant role in how a team is managed and led to achieve a specific vision or goal. Hence, the leadership styles become critical in an organization's success. There are different types of leadership styles and each of them has its own positives and negatives. There is enough evidence in the past literature that confirms that leadership commitment is an important factor in the quality improvement. To achieve sustainable CI culture the development of leadership commitment over a period is a key element in a culture of quality improvement, this commitment will develop over time and help achieve a sustainable CI culture (Almaiman & McLaughlin, 2018). Leadership at the organizational level is important as leaders serve as a role model. Executive involvement can influence the top management and functional heads to participate in CI (Galeazzo et al., 2021). Leadership competence and commitment, especially in managing resource, defining strategies, working methods, and driving teams towards CI, are critical from a leadership and management perspective (Unzueta et al., 2020). Mohammad et al., in 2020 conducted a quantitative survey with 400 responses which included CI as a variable and established that trust mediates relations between transformation leadership and CI. Leadership behaviours towards CI creates trust in the organization, which will reflect in employee solidarity towards CI (Mohammad et al., 2020). Leaders become enablers in organizations for the teams and supervisors. Strong leaders are needed for teams who can promote, manage, and communicate CI (Unzueta et al., 2020). Leadership focus on building employee empowerment culture motivating the employees and actively engage them in CI activities (Butler et al., 2018). There are many different types of leadership styles, and each of these styles have their own advantages and disadvantages. Leaders fostering a culture of collaboration in the work- place can have many benefits, including better cooperation, improved problem-solving, and increased innovation. This is not limited to finding solutions to business problems, but better directorial approaches to continue to encourage an environment of change. The thinking of the leader has a greater influence on the organization, creative thinking has a greater influence on visionary leadership (Atthirawong et al., 2021). Leaders have the responsibility to provide the vision, strategy, the required resources, and support. It's not limited to this, they should also engage employees, continuously monitor, and set an example to lead improvements in the teams (Singh et al., 2018). A study by Qi et al. (2019) found that involvement of leaders is essential for successful implementation of CI in IT service management. Literature identifies leadership, leadership styles and their involvement as influencing factors for organizations to achieve their outcomes and defined the success of the team in achieving those outcomes. However, there is limited research in IT context. Hence, the below hypothesis is arrived. Hypothesis 1 (H1): Leadership involvement has significant positive impact on adoption of continuous improvements in IT.

2.2. Employee Engagement (EE): Employee engagement is an approach which results in right conditions for

all the employees in an organization to contribute and bring out best of their skills which is in line with organisation's goals and values. Proper employee engagement contributes to organization success which brings in a sense of wellbeing for both the organization and the employee. From an employee's perspective, employee engagement refers to the establishment of trust, commitment, and a mutually beneficial communication process between the employee and the organization (What is employee engagement, 2022). This mutually beneficial communication approach increases success to both the employee and the organization contributing to organizational goals, employee success and well-being. For an employee it's about clearly understanding the roles and responsibilities within the organization and contributing towards organization success. From the organization perspective it's about organization's success and the success of the employee. When an employee has a clear understanding of the organization purpose and its objectives, he or she can fulfil them better and take part in the journey of the success of the organization by contributing to it positively. Employee engagement is about being fully involved as a team player focusing clearly on goals and contributing to them through the regular feedback from team and managers. This feedback mechanism supports employees developing new skills that would contribute to once success and organization success. Employee engagement is also about employees developing a feeling of being loyal, feeling pride towards their organization. This would enable them to become a positive force in promoting the organisation values both internally and externally. When an employee embraces the organization values of engagement, they are more involved in organizations and self-improvement. Employee engagement is key from an employer point of view as this will help in improving their knowledge and contribute towards commitment to products, processes, and services, there-by being innovative at work. From an organization perspective it's important that the employee deeper commitment is key for higher productivity and active engagement in organization activities. Their actions should reflect organization values and be consistent in exhibiting the values. When the values and commitment is mutually established it would become easy to drive organization towards a growth path which includes CI. CI is a process that permeates an organization vertically and horizontally. Engagement at different levels and functions within an organization is critical to implementing CI. Empowering people within an organization through engagement initiatives, executive support, and development of self-esteem leads to a better relationship between work and organizational commitment. Jurburg et al., (2009) established that commitment has a positive impact on employee engagement in improvement initiatives. Employee engagement in organizational activities defines the success of organization. Better employee engagement results in organizations achieving defined goals and objectives. When employees feel comfortable with what they are doing and how they are doing, the commitment towards the job increases as the purpose is clear. Satisfaction of the employees is considered one of the important factors for making changes since dissatisfaction makes employees not to be committed and no support towards change, they would resist change (Iljins et al., 2015). The intention of the employee to be engaged, attitude towards participation and contribution to change is necessary for CI. The environment for employees to easily participate in CI activities is required to ensure employee can be part of the CI activities. However, there is no direct relation between ease of participation and employee intention to participate. The intention to be part of the CI is positively related to the usefulness of being part of CI (Jurburg et al., 2019). People leaders should establish and enable an environment that supports employee engagement is doing things out of desire or with intentions to help themselves and the organization. Managers should create an environment that supports employees to do everything they want desirously and intentionally (Vu, 2020). Employee engagement is an important factor for installing a culture of continuous improvement in teams. Engaged employees have a higher inclination to be committed by actively participating and providing feedback which contributes to the success of initiatives involving improvements (Lacerda et al., 2020). Hence, past literature shows that employee engagement is key for organization success and to drive outcome, leading to the following hypothesis. Hypothesis 2 (H2): Employee engagement in CI activities has significant influence on adoption of continuous improvements in IT.

2.3. Organization Culture (OC): Organization culture may have developed from a variety of aspects like beliefs of the founding fathers, their evolution, experiences over the period and learnings from their experiences. The culture would broadly reflect the beliefs which become the foundation of the organization. Having a healthy culture in an organization would promote the vision of the organization. For an organization to excel its culture

needs to be value driven, positive and clear. Continuous improvements and learnings are valued by positive organizational culture. Organization Culture which includes experimentation, innovation and that which motivates trying new things by taking risk contributes to the success of organizations improvements initiatives (Dumitrescu et al., 2017). A company can be a blend of different types of culture and need not be of one or the other type of culture. For implementing lean management there needs to be a preparation phase where every employee in the organization participates. For this to happen employees should have been trained and understand the need for improvements and should be enabled to implement lead practices in their day-to-day jobs (Womack & Jones, 2003). Benefits of a strong culture include increased trust and cooperation, less conflicts, and more effective decision-making. A strong sense of identification with the firm, an informal control system, and a consensus among employees as to what is crucial are all provided by culture. Employees in firms with clearly defined cultures may also defend their actions at work on the grounds that they are consistent with the culture. More than discussions and resources proper organization culture is required. Certain cultural characteristics are necessary for effective continuous improvements. To develop and encourage continuous improvement in the spirit of organization is a difficulty that many organizations must overcome (Almaiman & McLaughlin, 2018). Almaiman et al. (2018) established that for an organization to enable CI the organization should have an enabling infrastructure that motivates employees to implement improvements. They also established that leaders should allow employees to participate in continuous improvement activities. Culture of an organization is a key in the implementation of continuous improvement initiatives. Organization culture that fosters employee empowerment, trust and accountability enables employees to adopt new processes and practices. This enables the success of improvement initiatives (Koh et al., 2020). Organization culture can be classified into Clan, Advocacy, Hierarchy and Competition cultures. Different organizational cultures can have a significant impact on the success or failure of continuous improvement initiatives. For example, a culture that values collaboration, open communication, and experimentation may be more conducive to continuous improvement compared to a culture that values hierarchy, structure, and adherence to established processes. Hudson & Smart, (2019) examined the impact of organizational culture on continuous improvement initiatives. The authors found that certain aspects of organizational culture, such as employee involvement, learning orientation, and supportive leadership, were positively associated with continuous improvement. On the other hand, cultural factors such as resistance to change, a focus on short-term results, and a lack of trust and collaboration were found to be negatively associated with continuous improvement. Based on the Literature review it is understood that Organization culture be it one type or other, mixed type has can have an impact on the people, teams, and the culture they embrace to operate which would drive continuous improvement initiatives to be a successful practice. This has given rise to the following hypothesis. Hypothesis 3 (H3): Organization Culture fostering encouragement and motivation has significant influence on adoption of continuous improvements in IT.

3. Research Methodology: The strategy that was employed was a quantitative study designing questions for the factors to be researched. The questions were designed considering and referencing pre-existing measurement tools like was referenced for organization culture questions. The questions were designed by referencing Utrecht Employee Engagement Scale (UWES), leadership scale (ILS) discussed by (Aarons, Ehrhart, & Farahnak, 2014) and (OCAI) for organization culture discussed by (Cameron & Quinn, 2006) to test the hypothesis on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 being strongly agree and 5 being strongly disagreed to establish the relationship on the dependent variables along with their statistical significance. The survey questioner consisting of 4 sections, 1st section focused on demographics like age, gender, education level, role in organization. The 2nd section focused on questions to measure employee engagement, 3rd section on organizational culture, 4th section on leadership involvement. The final sections focused on questions related to the continuous improvement's outcomes. The questioner was circulated online through WhatsApp with a google forms link to more than 250 participants. Valid responses were received from 70 respondents with a response rate of approximately 25 – 30%. The survey data collected is well distributed that enables establishment of research objective. To do this the data collected was analysed statistically using ADANCO 2.3.2 tool. In the following sections we will discuss the data and analyse data collected to establish hypothesis and objectives.

3.1. Conceptual Model: The findings from literature review led to establishing the conceptual model as shown in Figure 1. The relation between the independent variables on dependent variable which is adoption of continuous improvements by IT is tested to establish answers to the research questions.

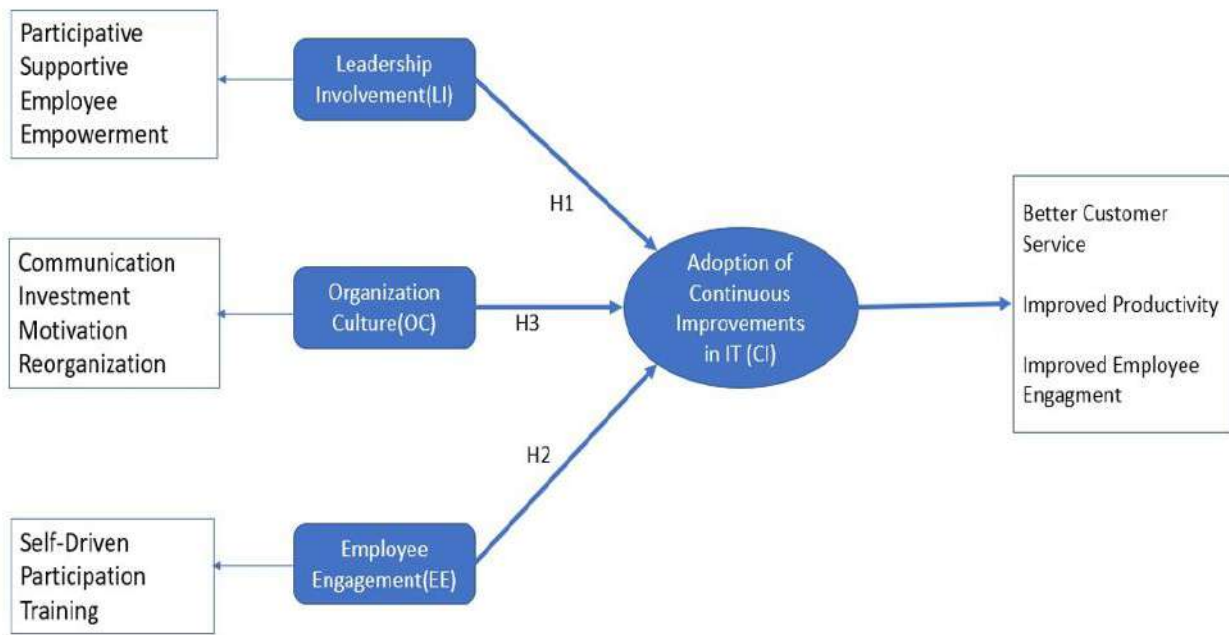


Figure 1: Research Model

3.2. Data Analysis and Results: Summary of the demography of the respondents is shown in Figure 2. The population was well covered, and the distribution considered to be good to undertake the data analysis.

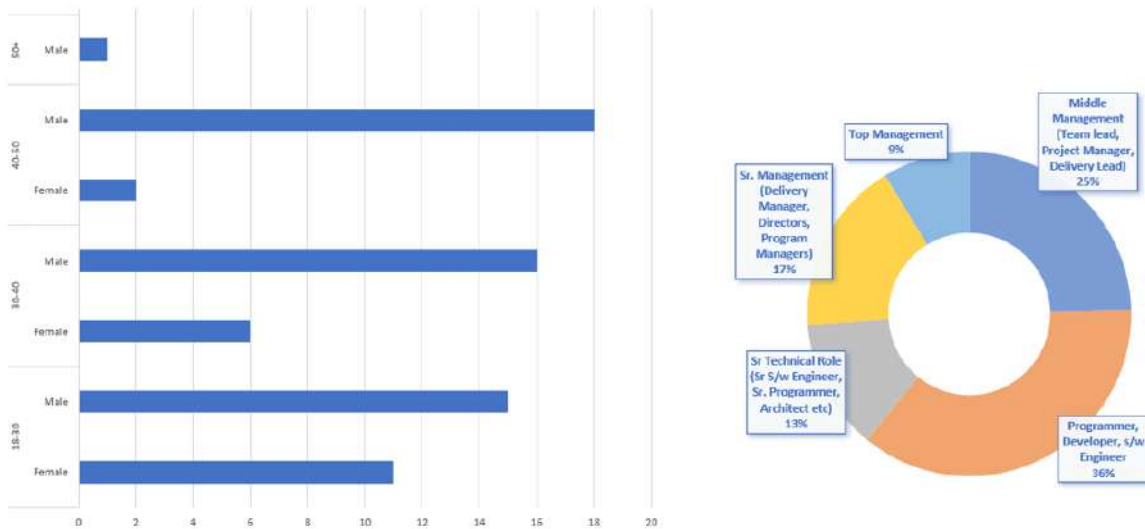


Figure 2: Demography

3.3. Reliability & Validity: Jöreskog’s rho (ρ_c) values above 0.8 is considered good and above 0.9 is excellent (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2006). The minimum satisfactory threshold of Cronbach’s alpha (α) is 0.6, with values above 0.7 being preferred (Burgess & Steenkamp, 2006), (Cronbach, 1951). Considering the above norms, and with AVE figures ranging from 0.6093 to 0.7084 as shown in Figure 3 indicates the presence of reliability and validity within the model. Diagonal values (AVEs) were greater than the non-diagonal values as represented for each construct (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

| Construct | Dijkstra-Henseler's rho (ρ_A) | Jöreskog's rho (ρ_c) | Cronbach's alpha (α) | (AVE) | Fornell-Larcker Criterion |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|---------------------------|
| EE | 0.9024 | 0.8831 | 0.8284 | 0.6553 | .6553 |
| OC | 0.7964 | 0.8617 | 0.7875 | 0.6093 | .6093 |
| LI | 0.7938 | 0.8791 | 0.7929 | 0.7084 | .7084 |
| CI | 0.7936 | 0.8663 | 0.7689 | 0.6843 | .6843 |

Figure 3: Reliability & Validity

3.4. Loading, Cross Loading & VIF: Figure 4 shows indicator loading, cross loading and variance inflation factor for all 14 determinants of the measurement model. It can be observed that all 14 determinants carry a loading greater than 0.7; therefore, it ensures validity of the model. It can be observed that the cross-loadings of the determinants are denoted in bold and are higher than the cross-loadings on all other constructs in the model. This confirms the clear building of the constructs and the validity of the instrument without any cross-loading. The Variance inflation factor (VIF) values for all constructs are less than 2.93. Therefore, confirms that model is free from multicollinearity.

| Cross Loading | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Indicator | EE | OC | LS | CI |
| EE1 | 0.8865 | 0.5953 | 0.5963 | 0.4923 |
| EE2 | 0.8464 | 0.5526 | 0.5346 | 0.3704 |
| EE3 | 0.7783 | 0.6127 | 0.7460 | 0.2570 |
| EE4 | 0.7165 | 0.4380 | 0.4521 | 0.2461 |
| OC1 | 0.4747 | 0.7299 | 0.5133 | 0.3958 |
| OC2 | 0.6360 | 0.8063 | 0.7028 | 0.4184 |
| OC3 | 0.5461 | 0.7990 | 0.4922 | 0.3649 |
| OC4 | 0.4707 | 0.7849 | 0.5365 | 0.5159 |
| LS1 | 0.6002 | 0.6394 | 0.8455 | 0.4271 |
| LS2 | 0.6078 | 0.5986 | 0.8828 | 0.4321 |
| LS3 | 0.5722 | 0.5812 | 0.7944 | 0.4190 |
| CI1 | 0.3580 | 0.3805 | 0.3425 | 0.8005 |
| CI2 | 0.3189 | 0.5403 | 0.2929 | 0.7819 |
| CI3 | 0.4295 | 0.4538 | 0.5820 | 0.8948 |

| Loadings | | | | |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Indicator | EE | OC | LS | CI |
| EE1 | 1.9436 | | | |
| EE2 | 1.9839 | | | |
| EE3 | 1.7927 | | | |
| EE4 | 1.5107 | | | |
| OC1 | | 1.4557 | | |
| OC2 | | 1.7922 | | |
| OC3 | | 1.8013 | | |
| OC4 | | 1.4625 | | |
| LS1 | | | 1.8512 | |
| LS2 | | | 2.0990 | |
| LS3 | | | 1.4705 | |
| CI1 | | | | 1.6416 |
| CI2 | | | | 1.4390 |
| CI3 | | | | 1.9167 |

| Variance inflation factor | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Indicator | EE | OC | LS | CI |
| EE1 | 0.8865 | | | |
| EE2 | 0.8464 | | | |
| EE3 | 0.7783 | | | |
| EE4 | 0.7165 | | | |
| OC1 | | 0.7299 | | |
| OC2 | | 0.8063 | | |
| OC3 | | 0.7990 | | |
| OC4 | | 0.7849 | | |
| LS1 | | | 0.8455 | |
| LS2 | | | 0.8828 | |
| LS3 | | | 0.7944 | |
| CI1 | | | | 0.8005 |
| CI2 | | | | 0.7819 |
| CI3 | | | | 0.8948 |

Figure 4: Loading, Cross-Loading & VIF

3.5. Data analysis and discussion: For this study structural equation model is used to establish the answers to the research questions. Structural equation model and coefficient of determination: In the structural model Figure 5 constructs are represented by the ovals, and arrows represent paths. A linear relationship is assumed to exist between the constructs. The size and significance of the path relationships are important elements in empirical research. ADANCO 2.3.2 develops a recursive structural model, and it is assumed that all residuals are uncorrelated and there is no causal loop. The structural equation model in Figure 5 was developed to test the hypothesis. Figure 5 indicates that the determinants are either strong or moderate with values ranging from 0.716 to 0.887

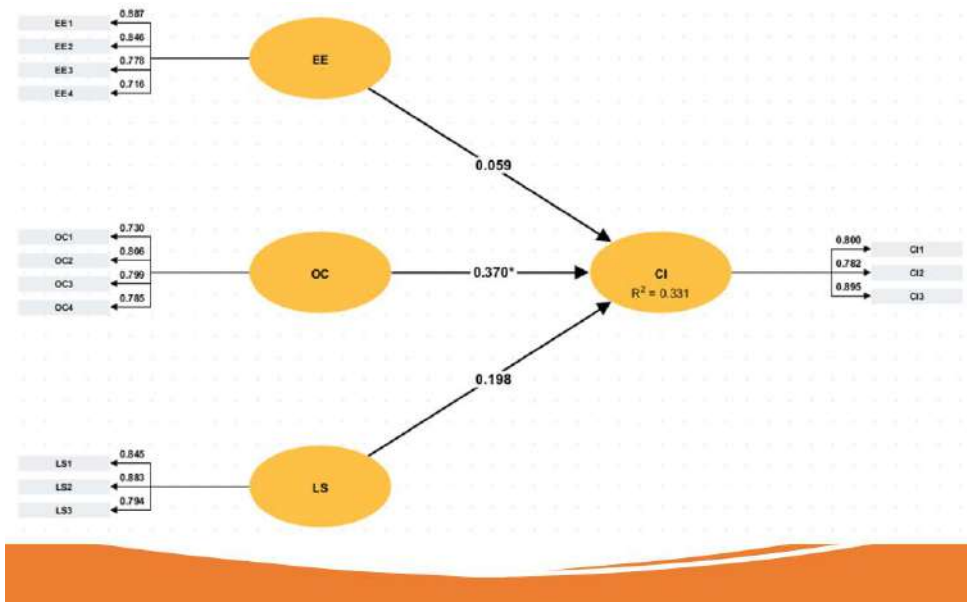


Figure 5: Structural Equation Model

3.6. Direct effects inference: T-tests play a critical role in determining whether significant relationships exist between the various constructs in the model (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011). In this study, two-tailed tests were evaluated and measured at 10%, 5% and 1% significance levels. Significance levels are measured using t-values and p values, as depicted in Figure 6. For unknown population data, a bootstrapping method was used for modelling, as documented by Efron (1987). Figure 7 shows the research model in which all path coefficients are summarized.

| Significance | t-values | Decision |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| $p > 0.10$ | $t < 1.65$ | Not significant |
| $0.10 > p > 0.05$ | $1.65 < t < 1.96$ | Moderate |
| $0.05 > p > 0.01$ | $1.96 < t < 2.59$ | Significant |
| $p < 0.01$ | $t > 2.59$ | Very significant |

Figure 6: Significance of t & p values

| Effect on Adoption of CI by IT | Original coefficient | Standard bootstrap results | | | Supported? |
|--|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| | | t-value | p-value (2-sided) | p-value (1-sided) | |
| Hypothesis 2 - Employee Engagement influence | 0.0592 | 0.3269 | 0.7437 | 0.3719 | Not Significant – Rejected |
| Hypothesis 3- Organization Culture influence | 0.3697 | 2.0800 | 0.0376 | 0.0188 | Significant- Accepted |
| Hypothesis 1 – Leadership involvement impact | 0.1982 | 0.8469 | 0.3971 | 0.1986 | Not Significant – Rejected |

Figure 7: Direct Effects Results

The results summarized below indicate the outcome of the data analysis and the results for each hypothesis tested. H1: Leadership involvement has significant positive impact on adoption of continuous improvements in IT is rejected as the $\beta=0.19$ with $t\text{-value} < 1.65$ H2: Employee engagement in CI activities has significant influence on adoption of continuous improvements in IT is also rejected as $\beta=0.05$ with $t\text{-value} < 1.65$ H3: Organization Culture fostering encouragement and motivation has significant influence on adoption of continuous improvements in IT is accepted with $\beta=0.36$ as the $t\text{-value} > 1.96$.

4. Conclusion and future research: This pilot study developed a coalition between theory and practice by drawing on academic and practitioner literature in continuous improvements in IT by collaborating with past literature and feedback from industry, and assessment of research artefacts. This research had three objectives pertaining to the three independent variables: employee engagement (EE), organization culture (OC) and leadership (LS). The influence of each variable was tested on the adoption of continuous improvements in information technology services (IT) for continuous improvements (CI), which was the dependent variable. Organization culture was empirically found to have the strongest impact on adoption of CI within IT. Employee's engagement and leadership was found to have an insignificant impact on adoption of continuous improvements in IT. This indicates that future researchers should study if leadership, employee engagement has any indirect effects with mediating variables, an angle which was not part of this study to understand significance of adoption of CI in IT.

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Impact Factors of the Maturity of FSSC in the Digital Age -A Study Based on Structural Equation Modeling

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Abstract: Since the mid 1980's, many MNCs have transformed their function into finance shared service centers (FSSC), in order cut cost and optimize internal operations. When it comes to the 21 century, breakthroughs in technology has witnessed the rapid growth of the digital economy, and the digital transformation of enterprise. FSSC is viewed as one form of finance digitalization. With the rapid growth of digital economy in China, FSS has gained popularity in large companies. However, unlike their counterparts who have initiated FSSC practices for decades, the practice of FSSC in China is deeply associated with the development of IT technology. Some see it as one kind of IT application in the finance function, as evidenced by the active involvement of IT companies in the establishment of FSSC. In this paper, the authors launched a questionnaire to measure the maturity of the FSSC in Chinese companies. Data was analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM), aiming to study the factors that has impacts on the maturity of financial shared Service Center and the process of the impact. Impact factors were designed based on the TOE (ie.Technology-Organization-Environment) theory, and the maturity model of financial shared service center was modified from the PWC maturity model of FSSC. And then a structural model was constructed. Various tests for SEM were used and the studies shows that the technology and organization factors push the development of FSSC, while the external environmental factor indirectly influence the maturity of the FSSC through affecting the organizational and technological factors. The paper also shows the influencing path of the factors.

Keywords: Digital transformation; finance function; financial shared service center (FSSC); structural equation modeling; TOE theory, influencing factors.

1. Introduction: Since the mid 1980's, many MNCs have transformed their function into finance shared service centers (FSSC), to cut cost and optimize internal operations. When it comes to the 21 century, breakthroughs in technology have witnessed the rapid growth of the digital economy, and the digital transformation of enterprise. Digitalization, the process of transforming any kind of activity or information into digital formats that can be collected, stored, retrieved, and analyzed electronically (CFO research and SAP ,2015) is gathering pace all over the world. An investigation by IDC (2018) shows that of the 2000 top companies worldwide, two third of the CEO thinks the digitalization is the core of their strategy. On the other hand, digital finance transformation is one of the Must Do's for CFOs to accelerate the digital enterprise. The finance function has played an important role in the evolution process of enterprise informatization, by computerization of the accounting system and the adoption of ERP. The finance function provides power for enterprise transformation

(Yang, Yan, etc, 2023). As stated by Accenture (2018), the finance function is the key to push the enterprise transformation. The state-owned assets supervision and administration commission of China also encourage adoption of AI technology and calls for the Finance to be the leaders, pioneers, and promoters in enterprise digitalization (SASAC, 2022). The transformation of digital finance usually starts with the automation of transactional activities and elimination manual interventions (Accenture, 2022), which is a common practice in the construct of FSSC. So FSSC is seen by many companies as the starting point of finance digitalization. Today, it is estimated that 80 percent of Fortune 500 companies have implemented some type of shared services model.

(Buchanan, 2017). Intro The practice of FSSC was introduced by MNCs in China in the late 1990's. With the rapid growth of digital economy in China, FSS has gained popularity in large companies, especially when it came to 2020's. However, the social economic environment and the technology today are quite different from those in the 1980-1990s. The economy of China has been flushing for decades, and the government has spent a lot on AI related IT technology investment, it also calls for the adoption of FSS. Unlike the western MNCs who initiated FSSC practices decades ago, the practice of FSSC in China is deeply associated with the development of IT technology. Some even see FSSC as one kind of IT application in the finance function, as evidenced by the active involvement of IT companies in the setting of FSSC. And as application of IT is quite widespread today, some FSSCs are keen to adopt new technology. In a recent survey sponsored IMA (Guo, Xiaomei, et al 2023), the authors investigated the current status of FSSC adoption in China, measured the Maturity of the FSSC and the level of technology application. We found that Maturity level of FSSC in China is around "developing", strategy and IT technology application are emphasized, while there leave much to be desired in other dimensions. So in this paper, the authors try to further the research by analysis the impact factors of Maturity of FSSCs. The research question is what factors have pushed the development of FSSC and how is the process of these factors in driving the development of FSSC? Based on the questionnaire and the data collected before, the authors use the structural equation modeling (SEM) to investigate the factors and the process of the impacting factors on the maturity of FSSC. The remaining of the paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, we made an extensive literature review and a theoretical analysis. In section 3, we described the design of the study and the construct of the model. In section 4 we discussed the data and the results. In section 5 we drew to conclusions.

2. Literature Review and theory analysis:

2.1 Concept and nature of Financial shared service: Financial shared service derived from shared services, dated back to the 1990's. As "a tactical technique by which corporations can organize financial and other transaction-oriented activities to reduce costs", the service helps the company to reduce operating cost and provide quality services to internal parties, adding value to business units (Schulman 1999). Shared services integrate core elements in one or more locations and re-engineer those business processes that are highly repetitive and easy to standardize within the enterprise. Shared service is a cooperation strategic that can centralized a part of the existing management functions to a new semi-autonomous business unit, the business unit have a special management structure to improve efficiency, create value, save the cost and improve the quality of service to internal customers (Bergeron, 2003). FSS is the practice of SSC in the finance function. The finance function in each branch and subsidiary, such as traction recording, bookkeeping can be centralized to the financial shared service center for unified processing (Bergeron, 2003). The surge of FSSC has brought about great benefits to many companies. FSS helps the accountants to get rid of the tedious work of daily transaction records (Herbert & Seal (2012)). FSSC is the output of enterprise reform and financial transformation (Zhang, Ruijung et al, 2010). Most authors hold the view that implementing FSS is an reengineering of the fiancé process with the help of IT system, aiming to reduce cost, increase efficiency and enhance controls (Chen Hu, 2008; Xie, Changqiang, 2012; Zhang, Qinglong, 2016; Cui Yongcheng, 2019).

2.2 Factors driving the implementation of FSSC: Reijers and Mansar (2005) find that partners along the value chain, operating strategy, structure are among the key external factors that has impact on establishment of FSSC. Martin (2011) put the factors to be site selection, strategy planning, process management, change management, organization structure and service level agreement. Rohith Rampha (2013) find that corporate governance, employees in the FSSC, communication, performance management and agility are the key factors.

Based on a case study, Grant and Delvin (1999) attributed the success factors of Enterprise Financial Sharing Service Center to: personnel, the internal and external environment, the application method of BPR, the information technology and the change of enterprise vision. Based on the case of ZTE, Zhang Ruijun & Zhang Yongyi (2008) suggested that the reform of the finance structure, the network of the finance system, optimization of the core process and good performance measurement system are keys to success. He and Zhou (2013) founds that strategy planning, process management, information system, organization design, humane resource management and performance management have positive effects on the value of FSS. Hu Lei (2019) based on reengineering theory and change management theory, put forward 5M factors for successful FSSC, i.e. strategy management, business process management, information system management, change management and performance management. Though many are listed, factors can be attributed based on the TOE model introduced by Tornatzky and Fleischer (1990), as the implementation of FSSC is impossible without the use of IT implementation. TOE provides a framework to examine the influence of technological, organizational, and environmental contexts on the adoption and implementation of technological innovations. The model holds that effectiveness of IT implementation relies on both internal and external factors. Congruence between the organization, environmental and technology factors should be considered in pushing IT implementation.

2.3 maturity level of FSSC: There are many maturity models for SSC. The Hackett Group (2012) judges the maturity of GBS form technology, service, information management, organization structure and governance, and business partnership. Based on an investigation on Global 500 and Fortune 1000, KPMG (2016) measures the maturity from service types, data analytics, human resources management, process and technology. CIPFA(2010) measures the maturity of SSC from Processes, Quality assurance. Governance arrangements delivery system, Efficiency mechanisms, Technology support. The PwC maturity model (PWC, 2012) is targeted at FSSC with eight different evaluation criteria, namely strategy, Organization/governance/compliance, Continuous improvement, Business processes, Customer relations, Performance management, Human resources management, system and technology. Due to the focus on FSSC, Their aggregated scoring determines the position an FSSC is assigned to in the model. Summary of the model is list in table 1

Table 1: PWC's Maturity Model of FSSC

| Dimension | Description and criterior |
|--|--|
| Strategy | 1.Criteria used to select the FSSC location, and their respective ranking 2.Implementation strategy chosen 3.Evaluation of the objectives since FSSC implementation from today's perspective 4.compared to when the FSSC was founded |
| Organization/governan ce /compliance | 1.Center concept of the FSSC (cost center versus profit center) 2.Cost allocation method for services provided 3.Scope and revision cycle of service level agreements (SLAs) 4."Process owner" approach to manage processes 5. Governance of the FSSC 6. Monitoring of process compliance and use of automated controls |
| Continuous improvement | 1.Systematic and regular analysis of costs and quality 2.Continuous search for and implementation of optimization measures 3. Deployment of quality improvement tools 4. Approach to measure whether an FSSC is meeting its objectives |
| Business processes | 1.Degree of standardization and automation of processes within the FSSC 2. Degree of standardization and automation of processes in upstream and downstream processes outside the FSSC 3. Level of process documentation |
| Customer relations | 1.Customer structure (share of internal and external customers) 2.Service structure and customer orientation within the FSSC |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| | 3. Deployment of tools for customer management |
| Performance management | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Sophistication of performance management systems in place 2.Transparency of the performance measurement process 3. Availability of information related to operational and strategic management 4. Definition of measurable performance targets and monitoring of target 5.achievement 6 .Extent of financial control systems within the FSSC |
| Human resources management | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Use of different training tools and training types by staff group 2.Quality of communication between management and staff in the FSSC 3.Approach to linking the performance evaluation of employees with the definition 4.use of development measures 5. Use of employee satisfaction surveys |
| Systems and technology | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Degree of process automation and standardization of IT systems 2.Continuous optimization of IT systems 3.Extent to which workflow and integrated ERP systems are deployed 4.IT governance supporting financial control processes |

(Source: PWC. *Financial shared service center on the rise toward valuable business partner2nd generation FSSCs*[R/OL].(2012-07-16)[2020-1-15].<https://pwcplus.de/en/article/156215/financial-shared-service-center/>)

3. Research Design:

3.1 Data collection:

In order to generate items related to different dimensions maturity and other latent variables, we designed a structured questionnaire with both quantitative and qualitative measures. A pilot survey was carried out to refine the questionnaire. The questionnaire was published on line from Jan 5,2020 to April 16,2020. With the promotion by IMA member platform and other personal sources, a total of 323 questionnaire were distributed and received, of which 134 were completed OF these 134 questionnaire,91 were from companies that have established FSSC, while 43 were from companies that have not yet established FSSC. For the measurement of the maturity of FSSC, 91 samples were used for further analysis. For the study in this paper, 19 items were used. The data are collected on five point Likert scale (5<----1>), where 5 denotes strongly agree and 1 denotes strongly disagree.

3.2 Hypothesis formulation: Hypothesis are derived based on the framework of TOE, literature review and theory analysis.

3.2.1 Technological factor: TOE theory (Tornatzky, 1990) emphasizes the importance of Technology in innovation of organization, depending on the level of current system, technology, compatibility of the systems, fitness of the new technology with the organization, the function, complexity and other factors. In establishment of FSSC, new technologies are adopted, while current IT system are merged and centralized. Without technology, there will be no FSSC. Introduction of new technology requires multifunctional IT platform, mature data management ability and the Stable running IT infrastructure. Maturity of IT technology helps the FSSC the increase the efficiency, and a further development. According to Accenture (2019) digitalization leads to the merge of process, technology data and talents, a digitalization data center and platform increase the efficiency of finance. Advances in technology push the evolution of FSS. H1 : Higher level of Technology has positive effect on maturity of FSSC.

3.2.2 Organization factor: Adoption of new technology is not only affected by technology, but also by factors in the organization, such as design of the organization, support from the top, human resource management and performance management. Establishment of FSSC cause a redesign of the finance function, may lead to redesign of the organization structure (Ma, 2019) .The relationship of FSSC and other units in the organization should be redefined, to ensure the smooth operation of FSSC. Good organizational design is a prerequisite for the effective operation of an organization, providing power and support for FSSC. Support from the top is also

necessary, as design of FSSC is a strategy decision. Good planning insure further development of FSSC. Dong (2001) identifies three top management, namely resource allocation rights, involvement in change management and willingness to share the system, influence that top management exercise on the system implementation. Support from the top indicates that there are resources available to push the development of FSSC, and ensure of the success of FSSC. Other than the two factors, talent is an important factor too. A FSSC applies a new operational model in an new operation mode. Do employees accept the new model? Are they capable of the new position? Proper training helps the employees to build the capabilities needed for the new model (Fahy, 2005) .Roles and positions of FSSC will be changed, sometimes leading to layoff or reposition of employees. Unable to deal with such change may hinder the development of FSSC. Performance management, allowing each part of the FSSC to operate in a balanced and coordinated manner, is the guarantee s for the efficient operation of the center(Chen,hu and Li ying, 2011) .Performance management is an important means to achieve consistency between FSSC and the overall strategic goals and value pursuit of the enterprise, and to assist in the continuous optimization and improvement of enterprise processes (Chen Yi, 2018) .A good performance measurement system help to judge the soundness of the operation of FSSC. So we have Hypothesis as: H2 : Good organization conditions have positive effects on maturity of FSSC.

3.2.3 Environmental factor: Organizational innovation incurred in a certain environment. Environmental factors are the macro environment in which an organization conducts its business and activities. In this article the environmental factors refers to industry environment and policies and regulations. FSSC in one form of digitalization. In the digital age, development of new business model and technology put challenges to firms, forcing many companies to have digital transformation. Pressure from competitors forced firms to make a change. The Chinese government has been vigorously developing the digital economy. There are several governmental policies encouraging and required the establishment of FSSC for large companies (MOF, 2013, 2014). So we have Hypothesis as: H3: A good environmental condition has a positive impact on the maturity of FSSC.

3.2.4 Interrelationship among environmental, organizational and technological factors. The above three factors are interrelated. Environmental factors have impacts on enterprises through the internal factors of the organization. For example, external institutional norms or policy support can affect the cognition and behavioral preferences of corporate executives, thereby affecting their support of FSSC. Pressure from the industry may have impacts on the organization design and resource allocation. On the other hand, support from the top has impacts on the application of a technology. Good design of the organization or the process can ensure the application of a technology. Proper training to organizational personnel is also a driving force for promoting sustainable technological development. So, we have H4 : Environmental conditions has impacts on organizational conditions of FSSC. H5 : organizational conditions have impact on Technology implementation of FSSC.

3.3. Design of the variables: There are four latent variables in the study, including technology, organization, environment and Maturity of FSSC. With each variable, several items are designed See table 2 for details. The items of maturity are based on the framework PWC maturity model, with some revision based on literature review and survey. Strategy, as a long term planning, normally will include other items such as process and organization. “result from the dimension of strategy has positive effects on continuous improvement, customer relationship and performance management.”, as stated in the report of PWC maturity model. To avoid multi collinearity, the strategy item is excluded.

Table 2: Variables and Items

| Variables | Dimensions | Codes | Items | Reference |
|---|------------------------------------|-------|--|--|
| Maturity | Organization/governance/compliance | MA1 | Clear structure and governance of FSSC Monitoring of process compliance and use of automated controls existed. | Markus Zillner和 Ralf Jaspert (2013) [35] |
| | Continuous improvement | MA2 | Continuous search for and implementation of optimization measures in FSSC | |
| | Business processes | MA3 | Degree of standardization and automation of processes within and outside the FSSC is high | |
| | Customer relations | MA4 | Operation of FSSC is customer orientated | |
| | Performance management | MA5 | Transparency of the performance measurement process existed in FSSC | |
| | Human resources management | MA6 | Use of different training tools and training types by staff group | |
| | Systems and technology | MA7 | IT system deployed is process automated and standardized | |
| Technology Nilly Essaides (2018) 、 Thomas and Johan (2016) | Technology adoption | TE1 | Mature ERP in place before FSSC was established | He and Zhou Fang (2013) 、 |
| | | | | |
| | Functions | TE2 | There are Reliable and multifunctional platform for IT application | |
| | Stability | TE3 | The company have continuous maintenance of IT equipment | |
| | Compatibility | TE4 | IT system is Fit for FSSC | |
| | Data Management | TE5 | Data management is mature when establishing FSSC . | |
| | Process automation | TE6 | Automation and Standardization have been achieved when establishing FSSC . | |
| Organization | SMAC | TE7 | SMAC technology is in use for decision making before FSSC implementation. | He and Zhou Fang (2013) |
| | BI | TE8 | BI and expert system are in use for decision making before FSSC implementation. | |
| | Organizational design | OR1 | Organization structure is fit for implementation of FSSC. | |
| | Support from the Top management | OR2 | Top managers deem it necessary to implement FSS to optimize the finance process | |
| Environment | Human resource s Management | OR3 | There are periodic training for employees of the company | Xu Feng |

| Variables | Dimensions | Codes | Items | Reference |
|-----------|------------------------|-------|--|-----------|
| | Performance management | OR4 | There exists refine and opaque performance evaluation | (2012) |
| | Compliance Pressure | EN1 | FSSC establishment is required by the Governmental agency or Industry Associations | |
| | Supportive policy | EN2 | FSSC establishment is recommended by the Governmental agency | |

3.4 Model construction:

A summary of Hypothesis is shown in table 3 and the estimated SEM model is given in figure.

Table 3: Summary of Hypothesis

| Code | Hypothesis |
|----------------|--|
| H ₁ | Higher level of Technology has positive effect on maturity of FSSC |
| H ₂ | Good organization conditions have positive effects on maturity of FSSC. |
| H ₃ | A good environmental condition has a positive impact on the maturity of FSSC |
| H ₄ | Environmental conditions has impacts on organizational conditions of FSSC. |
| H ₅ | organizational conditions have impact on Technology implementation of FSSC |

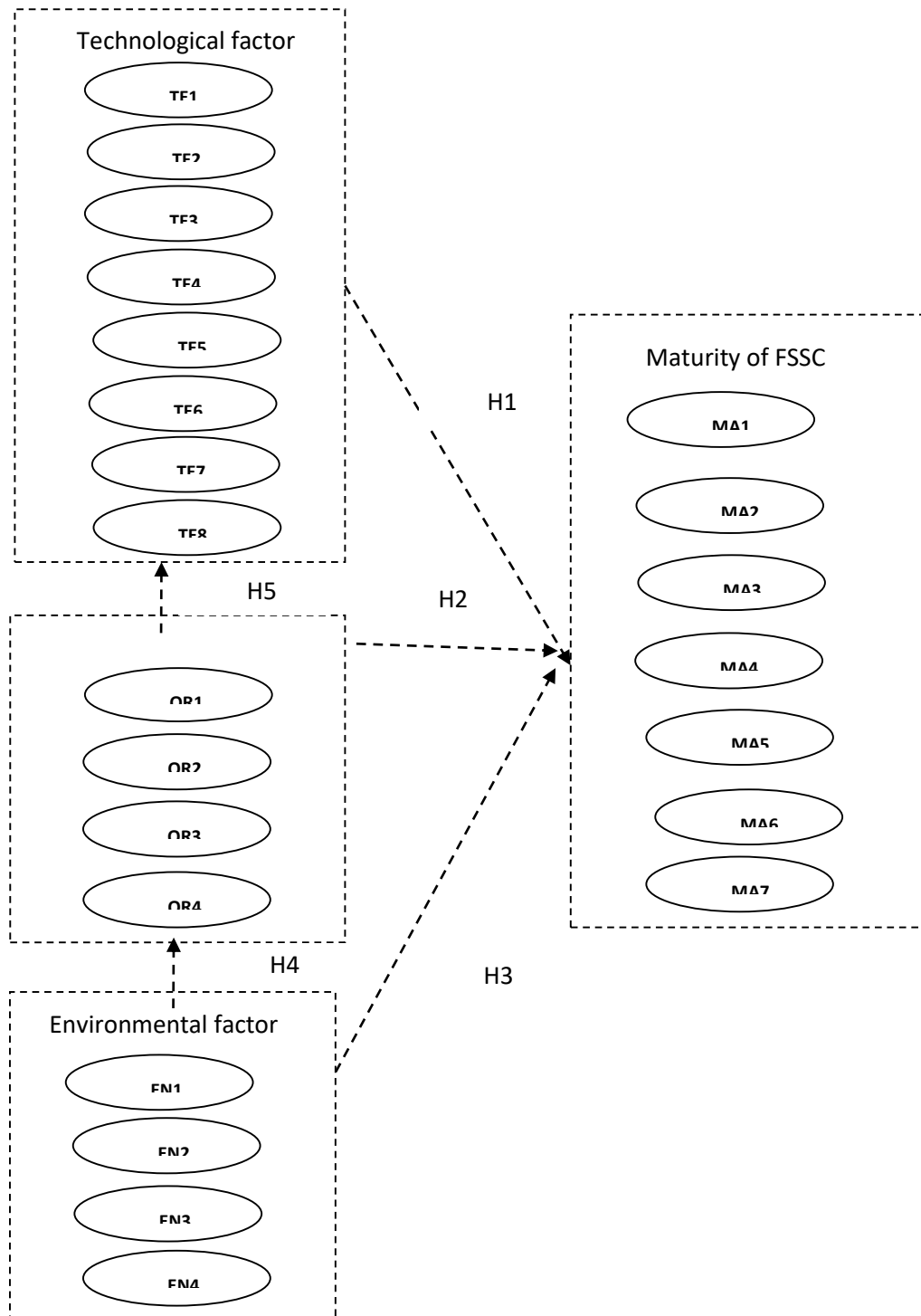


Figure 1: *Estimated Structural model*

4. Data analysis and results: Construct validity was established in this study by establishing factor loading, Cronbachs'alpha, convergent validity and discriminate validity. The data collected through questionnaire was analyzed, using SPSS 25, for estimation of the Cronbachs'alpha, factor analysis. SEM (AMOS Software Package, which is available on SPSS platform) was used to carry out the confirmatory factory analysis (CFA), the interrelationships/structural relationships between the different factors and for testing the hypotheses of the conceptual model.

4.1. Facts of the sample enterprises: Of the 91 companies that have FSSC, 67 of them have undergone the establishment of FSSC, while 24 have just started the practice. Respondents comes from different industry,

most are from the manufacturing industry (24%). As to the ownership, most are SOE (42%), others are private enterprise, foreign firms, joint ventures, etc. Size of the companies varies, most are in the range of 100M-10Billion turnovers. See table 4 for details.

Table 4: Facts of the Samples

| Item | Category | Samples(no) | | % | |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| | | established | starter | established | starter |
| Industry | Manufacture | 22 | 14 | 24% | 33% |
| | Wholesaler and Retailer | 12 | 4 | 13% | 9% |
| | IT | 9 | 4 | 10% | 9% |
| | Finance | 7 | 5 | 8% | 12% |
| | Transportation | 4 | 3 | 4% | 7% |
| | Real estate | 7 | 0 | 8% | 0% |
| | Scientific research and technology services | 3 | 3 | 3% | 7% |
| | Utilities | 5 | 1 | 5% | 2% |
| | Others | 22 | 9 | 24% | 21% |
| Ownership | State owned | 38 | 16 | 42% | 37% |
| | Private | 31 | 19 | 34% | 44% |
| | Foreign | 20 | 3 | 22% | 7% |
| | Joint Venture | 1 | 5 | 1% | 12% |
| | collectively owned | 1 | 0 | 1% | 0 |
| Industry | | established | starter | established | starter |
| | Manufacture | 22 | 14 | 24% | 33% |
| | Wholesaler and Retailer | 12 | 4 | 13% | 9% |
| | IT | 9 | 4 | 10% | 9% |
| | Finance | 7 | 5 | 8% | 12% |
| | Transportation | 4 | 3 | 4% | 7% |
| | Real estate | 7 | 0 | 8% | 0% |
| | Scientific research and technology services | 3 | 3 | 3% | 7% |
| | Utilities | 5 | 1 | 5% | 2% |
| Revenues | Others | 22 | 9 | 24% | 21% |
| | Foreign | 20 | 3 | 22% | 7% |
| | Joint Venture | 1 | 5 | 1% | 12% |
| | collectively owned | 1 | 0 | 1% | 0 |
| | Less than 50 Million | 2 | 7 | 2% | 16% |
| | 50M-100M | 4 | 5 | 4% | 12% |
| | 100M-1000M | 20 | 19 | 22% | 44% |
| | 100M-10 billion | 31 | 10 | 34% | 23% |
| | 10 billion -50billion | 11 | 2 | 12% | 5% |
| 50 billion -100 billion | 11 | 0 | 12% | 0% | |
| Item | Category | Samples(no) | | % | |
| | | established | starter | established | starter |
| Industry | Manufacture | 22 | 14 | 24% | 33% |
| | Wholesaler and Retailer | 12 | 4 | 13% | 9% |
| | IT | 9 | 4 | 10% | 9% |
| | Finance | 7 | 5 | 8% | 12% |
| | Transportation | 4 | 3 | 4% | 7% |
| | Real estate | 7 | 0 | 8% | 0% |
| | Scientific research and technology services | 3 | 3 | 3% | 7% |
| | Utilities | 5 | 1 | 5% | 2% |
| | Others | 22 | 9 | 24% | 21% |
| | 100 billion -500 billion | 7 | 0 | 8% | 0% |
| | More than 500 billion | 5 | 0 | 5% | 0% |

IT application rate is higher in companies with FSSC than in companies without FSSC. Technology that have greater application include electronic invoice (70%), visualization (62%), and big data (53%). New technology, such as RPA, cloud computing enjoy higher adoption rate in FSSC.

4.2 Descriptive analysis of Lantern Variables: As seen from table 5, standard errors of variables range between 0-1.3, most have absolute value of skewness and kurtosis value under 1, indicating that values are reasonable. The overall sample data approximately conforms to the normal assumption, indicating that SEM is proper for further analysis.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics for latent variables

| Items | Min | Max | Average | Std Err | skewness | kurtosis |
|-------|-----|-----|---------|---------|----------|----------|
| MA1 | 1 | 5 | 3.82 | 0.94 | -0.71 | 0.13 |
| MA2 | 1 | 5 | 3.88 | 0.81 | -0.66 | 0.91 |
| MA3 | 1 | 5 | 3.46 | 0.89 | -0.37 | -0.30 |
| MA4 | 1 | 5 | 3.07 | 1.25 | -0.26 | -0.95 |
| MA5 | 1 | 5 | 3.25 | 1.14 | -0.38 | -0.44 |
| MA6 | 1 | 5 | 3.43 | 1.10 | -0.41 | -0.64 |
| MA7 | 1 | 5 | 3.64 | 0.97 | -0.84 | 0.43 |
| TE1 | 1 | 5 | 4.08 | 0.96 | -0.83 | 0.06 |
| TE2 | 1 | 5 | 3.92 | 1.04 | -0.68 | -0.46 |
| TE3 | 1 | 5 | 4.29 | 0.82 | -1.32 | 2.32 |
| TE4 | 1 | 5 | 3.97 | 0.94 | -1.05 | 1.45 |
| TE5 | 1 | 5 | 3.90 | 0.96 | -0.85 | 0.56 |
| TE6 | 1 | 5 | 3.70 | 0.99 | -0.76 | 0.34 |
| TE7 | 1 | 5 | 3.07 | 1.19 | -0.13 | -0.78 |
| TE8 | 1 | 5 | 2.86 | 1.24 | 0.10 | -0.95 |
| OR1 | 1 | 5 | 3.75 | 0.99 | -0.85 | 0.50 |
| OR2 | 1 | 5 | 4.13 | 0.77 | -1.11 | 2.43 |
| OR3 | 1 | 5 | 3.79 | 0.97 | -0.68 | 0.21 |
| OR4 | 1 | 5 | 3.53 | 0.99 | -0.25 | -0.40 |
| EN1 | 1 | 5 | 2.79 | 1.01 | -0.15 | -0.43 |
| EN2 | 1 | 5 | 3.38 | 1.00 | -0.51 | 0.30 |
| EN3 | 1 | 5 | 3.76 | 1.04 | -0.90 | 0.54 |
| EN4 | 1 | 5 | 3.66 | 0.95 | -0.47 | 0.08 |

4.3 Appropriateness of FA: Using Kaiser-Meyer- Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett’s test of sphericity, we test the sampling adequacy (Fox and Skitmore 2007). Results is shown in table 6. Value of KMO ranges from 0 and 1, the higher the value of KMO, the better .As a rule of thumb, The KMO value should be higher than the acceptable threshold of 0.6 for a satisfactory for factor analysis. As to the study, KMO values of four variables are all higher than 0.6. Bartlett's Test has been passed, indicating appropriateness for further analysis.

Table 6: KMO and Bartlett's Test

| Variables | KMO value | Bartlett 's Test of Sphericity | | |
|---------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|----|---------|
| | | Chi-Square | df | P value |
| <i>Technology</i> | 0.874 | 569.138 | 28 | 0.000 |
| <i>Organization</i> | 0.786 | 154.955 | 6 | 0.000 |
| <i>Environment</i> | 0.666 | 62.711 | 6 | 0.000 |
| <i>Maturity</i> | 0.830 | 363.236 | 21 | 0.000 |

Result of factor analysis is given in table 7 . Factor loading are coherent (initial eigenvalues are all greater than 1), resulting into three factor with 67.271% of the total variance explained.

Table 7: Total Variance Explained

| Factor | Initial Eigenvalues | | | Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings | | | rotated Sums of Squared Loadings | | |
|--------|---------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % |
| 1 | 7.536 | 47.102 | 47.102 | 7.536 | 47.102 | 47.102 | 4.759 | 29.746 | 29.746 |
| 2 | 2.005 | 12.529 | 59.631 | 2.005 | 12.529 | 59.631 | 3.423 | 21.395 | 51.140 |
| 3 | 1.222 | 7.640 | 67.271 | 1.222 | 7.640 | 67.271 | 2.581 | 16.131 | 67.271 |

According to the result of factor load coefficient after rotation, the factor attribution of each measurement item can be further judged. Generally, the factor load coefficient is greater than 0.5. As can be seen from Table 8, except for TE7 and TE8, the load coefficients of the remaining items of Technology are all greater than 0.5, and can be attributed to factor 1. The load coefficients of the four measurement items of Organization are all greater than 0.5, hence they can all be attributed to factor 2. For the measurement items of Environment, only EN1 and EN2 have load coefficients greater than 0.5 under factor 3 and can be attributed to factor 3. From the above analysis, it can be seen that the load coefficients of the items TE7, TE8, EN3 and EN4 under the corresponding factors do not meet the standards, so these items are eliminated from the model.

Table 8: Factor Load Coefficient after Rotation

| Items | Factor Load Coefficient after Rotation | | |
|-------|--|----------|----------|
| | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 |
| TE3 | 0.881 | | |
| TE5 | 0.852 | | |
| TE2 | 0.828 | | |
| TE4 | 0.777 | | |
| TE6 | 0.759 | | 0.351 |
| TE1 | 0.741 | | |
| OR3 | | 0.771 | |
| OR4 | | 0.769 | 0.326 |
| OR2 | 0.442 | 0.735 | |
| EN3 | | 0.721 | 0.361 |
| OR1 | | 0.659 | 0.331 |
| EN4 | | 0.526 | |
| TE8 | 0.392 | | 0.745 |
| TE7 | 0.464 | | 0.706 |
| EN1 | | | 0.689 |
| EN2 | | | 0.656 |

4.4 Assessing Validity and Reliability of the Constructs of the Measurement Model: Cronbach α was used to indicate the internal validity of the constructs. Cronbach alpha indicates the internal validity of the constructs. As the rule of thumb a value above 0.8 infers good reliability. As shown in table 9, Cronbach α for Technology, Organization and Maturity are 0.923、0.849、0.893, respectively, all are higher than 0.8, indicating a good level of validity. Cronbach α for (Environment) is 0.678, greater than 0.6, which is still acceptable. With the value of CITC which are all greater than 0.4 indicating a good relation among the items. So the text of validity is passed.

Table9: Test of Internal Validity of the Construct

| Variables | Items | CICT | Cronbach α with deleted items | Cronbach α |
|--------------|-------|-------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Technology | TE1 | 0.669 | 0.923 | 0.923 |
| | TE2 | 0.853 | 0.898 | |
| | TE3 | 0.828 | 0.904 | |
| | TE4 | 0.752 | 0.912 | |
| | TE5 | 0.815 | 0.904 | |
| | TE6 | 0.772 | 0.910 | |
| Organization | OR1 | 0.686 | 0.811 | 0.849 |
| | OR2 | 0.725 | 0.803 | |
| | OR3 | 0.665 | 0.819 | |
| | OR4 | 0.703 | 0.803 | |
| Environment | EN1 | 0.513 | - | 0.678 |
| | EN2 | 0.513 | - | |
| Maturity | MA1 | 0.665 | 0.881 | 0.893 |
| | MA2 | 0.722 | 0.877 | |
| | MA3 | 0.711 | 0.877 | |
| | MA4 | 0.705 | 0.879 | |
| | MA5 | 0.748 | 0.871 | |
| | MA6 | 0.657 | 0.883 | |
| | MA7 | 0.700 | 0.877 | |

4.5 Test of Convergent and Discriminant validity: Table 9 shows the results of factor loading. From table 10, it can be seen that except for EN1, loading factors of all other items are greater than 0.7 and significant, indicating a good fit of items and factors.

Table10: Factor Loading

| Latern variables | Items | Std err | Std loading factors | P- |
|------------------|-------|---------|---------------------|-------|
| (Technology) | TE1 | - | 0.702 | - |
| | TE2 | 0.17 | 0.884 | 0.000 |
| | TE3 | 0.134 | 0.875 | 0.000 |
| | TE4 | 0.154 | 0.804 | 0.000 |
| | TE5 | 0.157 | 0.85 | 0.000 |
| | TE6 | 0.161 | 0.805 | 0.000 |
| (Organization) | OR1 | - | 0.773 | - |
| | OR2 | 0.107 | 0.828 | 0.000 |
| | OR3 | 0.134 | 0.735 | 0.000 |
| | OR4 | 0.136 | 0.745 | 0.000 |
| (Environment) | EN1 | - | 0.535 | - |
| | EN2 | 0.584 | 0.958 | 0.000 |

Further, AVE and CR measures are used for test. To test the reliability of the constructs , composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) are used. To achieve convergent validity, the factor loadings and composite reliability (CR) should be greater than 0.7 and average variance extracted (AVE) of the constructs should be greater than 0.50 Table 11 shows the result.

Table 11: AVE and CR for the construct

| Variables (factors) | Average Variance Extracted: AVE | composite reliability:CR |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| (Technology) | 0.675 | 0.925 |
| (Organization) | 0.585 | 0.849 |
| (Environment) | 0.600 | 0.735 |

For test of Discriminant validity, compare the square root of AVE with the correlation of the factors. If square root of AVE is greater than the correlation, then a good Discriminant validity exists. Table 12 shows the results. The highlighted value are squared root value of AVE. It can be seen that all squared root value are greater than the correlation.

Table 12: Pearson Correlation and AVE Squared Root Value

| | (Technology) | (Organization) | (Environment) |
|----------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| (Technology) | 0.822 | | |
| (Organization) | 0.554 | 0.765 | |
| (Environment) | 0.333 | 0.449 | 0.775 |

4.6 SEM analysis:

4.6.1 Assessing Model Fitness:

Table 13 show the indices of goodness for fit for the first round. Chi square per degrees of freedom (χ^2/df) was used to test the fitness of the model, For the model to be acceptable, the value should be in the range of 1-3. Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) should be close to 0. A value less than 0.10 is still acceptable. Goodness of Fit index (GFI), Comparison fit index (CFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Tucker-Lewis Coefficient (TLI), Incremental fit index (IFI) can also be used for the test. A value closer to 1 infers goodness of fit. Normally, value above 0.90 infers acceptable of the construct. For the model to be acceptable, all goodness-of-fit indices should be greater than 0.9 and RMSEA should be less than 0.10. For the proposed model, χ^2/df is less than the observed data of 3, while value of other indices do not meet the acceptable criteria. Further revision of the model is necessary.

Table 13 : Goodness of Fit Indices for Estimated Model

| Indices | χ^2 | χ^2/df | RMSEA | GFI | CFI | NFI | TLI | IFI |
|---------|----------|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Norm | - | 1~3 | <0.10 | >0.90 | >0.90 | >0.90 | >0.90 | >0.90 |
| Value | 286.465 | 1.949 | 0.103 | 0.736 | 0.881 | 0.786 | 0.861 | 0.883 |

MI (Modification Index) was used. For the first trial, we choose path one (m4<---->m5), which has a larger MI, the result shows some improvement, yet the construct is still not acceptable. So we have a further trial, constructing a second path of t3<---->o2. Result of the goodness of fit indices are shown in table 14. Value of χ^2/df , RMSEA, CFI, IFI meet the acceptable norm, while value of GFI, NFI, TLI are a little higher than the norm. As the size of the study is not large, the model is still acceptable.

Table 14 : Goodness of Fit Indices for modified model (two paths added)

| Indices | χ^2 | χ^2/df | RMSEA | GFI | CFI | NFI | TLI | IFI |
|---------|----------|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Norm | - | 1~3 | <0.10 | >0.90 | >0.90 | >0.90 | >0.90 | >0.90 |
| Value | 259.191 | 1.788 | 0.094 | 0.771 | 0.902 | 0.807 | 0.885 | 0.905 |

Further analysis of the two path added are given, to test the reasonability of the modified model. M4, m5 are the residual errors of MA4 and MA5, two items of the maturity of FSSC. M4 test the customer orientation of FSSC. A customer orientated FSSC normally emphasize the customer relationship, hoping to increase the satisfaction and royalty of customers. These two are the performance measures usually embedded in the performance management system. The more customer oriented, the better performance management and vice versa. t3 is the residual error of the item of technological factor T3, ie the company has continuously maintenance of IT equipment. o2 is the residual error of the item of technological factor O2, ie the top managers deem it necessary to implement FSS to optimize the finance process. When the managers pay more attention to the implementation of the company's FSSC, they will support the IT adoption. As a result, continuously maintenance of IT system will be necessary, and vice versa.

It is economically reasonable for the two paths to exist.
The revised SEM is show in figure 3

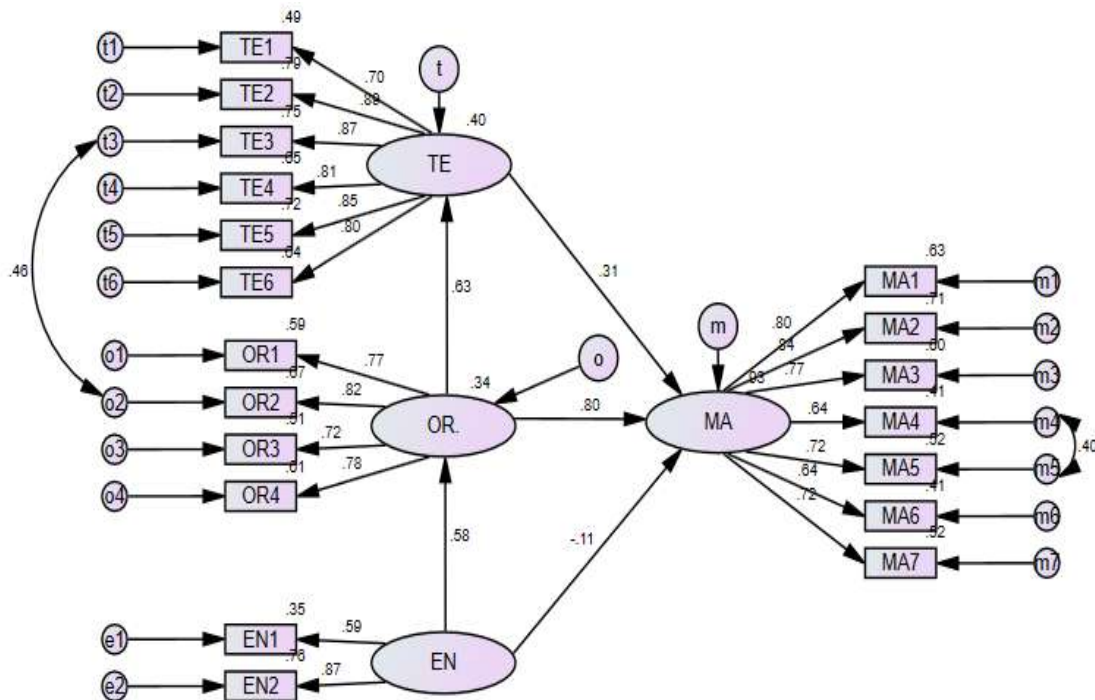


Figure 3 : Modified SEM

4.6.2 Hypotheses testing:

SEM is used to test the relationship of the Hypothesis. Results are shown in table 15. All except for H3 have been tested. Either technology or organizational factor has positive effect on Maturity of FSSC. Environmental factors have no significant impact on the maturity of FSSC ($r=-0.111$, $p=0.313$). A negative value of CR value shows that the policies or industry pressure does not have Substantive effects on maturity of FSSC. Hypotheses3 is not supported. Possible reasons may be the ownership structure of the sample companies. Of the 91 samples, 53(58%) has no state capital. Compared to SOE, these companies are less Sensitive to governmental policies. Supporting polices are most often targeted at SOE, practice of FSSC are required to be adopted by large SOEs first. As to None SOEs' the effect is not significant. Interrelationship between variables are tested too.H4 and H5 are supported. It is also implied that environmental factor have impacts on organizational and technological factor, so it has indirect effect on FSSC.

Table 15: Results of Hypothesis Testing based on modified SEM model

| Hypothesized path /Structuralrelationship | Standardized Estimates | C.R.Valu e | P Value | Is hypothesisSupported? |
|---|------------------------|------------|---------|-------------------------|
| Technology→ Maturity | 0.305 | 3.358 | *** | supported |
| Organization→ Maturity | 0.799 | 5.724 | *** | supported |
| Environment→ Maturity | -0.111 | -1.009 | 0.313 | Not supported |
| Environment→ Organization | 0.582 | 3.192 | 0.001 | supported |
| Organization→ Technology | 0.635 | 5.211 | *** | supported |

: *** significant on 0.001 level.

Effects of latent variables on maturity of FSSC are summarized in Table 16. The total effect of organizational factors on the maturity of FSSC is the greatest (0.993), with direct effect of 0.799 and indirect effect of 0.194 (by impacting the technology factor). Though environmental factor does not have direct effect, it has indirect effect (0.578) through impacts on organization and technology.

Table 16: Direct Effects/Indirect Effects and Total Effects of the Constructs

| Constructs | direct effects | Indirect effects | Total effects |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Technology→ Maturity | 0.305 | 0.000 | 0.305 |
| Organization→ Maturity | 0.799 | 0.194 | 0.993 |
| Environment→ Maturity | 0.000 | 0.578 | 0.578 |

5. Conclusions and Recommendations: It is recognized that the establishment of FSSC leads to increase of efficiency and cutting of the cost in the finance function. In the age of digital economy, FSSC has gained great popularity. However, the maturity level varies and on average, many companies are still in the beginning phase of implementing FSSC. To succeed in the future, companies should not only focus on the technology nature of the service. Impacting factors and the interrelationship among them should be emphasized. In the paper, based on the TOE model and the maturity model of FSSC, the authors analyzed the data collected from a questionnaire, using SEM. The results suggest that both technology and organizational conditions have positive effects on the maturity level of FSSC. The external environmental factors do not have direct impacts on the implementation of FSSC, however, it has indirect effects through the impact on technology and organizational conditions of the firms. In addition to that, the organizational condition has the greatest effects on FSSC establishment. It is recommended that companies should focus the organizational conditions and have proper strategy plan for the business transformation, rather than taking the FSSC implementation as a practice by the finance function alone. Keep a keen eye on the environmental factors, especially the policies, trends of best practice in FSSC may help the companies to reevaluate their digital strategy and push their digitalization of finance function to a deep level. Due to time limit, the size of the sample in the study is not large, yet with the validity, the conclusions are reasonable.

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Marketing of Organic Products: A Case Study of the Sampran Model

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Abstract: Green products commonly offer potential benefits to the environment and human health, which consumer preferences have forced sustainability-oriented firms to shift their focus to producing green products increase. This study investigated the organic or green product distribution channels and marketing strategies of organic vegetable farmers. Survey research with a simple random sampling technique was conducted using 120 Sampran Model Project farmers in Nakhon Pathom province, Thailand. The data were processed and analyzed using a statistical package for the social sciences. The results revealed: 1) 3.50% of the farmers sold organic products via each channel at a high level; and 2) 43.30% of the farmers had no promotion marketing strategy for selling organic products, while 27.50% used a price reduction strategy, and 9.00% used a price reduction strategy with a bonus product/gift, 7.00% applied a price reduction strategy when customers purchased in large quantities, and 7.00% applied a price reduction strategy when customers purchased a specified amount with free shipping, 3.00% used a promotion strategy, such as a sale, exchange, distribution, and giveaway; and 4) the rest of the strategies consisted of reward points collection (0.80%), 10% discount when customers purchased in bulk (0.80%), if customers purchased a specified amount they could visit the farm (0.80%), and a free trial (0.80%).

Keywords: Green product, Marketing, Marketing strategy, Organic products, Sampran Model

1. Introduction: Green products are products which are biodegradable, non-toxic, eco-friendly and can be recycled (Ying-Ching and Chang, 2012). The demands for green products have been exponential growth coincided with the environmental awakening of the consumer, especially in the last 14 years period of 2006–2019 (Bhardwaj et al., 2020). As a consequence, green products also have created a new market known as green market. Marketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and values with others (Kotler et al., 2007), with issues related to the environment being the most common problem, requiring considerable effort to find desirable options. Nowadays, consumers in the market are more concerned about the environment. According to Chaudhary et al. (2011), “Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe”. Many health enthusiasts are focused on how the ills of the environment have consequences for individual health. They pay a premium for safer products, such as organic food, because they are worried about the long-term effects of pesticides (The Center for Green Industries and Sustainable Business Growth, 2014). The Sampran Model is a project to motivate Thai farmers to become involved in a sustainable business model based on the sufficiency economy policy regarding 3 aspects of sustainable development: 1) stimulating farmers to leave their comfort zone and become independent farmers; 2) fostering collective leadership for change to be inter-independent, involving empowerment to become entrepreneurs, where middlemen are encouraged to embrace inclusive business principles and consumers are engaged to be more active (Navaraj, n.d.); and 3) building a network based on a public-private-partnership (PPP). Therefore, this

research aimed to study the organic or green product distribution channels and marketing strategies of organic vegetable farmers regarding the future of organic agriculture is considered to be not only promising by extensionist, but it also requires support in structured marketing (Papadaki-Klavdianou et al., 2003).

2. Materials and methods:

2.1 The study area: The study was conducted in Samphran District, Nakhon Pathom Province, Central Thailand (Fig.1).

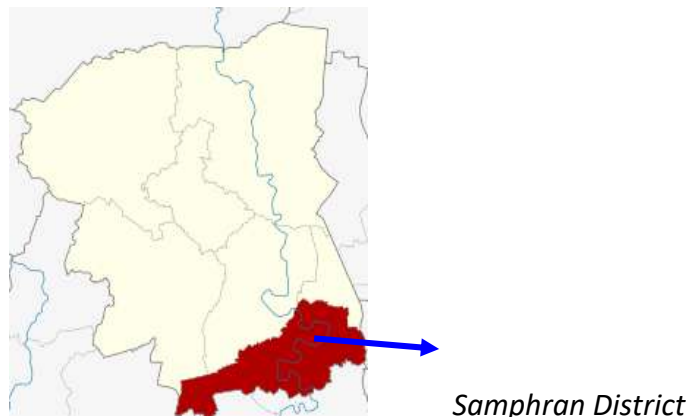


Fig.1: Map of Samphran District of Nakhon Pathom Province, Thailand

2.2 Data collection procedure: In total, 170 farmers joined in applying the Sampran Model for the distribution of organic agricultural products during 2021 in Nakhon Pathom province. The sample size at the 95% confidence level with a degree of variability of 5% was determined to represent a true population based on equation 1:

$$n = N / (1 + N (e^2)) \quad (1)$$

Where; n is Sample size, N is Population size and e is Allowable error (e = 0.05).

The associated sample size based on equation (1) for the intensity of organic production in Nakhon Pathom province was 120, which was selected randomly using probability proportional to size according to Yamane (1967).

2.3 Method of data analysis: The study was based on primary data and was confined to Nakhon Pathom province, Thailand. The data consisted of information on organic production, such as the total organic farming area and the number of family members engaged in organic production. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire.

3. Results:

3.1 Socio-economic characteristics of organic production farmers: The socio-economic characteristics of organic production farmers in the study area consisted of gender, age, years of schooling, experience in organic production, and number of family members that were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results are presented in Table 1. Of the respondents, 37.50% were male organic production farmers in the Sampran Model project, while 62.50% were female, similar to the figures reported by Katepan et al. (2020). Based on age classification, 38.30% were aged 40–49 years, while 11.70% of the respondents were older than 60 years. This reflects a young farming population, in contrast to Idowu (1989), who reported the farming population was ageing. Regarding the period of education for the organic production farmers, 27.50% of the respondents had 16 years of schooling, while about 20.00% 6 years. Thus, 31.70% of the respondents had one form of formal education, indicating that the organic production farmers in Nakhon Pathom province had a similar level of education as reported by Gabriel et al. (2006). For 81.00% of the respondents, their monthly income was in the range THB 10,001–50,000, with 10.00% having less than THB 10,000, 6.00% had THB 50,001–90,000, and 3.00% had more than THB 90,000. The farmer who received the highest income had the largest organic farming area (8.00 rai). The number of family members of respondents was in the range 1–9, with a mean of 4.50. The number of family members of respondents who were engaged in organic production was 1–8, with a mean of 2.10

Table 1: Socio-Economic Characteristics of Organic Production Farmers in Sampran Model Project

| Characteristics | % | Mean | Min | Max |
|---|-------|------|------|------|
| Gender | | | | |
| Male | 37.50 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| Female | 62.50 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| Age (years) | | | | |
| < 30 | 5.80 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| 30 - 39 | 15.80 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| 40 - 49 | 38.30 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| 50 - 59 | 26.70 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| > 60 | 11.70 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| No. of schooling year (years) | | | | |
| 0 - 6 | 20.00 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| 7 - 9 | 11.70 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| 10 - 12 | 19.20 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| 14 | 7.50 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| 15 | 10.00 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| 16 | 27.50 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| > 16 | 4.10 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| Total of organic farming area (rai) | n.a. | 1.30 | 0.25 | 8.00 |
| Income (THB. /month) | | | | |
| < 10,000 | 10.00 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| 10,001-50,000 | 81.00 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| 50,001-90,000 | 6.00 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| > 90,000 | 3.00 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| Number of family members (Person/household) | n.a. | 4.50 | 1.00 | 9.00 |
| Number of family members per household engaged in production | n.a. | 2.10 | 1.00 | 8.00 |

(Source: Computed by the authors from field survey data, 2021)

n.a. = not applicable; 1 rai = 0.16 ha

3.2 Opinions and marketing strategy of organic production farmers regarding distribution channels for organic products: Table 2 shows the opinions of organic production farmers in the Sampran Model Project regarding the distribution channels of organic products. Considering each item separately, 3.90% of the respondents concluded that Fanpage Facebook was an appropriate channel for selling organic products to consumers, 3.90% agreed that various applications (especially the Thai Organic Platform application) were suitable channels for selling organic products to consumers. 3.30% concluded that Line OA was a suitable channel for stores that want customers to easily inquire about the products and can chat with the shop immediately, 3.30% agreed that the store website was an appropriate channel for selling organic products to consumers, and finally, 3.10% agreed that Instagram was an appropriate channel for selling products to consumers, because Thai consumers like to see product details in pictures. Overall, the organic production farmers concluded that each channel was important for selling organic products at a high level, with a total average of 3.50%.

Table 2: Opinions of Organic Production Farmers in Sampran Model Project Regarding Distribution Channels for Organic Products

| Topics | Min | Max | Mean | Priority |
|---|-----|-----|------|----------|
| 1. Fanpage on Facebook is an appropriate channel for selling organic products to consumers. | 2 | 5 | 3.90 | High |
| 2. Instagram is an appropriate channel for selling products to consumers, regarding Thai people like to see product details through pictures. | 0 | 5 | 3.10 | Medium |
| 3. Line OA is a suitable channel for stores that want customers to easily inquire about the products, regarding can chat with the shop immediately. | 0 | 5 | 3.30 | Medium |
| 4. The store website is an appropriate channel for selling organic products to consumers. The dealer has its own website. | 0 | 5 | 3.30 | Medium |
| 5. Various applications, especially the Thai Organic Platform application, are suitable channels for selling organic products to consumers. | 0 | 5 | 3.90 | High |

| | | | | |
|--------------|--|--|-------------|-------------|
| Total | | | 3.50 | High |
|--------------|--|--|-------------|-------------|

(Source: Computed by the authors from field survey data, 2021)

The survey of marketing strategies for selling organic products of farmers in the Sampran Model Project showed that 50.80% of the respondents had knowledge about organic products at the moderate level, with 42.50% being knowledgeable enough to answer questions about organic products, and 6.70% had no knowledge of organic products at all (Table 3).

Table 3: Knowledge of Selling Organic Products

| Topics | Frequency | % |
|---|------------------|---------------|
| 1. Knowledgeable enough to answer questions about organic products. | 51 | 42.50 |
| 2. Moderate knowledge of organic products. | 61 | 50.80 |
| 3. No knowledge of organic products at all. | 8 | 6.70 |
| Total | 120 | 100.00 |

(Source: Computed by the authors from field survey data, 2021)

Table 4 shows the promotion strategies adopted for selling organic products, with 43.30% of respondents having no promotion strategy, 27.50% used a price reduction strategy, and 9.00% used a price reduction strategy with bonus product/gift. Furthermore, 7.00% used a price reduction strategy for customers purchasing large quantities, 7.00% applied a price reduction strategy for customers purchasing a specified amount with free shipping. In addition, 3.0% of the farmers used a promotion strategy, such as sale, exchange, distribution, and giveaway. The remaining strategies consisted of a 10% discount for customers purchasing in bulk (0.80%), using a reward points system (0.80%), customers purchasing a specified amount could visit the farmer's farm (0.8%), and a free trial (0.8%).

Table 4: Promotion Strategies for Selling Organic Products

| Topics | Frequency | % |
|---|------------------|---------------|
| 1. 10% discount when customers purchased in bulk. | 1 | 0.80 |
| 2. Price reduction strategy. | 33 | 27.50 |
| 3. No promotion strategy. | 52 | 43.30 |
| 4. Price reduction strategy with bonus product/gift. | 11 | 9.00 |
| 5. Promotion strategy, such as a sale, exchange, distribution, or giveaway. | 4 | 3.00 |
| 6. Price reduction strategy for customers purchasing large quantities. | 8 | 7.00 |
| 7. Price reduction strategy for customers purchasing a specified amount with free shipping. | 8 | 7.00 |
| 8. Reward points collection. | 1 | 0.80 |
| 9. Customers purchasing a specified amount can visit the farmer's farm. | 1 | 0.80 |
| 10. Free trial strategy. | 1 | 0.80 |
| Total | 120 | 100.00 |

(Source: Computed by the authors from field survey data, 2021)

Discussion: Farmers in the Sampran Model Project had many marketing channels, including Fanpage, Facebook, Instagram, Line OA, the store website, and a Thai Organic Platform application. In addition, they should consider using a TikTok channel to present their story and to market their products because the number of Thai people using TikTok has substantially increased and it is not only used for entertainment, but also for promoting, selling, and advertising products and services along with the other channels of social online platforms, as was reported by Settachan (2021).

Conclusions and recommendations: This study on the distribution channels and marketing strategies of organic vegetable farmers regarding organic or green products found that 3.50% of farmers sold organic products via each channel at a high level. The organic products of the Sampran Model Project were very popular because their quality met the market demand. The study results indicated that most organic production farmers (43.30%) could sell their organic products with no promotion similar with Ferraz et al. (2017). The most popular

marketing strategies were a price reduction (27.50%) and applying a price reduction strategy with a bonus product/gift (9.00%), respectively. A recommendation was that the farmers in the Sampran Model Project should consider the age and gender of potential customers when choosing a marketing strategy because these demographic factors affect purchase response, causing consumers to buy more or less.

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An Analysis of the Impact of Goods and Services Tax (GST) and its Compliance in Sierra Leone (National Revenue Authority)



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Abstract: This study analyzes the effects of (GST) and how well it is being implemented in Sierra Leone (National Revenue Authority). Both International Monetary Fund and the government recommended the implementation of GST in Sierra Leone. GST replaces all previous taxes, including domestic sales tax, import sales tax, entertainment tax, hotel room tax, restaurant tax, food tax, message tax, and professional services tax. The objectives of the study are as follows: to research how GST impacts the Sierra Leone economy, to know if GST implementation will lead to an increase in prices of goods and services; to assess the GST compliance rate in Sierra Leone; and to know the reasons for GST implementation in Sierra Leone. The data collection method is based on primary sources as well as the website of the national revenue authority, newspapers, and published articles. The study's participants were 89 employees of the National Revenue Authority and business owners in Sierra Leone from 2021 to 2023. The questions were evaluated using SPSS in the form of descriptive analysis, chart, and correlation analysis. The results showed that implementation has positive effects on the Sierra Leone Economy. The introduction of GST is to boost revenue and promote economic growth in Sierra Leone. GST introduction in Sierra Leone has resulted in increased prices of goods and services, and the country's compliance with tax is only moderately high. It is recommended that the national revenue authority should provide tax education and awareness and provide availability and accessibility of technological infrastructure for GST implementation in the country.

Keywords: Goods and services tax, National revenue authority, price, implementation, compliance

1. Introduction: Goods and services Tax is single tax that applied to the provision of goods and services. It's also the types of tax on the consumer. In other nations, including the United Kingdom, Finland, and Canada, GST is sometimes referred to as value-added tax (VAT). More than 146 nations, including Australia, Hong Kong, and Singapore, have introduced the GST as a revenue-generating measure. i.e., the range is between 5 percent and 24 percent. Every link in the supply chain for products and services, from the producer to the consumer, will be responsible for paying for them. GST is a type of "consumption tax" on goods and services (Guna & Anuradha, 2021). Taxes paid on the acquisition of goods or services, whether they are intended for resale or the creation or manufacture of a new product, are used as credits to reduce the tax that must be paid on the sale of such products. This procedure will be followed each time the aforementioned commodities are transferred, whether they are in their original form or a new one. According to Hakim et al., (2016), the goods and services tax's implementation has certain possible flaws and may actually have a detrimental effect on emerging nations' levels of efficiency. Sierra Leone also faces numerous obstacles, including difficulty getting funding and a high

goods and services Tax (GST) burden. In 2003, National Revenue Authority of Sierra Leone (NRA-SL) was created to improve revenue collection in accordance with IMF recommendations. The NRA administers domestic taxes, customs charges, and other taxes. After the NRA was formed, revenue collections improved, and the adoption of GST that was advised by IMF along with Sierra Leone government brought GST into effect. GST became active in January 2010 instead of the originally scheduled date of March 1. Domestic sales tax, import sales tax, entertainment tax, hotel accommodation tax, restaurant tax, food tax, message tax, and professional services tax are all replaced by GST. If a business's taxable sales exceed a certain threshold, it must register for goods and services tax. Sierra Leone GST system was established with the goal of developing a tax structure that will be straightforward and effective for all parties with the least amount of negative effects on business operations. Also, GST registration requirements are expected to be met by only the top 20% of enterprises in Sierra Leone, streamlining the country's tax structure. Due to the ease of use and understanding of the system, the cost of compliance for enterprises that meet the registration requirement should be as low as possible. Taxpayers who have registered for GST will function as agents and tax collectors, enabling the system to be self-policing. A simple approach would lower the number of NRA employees needed and government expenses. It is a blessing that, GST has been implemented in Sierra Leone. It has a lot of advantages that make it an alluring method for increasing tax revenue there.

1.1 Statement of the problem: Despite the fact that introduction of GST in September 1, 2009, was the largest global tax reform in decades, Sierra Leone has made only modest preparations. The implementation of goods and services tax will increase economic activity, which will in turn promote the production of products and services and lead to national economic growth.

1.2 Objectives of the research: •To know how GST impacts Sierra Leone economy.

- To know if GST implementation will increase prices of goods and services
- To assess GST compliance rate in Sierra Leone.
- To know the reasons for GST implementation in Sierra Leone.

2. Literature Review:

2.1 Goods and services tax in Sierra Leone: Developing nations like Sierra Leone frequently struggle to generate domestic revenue for development. Researchers have suggested that one approach to resolving this problem is to expand the tax base. This is because it is necessary to build infrastructure, generate employment, lower unemployment, broaden productive economic sectors, and considerably increase public revenue from non-mining sectors. By following this process, tax policy should aim to put all taxable goods and services in a tax band with a progressive rate, and ensuring that the wealthiest pay their fair amount while providing incentives for low-income earners to save. The success of any nation should depend heavily on its ability to administer its tax systems effectively and efficiently (Tee et al., 2016). GST is a modernized version of a sales tax. It is paid at the time of importation, sale, exchange, or delivery as a proportion of the value of the products or services. Since September 1, 2009, goods and services delivered in Sierra Leone for domestic use are subject to a single rate of 15% products and services tax. Import sales tax, domestic sales tax, entertainment tax, restaurant and food tax, message tax, hotel accommodation tax, and professional services tax were replaced by GST in order to simplify the indirect tax system and lower administrative costs of National Revenue Authority (NRA).

2.2 Impacts of GST on Sierra Leone's Economy: Sierra Leone economy is likely to expand after the adoption of GST. However, macroeconomic advantages of introducing GST vastly exceed the disadvantages; it is also a significant step that signals to the world macroeconomic advantages of introducing goods and services tax, however, vastly exceed the disadvantages; it is also a significant step that signals to the world at large that we are committed to one route for economic advancement. One taxation system, GST, has taken the role of other indirect levies. Lowering the cost of products and services, enacting anti-profiteering regulations, and eliminating the indirect tax system's cascading effect may be able to reduce inflation. Consumers can anticipate nationwide uniformity in commodity costs. States would be less reliant on the federal government for funding if the central and state governments shared revenues equally. This might result in equal opportunities for state growth. States with a high consumer population will profit more from GST because it is a consumption-based destination tax. This would encourage industrial growth in poor nations. Due to the fact that resale homes and properties that are ready to be moved into will not be subject to the GST levy, the country's introduction of GST

will benefit the real estate sector. One option to diversify the government's revenue sources might be the implementation of GST. The government may keep earning money while enhancing its capacity to expand the economy and stabilize the nation. In addition, the introduction of GST might help the government boost national savings in order to prepare for inflation in the future. Governments all across the world need finance to increase income and cover rising expenses. The introduction of GST is part of large tax reform initiative designed to help Sierra Leone adapt to the internationally accepted tax structure and principles. It improves the nation's revenue performance and makes GST's collection of all indirect taxes simpler. Several indirect taxes are having a cascading impact in Sierra Leone (A. K. Kamara & Kamara, 2023). Taxes may increase the cost of capital and lessen investment incentives in the first channel. Economic growth will suffer if tax rates are raised because they deter investment. Taxes can also affect capital allocation by giving some industries preferential incentives, which lowers the productivity of all investment. Taxes also have an impact on total factor productivity, which has an impact on growth. Taxes cause resource allocation to lose efficiency and distort factor prices (Ferede & Dahlby, 2012). Taxes harm efficiency, which lowers overall production across the board. Taxes may have an impact on entrepreneurship, which has the potential to have an additional impact on total factor productivity. Goods and services tax supporters argue that the tax is necessary to reduce the federal government's deficit spending (Saira et al., 2010). In addition, it has been seen as a way to diversify the government's revenue sources. GST would be able to give the government a steady flow of income, enhancing its capacity to enhance public services and enhance economic stability. However, those who are opposed to this new tax reform claim that it will be difficult to implement GST and that higher tax revenues will only lead to higher government spending (Saira et al., 2010).

Kamara & Kamara, (2023) conducted research on the effect of GST on prices of goods and services in Odisha. The research identified benefits like ease of administration and enforcement, as well as the development of a national market. Nonetheless, the state governments of India receive compensation for any revenue losses brought on by the introduction of GST by the central authority. The research's conclusions were attained through the collection of secondary data. As a result of the adoption of the GST, India's tax GDP ratio will rise to 12% in 2020, and this indirect tax reform in India will enhance Indian economy because of the rising value of tax income. Few studies have looked at how the implementation of a national retail consumption tax will affect inflation. Nawi et al., (2020) investigation looked into how goods and services tax adoption affected the Malaysian stock market. From June 2009 to November 2016, the study looked at daily closing prices of Malaysian Stock Exchange and futures markets. Before the government adopted GST, they discovered that Malaysian stock market was less volatile than futures markets, and vice versa. They came to the conclusion that the implementation of goods and services tax increased the cost of goods and services while lowering household purchasing power. According to Gelardi, (2012), The implementation of a consumption tax would probably result in a one-time price increase in order to prevent an economic contraction. As a result, it's unclear what the impact of introducing a tax will be on national consumption. When a consumption tax replaces an income tax, it has been proposed that people typically start saving more and consume less. But, as time goes on, consumption finally surpasses that of the initial course, leading to increased consumption and a larger capital stock (Gelardi, 2012). Nawi et al., (2020) investigated the effects of GST on national growth in ASEAN member nations using a least squares dummy variable model. He added that seven of ASEAN's ten member countries had already implemented GST. He also asserted that final consumption expenditure for household and the general government are positively and significantly correlated with GDP. However, the post-GST modifications have different implications in different countries. Thailand and the Philippines both significantly hampered the development of their respective countries. Singapore, however, has a very favorable association. The empirical literature in industrialized nations demonstrates that taxes have a negative impact on GDP. Using panel data from 25 affluent OECD countries between 1975 and 2010, (Thaçi & Gërxhaliu, 2018) studied the link between corporate and personal income tax rates and economic growth. According to the research findings, taxes on company and individual income have a detrimental impact on economic growth. However, there is a significant link between corporate income tax and expansion of the economy. Mahammad Rafee & ., (2020) examined the impact of VAT and GST on customers and restaurant owners while comparing the two tax assessment frameworks for the café business. The analysis is predicated on the idea that goods and services tax is a crucial foundation for eateries and their patrons, strengthening the core of the consumer by lowering the tax rate. It

will also boost the GDP of the Indian economy. However, according to Agrawal, (2017)

The following are the negative impacts of GST on India's economy: Sierra Leone is an exception to this.

- GST is a confusing term that refers to double taxation under the guise of a single tax.
- The majority of dealers swindle the government by merely providing VAT instead of paying the central excise tax. But now, each of those sellers would have to pay GST.
- The immediate effects of the GST are anticipated to be neutral to adverse for the overall economy.
- It will be a mixed bag for customers, as certain products will become less expensive while others will become more expensive.
- Services like telecom, banking, and air travel will increase in price.
- Because this tax is new, it will take some time for the public to comprehend its effects.
- It is simpler to say than to do. There are usually certain issues that come up. It is a tax based on consumption; hence, the location of the service must be specified in the case of services.
- If a vendor improves his profit margin without passing on the actual benefit to the consumer, the price of items may similarly trend upward.

2.3 GST COMPLIANCE: Tax compliance is the observance of tax rules and regulations by taxpayers, but the idea presupposes that taxpayers are willing to fulfill their obligations without being inspected, prosecuted, or in need of a warning or a consequence (Saraçoğlu et al., 2018). Tax compliance is taxpayers' willingness to abide by tax regulations, including tax computation, registration, disclosure, and payment, to create a stable National economy (Nawi et al., 2020). Taxpayers' willingness to abide by the law may be influenced by a number of factors, including their moral principles, the legal system in place, and other local contexts. Without resorting to enforcement action, tax compliance refers to a person's or another taxable entity's desire to operate in accordance with the letter of the tax law and administration (Ling et al., 2016). To minimize any misunderstandings about the implemented tax, taxpayers demand to be made aware of the advantages of paying taxes before doing so. According to prior research, tax knowledge and compliance are positively correlated (Nawi et al., 2020). An optimistic tax compliance result would depend on the taxpayer's attitude toward tax services and the financial penalties imposed by tax authorities. The most important macroeconomic aspect that determines how taxes are seen to be paid is the tax burden, which also has an impact on tax consciousness. The difficulty of tax compliance increases with an individual's tax burden, especially given the perception that the system is unfair. Depending on how much of tax structure is made up of direct and indirect taxes, the notion that tax burden is unfair may arise. Taxpayers may act differently due to the fact that indirect taxes are levied on all goods and services and that the burden is inversely related to income.

2.4 The A-S model of taxation: The article on compliance with income tax administration among micro, small, and medium enterprises in Ghana (Peprah et al., 2020), studied taxpayer's genuine choice regarding their input supply (labor and capital) and gross revenues as individuals and corporate entities cannot be identified and accounted for. With this plan, it will be possible to predict how much of the taxpayer's income will be disclosed and how much will be kept secret. The idea goes that when choosing whether to pay taxes, taxpayers are assumed to be risk-averse. However, if it is assumed that as people become wealthier, they become more eager and engage in riskier activities, a person with a greater gross income would steer clear of them more. The A-S model indicates that the state's economy is being impacted by the higher tax rate. Therefore, a higher tax rate has an impact on both income and substitution. A high tax rate reduces the income of the taxpayer, which decreases their desire to pay taxes. This phenomenon is called the "income effect." The substitution effect, however, is applied to greater evasion in the reverse way, suggesting that a high tax rate promotes tax evasion. There is no doubt that larger and medium-sized enterprises can comply with tax regulations, but smaller businesses cannot.

2.5 Policies of the 2009 GST Act in Sierra Leone: There has been lots of research done on the GST policies to ensure that they are implemented correctly and effectively (M. Z. Kamara & Mingfei, 2010).

2.5.1 Zero-rated supplies (Schedule one of GST Act): Although, some goods and services are taxable, they are taxed at 0% (zero percent) for economic reasons. Goods transported as storage on ships or aircraft departing Sierra Leone and exports (apart from export of all minerals, including gold and diamonds) are two examples of zero-rated supplies. Due to Sierra Leone's increased ability to compete in international markets, exports are profitable.

2.5.2 Exempt supplies (Schedule two of GST Act): There are several goods that are not taxed due to social, economic, or tax administration issues. Examples of excluded supplies include rice, pipelines, water, fuel, books, medical, educational services, particularly pharmaceutical supplies, financial services, and minerals for export, including gold and diamonds.

2.5.3 Institutional reliefs (Schedule three of GST Act): (i) Republic of Sierra Leone president.

(ii) Missions of the Commonwealth and foreign embassies (Reciprocal only).

(iii) Other international organizations that have agreements with government of Sierra Leone and clearly state that they are exempt from paying local taxes on products and services that have been legally recognized by parliament.

(iv) The importation of products for use in post-natural disaster recovery or aid, as authorized by the Ministry of Finance.

2.5.4 Transactions outside the scope (Schedule three of GST Act): One item only, the transfer of going concern is designated as falling “beyond the scope of GST” for example, products imported from foreign embassies and those used in rehabilitation or relief efforts after a natural disaster are exempt from tax specific institution an under certain condition.

3.0 Material and method: Primary and secondary sources are both used in the data collection process for this study. Secondary sources like the website of the national revenue authority, newspapers, and published articles. The primary sources is by submitting questionnaires via a Google form to respondents who have provided written information or have given a well-structured response, which will then be completed and returned to the researcher. The study's participants were 89 employee of National Revenue Authority the institution handling tax issues in Sierra Leone and business owners in Sierra Leone from 2021 to 2023, and the questions were evaluated using SPSS in the form of descriptive analysis by using chart and correlation analysis.

4.0 Results and Discussion:

4.1 Results:

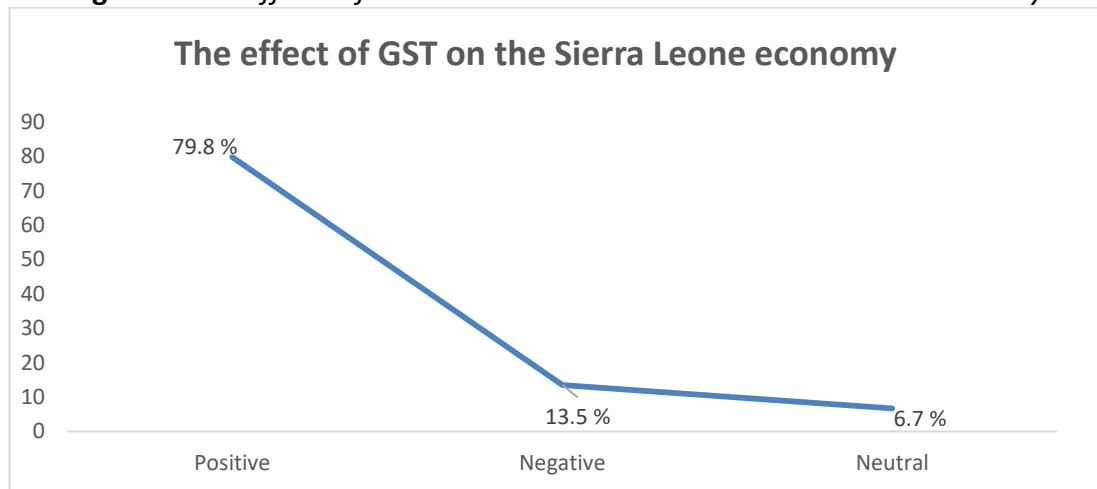
Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | | Std. Deviation |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|----------------|
| | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Std. Error | Statistic |
| The effects of GST on the Sierra Leone economy. | 89 | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.2697 | .06140 | .57926 |
| The reasons for GST implementation in Sierra Leone. | 89 | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.3933 | .07078 | .66773 |
| GST implementation leads to an increase in the prices of goods and services. | 89 | 1.00 | 2.00 | 1.2022 | .04282 | .40395 |
| The GST compliance rate in Sierra Leone. | 89 | 1.00 | 3.00 | 1.8764 | .05722 | .53979 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 89 | | | | | |

(Source: Primary Source by Researchers through SPSS)

The variables under discussion and their statistical measurements are as follows: mean, standard deviation, and standard error for the variables under investigation. Table 1 above displays the descriptive statistical analysis linked to the GST in the economy of Sierra Leone. Below are the variables and their means that are being taken into account: the effect of the GST on the economy of Sierra Leone; the reasons for implementing GST in Sierra Leone GST implementation leads to an increase in the prices of goods and services, and the GST compliance rate in Sierra Leone (1.2697, 1.3933, 1.2022, 1.8764, and 1.4157, respectively).

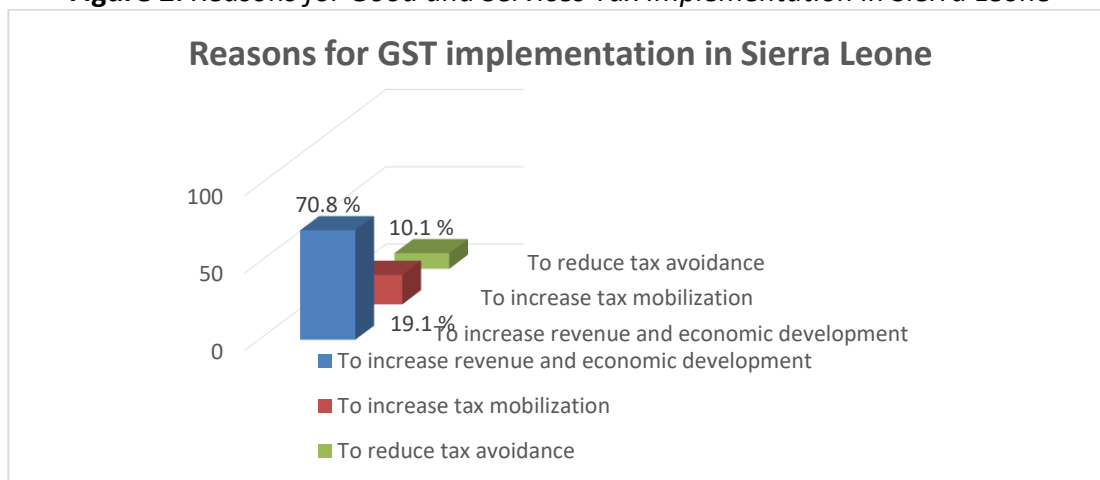
Figure 1: The Effects of Good and Services Tax on the Sierra Leone Economy



(Source: Primary Source by Researchers through SPSS)

The majority of respondents, or 79.8%, concluded that the GST has a good effect on Sierra Leone. Figure 1 above shows that the GST has beneficial effects on Sierra Leone. Only 13.5% of respondents, as seen in the graph, believe that GST has a negative effect on Sierra Leone's economy, while 6.7% are indifferent. Therefore, 6.7% of respondents claim that GST has neither beneficial nor negative effects on the Sierra Leonean economy.

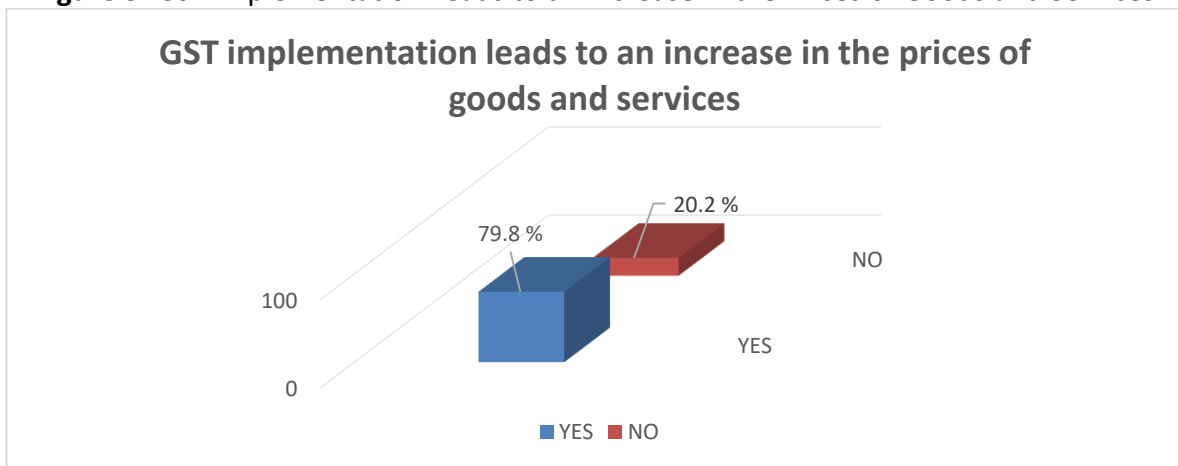
Figure 2: Reasons for Good and Services Tax Implementation in Sierra Leone



(Source: Primary Source by Researchers through SPSS)

As shown in Figure 2 above, the reason for implementing GST in Sierra Leone is to increase revenue and promote economic development. This means that the main purpose for which the government of Sierra Leone introduced GST was to improve its revenue base and develop the economy. Hence, 70.8% of the respondents believed that GST implementation in Sierra Leone can lead to increased revenue and economic development, whereas 19.1% believed that GST implementation in Sierra Leone is to increase tax mobilization, and 10.1% of the respondents believed that the purpose GST implementation is to reduce avoidance.

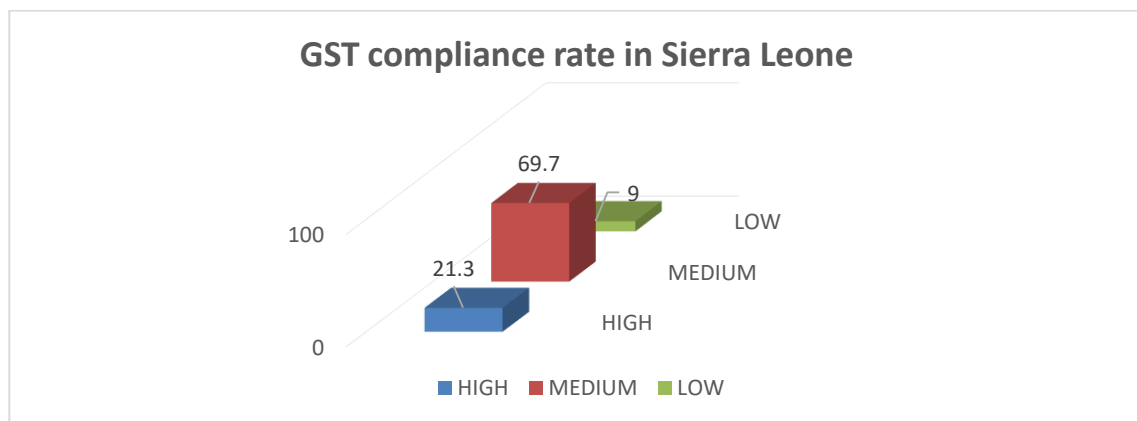
Figure 3: GST Implementation Leads to an Increase in the Prices of Goods and Services



(Source: Primary Source by Researchers through SPSS)

Figure 3 above looks at how the implementation of GST increases pricing for goods and services in the country. According to respondents, 79.8% of them agreed that the implementation of the GST in Sierra Leone has a resulted in an increase in the prices and services in the country. Additionally, 20.2% of the respondents disagree, stating that they do not agree that Sierra Leone's prices for goods and services rise because of GST implementation.

Figure 4: Good and Services Tax Compliance Rate in Sierra Leone



(Source: Primary Source by Researchers through SPSS)

The compliance rate for GST in Sierra Leone is examined in Figure 4 above. GST compliance rate in Sierra Leone, according to the respondents, is medium, with 21.3% of them believing it to be extremely high. 69.7% of those surveyed reported and upheld believed that GST compliance rate is at medium. Finally, just 9.0% of respondents said that Sierra Leone's GST compliance is extremely low.

Table 2: Correlations

| | | The GST implementation in Sierra Leone | An increase in the prices of Goods and Services |
|---|---------------------|--|---|
| The GST implementation in Sierra Leone | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .797** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 89 | 89 |
| An increase in the prices of goods and services | Pearson Correlation | .797** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 89 | 89 |

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

(Source: Primary Source by Researchers through SPSS)

The adoption of GST in Sierra Leone was accompanied by an increase in the prices of goods and services, according to Table 2, the correlation analysis ($r = 0.797$, $p = 0.01$). This indicates that the introduction of GST in Sierra Leone has resulted in an increase in the prices of goods and services in Sierra Leone. This means that strong correlation exists between the two variables.

4.2 Discussion: The first finding of our research revealed that GST has positive effects on the Sierra Leone economy. This means that if GST compliance rate is high, it will boost the gross domestic product (GDP) of Sierra Leone. This unified tax system will contribute significantly to market efficiency, enhance ease of doing business, and improve substantial reductions in logistics costs. As a result of these positive shifts, there has been a noticeable stimulation in economic activity and notable boosts in productivity levels that have ultimately contributed to the overarching economic growth in Sierra Leone. Kamara & Kamara, (2023) conducted research on the effect of GST on the prices of goods and services in Odisha. The study identified benefits like ease of administration and enforcement as well as the development of a national market. Another positive impact of GST is that its adoption in Sierra Leone has ushered in a cutting-edge tax administration system that capitalizes on technological advancements. Consequently, avenues for engaging in deceitful practices like tax evasion have been greatly limited while promoting better compliance with taxation laws. Furthermore, enhanced transparency coupled with the introduction of an invoice matching mechanism provides tax authorities with increased capabilities to identify inconsistencies and effectively combat any instances of attempted tax evasion. Second, our findings indicate that Sierra Leone implemented GST in order to rise revenue and the nation's economic growth. This increase in revenue for Sierra Leone and its economic development is a result of an increase in tax compliance for goods and services tax, as opposed to other taxes where tax avoidance is high. Goods and services tax implementation has had very positive effects on manufacturers and exporters. In the area of manufacturers, they are relieved of the burden of tax because this tax is distributed to the final consumers buying the goods and services in Sierra Leone. Hence, the tax burden is distributed between the manufacturers and consumers or sometimes shifted to the final consumers, thereby leading the manufacturers to reduce their tax burden in Sierra Leone. This has encouraged manufacturers to invest in their manufacturing businesses and expand their operations. Consequently, a boost in manufacturing activities has directly contributed to increased exports, which leads to growth in exports that will lead to higher foreign exchange earnings and has played a significant role in contributing to overall economic growth. The third result of our findings revealed how goods and services tax implementation in Sierra Leone led to an increase in prices of goods and services. According to Gelardi, (2012), The implementation of a consumption tax would probably result in a one-time price increase in order to prevent an economic contraction. Its implementation impacted it indirectly via certain means, such as changes in the rate of tax, market dynamics, etc. In cases where the tax rate is very high, the manufacturers or business owners may transfer or shift the tax rate or tax burden to the consumers, resulting in higher pricing for such Goods and Services, which raises the cost of Goods and Services in Sierra Leone. Pricing decisions in the context of market dynamics are directly influenced by the forces of supply and demand for products and services. The cost structure of business is impacted by goods and services

tax, and market forces have an impact on the ultimate prices. If there is high demand and competition for goods and services, the manufacturers or business owners may absorb the additional burden of GST to remain competitive and continue the business, which will keep prices constant. In a situation where there is high demand and low competition, the manufacturers will increase the tax rate and shift it to the consumers in the form of high prices of goods and services, in turn prices of Goods and Prices will be high in the country. Lastly, our findings revealed that GST compliance rate is at medium in Sierra Leone. There are various factors that put the compliance rate at medium, such as tax education, technological infrastructure, and GST complex system. There are quite a number of business owners who have little or no knowledge or education about the goods and services tax regulations and requirements, their impact on compliance, and their implication for the economy in Sierra Leone. As a result, the rate of acceptance in the country is medium. Even those that have knowledge of the implementation of GST regulation's, requirements and benefits have serious issues with the accessibility and availability of the technological infrastructure, such as online tax filing systems, electronic invoicing, and taxpayer portals, which make it difficult to facilitate compliance. Efficient technology platforms make it easier for business owners or taxpayers to accomplish their goods and services tax obligations, reduce the likelihood of mistakes, and improve compliance. Besides technological infrastructure accessibility, Sierra Leone is a developing country and has quite a number of illiterate business people in the business sectors, which makes it quite difficult to use the instrument for the processing of goods and services. As a result, they did not comply with the use of this tax system. Hence, its compliance rate is medium.

5.0 Conclusion and recommendations:

5.1 Conclusion: In conclusion, the study of goods and services tax in Sierra Leone has had strong positive effects on the country's economy. Several indirect taxes have been replaced by the goods and services tax, creating a single tax structure, which has reduced administrative costs for the country's tax authority. And also lead to economic advantages in the country like promotion of state development, rousing industrial growth, improving the real estate market, and stabilizing the economy. However, there are some critics who argue that the introduction of GST has led to an increase in prices of goods and services. The objective of the research is to examine the impacts of goods and services on the economy of Sierra Leone and their effects on the general prices of goods and services in Sierra Leone. Furthermore, the research findings indicate that there are positive effects of the implementation of goods and services tax in Sierra Leone, and its high compliance rates will lead to economic growth, market efficiency, and improved business operations in the country. It also revealed that one of the main reasons for the implementation of goods and services tax in Sierra Leone is to increase revenue for the economic development of the country. And adoptions have led to economic activity stimulation and the modern tax system or administration introduction. Even though the introduction of GST has led to increases in prices of goods and services in Sierra Leone, the effect is indirect and dependent on tax rates and market dynamics as compared to the indirect tax system, where the impact is directly on the taxpayers. Moreover, GST compliance rate in Sierra Leone is medium due to factors like a lack of knowledge about GST and technological infrastructure limitations.

5.2 Recommendations: As per research findings, it is recommended that:

1. The national revenue authority in charge of tax system in Sierra Leone should provide tax education and awareness to increase tax awareness in the country. Through this, business owners, manufacturers, and taxpayers will be able to gain knowledge about GST in Sierra Leone. This can be achieved through training seminars, giggles, or educational campaigning.
2. National Revenue Authority should invest in and develop technological infrastructure and make it accessible to all business owners and manufacturers in Sierra Leone to increase compliance with goods and service tax.
3. National Revenue Authority should continuously monitor and assess the impacts of GST and its effectiveness in Sierra Leone so as to identify areas for improvement and address any challenges facing GST implementation in the country.
4. National Revenue Authority handling taxation in Sierra Leone should provide clear guidelines that will improve tax compliance. By so doing, business owners or taxpayers will have a clear and comprehensive understanding of their obligations regarding goods and services tax in Sierra Leone, which will in turn improve compliance.

5. Further research has to be carried out on the distributional impacts of GST among different regions and income groups in Sierra Leone. To know as to whether goods and services tax have any change in income inequality and regional differences and to have an understanding of how goods and services affect the purchasing power and welfare of different sections of the Sierra Leone population. If these recommendations' are implemented, Sierra Leone will improve the positive effects of GST, promote economic growth, and increase the rate of GST compliance.

6.0 Conflict of Interest: Authors disclosed zero conflicts of interest concerning the article's writing.

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The Influences Of The Brand Image On The Service Recovery Strategy Of Private Hospitals In Thailand: The Role of Customer's Emotional Intelligence

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Abstract: The research aimed to 1) investigate the influences of four dimensions of brand image on service recovery strategy, satisfaction, words of mouth, and revisit intention and 2) identify the moderation effect of emotional intelligence forming of satisfaction from service recovery strategy. The study was conducted by quantitative research design where the data was collected using an online questionnaire by purposive sampling methods from the service users of private hospitals in Thailand. The 600 usable respondents will be analyzed by Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and multi-group analysis with AMOS. The dimensions of brand image may positively promote the effectiveness of service recovery strategy according to ECT theory and supported SET theory by illustrating intended positive word-of-mouth communications and revisiting intention. This study may also introduce the moderation effects of emotional intelligence (EI) on satisfaction with the service recovery strategy. The results of the study indicated that recommended guidelines in private hospitals business to improve their service recovery strategy by using the dimensions of brand image to improve customer retention. EI identification could help to differentiate customers to provide suitable service recovery strategy attempts to fix the service discomfort in the healthcare sector.

Keywords: Brand image, Service recovery strategy; Emotional intelligence, Private hospital

1. Introduction: Service Recovery Strategy is a process that has been designed to retrieve satisfaction back in customers who have experienced failures (Cheng et al., 2019). The service recovery strategy was recognized as being effective in generating satisfaction to create a perceived fairness (Vázquez-Casielles et al., 2010) related to the customer retention strategy (Amoako et al., 2021). The effective service recovery strategy was evaluated by the satisfaction of the recovery (Odoom et al., 2019). Service failures are caused by the inability to offer service or slower than usual, the inability to respond to the customer's needs, or improper behavior from the service staff. The service recovery strategy will start once service failure has been notified or occurred (Van Vaerenbergh et al., 2019). The different levels of customer expectations, self-esteem, and failure severity increased the challenges for the service recovery strategy field (You et al., 2020). The extant literature was the concurrent or inconsistent results in different business fields (Chan et al., 2023). The study of service recovery has two main aspects, studies focus on perceived justice as a psychological service recovery strategy (Liao et al., 2022). Another focus is on service recovery in the action or tangible service recovery strategy (R. Mostafa et al., 2014; Luong et al., 2021). There is an argument on what is a suitable strategy between tangible action and holistic justice perception (de Mesquita et al., 2023). There were studies focused on factors related to failures such as the failure type (Walton & Hume, 2012), the severity of the failure (Craighead et al., 2009), or delayed timing to recovery (Tang et al., 2018) which are negative consequences. There are interesting gaps in finding the factors that may fix dissatisfaction in terms of positive sources. The customer's existing perceptions such as corporate image, corporate trust, and social responsibility have been empirically linked to the satisfaction of the recovery (R. B. Mostafa et al., 2015; Albus & Ro, 2017; Amoako et al., 2021). The sources of experienced positive customers' perceived value perception may promote the opportunities for a successful service recovery strategy. Brand image is a component of brand equity. It can be effective in service marketing expansion and retention strategies (N. Nguyen & LeBlanc, 1998; Nawi et al., 2022). Brand awareness is also a product of

branding that can create marketing advantages for the business (K. H. Kim, Kim, Kim, Kim, & Kang, 2008). Hospital brand loyalty is the most often studied related to topics of brand image and perceived service quality (Górska-Warsewicz, 2022). Service recovery strategy satisfaction links to the brand evangelism (Zhu & Park, 2022). The dimensions of brand image as an independent variable in the context of service recovery strategy are still limited compared to failure attributions, type or severity of failures (Q. N. Nguyen et al., 2021a; Zhu & Park, 2022). Employees' image has also minimized service failures (Li et al., 2022). Therefore, this study focuses on the influences of four dimensions of brand image on the service recovery strategy. Emotional intelligence is widely studied today whether it is in psychology in terms of education and marketing (Goh & Kim, 2021). The studies in the context of service recovery have mainly focused emotional intelligence of employees' perception to control customer feelings but few studies from a customer view (Fernandes et al., 2018; Wei et al., 2021; Xu et al., 2022). Emotional intelligence will improve employees' problem-solving in the service recovery strategy (Chaouali et al., 2021). Female tends to employ higher emotional intelligence than male (Deng et al., 2023). Therefore, this study aims to investigate emotional intelligence in the role of moderation effects on the service recovery strategy context. There are 38,512 healthcare service facilities in Thailand, comprising 34.7% state-funded and 65.3% of private businesses ("Industry Outlook 2020-2022: Private Hospital," 2020). Thailand is also one of the top destinations in health tourism as it is assessed as a country with excellent medical service quality and ranked 13th in the world with a top-tier healthcare system (Monthalee Nooseisai et al., 2016). Therefore, the business of private hospitals tends to grow continuously. The key supporting factors for this growth included entering an aging society, the rise of the middle social class, and the expansion of urban communities. Healthcare is considered a high-stress service recovery strategy (Antonetti et al., 2018). To gain the highest market share, private hospitals needed to create satisfaction in their services at a higher than competitors by improving service quality, branding strategy, and social media marketing. Even if the hospital tried to reach service excellence, service failures or irregular service behavior could happen anytime. Service failures without a service recovery strategy could lead to switching intentions (Mazhar et al., 2022) and negative word of mouth (Nazifi et al., 2022; Yin et al., 2022). This study uses expectation confirmation theory (ECT) to explain the satisfaction-forming process considering what the customer expects compared to the value that the customer perceived value (Oliver, 1980). This study will evaluate service recovery strategy by using customer-perceived justice as perceived value and brand image as customer experiences values to compare with service failures according to ECT to confirmation of satisfaction. The social exchange theory (SET) evaluates the approach to compare the costs and benefits of consumers' mindset who assess the benefits outweigh the cost, a trade-off is made (Hall, 2003). This study provides at least two contributions 1) identifying the influence of the perceived brand image on service recovery strategy, word-of-mouth communication, and revisit intention and 2) exploring the role of the emotional intelligence of individual customers in the service recovery context of the healthcare sector.

1.1 Research Questions: 1. Does the hospital brand image positively influence to the service recovery strategy? 2. Do the differences in the level of customers' emotional intelligence impact satisfaction of service recovery?

1.2 Research Objectives: 1. To study the influences of perceived brand image on a service recovery strategy. 2. Identifying brand image dimensions contributes the most as the antecedents of enhancing service recovery strategy. 3. To examine the influence of service recovery strategy on satisfaction, word-of-mouth communication, and revisit intention. 4. To explain the roles of customer emotional intelligence on satisfaction to the service recovery strategy.

2. Literature Review:

2.1 Brand Image: Brand image is retrieved from the customer's perception of the brand (Keller, 1993). Brand image associated with the concepts of reputation and company identity is conceptualized and measured differently. Reputation refers to the historical experience cognitive of customers which involves customer journeys touch point with corporate. It reflects value perceptions about an organization's qualities and trust which forms consumer attitudes toward brands, products, and services leading to behavioral intention (Romaniuk & Nenycz-Thiel, 2013). Brand image has played an important role in perceived service quality and revisiting intention and sustainable marketing fields (Huei et al., 2014; Grubor & Milovanov, 2017). Brand image dimensions in terms of its association are considered from three aspects: product value, brand personality, and

company association (Aaker, 1991). The brand image could be in the dimension categorized by its attributes, interest, or attitude (Keller, & Aaker, 1992). Benefits and values formed the brand image of the product, service, and organization in terms of the brand image of benefits (Salciuviene et al., 2009) that customers link to the brand experiential, symbolic, social, functional and appearance enhances (Aaker, 1991; Hsieh, 2002; Jr et al., 2007). Value-based brand image has been accepted as the blending of functional and emotional perceptions of customers (N. Nguyen & LeBlanc, 1998). The experiential brand image refers to the overall state of brands that are experienced by customers including sensory, affective, and beliefs. The customers will create an emotional bond with the brand relating to the brand image building in the consumer insight (Cleff et al., 2018). The symbolic brand image is the customer's appeal to their respect of value and culture. Consumers may alter their beliefs about a brand depending on the self-brand connection and attribute converted to symbolic meaning to the brand (Hammerl et al., 2016). The functional brand image creates value in the usage of the brand (Kato, 2021). The performance and durability of a product or service will contribute to the functional brand image formation (Kato & Tsuda, 2018). Social brand image is a benefit that indicates the social status of customers who buy or use products and services as efficiency, reliability, confidence, and personality. The social brand image is a kind of brand that promotes social values in customer perception. The social brand image of cosmetics is linked to customer satisfaction (Jr et al., 2007). Specifically, The brand image builder process needs a combination of both rational and emotional perceived value (R. B. Kim & Chao, 2019). Hospital brand image has been a source of perceived service quality (Cham et al., 2016). Service recovery strategy related to brand image and relationship quality (Chen, 2015) Brand image influenced service recovery and satisfaction as a moderation effect (Nikbin et al., 2010). In the context of service failures, The brand image was acting as the mediator of satisfaction to customer loyalty (Liat et al., 2017) and avoiding consumer switching behaviors (Chigwende & Govender, 2020). The present study, therefore, used these four dimensions of brand image influencing service recovery strategy as the roles of independent variables. This article investigates the dimensions of the brand image of experiential, symbolic, social, and functional have positively influenced a service recovery strategy. Regarding the preceding discussion, this study hypothesized as follows: H1: Experiential brand image positively influences service recovery strategy H2: Symbolic brand image positively influences to the service recovery strategy. H3: Social brand image positively influences to the service recovery strategy. H4: Functional brand image positively influences to the service recovery strategy.

2.2 Service Recovery Strategy: The concept of the service recovery journey is divided into three phases; pre-recovery, recovery, and post-recovery (Van Vaerenbergh et al., 2019). Perceived justice has been considered the most important aspect of a service recovery strategy (Badawi et al., 2017; del Río-Lanza et al., 2009; Migacz et al., 2018) The justice as service recovery strategy consists of three dimensions; distributive, procedural, and interactional (Jung & Seock, 2017). There are relationships between perceived justice and satisfaction in the service recovery strategy widely (Arsenovic et al., 2021; Balaji et al., 2018; Kau & Wan-Yiun Loh, 2006; Michel, 2001; Nikbin & Hyun, 2015; Sparks & McColl-Kennedy, 2001). Satisfaction is retrieved from the state of mind that the service user has regarding their purchase behavior (Oliver, 1981). A successful service recovery strategy is indicated by the satisfaction (Akdere et al., 2020; Chang & Chang, 2010; Jin et al., 2019; H. Kim et al., 2022). Therefore, the hypothesis has been formed: H5: Service recovery strategy influences to satisfaction.

2.3 Words Of Mouth and Revisit Intention: Words of mouth communications (WOMs) are the personal direct reaction that sources the information distributed as reliable on another service user such as friends, family, and relatives decisions and has a much greater effect than conventional marketing tools (Sen, 2008). The empirical studies have introduced the effects of satisfaction with service recovery on the WOMs (Hogreve et al., 2019; Luong et al., 2021; Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002). WOMs also directly affected service user decisions on purchasing and brand loyalty (Donthu et al., 2021). Whereas revisit intention is the preferred behavioral intention for customer retention in the hospitality industry (Spreng et al., 1995; Hogreve et al., 2019; Arsenovic et al., 2021; Q. N. Nguyen et al., 2021b; H. Kim et al., 2022). Therefore, the following words of mouth, and revisit intention are hypothesized. H6: Satisfaction influences to word-of-mouth communication. H7: Satisfaction influences to revisit intention. H8: Word-of-mouth communication influences revisit intentions.

2.4 Emotional Intelligence: The definition of emotional intelligence by Mayer and Salovey is "The ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion: the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate

emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (Mayer et al., 1997). Emotional intelligence has been accepted as a strong predictor of negative mood (Delhom et al., 2022). A higher level of emotional intelligence tends to increase problem-solving skills and reduce the level of perceived stress (Chaouali et al., 2021; Karaoglan Yilmaz et al., 2023). Organizations use emotional intelligence to predict their employee's performance in conflict management. It is the key concept to resolving conflict (Winardi et al., 2022). The key contributions of EI to the construction industry were discovered as increased individual and overall project performance, inspired leadership, formed stress control capacity, improved communication skills, and enhanced confidence within the project practitioners (Kukah et al., 2022). Customers with emotional intelligence similarity will positively influence their forgiveness of service failures (Xu et al., 2022). The employee’s emotional intelligence has promoted the chance to recall customer satisfaction in the service recovery strategy (Wei et al., 2021). Therefore, the following hypothesis is formed: H9: The difference in emotional intelligence level influences to satisfaction with service recovery strategy. The research conceptual framework is shown in Figure 1.

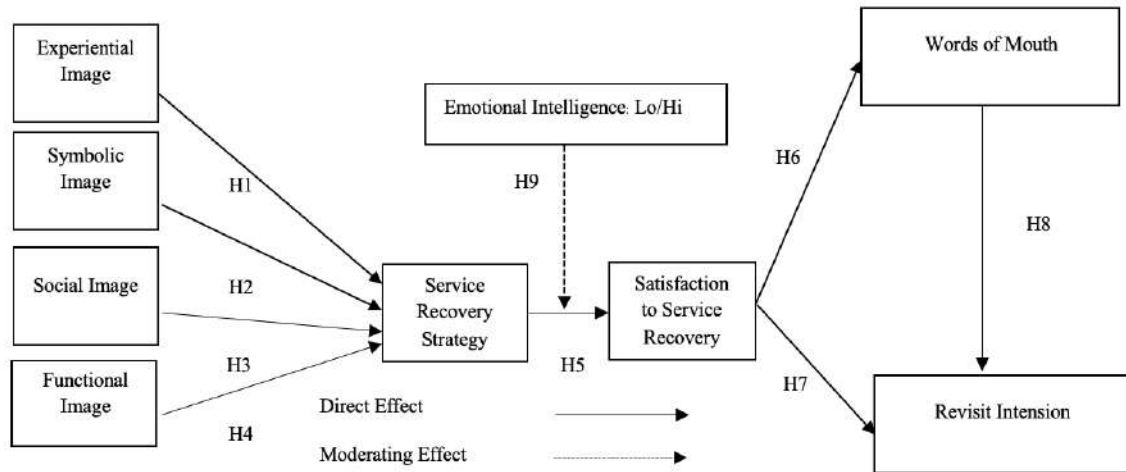


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

3. Research Methodology: The research tool was a modified questionnaire from past studies. The researcher translated it into the Thai language to have a clear understanding. The questions about hospital brand image, 19 questions were adapted from Jr et al., (2007) and (Lassar, Mittal, & Sharma (1995). The scenario of service failure and recovery was written by the author. The respondent will be asked to read the scenario clearly before completing the questionnaire. The 15 questions on service recovery strategy in three dimensions are adapted from Tax et al., (1998); Smith et al. (1999), and Maxham & Netemeyer, (2002). Four items of satisfaction were taken from Maxham & Netemeyer (2002). The questions about word-of-mouth communication three items were taken from Rageh Ismail & Spinelli, (2012). Revisit intention of three items were taken from Tih & Lee, (2013). The 33 questions on emotional intelligence were taken from the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) (Schutte et al., 1998). The EI was sub-scaled into four sub-categories as follows: ten items for the perception of emotion, nine items for managing own emotion, eight items on managing others’ emotions, and six items for utilization of emotions. The 5 levels of the Likert scale have been used where 1 strongly disagrees and 5 strongly agrees. Emotional intelligence will be calculated for average mean as discrimination into low, medium, and high emotional intelligence levels.

Table 1: Questionnaire items

| No. | Construct | No. of Items | Sources |
|-----|-----------------------|--------------|--|
| 1 | Experiential images | 4 | Jr et al., (2007) |
| 2 | Symbolic images | 4 | Jr et al., (2007) |
| 3 | Social image | 6 | (Jr et al., 2007), ((Lassar et al., 1995) |
| 4 | Functional image | 5 | Jr et al., (2007) |
| 5 | Distributive justice | 5 | (Smith et al., 1999; Tax et al., 1998; Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002) |
| 6 | Interactional justice | 6 | (Smith et al., 1999; Tax et al., 1998; Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002) |
| 7 | Procedural justice | 4 | (Smith et al., 1999; Tax et al., 1998; |

| | | | |
|----|----------------------------------|----|---------------------------------|
| | | | Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002) |
| 8 | Satisfaction to service recovery | 4 | (Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002) |
| 9 | Words of Mouth | 3 | Rageh Ismail & Spinelli, (2012) |
| 10 | Revisit intention | 3 | Tih & Lee, (2013) |
| 12 | Emotional intelligence | 33 | Schutte et al., (1998) |

3.1 Data Collection and Statistical Analysis: Data will be collected using a self-administered questionnaire from servicer users with quota sampling from six regions of Thailand, and purposive sampling ages over 20 years old and experienced with private hospital service within 6 months before applying for the survey. The questionnaire link will be sent through an online community of private hospital users providing screening questions to ensure the usable respondents asking them to provide information, e.g., basic information about private hospitals, the purpose of use, the service frequency of use, and the service experience with service failures at the pre-page for validation purposes. The proposed sample size with 600 usable respondents will be then analyzed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM). The multigroup SEM technique will be used for the testing of emotional intelligence as a moderation effect.

4. Conclusion: Provides a magnitude of effects of brand image dimension in service recovery strategy, word-of-mouth communication, and revisit intention. This study presents the results of a moderation effect of customers' different levels of emotional intelligence. This study was to develop the literature field of brand image dimension, service recovery strategy, emotional intelligence, and positive behavioral intention in the context of private hospitals in Thailand.

4.1 Theoretical Contributions: This study is consistent with the expectation confirmation theory of satisfaction and social exchange theory. It explains the motivations of individuals related to perception towards behavioral intentions. It was found that the perception of brand image is considered the additional perceived value of service failures and recovery. This implies that an experienced brand image also supports the chance of a successful service recovery strategy that can create satisfaction lead to word-of-mouth communication and revisit intention as a marketing tool for customer retention in the health service sectors. This study provides more area literature on perceived value definition as not an instance of perceived but the experience may be calculated in satisfaction confirmation in ECT theory. This study may support the social exchange theory of satisfaction with intended marketing behavioral intentions such as word-of-mouth communication and revisit intention. The emotional intelligence level contributes to the area of literature on service recovery context. The discrimination of customer type should be an important topic on how to link the EI level with facial and deep behaviors. This study may explore the characteristics of EI notifications measurement before the delivery service recovery strategy.

4.2 Managerial Contributions: The results explore the dimension of brand image building positively promoting the success of the service recovery strategy. The private hospital market is highly competitive. It is the development of the marketing strategy of the service organization by creating satisfaction through positive word-of-mouth communication and having a revisit intention. Private hospitals can create competitive advantages over competitors by strengthening their brand image to help the risk of customers' loss from service failures. The result also illustrates the magnitude of the four dimensions of brand images that hospital marketing directors could focus on and develop their strategy by sending a clear statement on marketing campaigns related to the strongest dimension of their marketing plan. Service recovery strategy by delivering justice perception and awareness still be effective in a private hospital. The frontline staff who respond to manage the service failure and recovery should focus on providing a sensible explanation or monetary compensation such as a discount or free coupon to bring the customer service failure reached satisfaction by three dimensions of justice. The hospital directors should also promote the channel to customers to share positive stories about hospital services with relatives and friends via social media and personal. This study may contribute to the employee staff to measure the different customers with low and high emotional intelligence levels. Low EI customers need higher attempts than those with high EI. The service marketing managers should provide training to frontline staff to evaluate the customer EI level and provide the right level of attempts along with a service recovery strategy.

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Words as Weapons: An Intersectional and Biopolitical Reading of Selected War Memoirs by Marginalised Female War-Crime Survivors



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Introduction: Research Area: The primary object of this research is to explore the layers of subjectivity as expressed through the memoirs by women who, in different corners of the world, were subjected to war crime during the late twentieth and the twenty-first century. The research project aims to find whether these life-writings should be recognised only as chronicles of their silent sufferings or as bold proclamations of their resistance against the biopolitical oppressions they were exposed to.

Research Objective: Women's experiences of war worldwide are usually homogenised and reduced to things related to gender only with scant regard for how race, culture, class, religion, and socio-political identity contribute to the issue. Besides, the available literature on life writings written in the context of war seldom focuses on the issue of how biopolitical oppression becomes endemic during wartime and how narratives by people belonging to the margins of society reflect this reality. Triggered by these aspects, the current study intends to prove that marginalised women's testimonial writings detailing their experiences of war can be interpreted in a framework comprising gender as well as factors other than gender as analytical tools and, the oppressions that shape these women's experiences can be defined in terms of biopolitics.

Literature Review: Claire M. Tylee, in her 1990 book *The Great War and Women's Consciousness: Images of Militarism and Womanhood in Women's Writings, 1914-64*, tries to explore "what part women's [wartime] writing plays in the construction of a national culture" (Tylee 15). However, she "limited [herself] to works that were written by women with experience of Europe ..., published in English, and available in England" only (Tylee 17). Besides, her highly subjective opinion "[w]omen have always been the sufferers in wartime" makes it apparent that she took up a slightly essentialist stance on women's experiences of war (Tylee 13). To challenge such essentialist notions, Victoria Stewart, in her 2004 book *Women's Autobiography: War and Trauma*, attempts to diversify women's experiences of war by taking into account "a degree of cultural specificity which historical generalizations do not always allow" (Stewart 21). But, even after advocating the need for "cultural specificity", Stewart's discourse centres around women of white and western origin only. Miriam Fuchs' *The Text is Myself: Women's Life Writing and Catastrophe* (2003) is an exception as it clearly states that since "catastrophe [is] a global phenomenon to which no one is immune, there is less justification for examining only one national literature" (Fuchs 4). On a different note, Nicole Ann Dombrowski, in her 2004 book *Women and War in the Twentieth Century: Enlisted with or without Consent*, draws attention to the fact how, in the context of war, women are always given the status of "agents, accomplices, opponents, and victims of wartime violence" and how "[all] four of these classifications pose problems for a woman's autonomous self-expression and her subjectivity as a private individual and engaged citizen" (Dombrowski 2). Finally, in an attempt to show how testimonial texts by female survivors of human rights violation can be successfully read as tools for raising voices against such crimes, Ana Belén Martínez García, in her 2020 book *New Forms of Self-*

Narration: *Young Women, Life Writing and Human Rights*, asserts that intersectionality should be the critical lens to read and interpret such texts (Martínez García 5). From a biopolitical point of view, the chapter titled “Embodied Memories: Settler Colonial Biopolitics and Multiple Genealogies in Deborah Miranda’s *Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir*” by René Dietrich in the 2016 book *Biopolitics and Memory in Postcolonial Literature and Culture*, edited by Michael R. Griffiths, explores how acts of life writing by North American Indigenous authors raise the biopolitical logic of racialisation, regulation, and naturalisation fundamental to settler colonialism. The texts of life writing by Indigenous authors, according to Dietrich, make visible the settler colonial biopolitical logics and illustrate how they construct Indigenous bodies and lives as objects to be variously removed, discarded, contained, and fetishised. In their acts of life writing, as postulated by Dietrich, these authors offer a dominant means of intrusion into the biopolitical logics of settler colonialism, as they expose the foundational aspect of eradication and renunciation in settler colonial biopolitics, reject to be contained within the depoliticised category and attain a position of agency from which to not only offer a severe critique of the politics of the settler state, but also to denaturalise settler colonial rule. The current research aims to adopt this very idea in order to conceptualise the selected memoirs as vehicles for marginalised women’s resistance to totalitarian biopolitics prevalent during wartime. In addition to these books, a few recent papers have also thrown some light on this topic, albeit differently. Carol Acton in her 2004 paper “Diverting the Gaze: The Unseen Text in Women’s War Writing” draws attention to how women’s writings about their experiences of war, especially those written after the two world wars, are mostly neglected in any discussions on the effects of war on different literary genres. But, like most of her predecessors and contemporaries, her essay focuses only on British and white American women’s memoirs. On the other hand, Inger Skjelsbaek’s 2006 paper “Victim and Survivor: Narrated Identities of Women Who Experienced Rape during the War in Bosnia-Herzegovina” provides an intersectional analysis of women’s testimonies in which their identities are examined as both gendered victims and ethnic survivors. Helena Grice’s 2012 paper “‘The Voice in the Picture’: Reversing the Angle in Vietnamese American War Memoirs” explores how life-writings by Vietnamese people offer a counter-narrative of Vietnam War. Fardowsa Abdullahi, in her 2016 MA thesis on International Studies titled “Rape as a Weapon of War in Darfur”, submitted to the University of San Francisco, questions the validity of universalising third world women’s experience of wartime sexual violence and the assumption that they are unable to speak for themselves. Very recently, in 2021, in a paper titled “A Geocritical Rethinking of Iranian and American Female War Memoirs: Da and Rule Number 2”, authors Farideh Shahriari and Leila Jamili challenge the androcentric representations of war narratives which they call one-dimensional because of their scant regard for geopolitical and cultural differences. Considering these books and papers as the pioneers in this field, this study aims to examine the selected memoirs from an intersectional perspective and discover how the narrators’ predicament fuelled the testimonial impulse in them which resulted in both verbal and literary protests against the perpetrating biopolitical policies they were victimised by.

Theoretical Framework: The proposed research will be conducted through a theoretical framework comprising the theory of intersectionality and the theory of biopolitics. Coined by Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, when she published a paper in the University of Chicago Legal Forum titled “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex”, the term ‘intersectionality’ refers to the system for conceptualising a person, a group, or a social issue as affected by a number of discriminations of different nature and it considers people’s imbricating identities and experiences to recognise the intricacy of prejudices they encounter. In other words, intersectional theory proclaims that people are often disadvantaged by multiple sources of oppression like race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and other identity markers. Intersectionality identifies that these identity markers do not exist autonomously and that they together create a multifaceted convergence of oppression. Now, since the women, whose memoirs are to be selected for this research, are simultaneously females and members of some specific religious/racial/ethnic minorities, the very construction of their identities as ethnic survivors and gendered victims is expected to be best interpreted through the lens of intersectionality. Because, the heterogeneity of their experiences would probably be subordinated within a framework comprising only critical race theory or only feminist studies as these theories, as analytical tools, cannot fully represent the totality of the discriminations they faced. The historical events and the socio-political contexts which led to the production of the three selected memoirs will be examined through a biopolitical

perspective as well. Coined by Rudolf Kjellén in his 1905 book *The Great Powers*, the term 'biopolitics' refers to an intersectional field between human biology and politics that can be defined as the strategies and mechanisms through which human life processes are regulated under regimes of authority over knowledge, power, and systems of subjectivation. The concept of biopolitics was popularised by Michel Foucault in several of his famous lectures like 'Society Must Be Defended', 'The Birth of Biopolitics', 'The Courage of Truth', 'Security, Territory, Population', and so on. In a Foucauldian definition of the term, biopolitics can be understood as a political rationality which takes the administration of life and populations as its subject "to ensure, sustain, and multiply life" (Foucault 138). However, unlike Foucault, Giorgio Agamben and other contemporary thinkers have explained the unrestrained exertion of biopower as a denial of individuality as well as humanity and, Achille Mbembe notes Foucault's lack of a theoretical contribution on how biopower is put to work in systems of violence and domination, thus developing his idea of 'necropolitics' which he defines as the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die. In the case of this research, the various types of oppressions that form the crux of these memoirs will be scrutinised through a biopolitical lens because the lives of these women and people belonging to their communities as well as the bodies of these women and their biological functions were perceived as territories to be politicised, or, in Agamben's term, depoliticised, in the governing power's favour.

Research Questions:

1. How does war or any such social conflict affect the genre of life-writing?
2. How do issues like race, religion, political views, and gender affect war memoirs?
3. How much feasible is it to interpret a marginalised woman's war memoir as a literary resistance against biopolitical oppression?
4. Is it possible to read these memoirs as counter-narratives to the official war narratives?
5. Which socio-political aspects should be taken into consideration while interpreting life-narratives by female war crime survivors?
6. How does biopower manifest in wartime totalitarianism and how can it be revealed through life-writings by marginalised people?

Research Approach:

I. Selection of Texts: The texts that have been selected for this intended research include:

1. *Tested to the Limit*, war memoir by Consolée Nishimwe
2. *Tears of the Desert*, war memoir by Halima Bashir
3. *The Last Girl*, war memoir by Nadia Murad.

Methodology: The proposed research is expected to follow a research methodology which is descriptive because it will describe the phenomenon of war crime by observing facts and then drawing conclusions from them, correlational because it will seek to establish a relation between the selected memoirs and the theories, analytical because it will try to critically examine the texts according to the selected theoretical framework, and exploratory because it will attempt to clarify why and how there is a relationship between the varied aspects of the phenomenon of war crime. Following will be the steps of this research:

- Beginning with a chronological survey of women's life-writings documenting their experiences of wars across the world, the project aims to throw some light on the available literary criticisms examining female self-narratives composed in the context of armed conflicts.
- Next, the theoretical outline of the research will be examined to demonstrate how it can provide a feasible framework for analysing the selected texts as well as other similar texts. For this, the historical contexts of the selected memoirs will be analysed according to the theory of biopolitics, with its predominant focus on the opinions of Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben, and Achille Mbembe. In order to explore the factors contributing to the oppression documented in the selected memoirs, they will next be interpreted according to the theory of intersectionality, concentrating chiefly on how Prof. Kimberlé Crenshaw defined the term.
- To conclude the project, an attempt will be made to find all those possible ways through which further researches, using the same theoretical framework, can be conducted on memoirs by men and transgender people who were survivors of war crimes.

Tentative Chapter Division:

1. History of Women's Life Stories Recorded in the Context of War
2. Intersectionality and Marginalised Women's Life-Writings in Conflict Zones
3. Biopower, Modern Wars, and the Lives of the Political Other
4. Analysing the texts: i. Tested to the Illimitable Limit: Consolle Nishimwe's Story ii. The Dauntless Daughter of Darfur: Halima Bashir's Story iii. She Who Refused to Be Silenced: Nadia Murad's Story
5. Conclusion.

Expected Outcome: This research is expected to provide a counter-narrative to the official war narratives of the contemporary world and it intends to show how different forms of testimonial life-writings by people belonging to the margins of the society can be used as effective tools of human rights activism for raising voices against the crimes committed in conflict zones worldwide.

Conclusion: Since antiquity, women's role as primary caregivers had endowed them with the strong feminine instincts that helped mothers save their progeny from imminent attacks and fight back when the attack could not be thwarted. It will be the aim of this project to show that life-stories of assertive and resilient women are living proofs that the instinct is still alive and will remain so until there will be battles yet to be won.

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Investigating the Relationship between Parents' Educational Background and the Behavioral Challenges Displayed by their Children Living in Tirana

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Abstract: Research indicates that children often select their role models based on the behavior exhibited by their caregivers. During the formative years, parents serve as the primary influencers and educators for their children, often being perceived as role models or "superheroes" by the child who aspires to emulate them as they grow older. Among the various factors influencing the parent-child relationship, the educational level of parents is particularly noteworthy. Hence, this study aims to examine how the educational background of parents impacts the behavioral tendencies of their children. The research employs quantitative descriptive methods, focusing on high school students in Tirana. The data collection tool utilized is the Youth Self-Report (YSR) from ASEBA, with a total of 1260 students participating in the questionnaire. Findings reveal that young individuals with mothers holding university or postgraduate degrees exhibit lower levels of behavioral problems, with an increase in problems observed as the mother's educational level decreases. Regarding the father's education, the study indicates that a lower paternal education level correlates with a reduced inclination of young people toward boasting, showing off, or lying, while these tendencies increase with higher levels of paternal education.

Keywords: Mothers' level of education, Fathers' level of education, Behavior Problems, Adolescent

I. Introduction: The influence of parents on their children is crucial during both early childhood and adolescence. The attitudes and aspirations of children are, to a significant extent, shaped by the values and expectations to which they are exposed. Among the various elements that impact the parent-child relationship, the educational level of parents holds particular importance. This factor is closely linked to employment opportunities, as individuals with higher educational levels generally enjoy better prospects in the job market. This study aims to examine how the educational level of parents affects the behavioral problems of their children. In this study, data collection utilizes the Youth Self-Report (YSR), a tool provided by ASEBA that offers a comprehensive approach to assessing both adaptive and nonadaptive functions of children and adolescents. ASEBA is widely utilized in mental health services, schools, medical facilities, services for children and families, public health agencies, child counseling, training, and scientific research. The instrument has been translated into over 80 languages, and there are more than 7,000 reported publications citing materials from ASEBA, involving the work of over 9,000 authors from various cultural societies. The selected age group for this study comprises high school students aged 15-20, commonly referred to as teenagers. This choice is significant because adolescence is a crucial period when individuals transition from dependent childhood to independent youth, preparing to take on adult responsibilities. Adolescents of today will be the future parents, teachers, and leaders, and their experiences during this stage shape their future actions. Adolescence is a time of identity formation, and the role of parents has implications for the behavior, educational pursuits, and occupational goals of adolescents.

Research questions: 1. What is the impact that mothers and fathers' educational level have in their children's behavioral problems?

Definitions: •Mothers' and fathers' level of education refers to a structure of education beginning with elementary school which is the basic first stage with a four years length of programs. The is primary school (with 8 years of education, now it's 9 years of education) with an age level from 10 to 14 years old. After primary school is high school with a length of program of four years (now it's three). Then, there are university level studies including bachelor diplomas, master diplomas (second stage) and Phd (third stage).

•Behavioral problems relates to a number of specific behaviors that are seen as problematic, such as alcohol consumption without parents permission, bragging or showing off, depend-ency adults, destruction of their achievements and of the others, disobedience to parents, disobedience to school, showing no repentance for mistakes, jealousy for others, unconscious actions, deceitful deeds or deceptive behavior, failure in learning outcomes, and staying away from home.

•Adolescent refers to people that are at a phase of human growth and development that occurs between childhood and adulthood, typically marked by the onset of puberty and encompassing the teenage years, which in this study is between 14 and 19 years of age.

•Behavioral problems refer to patterns of actions or conduct that deviate from socially accepted norms and expectations, often causing disruption or impairment in various life domains. These problems can manifest in a range of behaviors, including aggression, defiance, impulsivity, hyperactivity, withdrawal, anxiety, depression, and other conduct-related issues.

II. Literature Review: The educational attainment of parents play a crucial role in shaping the behavior of children, particularly those growing up in challenging economic circumstances. Children in difficult financial conditions often encounter persistent challenges not faced by their peers. Living in poverty exposes children to various risk factors, including emotional challenges, acute and chronic stressors, cognitive setbacks, and health and safety concerns. The prevailing theory in psychology and child development emphasizes the interplay between genetics and the environment in shaping behavior. Behavioral genetics suggest that genes contribute to 30-50 percent of behavior, leaving the environment responsible for the remaining 50-70 percent. Recent research indicates that social experiences, particularly those within family and peer relationships, have a more significant impact on behavior than previously thought. Early relationships with parents or caregivers play a crucial role in shaping a child's personality, influencing whether it develops as affectionate and secure or not affectionate and insecure. Parental education emerges as a vital indicator of children's academic outcomes and behavior. Numerous studies, often conducted through cross-sectional correlational analysis or limited longitudinal designs, reveal a correlation between poverty, low socioeconomic status, and adverse impacts on children, including low intelligence coefficients, poor academic performance, and socio-emotional problems. Socioeconomic stress, such as financial difficulties and unstable employment, affects child achievements through its impact on parental stress and family interaction patterns. Variables such as parental education and income influence family dynamics and, consequently, children's behavior. Parental influence on children's behavior is well-established in social learning models. Research in behavioral sciences indicates that children with low-educated parents are prone to psychiatric disturbances and inappropriate social functioning. Children in families with low parental education levels are more likely to exhibit behavioral problems that persist over extended periods, according to studies by Dodge, Pettit, and Bates. Most studies on adolescent behavioral problems consider them as indicators of emotional well-being, which broadly refers to an individual's thoughts and feelings about themselves and others. Emotional and social well-being encompasses the ability to adapt to life's challenges, demonstrate resilience, cope effectively, and lead a fulfilling life.

III. Methodology: This research is conducted through quantitative descriptive research that is used to describe the characteristics of a population or a phenomenon under study by gathering information without interfering with the manipulation of the environment. The targeted population in this study includes all young people, focusing on high school youngsters in Tirana. The sample selection procedure was a three-stage one. The sampling was clustered. In the first phase, were selected all Tirana's public city schools, with the exception of Sinan Tafaj school, which was used for pilotage. In the second phase, at least 3 classes were randomly selected at each school, and in the third phase, the questionnaire was filled from the individuals within the classrooms chosen. The final score was 1260 students. The piloting of the questionnaire was carried out on a sample of 30

pupils of the school "Sinan Ta-faj". The selection of students for piloting was conducted in such way that ensured the participation of students with all kind of academic performance levels, with parents from different social and economic status, and different ages, in order to achieve a greater diversity of sample of pilotage. In its final formulation, experts were also asked to compile questionnaires and statistical analyzes, especially for data coding issues and their suitability with the analyzes expected to be carried out with this data. After piloting, some of the questionnaire questions were reformulated to avoid ambiguity or the fact that some of the questions were unclear. In the original questionnaire was added a section of questions regarding the socio-economic status of parents. Also, some open questions were eliminated, because not only they didn't get answered but they were not relevant to this study. The tool used for collecting data in this study is YSR – the Youth Self-Report . ASEBA provides a comprehensive approach to assessing adaptive and nonadaptive functions of children and adolescents. ASEBA's school age instruments include the CBCL - the Child Behavior Checklist; YSR - Youth Self Report and TRF - The Teacher's Report Form. These questionnaires are examinative measurements with a high quality of standardization for the emotional, behavioral, and social competencies of children and adolescents, developed by Achenbach and used respectively for parents, adolescents and teachers. The instrument consisted of 13 statements where each of the respondents should choose one of the three proposed alternatives, the first one was number "1" would be checked if the assertion in question was "False", number "2" if the statement was "partially or sometimes true" and the number "3" if the statement was "very or very often true". The names assigned to these syndromes reflect the content of the topics and the language used is selected in a way to facilitate communication between mental health professionals and users of the questionnaire. In this study, are going to be addressed only the problems related to the behavior of the respondents. In the group of behavioral problems are the following statements: I brag, show off; I consume alcohol without the permission of my parents; I destroy my own things / achievements; I destroy the things / achievements of others; I have excess dependency on adults; I do not obey to my parents; I do not obey to school authority; I do not feel sorry for doing something wrong or that I should not do; I'm jealous of others; I act without thinking; Lie or deceive; My results at school are not good; and I like to stay away from home.

IV. Analysis: The respondents massively estimated all statements as untrue. The statement "I consume alcohol without the permission of parents" is estimated as "untrue" from about 79 percent of the students, "partially true" from about 16 percent of them and "true" by only 5.6 percent of them. For the statement "I brag, or show off" about 83 percent of the respondents say that "it is not true", about 13 percent of them find that the statement is "partially true" and a small part, about 4 percent think the assertion is very or often "true". 70 percent of students think that the statement "I have a lot of dependence on adults" is not true, about 25 percent say the statement is partially true and 5.4 percent consider the statement very true. Even for the statement "I destroy my own things / my achievements" most of the respondents or 70.4 percent of them find that the statement is untrue and less than 7 percent consider it very true. For the next statement, "I destroy my own things / or the things of others," about 89 percent of students say that is a false statement, and only 3.6 per cent think that the statement is often or very often true. Finally, for the statement "I do not obey to my parents", about 21 percent of students responded as "partially true" to this statement and most of them, almost 75 percent find that the statement is not true. Even on the second series of the statements that determine the behavioral problems, respondents didn't seem to agree with the listed statements. About 81 percent of them think that the statement "I do not obey at school" is not true and very few or 4.7 percent agree very strongly with the truthfulness of the statement. For the statement "I do not feel sorry for doing something wrong or that I shouldn't do" about 71 percent responded that the statement is not true and about 19 percent partially agreed with the statement. Even for the statement "I feel jealous of others, about 70 percent of respondents think the statement is not true and less than 5 percent considerate a very true statement. 51 percent of students disagree with the statement "I act without thinking" and a significant figure of about 42 percent partially agrees. If 77 per cent of students do not think that they lie or cheat, only 5.7 percent claim such actions. For the next statement, "my results at school are not that good", about 54 percent think the assertion is not true and a good part of them, about 34 percent of them thinks that this statement is partially true. Respondents answered in the same way to the last statement of the section on behavioral problems. About 57 percent of them find that the statement "I like to stay away from home" is not true and 31 percent of

them estimate this statement as partly true. The statement which relates to self-esteem and sincerity, the majority of respondents (71 percent) responded that they are very honest, while 22 percent declare that they are partly or only sometimes sincere. Only a small percentage have chosen the option that this statement is not true. Such a group would be interesting to be studied deeper, to discover the reasons behind the lack of this conscious dishonesty. However, such an analysis is beyond the focus of this paper. In the following statement, students are asked to compare themselves with others and identify whether they do things better than others. Percentages of answers are in favor of the second alternative of responses; 54 percent of respondents think they can sometimes do something better than others. Interestingly, about 33 percent of respondents stated that they do things generally better than others, while the remaining 13 percent stated that this statement is never true. We also gathered information on the respondent's agreement with two assertions regarding chores and the assistance that they can offer to people in need. Regarding the first statement, the responses have a descending trend, so most of the respondents (52 percent) have no desire to do chores, 29 percent have partial or sometimes inconsistent tendencies to engage on chores, while the remaining percentage (19 percent) claim to have a tendency and this assertion is very true. Regarding the statement "I try to help people when I have the opportunity", it is noted that the tendency of the answers is contrary to chores engagement. Most of the respondents, over 70 percent claim that this statement is very true or often true, about 23 percent think that "this sometimes happens", so the statement is partially true. Meanwhile, the remaining of the 6 percent of the respondents state that this is not a true affirmation for them, so they do not help people when they are able, which would certainly require a deeper analysis of the reasons.

The breakdown of the factors for behavioral problems. The elements of the anti-image matrix diagonal for variables that are indicators of behavioral problems range from 0.683 to 0.911. Table 4.18 presents tests and other measurements for the adequacy and the consistency of the sample chosen for factor analysis. The KMO test resulted in a measure of 0.852 considered to be between "meritorious" and "marvelous", while the Bartlett test resulted statistically significant. Regarding the stability, Cronbach's alpha statistics have resulted in about 0.7, so, an acceptable extent.

Table 4.18: *Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure, Bartlett's test of Sphericity and Cronbach's Alpha for indicator variables for behavioral problems*

| KMO and Bartlett's Test | | |
|--|--|--------------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | .852 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 2523.289 |
| | Df | 136 |
| | Sig. | 0.000 |
| Reliability Statistics | | |
| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
| .684 | .701 | 17 |

Table 4.19 presents the variables and factors derived from this factorial analysis. As it can be seen, there are four factors that have resulted in an eigen value greater than one. All four of these components together account for about 44 percent of the original total variance of the variables included in it. The first component is closely related to the variables: I consume alcohol without the permission of my parents, I destroy my things / my achievements, I destroy the things / achievements of others, I do not obey to my parents, I dont obey in school, I do not feel guilty when I've done something that i shouldn't or wrong, my results at school are not good and I like to stay away from home. This component seems to be related to destructive problem behaviors. The first component explains about 16 percent of the total variance. The second component is strongly related to the variables: I brag, show off; I lie or cheat and there is negative correlation with the variable: I try to help people when i can. The variance explained by this component is 11.5 percent. The third component is related to two variables, the first one is "i can do some things better than others" and the other one is "I tend to do chores".

The variation explained by this component is 8.3 percent. The last component is closely related to the two remaining variables: "I am jealous of others" and "I act without thinking." It explains the 8th percent of the total variance.

Table 4.19: Factors Extracted From the Factor Analysis for Behavioral Problems

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| C2 I consume alcohol without my parent's permission. | .480 | .332 | .199 | -.324 |
| C7 I brag, show off. | .147 | .543 | .173 | .294 |
| C11 I have a dependency on adults. | .123 | .010 | -.190 | .711 |
| C15 I am honest. | -.033 | -.666 | .117 | .017 |
| C20 I tend to destroy my own things/achievements. | .619 | -.031 | -.028 | .210 |
| C21 I tend to destroy the things/achievements of others. | .500 | .401 | .047 | .001 |
| C22 I don't obey to my parents. | .652 | .236 | .061 | .129 |
| C23 I don't obey in school. | .650 | .277 | .108 | .027 |
| C26 I don't feel guilty If I have done something that I shouldn't or something wrong. | .311 | .264 | .139 | .209 |
| C27 I am jealous of others. | .110 | .232 | .293 | .563 |
| C41 I act without thinking. | .417 | .090 | .131 | .443 |
| C43 I lie or cheat. | .267 | .551 | .243 | .169 |
| C49 I do some things better than others. | .038 | -.027 | .758 | .032 |
| C61 My achievements at school are not very good. | .533 | -.116 | -.126 | .068 |
| C67 I like staying away from home. | .560 | .018 | .205 | .099 |
| C73 I tend to do chores. | .062 | -.011 | .583 | -.001 |
| C109 I try to help people when I can. | .063 | -.603 | .349 | .005 |

The comparison of the averages of the indexes of behavioral problems according to the characteristics of parents and family. In this subsection, is tested the zero hypothesis that behavioral problems are not related to the parent's educational level. To test the hypothesis, are used four behavioral indexes of behavioral problems derived from the factorial analysis under subsection 4.2.3. At first, is tested the hypothesis of equal averages according to mother and father's education, the results of which are presented in Table 4.41. As you can see the second, third and fourth averages are different according to the mother's and father's educational levels. To investigate further the differences between index averages by different groups, was performed Tukey's b test for each of the indexes, the averages of which were statistically different.

Table 4.41: ANOVA for Comparison of the Averages of the Indexes of Behavioral Problems According To the Educational Level of Mothers and Fathers

| | | Sum of squares | df | Mean squares | F | Sig. | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------|----------|--------------|-------|-------|------|
| Mother's education | Behavioral problems 1 | Between groups | 1.148 | 3 | .383 | .381 | .767 |
| | | Within groups | 1075.340 | 1071 | 1.004 | | |
| | | Total | 1076.488 | 1074 | | | |
| | Behavioral problems 2 | Between groups | 14.436 | 3 | 4.812 | 4.892 | .002 |
| | | Within groups | 1053.385 | 1071 | .984 | | |
| | | Total | 1067.821 | 1074 | | | |
| | Behavioral problems 3 | Between groups | 21.690 | 3 | 7.230 | 7.396 | .000 |
| | | Within groups | 1047.006 | 1071 | .978 | | |
| | | Total | 1068.695 | 1074 | | | |
| | Behavioral problems 4 | Between groups | 24.596 | 3 | 8.199 | 8.361 | .000 |
| | | Within groups | 1050.173 | 1071 | .981 | | |
| | | Total | 1074.769 | 1074 | | | |
| Father's education | Behavioral problems 1 | Between groups | 5.656 | 3 | 1.885 | 1.873 | .132 |
| | | Within groups | 1064.187 | 1057 | 1.007 | | |
| | | Total | 1069.843 | 1060 | | | |
| | Behavioral problems 2 | Between groups | 19.269 | 3 | 6.423 | 6.508 | .000 |
| | | Within groups | 1043.151 | 1057 | .987 | | |
| | | Total | 1062.420 | 1060 | | | |
| | Behavioral problems 3 | Between groups | 18.914 | 3 | 6.305 | 6.422 | .000 |
| | | Within groups | 1037.626 | 1057 | .982 | | |
| | | Total | 1056.540 | 1060 | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|----------------|----------|------|-------|-------|------|
| | Behavioral problems 4 | Between groups | 18.373 | 3 | 6.124 | 6.168 | .000 |
| | | Within groups | 1049.564 | 1057 | .993 | | |
| | | Total | 1067.937 | 1060 | | | |

Tukey's b test scores for equality between the second, third and fourth index averages of behavioral problems according to the educational level of their mother (Table 4.42) show that the second index is higher. For the teenagers whose mothers have a higher educational level, have a higher predisposition to engage in behavioral problems than their peers. For the third index of behavioral problems, it is noted that the index is at a high level for adolescents whose mothers have a low educational level. For those teenagers whose mother have a higher educational level this index is also high, but for those that have mothers with an average education this index is low. As for the fourth index of behavioral problems, the test results show that high school students whose mothers have an university degree or higher have lower values of the fourth index of behavioral problems, and these values are increasing with lowering maternal education.

Table 4.42: Tukey's B Test for the Comparison of the Averages of the Second, Third and Fourth Indexes of the Behavioural Problems according To the Educational Level of Their Parents

| | N | Behavioral problems 2 | | Behavioral problems 3 | | Behavioral problems 4 | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|-------|------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| Mother | 8 years or less | 112 | -.181 | | | .200 | | | .284 |
| | High school | 579 | -.057 | | -.113 | | | .070 | .070 |
| | University degree | 280 | .075 | .075 | .061 | .061 | -.173 | -.173 | |
| | Postgraduate | 104 | | .266 | | .291 | -.204 | | |
| Father | 8 years or less | 95 | -.178 | | .016 | | | | .203 |
| | High school | 537 | -.079 | | -.082 | | | .099 | .099 |
| | University degree | 310 | .058 | | .030 | | -.112 | -.112 | |
| | Postgraduate | 119 | | .316 | | .356 | -.215 | | |

The average of the second index of the behavioral problems is lower for lower levels of father's education and increases with the increase of their educational level, a situation similar to the averages of this index by maternal education level. This trend is repeated also in third index of behavioral problems, when again the lower the educational levels of the father are associated with lower indexes values, and with a rise in the educational level, the index value also increases, a tendency different from the mother case for this index. In terms of changing the average of the fourth index of behavioral problems by father's education, the situation is almost the same as the above case regarding averages by mother's level of education. A higher level of fathers' education is accompanied by a significant reduction in the index value.

V. Discussions and Conclusions: Analyzing the educational characteristics of parents in relation to their children's behavioral problems. Parents' level of education is a very important indicator of the behavior and academic outcomes of their children. (Davis-Kean, 2005; Dearing, McCartney, and Taylor, 2002; Duncan, Brooks-Gunn, and Klebanov, 1994; Haveman and Wolfe, 1995; Nagin and Tremblay, 2001; Smith, Brooks-Gunn, and Klebanov, 1997). Children whose parents have higher levels of education have had more positive scores than children whose parents have lower levels of education. These results have been observed in several aspects, including pro-social behavior, school attendance, academic achievement, and lower tendencies to consume tobacco or alcohol. Young people whose mothers have university or postgraduate education exhibit a low level of behavioral problems, while with the lowering of mother's educational level values are rising. As far as father's education is concerned, the results show that the lower the education level of the father, the lower the tendency of young people to brag, to show off or to lie, while this tendency increases with the increase of the educational level of the father. We can also emphasize that with the increase in the educational level of the father, the tendency of young people to act without thinking or feeling jealous for others decreases. This data is also supported by Stipek (1998) who stated that a low economic status, including low levels of parental education, could adversely affect family relationships and interactions and may lead to behavioral problems in children. Behavioral problems are more apparent in those students that have the mothers and fathers with a low educational level. Among other things, they are characterized by the tendency to brag and to lie.

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Analyzing the Relationship between Industrial Policy and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem



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Abstract: This article discusses the importance and articulation of innovation policy from the point of view of the entrepreneurial ecosystem approach. To this end, the authors described the analysis of industrial policy based on the entrepreneurial ecosystem approach proposed by Stam (2018). Also, the role of cooperation between the public and private sector during the development of the entrepreneurship ecosystem policy are discussed. The article concludes with a brief discussion of the development of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Azerbaijan.

Keywords: Industry Policy, Innovation Policy, Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Ecosystem, Azerbaijan
JEL Code: L26, L52

Introduction: In recent years, research on the entrepreneurial ecosystem has been published in the most prestigious social science journals (about 50% of which belong to Q1 and Q2 category journals)(Velt, Torkkeli, & Laine, 2020). The successful industrial policy of developed countries such as Finland, Norway, Sweden, and the Netherlands serves as a road map for sustainable economic development. Some researchers (Alvedalen & Boschma, 2017; Isenberg, 2010) recommend that such successful regional policies (e.g. Silicon Valley) adapt these policies to local ecosystems rather than applying the same. Based on this thought, the authors analyzed the entrepreneurial ecosystem approach proposed by Eric Stam (Stam, 2018) for successful industrial policy. The entrepreneurial ecosystem approach focuses on entrepreneurs who stimulate the process that Schumpeter called "creative destruction." This approach improves entrepreneurial ecosystem policy in three ways. First, it encourages a shift in entrepreneurship from quantitative growth (e.g. new firms and self-employment) to qualitative growth (e.g. innovation-oriented entrepreneurship). Second, it requires rethinking the logic and judgments that formulate the relevant policy. Third, moving away from entrepreneurial politics prioritizes the development of policies that foster an entrepreneurial economy and entrepreneurial ecosystem to stimulate creative destruction.

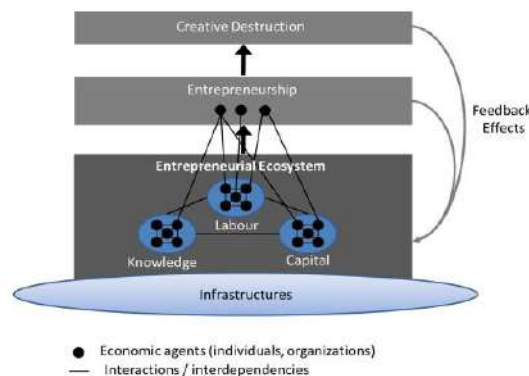
This article briefly analyzes the relationship between industrial policy and the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The research methodology includes analysis and comparisons based on research databases such as Science Direct, Web of Science, Scopus and Google Scholar. After an introduction, a brief analysis presents Stam's proposition on industrial policy from the perspective of the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Stam, 2018), and the last section concludes with a short discussion on the development of an innovative entrepreneurial ecosystem in Azerbaijan.

Entrepreneurial Ecosystem and Industrial Policy: Although there is no consensus in the literature on the definition of an entrepreneurial ecosystem, (Brown & Mason, 2017) we preferred the following most cited definition by Stam and Spigel: "Entrepreneurial ecosystem-A set of factors and actors that are coordinated and interdependent in a given area to enable productive entrepreneurship." (Stam & Spigel, 2018, p. 407). In the entrepreneurial ecosystem, economic and social resources are closely related to capital markets, customers, entrepreneurial culture and leadership. At the same time, this system regulates cooperation between private companies and government agencies in the field of resource flow. Based on the listed reasons, the entrepreneurial ecosystem is considered as a set of state, private institutions, families, educational institutions and other social groups and defines 3 directions of the entrepreneurial spirit (Brown & Mason, 2017, p11-30)

1. Entrepreneurial activity that ensures rapid development of the company
2. Local business environments that support entrepreneurship
3. Improved relationships among all stakeholders.

The development of an entrepreneurial ecosystem is a complex process that depends not only on the growth of companies, but also on the growth and development of other actors in the economy. For this reason, in order for the process to be successful, Isenberg (2010) suggests that public institutions work in a coordinated manner with the private sector and support the development of the system. In this way, the participation of stakeholders will shape the entrepreneurial ecosystem culture among them based on values, norms and information base. Entrepreneurial ecosystems are not particularly planned structures. For this reason, it is the formations that influence or remain influenced, sometimes develop and sometimes disappear by themselves. Because it is a process that occurs in the natural environment, the ecosystem cannot be created and controlled by the government or other institutions. Because control or ownership contradicts the concept of an ecosystem. The government, in turn, can ensure the creation of fertile conditions for the creation and formation of the ecosystem. Organizations can be engaged in entrepreneurial activities in this system, but the ecosystem itself is formed naturally with the participation of all parties. At the same time, the ecosystem can spread beyond the borders of a country to regional and international levels. Ecosystem management refers to steps taken to increase the benefits of this system. State-business projects, banks, universities, foundations, and public organizations can operate in the direction of increasing the benefits of the ecosystem. An entrepreneurial ecosystem is a network of relationships built on the basis of interactions among multidisciplinary institutions and individual stakeholders that promote entrepreneurship, innovation, and regional economic growth. For entrepreneurial activity to be successful, access to the human capital, financial and knowledge resources needed by entrepreneurs and public policies that provide an institutionalized environment that supports and protects entrepreneurs is essential. These relationships are described in the model proposed by Stam as follows.

Figure 1: Entrepreneurial Ecosystems and Creative Destruction: A Conceptual Model



(Source: Stam, 2018, Page 4)

In the above conceptual model Stam (2018) proposes that the government should create a competitive entrepreneurial environment to achieve creative destruction and try to solve the problems that hinder the interaction of the factors that make up the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The factors of production that enable

entrepreneurial activity and the emergence of industry are: knowledge, capital and labor. Infrastructures, on the other hand, provide and constrain the factors involved in ecosystems and their interactions, and the social and physical conditions of economic activity, to create, adapt, distribute, and coordinate knowledge, capital, and labor.

By forming the industrial policy, the states try to ensure the differentiation of production structures in order to achieve long-term economic development, increase economic productivity, expand business opportunities, and attract investment in new areas where competition and comparative benefits will be achieved (Isenberg, 2010). Among industrial policies, the most successful (Stam, 2018) are policies that encourage the creation of innovative start-ups that cause creative disruption, identify and eliminate problems that hinder their development, and shape the competitive environment. Creative destruction (Schumpeter, 1934) is the diversion of economic resources from less productive activities to more productive activities. Because creative destruction is the main process that ensures the productivity of the economy, and it affects not only at the micro level, but also at the regional and macro level. Schumpeter calls creative destruction the fact that companies that provide economic development by introducing innovations or bringing previous products to the economy with a new design, and that provide new and better quality products, destroy the companies that are not able to adapt to these conditions and that are left behind and that new technology dominates the production processes. The promotion of economic balance and economic changes by these entrepreneurs through innovations is considered as the main element of creative destruction (Ferreira, Reis, Pinto, 2017). Schumpeter (1942) claims that the process of creative destruction continuously renews the economic structure, destroys the old, constantly creates the new, and thus is a revolutionary process. But an important feature here is the presence of entrepreneurs with a creative spirit, which is not achieved through technology. At the same time, it is the state's policy formulation that promotes and protects such entrepreneurship. One of the best examples to illustrate the impact of Schumpeter's innovation model on economic development is railroads. The discovery of railways in itself boosted economic development and raised the level of people's well-being. Later, the state policy in the field of privatization of railways, the expansion of railways, did not create new technology, but more productive use of existing technology, created a competitive environment and new opportunities in this field. As this example shows, politicians, entrepreneurs, local entrepreneurial elements, public associations, etc. take place in the development of the economy as a whole (Juma, 2014).

In this regard, Stam (Stam, 2018) proposes a conceptual model of creative destruction (figure 1) and a step-by-step assessment of the entrepreneurial ecosystem political process (table 1) for designing optimal industrial policies.

The main difference of Stam's model from other models is that it focuses on the interrelationships between fields and cause-and-effect relationships. Providing the conditions specified in the model, connecting the factors affecting the system with each other stimulates the achievement of the desired result. That is, in order to achieve creative destruction, the formation of entrepreneurial activity in the environment of the entrepreneurial ecosystem and the provision of infrastructure suitable for this environment, and the mechanism of mutual influence of creative destruction and entrepreneurial activity on the ecosystem environment and infrastructure is reflected in this model. Here, the factors affecting infrastructure are: formal and informal (such as culture) institutions, business networks, leadership, demand, physical infrastructure, support services, capabilities.

The key to defining industrial policy in an entrepreneurial ecosystem is that problem identification precedes policy development and supports policy prioritization. At the same time, policy implementation is not a one-time process, but is based on continuous monitoring and learning. The stages and monitoring of the political process that will ensure the entrepreneurial ecosystem are given in table 1. Considering that the economy is constantly developing, this process is not a one-time process, but a continuous process that ensures the measurement of policy effects, the study of ecosystem changes, and the simultaneous and sequential implementation of policies.

Table 1: Phases in the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Policy Process

| Phase | | | Monitoring |
|-------|--|---|------------|
| I | Diagnosis of the entrepreneurial ecosystem | Objective data of the ecosystem elements, its overall strength, output and outcomes | T0 |
| II | Debate on the diagnosis | Conversation with stakeholders about the strength of the ecosystem and its elements | |
| III | Selection of policy target(s) | Focus policy attention on leverage points, weakest links | |
| IV | Selection of policy instrument(s) | Consult policy catalogue of available policy instruments to achieve policy target | T1 |
| V | Implementation of policy instrument | Stakeholder engagement for implementation | T2 |
| VI | Impact evaluation | | T3 |

(Source: Stam, 2018 page 6)

Entrepreneurial Development in Azerbaijan: After gaining independence, Azerbaijan entered the stage of radical economic changes, but at that time, the tension of the internal and external situation in our country brought economic recession. Since 1993, measures have been taken to achieve macroeconomic stability and economic reforms have been initiated. During this period, certain measures were implemented in the direction of the organization and development of entrepreneurship, especially since 1996, fundamental qualitative changes took place in the country's economy, macro-economic stability was achieved after emerging from a deep economic crisis, and it was possible to ensure dynamic economic development. The Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan contains provisions related to the creation of conditions for the development of the economy based on market relations, the provision of entrepreneurship, the formation and development of the competition mechanism, as well as the protection of competition. The laws and other legislative acts of the Republic of Azerbaijan adopted in the direction of forming the necessary legal environment for the development of entrepreneurship formed the legal basis of entrepreneurship as a system. During this period, as a result of the successful oil strategy of the head of the country, the development of the oil sector and the development of auxiliary fields related to it were stimulated, and the positions of local entrepreneurs in those fields were strengthened. The carried out reforms have stimulated the development of the entrepreneurship sector, and the legal basis of entrepreneurship has been improved in accordance with world experience. The adopted state programs in the field of entrepreneurship development had a special role in the development of this field and made the state measures for the development of small and medium entrepreneurship one of the priority directions of the economic policy of the state of Azerbaijan. Within the framework of these state programs, important measures have been taken in the field of regulation of economy and entrepreneurship, a system of state financial assistance to entrepreneurs has been formed, and structures providing necessary technical assistance (advice, information, etc. services) to entrepreneurs have been formed.

Serious reforms have been carried out especially since 2015 in the direction of entrepreneurship development. For example, the types of businesses that require a license (special consent) have been reduced from 59 to 37, and the area of permits granted to types of business activity has been clarified and reduced to 86 (which is 4 times less than in the previous period). The process of issuing licenses for entrepreneurial activities has been simplified and this process has been started at ASAN service agency. The time limit for licenses has been abolished and the fees charged for issuing them have been reduced. While the fees were reduced twice in Baku, they were reduced four times in order to encourage entrepreneurial activity in the regions. At the same time, with the aim of supporting entrepreneurial activity, activities aimed at providing legal advice to the entrepreneur and facilitating legal procedures through mechanisms such as "one window" were implemented.

In 2016, a strategic plan was prepared with the aim of diversifying the economy, increasing competitiveness, and regulating small and medium-scale business activities in Azerbaijan. According to this plan, measures to be taken to achieve the goals of promoting the activities of SMEs, improving the business environment, providing profitable and efficient access to financial resources, internationalizing them and increasing access to foreign markets have been determined. At the same time, especially in the direction of the development of the non-oil sector, work was carried out in the direction of stopping inspections, creating industrial technology parks and

industrial districts, promoting and supporting export and investment, supporting local production through subsidies, and making social projects more prominent. In order to ensure accessibility, transparency and flexibility of utility services needed by SMEs in this area, the Energy Regulatory Agency was established and bureaucratic obstacles in this area were reduced.

"Mortgage and Credit Guarantee Fund of the Republic of Azerbaijan" was established as a non-commercial legal entity with the aim of providing profitable and efficient access to financial resources and increasing the level of services provided in this field. This institution performs functions such as facilitating mortgage mechanisms and attracting local and foreign financial resources to mortgage lending.

Based on the assessment of the current situation in 2016, improving the business environment and regulatory framework for SME activity, ensuring profitable and efficient access to financial resources of SMEs, increasing their internationalization and access to foreign markets, increasing the knowledge and skills of SMEs, accelerating the application of advanced practices A strategic road map of actions to be implemented until 2025 was prepared in order to achieve the goals.

Innovation center, operating under the State Agency for Service to Citizens and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, application of information technologies and provision of technical support in the field of industry, finance, science, education and other services in the private and public sector, creation and improvement of information systems and information resources is an institution that is active in the direction of.

The "Innoland" Incubation and Acceleration center started operating on November 12, 2018 under the State Agency for Citizen Service and Social Innovation under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. "INNOLAND" is an innovation center created with the aim of supporting the creation of a startup ecosystem, as well as promoting innovation and development of the private sector in Azerbaijan and the international arena, and consists of an Acceleration center, Coworking and an IT Training Center. The mission of the center is to develop an innovative entrepreneurial spirit and startup ecosystem, create an environment that encourages people to think differently and support entrepreneurs to develop their innovative businesses. In addition to offering startups services such as incubation by applying the best practices for the formation and development of the project at the initial stage, acceleration that helps the startup grow in Azerbaijan and the international market, and teaching programming and information technology knowledge, coding skills, in the field of startups, programmers, innovations offers an affordable and multi-functional coworking center for individuals working alone or with a small team, with 24/7 access, high-speed Internet, a single information kiosk, and mentor support.

Azerbaijan has taken some significant steps to improve its innovation system over the past decade (Alieva, 2021).

- The dynamic advancement of a national innovation system. Developing the national innovation strategy and setting up government agencies, such as the Innovation Agency in charge of innovation policy demonstrates that the government has a high level of commitment to innovation. There is a dynamic improvement in digital government platforms and public sector innovation.

- Existing public-private partnerships, building synergies for making a knowledge-based economy, developing public provisions for innovative start-ups, creating a broad arrange of logical research facilities by the Azerbaijan National Foundation of Sciences (ANAS), progress in the quality of Sciences, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education demonstrate the effort of the government in the development of the innovation system.

- There is also a fitting legal framework with prerequisites for making policy. The Law on Public Participation ensures a legal basis for an innovative approach. Policymakers have started to apply foresight exercises in preparing policies. Foresight exercises in designing policies have already been started to apply by policy-makers. The analyzed Grant Scheme was reasonable with the targets of the National Strategy for the Development of the Information Society and bolstered by a project guide and a systematic selection process.

There are some recommendations by the Innovation Policy Outlook (IPO) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in order to develop the innovation system in Azerbaijan (Alieva, 2021).

- Development of innovation governance among sectors and enabling synergies across policies. Reinforcement

of innovation governance among sectors and enabling synergies across policies. It should ensure that adequate reinforcement for R&D and innovation activities in the service sector and in industries with poor technological density, in parallel with high-tech industries, are provided by the government.

- Increasing the reinforcement for start-up development and launching policy tools that ensure industry-science connections. The government should support such an ecosystem that improves a venture finance mechanism, in collaboration with international donors, to get better the initial-stage financing gap and ensure the expansion of innovative programs and technological activities. Science-industry collaboration, mutual R&D grant programs between innovative enterprises and public R&D agencies, and stimulating commercialization of innovative projects by a venture finance mechanism should be the main focuses of this ecosystem.

- Creating a more structured connection between monitoring and evaluation to policy planning, involving government agencies accountable for innovation policy. Innovation forethought practices and research activities for long-term strategic innovation development should be integrated into the policy processes to pursue future trends.

Conclusion: The purpose of the article is to encourage politicians to formulate policies for the entrepreneurial ecosystem, not just for entrepreneurial subjects. For this, Eric Stam's (Stam, 2018) entrepreneurial ecosystem approach was analyzed. Based on this perspective and the results of similar studies (Qasimov and Cəbiyev, 2017; Aslanlı, 2017), it is possible to mention some steps taken to develop the innovative entrepreneurial ecosystem in Azerbaijan in recent years.

As an example of the measures implemented by the state in order to form the entrepreneurial ecosystem, electronization of services provided to entrepreneurs, production of competitive and added value products, radical reforms in the direction of the development of the non-oil sector for the purpose of regular evaluation of the implementation of reforms and for this purpose, suspension of inspections, industrial/ measures such as construction of technology parks, industrial districts, promotion and support of export and investment, support of local production at the expense of subsidies, placing social projects in the center of attention can be mentioned.

An example of the government's innovation-supporting policy is the creation of the Small and Medium Business Development Agency (SMB) and the decision "Criteria for defining a startup". According to the Tax Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, business entities that have received a "Startup" certificate are exempted from profit and income tax for a period of 3 years from the date of receipt of the certificate.

Another important factor is that companies invest more in innovation as a result of the increased level of competition. Because the increase in the level of competition will lead to the improvement of demand and this will lead to the development of the competitive environment in the domestic market (Porter, 1990; Abdurazzakov, Jafarov, Balayev, 2019). For this reason, the improvement of the competition legislation is of great importance.

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The Effect of Stabilization Policies on Poverty: Empirical Study of BRICS and MINT Countries



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Abstract: Over the previous decade, developing countries have experienced increased economic growth. Meanwhile, economic development leads to a change in poverty, which is prevalent in BRICS and MINT countries. As a result, it is essential to determine how government policy effects poverty. This study analyzes the influence of stabilization policies on poverty. Three stability policies are considered: fiscal policy, monetary policy, and exchange rate policy. Quarterly data from year 2000 to 2019 in BRICS and MINT countries were used. According to the outcomes of the study, all three stabilization policies significantly influence poverty outcomes. This provides valuable insights for policymakers and practitioners aiming to design effective strategies for poverty reduction and sustainable economic growth.

Keywords: Stabilization policy; Monetary policy; Fiscal policy; Exchange rate regime; Poverty; Globalization; BRICS countries; MINT countries; Panel data.

1. Introduction: A stabilization policy is a government's action to manage economic fluctuation. It has been a

catalyst for governments across the globe to stabilize their economies, control inflation, and promote economic growth. There are three stabilization policies in accordance with the previous studies: fiscal, exchange rate, and monetary policy. The fiscal policy focuses on government spending and taxation, the exchange rate policy focuses on maintaining a stable exchange rate, and the monetary policy focuses on regulating money supply and interest rates. To promote growth and reduce poverty, a country should balance these policies as they help to stabilize prices, increase employment, and improve social welfare (Mundell, 1963). Nonetheless, scholars have debated their effectiveness in reducing poverty. For instance, as fixed and flexible exchange rate become countries' economic toolkits, some believe fixed exchange rate help to reduce poverty by providing stability and attracting investment. However, critics claim that fixed exchange rate only benefit a country in the short run and impede flexibility during economic downturns. On the other hand, flexible interest rates allow adjustment, but they may cause volatility and reduce purchasing power (Ghosh et al., 1997). Therefore, countries mixed these two types of exchange rate for the most effective economic system in their specific circumstances (Ilzetzki, 2021). Besides stabilization policies, globalization has a complex and varied impacts on each country, especially poverty. On the one hand, it can promote economic growth, job creation, and technical improvements, thereby reducing poverty. Increased trade and investment have the potential to expand markets, boost productivity, and raise people out of poverty (Stiglitz, 2002; Dollar et al., 2002). On the other hand, it has the potential to worsen income disparity, disrupt customary livelihoods, and leave vulnerable individuals behind. Economic recessions and financial volatility can disproportionately affect the poor (Pimentel et al., 2018). As a result, the effects of globalization on poverty are determined by a country's specific circumstances, such as its degree of development, institutional capacity, social programs, and ability to offset bad consequences while capitalizing on possible benefits (Taylor, 2002; Streeten, 1998).

This thesis focuses on the BRICS and MINT economies¹, as they have been expanding rapidly in recent years. Simultaneously, they face some challenges in reducing poverty such as economic disparity, limited access to education and healthcare, lack of infrastructure, political instability, and corruption. Poverty reduction is critical for attaining long-term economic growth, maintaining social stability, and lowering income inequality. BRICS and MINT countries have implemented various stabilization policies in recent years. These policies have had varying degrees of success in reducing poverty in these countries. With the ability to influence global trade and investment patterns, BRICS and MINT countries are seen as key players in the global economy. The BRICS countries account for around 40% of the world's population and 30% of GDP worldwide (Bhattacharyya, 2015). These countries have significant involvement in global trade and capital flows. However, they encounter massive problems regarding poverty reduction. Over 270 million people in India live in poverty (World Bank, 2021). Brazil, Russia, and South Africa all have a significant poverty rate, while China has a large rural population that suffers significant economic challenges (IMF, 2021). Despite their great economic and political potential, the BRICS and MINT countries have major poverty challenges. These countries have established various poverty reduction policies and plans to address these issues, such as conditional cash transfer programs, employment programs, and health insurance programs. In Appendix: Table 1, I attached BRICS and MINT country profiles and some of their poverty reduction strategies². Therefore, I aim to investigate the effect of stabilization policies on globalization in effecting poverty in emerging countries. I will compare datasets of the most emerging countries: BRICS and MINT, to determine the relationship between the stabilization policy and poverty in these countries. Stability policies can have a strong influence on poverty reduction. This involves policies and initiatives to boost income, education, and social safety nets for the most vulnerable populations (World Bank, 2022). The Turkish government's stabilization policies implemented in the fallout of the 2008 global financial crisis led to a significant reduction in poverty (Kilic & Kaya, 2019). Similarly, the Brazilian government's social safety programs, which were implemented together with the stabilization policies, helped to reduce poverty and inequality in the country (Azevedo et al., 2018). However, not all policies have been equally effective. For example, while the Indian government's stabilization policies contributed to stabilizing the economy, they did not result in a significant poverty reduction (Chakraborty & Rawat, 2021). Likewise, the Indonesian government's stabilization policies had a minimal influence on poverty reduction (Razzak & Timilsina, 2019). Considering these inconsistent results, an empirical study of the stabilization policies for reducing poverty in BRICS and MINT countries is required. This study aims to address a gap in the literature by undertaking a quantitative analysis of the impact of stabilization policies on poverty in these countries.

Accordingly, I aim to answer the research question: What are the nature and the strength of the moderating effects of monetary, fiscal, and exchange rate policy on the relationship between globalization and poverty in BRICS and MINT countries? To answer this question, I use regression analysis in secondary data to evaluate the success of stabilization policies in reducing poverty in BRICS and MINT countries. The following variables are included in the regression: export of goods and services, government expenditure, central bank policy rate, exchange rate system, poverty headcount ratio, literacy rate, unemployment rate, and foreign direct investment. This study will use statistical tools to analyze if these stabilization policies play an important role in effecting poverty. This research provides empirical research on some economic indicators, policy interventions, and poverty outcomes from 2000q1 to 2019q4 to investigate the relationship between these countries' stabilization policies and poverty. Secondly, it assesses the effectiveness of specific stabilization policy such as fiscal, monetary, and exchange rate policy to poverty using quantitative evidence and statistical analysis. A slight comparative analysis is also carried out across the BRICS and MINT countries, highlighting similarities and differences in the effects of stabilization policies on poverty. Based on its findings, the study delivers valuable insights for policymakers on designing and implementing effective stabilization policies that promote poverty reduction in BRICS and MINT countries. Finally, the research adds to the existing literature by providing fresh empirical evidence, filling limitation gaps, challenging existing theories, and providing nuanced insights into the difficulties of poverty reduction policy in BRICS and MINT countries.

Literature Review: Increased international trade has created various opportunities for counties. Consequently, economic integration has made countries more vulnerable to external economic shocks. As a result, governments worldwide have implemented stabilization policies to stabilize their economies, especially during recessions. This section first reviews the literature on globalization and poverty reduction. Then, I include more information about each of the stabilization policies, including fiscal, monetary, and exchange rate policies. Globalization: Information and communication technology (ICT), international trade, and transportation have contributed to the interconnectedness of the world's economies, civilizations, and cultures. This process is known as globalization, where the integration of trade, government, and people beyond national borders emerges, resulting in an increase in economic growth, cultural interaction, and technical innovation. As economic interdependence among countries has elevated due to increased cross-border trade in commodities, services, and information, this also results in both advantages and disadvantages for the country (Ohmae, 1995). Although globalization has the potential to cause poverty by worsening income disparity, labor exploitation, diminishing sovereignty as countries rely on multinational corporations and global organizations, and leaving vulnerable individuals behind, globalization is highly beneficial for economic growth due to free trade agreements, foreign direct investment, and cross-border capital flow (Giddens, 1990 & Stiglits, 2002). Accordingly, I formulate my first hypothesis as follows:

H1: *Globalization Has A Negative Effect On Poverty.*

Poverty Reduction: Poverty reduction is an essential goal for governments, international organizations, and communities worldwide. Poverty is a complicated structural matter involving economic, social, and political issues. Policies aimed at boosting economic growth, providing job opportunities, and improving access to education and healthcare are some essential forms of poverty reduction strategies. Targeted social programs such as cash transfers, food subsidies, and healthcare subsidies, proven to decrease poverty and enhance health outcomes, are among the most effective strategies for reducing poverty (World Bank, 2019). Such programs have effectively reduced poverty and improved social outcomes in many developing countries, including Brazil, Mexico, and India (Bazzi & Clemens, 2019). Promoting economic growth and job creation is another effective strategy for poverty reduction. Policies that stimulate investment in education, infrastructure, and technology can help achieve this (United Nations Development Programme, 2021). Increasing the access of small businesses to loans and other financial services can also assist in boosting the economy and eliminating poverty (World Bank, 2019). Furthermore, reducing poverty requires a comprehensive strategy that tackles economic, social, and political problems. Social programs and policies encouraging economic growth and job creation can reduce poverty and improve social outcomes. Mundell (1963) recommends developing infrastructure, promoting technical innovation, and supporting international organizations such as the World

Trade Organization to achieve these benefits. He also suggests encouraging cultural exchange programs, tourism, and creating a competent and educated workforce to ensure that the advantages of globalization are more evenly shared. Policies can be implemented to reduce the negative effects of globalization. For instance, they implement policies that support social cohesion, environmental sustainability, and economic progress. By implementing these policies, a country may increase its productivity and competitiveness on the global stage, leading to economic growth and advancement. Mundell discovered the role of stabilization policies in maintaining economic stability. In this study, I extend their study further by examining whether these stabilization policies, including monetary, exchange rate, and fiscal policies, could moderate the relationship between globalization and poverty.

Stabilization Policies: Fiscal policy has been widely used to reduce poverty. This strategy requires government action in the form of taxing, spending, and borrowing. Fiscal policy may directly influence poverty reduction by reallocating resources to social safety nets and public investments in sectors such as education and healthcare, as well as to stimulate economic growth (Abosedra & Kamali, 2016). Government spending on education, health, and infrastructure favorably influenced poverty reduction in Bangladesh (Rahman & Ara, 2019). The efficacy of fiscal policy in reducing poverty depends on governments' capacity to target and reach the most vulnerable populations (Deaton, 2010). This highlights the importance of ensuring that fiscal policy is designed and implemented in a way that reduces poverty. So, in line with globalization and fiscal policy, here I state my second hypothesis:

H2: *Globalization Negatively Impacts Poverty, And This Effect Is Strengthened By Redistributive Fiscal Policy.* Monetary policy is another option for poverty reduction. This policy utilizes interest rates, money supply, and exchange rate to regulate the economy. Monetary policy can influence poverty reduction by improving the economy and reducing inflation rates (Hanif & Malik, 2014). Through managing the money supply and interest rates, monetary policy boosts investment and consumption, resulting in job creation and higher household income. Furthermore, a good monetary policy could stabilize a country's currency and promote exports, improving economic growth and reducing poverty (Glewwe, Rahman, & Wane, 2002). However, there is a risk that monetary policy would favor the rich disproportionately, as lower-income people may not have access to loans and suffer higher interest rates. Therefore, it is critical to ensure that monetary policy targets the most vulnerable populations (World Bank, 2016). Thus, aligning with globalization and monetary policy, here I state my third hypothesis:

H3: *Globalization Negatively Impacts Poverty, And This Effect Is Strengthened By The Expansionary Monetary Policy.* Exchange rate policy requires managing a country's currency's exchange rate, which can affect the prices of imported and exported products and services. A fixed and competitive exchange rate can boost local producers' and exporters' competitiveness, resulting in higher exports, economic development, and job creation (Kohli, 2006). Accordingly, a depreciated currency can boost the purchasing power of a country's exports while decreasing the cost of imported products, resulting in increased economic activity and lower poverty rates (Mujahid-Mukhtar et al., 2021). On the other hand, a floating exchange rate can cause macroeconomic imbalances, inflation, and disrupted economic development, all of which can hurt the most vulnerable people in society. As a result, designing and implementing exchange rate policies that balance the short-term benefits of currency depreciation with the long-term requirement for macroeconomic stability is critical (International Monetary Fund, 2016). Thus, my fourth hypothesis:

H4: *Globalization Negatively Impacts Poverty, And This Effect Is Strengthened By The Exchange Rate Policy.*

Research Model: Previous research suggests that there might be an effect of globalization on poverty. However, few studies have strong evidence of test results. For instance, government policies aimed at stabilizing a country's economy. This research framework animates this research based on the research hypotheses, Figure 1. The study integrates the Mundell-Fleming model (Mundell, 1963) and inclusive globalization (Stiglitz, 2002) to examine the relationship between globalization through stabilization policy and poverty.

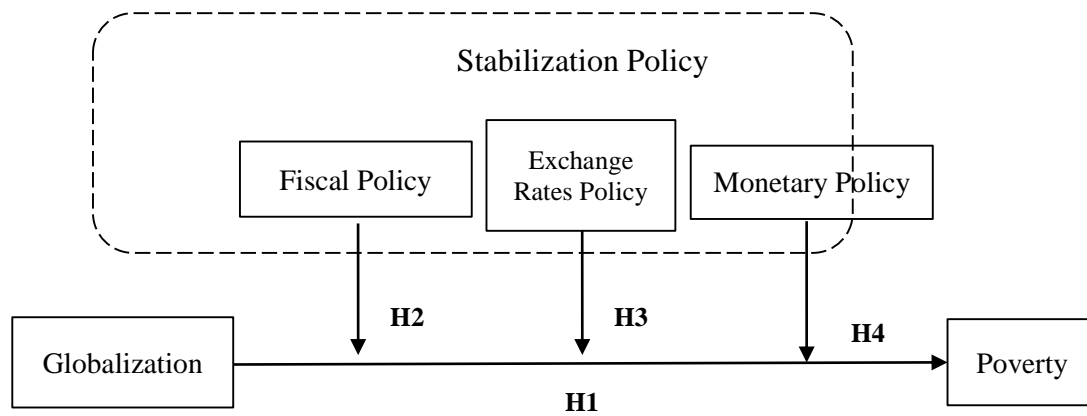


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Data: To solve the research question: What are the nature and the strength of the moderating effects of monetary, exchange rate, and fiscal policy on the relationship between globalization and poverty in BRICS and MINT countries? I first collected secondary data from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development Statistics, Nations Statistical Institute, National Banks, World Bank, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), IMF World Economic Outlook Database, Bank for International Settlements, and International Trade Organizations. Then, the data was analyzed using regressions to examine the relationship between stabilization policy in globalization negatively effecting poverty. The relevant variables include export goods and services, government expenditure, central bank policy rates, exchange rate policy, literacy rate, foreign direct investment, unemployment rate, and poverty headcount ratio. Hereby, I explain where I find the data and how I measure them. As I framed in my conceptual framework, I positioned globalization as the independent variable and poverty as the dependent variable. Nevertheless, I am also interested to discover the relationship of my mediator variables: fiscal, exchange rate, and monetary policies, with poverty and globalization. As the independent variable, I utilized quarterly data for globalization in the form of the export of goods and services, which is quarterly data from 2000Q1 to 2019Q4. The data comes from the OECD Statistics and World Bank: Global Economic Prospects. Henceforth, poverty, as the dependent variable, is measured based on the poverty headcount ratio. The poverty headcount ratio is the percentage of poverty headcount over the total population. A higher value signifies more challenging poverty, where the vulnerable population typically has limited access to education, healthcare, social and political unrest, and other infrastructure that is critical for economic mobility. This problematic cycle leads to an even bigger challenge where individuals are discouraged from improving their economic situation to meet their needs. The quarterly data provided by the World Bank and the United Nations will be used. One of my stabilization policy mediators is fiscal policy. Hereby, I employed government expenditure to measure fiscal policy quarterly. The data was collected from OECD Statistics, The World Bank, and IMF World Economic Outlook Database. As justified in my literature review, government expenditure is an accurate representation of fiscal policy since it refers to the amount of money spent by the government on goods and services such as education, health, defense, infrastructure, and more for country's benefit. Exchange rate policy refers to the action taken by a central bank to influence the value of its currency in relation to other currencies (Ilzetzki, 2021). I used the coarse classification codes of Ilzetski (2021). He suggests that his model can have a significant effect on macroeconomic outcomes, especially by affecting the institutions about the future path of exchange rate where this considers not only the degree of exchange rate flexibility, but also other factors, such as the usage of capital controls, the monetary policy, and the degree of exchange rate policy that provides a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of exchange rate regimes in different countries. The classification ranges from the most fixed exchange rate policies to the floating exchange rate policies. Here, I will set the data from 0 to 1, where 0 represents the most floating exchange rate policy and 1 is the most fixed exchange rate policy. One of the key factors in analyzing monetary policy is the central bank's ability to regulate money. To measure monetary policy,

I utilized quarterly monetary market rates on central bank policy rates, which represent the interest rates utilized by banks and other financial institutions when borrowing and lending money in the short term. These rates are influenced by the policies implemented by the central bank. The data for this analysis was sourced from reputable institutions such as the Bank for International Settlements, the Central Bank of Nigeria, and the Central Bank of Indonesia.

Table 1: Study Variables

| Variable | Definition | Measurement | Data Source |
|----------|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| EXP | Export of Goods and Services | Sale of domestically produced goods and services to foreign buyers, in a million USD | OECD Statistics; The World Bank: Global Economic Prospects |
| GOV | Government Expenditure (% of GDP) | Money spent by the government on goods and services | OECD Statistics; The World Bank; IMF World Economic Outlook Database |
| CBR | Central Bank Policy Rates | Monetary market rates | Bank for International Settlements; Central Bank of Nigeria; Central Bank of Indonesia |
| EXR | Exchange Rate Policy | The index ranged from 0 to 1; 1 means the most flexible regime | Ilzetzki et al. (2021) |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investment | Inflows of foreign direct investment | OECD; United Nations: UNCTAD |
| LITERACY | Literacy Rate | Literacy rate, adult total (% of people ages 15 and above) | World Bank |
| UNEMPLOY | Unemployment Rate | Unemployment rate for 16 years old and above | OECD; National Bureau of Statistics of Nigeria; National Bureau of Statistics of India |
| POV | Poverty Headcount Ratio | Poverty headcount ratio (% of the population) age 16 and above | The World Bank; The United Nations |

Figure 2 presents the the quarterly change in exports of goods and services. In the year 2000q1, exports of goods and services ranging from above six thousand million USD to around 51 thousand million USD, have significantly increased for most countries except for Nigeria and South Africa in 2019q4. In particular, India's value of goods and services exports in 2019q4 is 575% higher than its exports of goods and services in 2000q1. On the other hand, Figure 3 shows the quarterly change in poverty. The graph shows the poverty rate has been positively and negatively impacted by the economic and social environment, including global economic instability in 2001 and 2007. All BRICS and MINT countries, except Brazil and South Africa, have succeeded in decreasing their poverty rate from 2000q1 to 2019q4. Interestingly, Brazil shows a massive downturn of its poverty rate during the 2008 crisis and the number bounced back almost as huge as its slip in 2009q1.

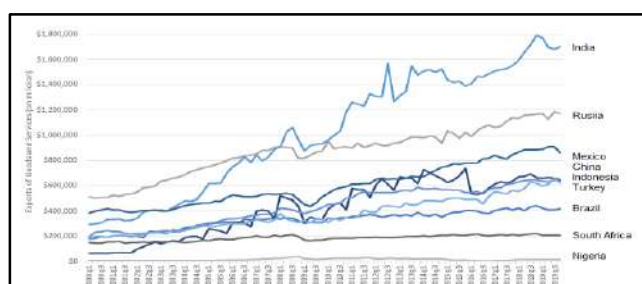
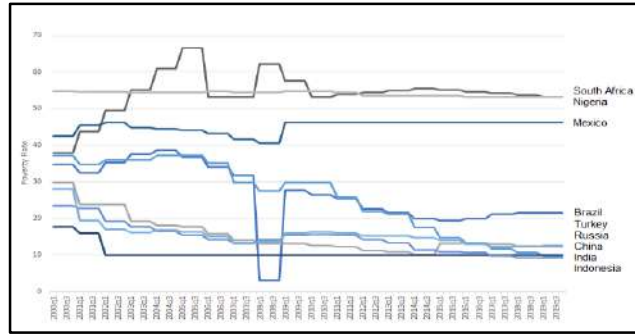


Figure 2: Exports of Goods and Services Quarterly Graph
Figure 3: Poverty Rate Quarterly Graph

Research Methodology: This research uses regression to conduct the empirical analysis. The estimated equation of this study is as follows:

$$\ln_POV_{it} = \beta_1 \ln_EXP_{it} + \beta_2 FDI_{it} + \beta_3 LITERACY_{it} + \beta_4 UNEMPLOY_{it} + \mu_i + \epsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

$$\ln_POV_{it} = \beta_1 \ln_EXP_{it} + \beta_2 \ln_GOV_{it} + \beta_3 \ln_GOV_{it} * \ln_EXP_{it} + \beta_4 FDI_{it} + \beta_5 LITERACY_{it} + \beta_6 UNEMPLOY_{it} + \mu_i + \epsilon_{it} \quad (2)$$



$$\ln_POV_{it} = \beta_1 \ln_EXP_{it} + \beta_2 \ln_CBR_{it} + \beta_3 \ln_CBR_{it} * \ln_EXP_{it} + \beta_4 FDI_{it} + \beta_5 LITERACY_{it} + \beta_6 UNEMPLOY_{it} + \mu_i + \epsilon_{it} \quad (3)$$

$$\ln_POV_{it} = \beta_1 \ln_EXP_{it} + \beta_2 EXR_{it} + \beta_3 \ln_GOV_{it} * EXR_{it} + \beta_4 FDI_{it} + \beta_5 LITERACY_{it} + \beta_6 UNEMPLOY_{it} + \mu_i + \epsilon_{it} \quad (4)$$

Where the equations (1) to (4) represent different models exploring the relationship between \ln_POV_{it} as the dependent variable, representing a measure of poverty, and various moderating variables and three control variables. In equation (1), \ln_EXP_{it} is the natural logarithm of the independent variable representing the export of goods and services, FDI_{it} , is the control variable for foreign direct investment, $LITERACY_{it}$, represents the control variable for literacy rate, and $UNEMPLOY_{it}$ is the control variable for the unemployment rate. β_1 , β_2 , β_3 , and β_4 are the regression coefficients, which quantify the relationship between each respective independent variable and the dependent variable. The term μ_i represents the fixed effect capturing country-specific characteristics that may influence poverty. Lastly, ϵ_{it} is the error term, accounting for unobserved factors and random variation in the model. Equations (2) to (4) introduce additional mediating variables and their interaction terms to examine the combined effects of \ln_GOV_{it} as the moderator variable representing government expenditure, \ln_CBR_{it} as moderator variable representing central bank policy rate, and EXR_{it} as moderator variable representing exchange rate policy on poverty, while retaining the control variables FDI_{it} , $LITERACY_{it}$, and $UNEMPLOY_{it}$.

Results: With the quarterly dataset of BRICS and MINT countries, ranging from 2000 to 2019, panel data has been created. The descriptive statistics of the dataset are presented in Table 2. According to Field (2018), the data can be considered normal if it has a skewness between -1 to +1 and kurtosis between -3 to +3. Based on this formulation, it can be seen that data on poverty, the exchange rate, FDI, and the unemployment rate are considered normal distributions. Meanwhile, export goods and services, government expenditure, and literacy rate data are right-skewed and are leptokurtic distributions. On the other hand, central bank policy rates data is normally skewed and leptokurtic.

Table 2: Descriptive Analytics

| Variable | N | Range | Mean | Min | Max | SD | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|------------|-----|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| \ln_POV | 720 | 1.979502 | 3.186008 | 2.219203 | 4.198705 | 0.632114 | 0.004153 | 1.470179 |
| \ln_EXP | 720 | 6.300023 | 12.58459 | 8.098947 | 14.39897 | 1.299391 | -1.64544 | 5.369063 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| ln_GOV | 720 | 1.690784 | 2.876126 | 1.774952 | 3.465736 | 0.315738 | -1.1231 | 4.38385 |
| ln_CBR | 720 | 2.995733 | 2.159594 | 1.098612 | 4.094345 | 0.482719 | 0.693256 | 3.616857 |
| EXR | 720 | 1 | 0.240972 | 0 | 1 | 0.355645 | 1.131093 | 2.858832 |
| ln_FDI | 720 | 7.237912 | 8.253172 | 4.32606 | 11.56397 | 1.327125 | 0.011413 | 2.803804 |
| ln_UNEMPLOY | 720 | 2.586284 | 2.042166 | 0.795421 | 3.381706 | 0.637962 | 0.567925 | 2.247135 |
| ln_LITERACY | 720 | 0.669177 | 4.443352 | 3.933347 | 4.602524 | 0.181197 | -1.47211 | 3.765602 |

When generating a regression model, parameter estimations are influenced when one independent variable collides with a combination of other independent variables, a phenomenon known as multicollinearity. Therefore, major problems could arise, such as a reduction of the statistical power of the regression model and making accurate estimation of the correlations between variables more difficult. (Lin, 2008). Pearson's correlation matrix is used to test for multicollinearity, resulting in a correlation coefficient between variables. Table 3 displays the outcome of Pearson's correlation matrix.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

| | POV | EXP | GOV | CBR | EXR | FDI | UNEMPLOY | LITERACY |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| POV | 1.00*** | | | | | | | |
| EXP | -0.537*** | 1.00*** | | | | | | |
| GOV | -0.098*** | 0.539*** | 1.00*** | | | | | |
| CBR | 0.144*** | -0.308*** | -0.088*** | 1.00*** | | | | |
| EXR | -0.338*** | -0.128*** | -0.408*** | -0.238*** | 1.00*** | | | |
| FDI | -0.541*** | 0.482*** | -0.004** | -0.429*** | 0.354*** | 1.00*** | | |
| UNEMPLOY | 0.397*** | -0.425*** | 0.067** | 0.345*** | -0.328*** | -0.615*** | 1.00*** | |
| LITERACY | -0.481*** | 0.640*** | 0.638*** | -0.142*** | -0.095*** | 0.336*** | -0.076*** | 1.00*** |

Note: The significance level is shown: * p-value<0.10; ** p-value<0.05; *** p-value<0.01

Based on Mukaka (2012), I choose a multicollinearity criterion of 0.8 in this study; if the correlation coefficient is more than this threshold, multicollinearity is assumed. According to Table 3, no correlation of independent variable coefficients is greater than 0.8, indicating no possibility of multicollinearity. Nonetheless, I still decided to utilize the variance inflation factors (VIF) test to recheck the multicollinearity problem. The VIF computation can also be used to determine the presence of multicollinearity. VIF values greater than ten are considered to be indicative of significant multicollinearity and frequently suggest the deletion of specific predictors (Robert A. Stine, 1995). The VIF calculation result is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: VIF Analysis

| Variable | VIF | 1/VIF |
|----------|------|----------|
| EXP | 2.83 | 0.353223 |
| LITERACY | 2.58 | 0.388282 |
| GOV | 2.44 | 0.410557 |

| | | |
|----------|------|----------|
| FDI | 2.33 | 0.429446 |
| UNEMPLOY | 2.02 | 0.494386 |
| EXR | 1.59 | 0.630437 |
| CBR | 1.32 | 0.758912 |
| Mean VIF | 2.16 | |

Estimation of the Fixed Effect Models: Before performing panel data analysis, it is critical to check for heteroskedasticity concerns, which might impair the accuracy and reliability of the statistical analysis. The Breusch-Pagan test revealed that the dataset contains heteroskedasticity, with a chi-square of 11.18 and a p-value less than 0.01 (Breusch & Pagan, 1979). Therefore, the usage of robustness is needed for regression. Hereby, fixed effect models are utilized for panel data analysis. Table 5 displays the findings of the fixed effect model. Three models are provided, each with its own set of moderator variables and three control variables. The first model has one independent variable and three mediators. The second model receives the same treatment plus government expenditure (GOV) as a moderating variable and its interaction. The third model changes the GOV variable to central bank policy rates (CBR) as the second mediating variable and its interaction. The fourth model, uses the mediating variable exchange rate policy (EXR) and its interaction.

Table 5: Panel Fixed Effect Regression Model

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
|----------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| EXP | -0.143*** (0.0196) | -0.416*** (0.0583) | 0.0433 (0.0222) | -0.193*** (0.0191) |
| FDI | -0.0572*** (0.0109) | -0.0473*** (0.0109) | -0.0274** (0.0102) | -0.0470*** (0.0102) |
| UNEMPLOY | 0.0820*** (0.0229) | 0.0792*** (0.0226) | 0.0431* (0.0208) | 0.0988*** (0.0212) |
| LITERACY | -1.814*** (0.183) | -2.089*** (0.192) | -0.549** (0.188) | -1.591*** (0.174) |
| GOV | | -0.928*** (0.216) | | |
| EXPxGOV | | 0.0993*** (0.0203) | | |
| CBR | | | 0.194*** (0.0216) | |
| EXPxCBR | | | -0.000000371*** (0.0000000273) | |
| EXR | | | | 0.206*** (0.0419) |
| EXPxEXR | | | | 0.000000328*** (0.0000000678) |
| Constant | 13.35*** | 16.98*** | 5.158*** | 12.79*** |

| | | | | |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | (0.733) | (1.126) | (0.890) | (0.687) |
| Observation | 720 | 720 | 720 | 720 |
| Adjusted R-sq | 0.452 | 0.464 | 0.558 | 0.522 |

Note: 1) Figures in parentheses are z-values 2) The significance level is shown: * p-value<0.10; ** p-value<0.05; *** p-value<0.01. After determining to use fixed effect as it can deliver a more robust result, I utilize the model's output to determine the study's hypothesis result.

Hypothesis 1 states that globalization has a negative effect on poverty. This hypothesis is supported by Table 5, model number one, where a 1% rise in BRICS and MINT countries' export of goods and services, as its globalization variable, will result in a 0.14% decrease in poverty. This interpretation is accepted at 1% significant level. Thus, hypothesis one regarding the negative effect of globalization on poverty is accepted.

Hypothesis 2 states that globalization negatively impacts poverty, and this effect is strengthened by redistributive fiscal policy. The second model of Table 5 shows that fiscal policy, in fact, has a positive effect on strengthening globalization's positive impact on poverty and is significantly accepted at 1%. According to the calculation, a 1% rise in BRICS and MINT countries' government expenditures, as the variable of fiscal policy, will result in a 0.09% increase in poverty. With this conclusion, hypothesis two regarding fiscal policy strengthening the negative impact of globalization on poverty in BRICS and MINT countries can be rejected.

Hypothesis 3 states that globalization negatively impacts poverty, and this effect is strengthened by the expansionary monetary policy. This can be assessed using the third model of Table 5, which shows a negative effect and is significantly accepted at 1%. According to the calculation, a 1% rise in BRICS and MINT countries' central bank rates on money market rates, as a variable of monetary policy, will result in a 0.0000003% increase in poverty. With this conclusion, hypothesis three regarding monetary policy strengthening the negative impact of globalization on poverty in BRICS and MINT countries is accepted.

Hypothesis 4 states that globalization negatively impacts poverty, and this effect is strengthened by the exchange rate policy. This can be assessed by the fourth model of Table 5, which shows a positive effect and is significantly accepted at 1%. According to the calculation, a 1% rise in BRICS and MINT countries' exchange rate policy will result in a 0.000000328% increase in poverty. With this conclusion, hypothesis four regarding exchange rate policy strengthening the negative impact of globalization on poverty in BRICS and MINT countries can be rejected. Since all fixed effects models are significant at the 1% confidence level, the adjusted R-squared outcome of each model is compared to select the optimal model to use. Adjusted R-squared is a metric that assesses how well the independent factors predict the dependent variable. It ranges from 0 to 1, with a greater value suggesting a better fit. Consequently, with an adjusted R-squared value of 0.558, the third model is the best fit. Based on the analysis conducted, it can be inferred that the central bank policy rate, as a key component of monetary policy, holds the utmost importance from all stabilization policies in influencing the impact of poverty. Subsequently, the exchange rate policy; and government expenditure, which represents fiscal policy, also contribute to addressing the poverty-related concerns.

Conclusion and Discussion: Conclusion: This empirical study has investigated the effect of stabilization policies on the relationship of globalization on poverty in BRICS and MINT countries. By analyzing various stabilization policy variables and their relationship with poverty levels, this study has provided valuable insights into the economic dynamics at play from 2000q1 to 2019q4. The findings reveal that central bank policy rates, government expenditure, foreign direct investment (FDI), literacy rates, and unemployment rates significantly influence poverty outcomes. Figure 2 and Figure 3 show that some countries like India, China, and Indonesia succeeded to affect poverty negatively by their exports of goods and services throughout time. The study highlights the importance of stabilization policy effects on poverty reduction. While certain policies, such as central bank policy rates and government expenditure, demonstrate a significant association with poverty levels. The central bank policy rate appears as a key component among all stabilization policies studied, exhibiting significant effects on poverty levels. As a critical component of monetary policy, the central bank policy rate shapes the economic environment and can influence poverty outcomes. According to the findings, changes in the central bank policy rate can have a direct impact on poverty reduction initiatives. Additionally, Figure 4 shows that BRICS and MINT countries' central bank rates on money market rates have competed

intensely since 2008q1. As the higher the central bank rates, the smaller the poverty rate.

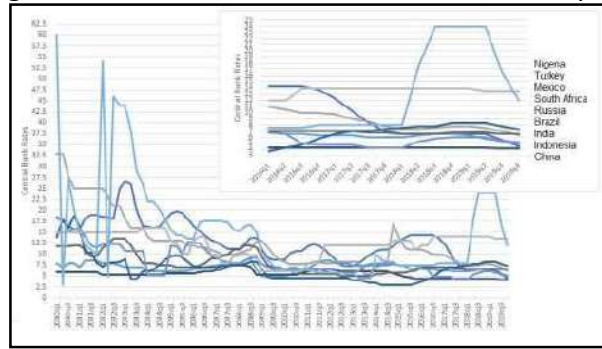


Figure 4: Central Bank Rates Quarterly Graph

Moreover, government expenditure, which represents the fiscal policy. Figure 5 presents' two economic shocks that affects government expenditures for all countries. This variable best- use for long-term effects on poverty. Compared with Figure 2, South Africa and Mexico are in the top three of the highest poverty rates and the top three of the highest government expenditures, supporting the positive effect of government expenditures increases the poverty rate. Lastly, exchange rate policy, as more fixed exchange rates affect the increase of poverty levels positively.

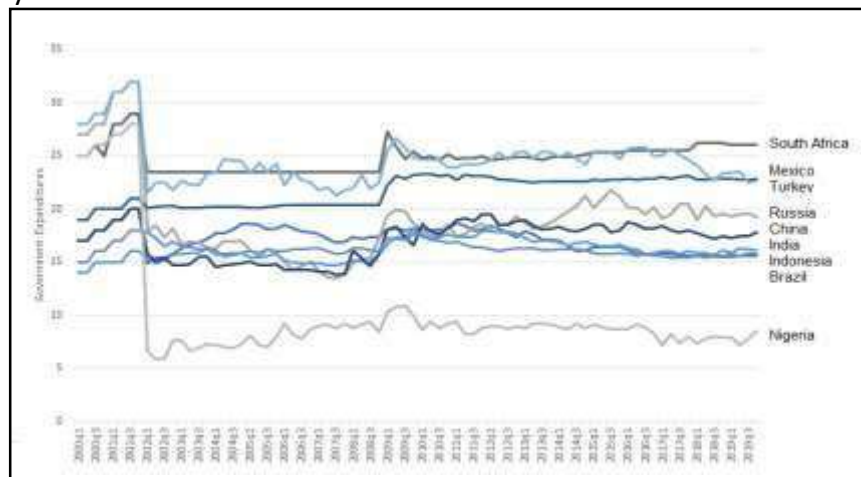


Figure 5: Government Expenditures Quarterly Graph

Contribution: This paper contributes significantly to the existing knowledge by addressing the current gaps in understanding the effects of stabilization policies. In the present context, where numerous countries are implementing stabilization policies, there is a need for reliable and comprehensive research to draw a clearer picture of their impact. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a deeper understanding of the types of stabilization policies that influence poverty. Through an empirical examination of data from BRICS and MINT countries, this research contributes to the development of knowledge for developing countries, especially regarding the effects of stabilization policies on poverty. By employing analytical methods, the study aims to uncover the specific mechanisms through which these policies shape poverty outcomes. This nuanced understanding will equip policymakers with valuable insights, facilitating more informed decision-making and the design of more effective stabilization policies. The findings of this study hold practical implications for policymakers, as they shed light on the intricate relationship between stabilization policies and poverty reduction. By enhancing policymakers' understanding of this relationship, they can make informed assessments of the potential impacts and trade-offs associated with different stabilization policies. Consequently, this knowledge will enable policymakers to craft more targeted and impactful poverty reduction strategies. In conclusion, this paper contributes to the academic discourse by providing a comprehensive analysis of the effects of stabilization policies. This research not only advances existing literature but also equips policymakers with crucial insights necessary for evidence-based decision-making in the realm of stabilization policies, ultimately fostering more effective poverty alleviation efforts.

Limitations: This study has various limitations that must be acknowledged. First of all, data availability and quality were a major challenge. Working with huge and complicated datasets, especially quarterly, might result in data inconsistencies. Data inconsistencies could arise despite the use of credible sources owing to missing data, measurement mistakes, or variances in data gathering processes. Furthermore, access to data beyond the year 2000 might be problematic for many developing countries, restricting the width of the study. Furthermore, the lack of quarterly statistics for certain variables, such as poverty headcount, makes it difficult to capture short-term changes in poverty levels correctly. To improve the robustness of future study, a wider range of variables linked to fiscal, monetary, and exchange rate policies should be considered. A more thorough measurement of the effectiveness of stabilization efforts in decreasing poverty can be accomplished by considering other factors. This method would allow for a more sophisticated understanding of the intricate relationships and potential trade-offs between various policies interventions. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has created an economic situation that has the potential to change the linkages between stabilization strategies and poverty outcomes. The study's findings may not be generalizable to other time periods or non-pandemic contexts due to the specific conditions and governmental responses during the pandemic. Finally, this study recognizes the constraints caused by inconsistencies in the data, challenges in acquiring complete data for developing countries, and the need for a more comprehensive collection of factors to reflect the real impact of stabilization programs on poverty. However, it is important to consider that the representativeness of these findings for other developing countries may vary. Factors such as the economic status of countries, whether they are rich or poor, and the presence of informal economies, including illegal economies, which often go unregistered, can significantly affect the outcomes of each stabilization policy. This complex environment contributes to the inconsistency observed in the outcomes. Moreover, it is essential to acknowledge that the generalizability of these findings to all countries is limited due to not all governments specifically perform their stabilization policy to reduce poverty and corruption poses a significant obstacle in some countries. Addressing these limitations in future research will lead to a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of the impact of stabilization programs on poverty reduction.

Recommendations for Future Research: Future research in this area should concentrate on broadening and confirming the findings by integrating a broader collection of variables to reflect each form of stabilization strategy. This will improve the study findings' dependability and accuracy while also providing a deeper grasp of the precise fiscal measures that are most significant in addressing the current circumstance. Additionally, there is a need for qualitative research to investigate the explanations and reasoning behind the policy choices and to understand the deeper impact on the citizens. Combining quantitative analysis with qualitative insights will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding stabilization programs and their effects on poverty. This holistic approach will enhance the overall comprehension of the subject matter and facilitate the formulation of more effective and targeted policies to alleviate poverty. However, it is essential to acknowledge that the generalizability of these findings to all countries is limited. Therefore, scholars should conduct more thorough research to ensure a better generalization of the results and to account for the diverse contexts and specificities of different countries. The application of statistical techniques to address missing data and other irregularities should be explored to reduce the overall impact of missing data. Furthermore, researchers should prioritize transparency by openly discussing the constraints of the data and the methods used for data acquisition and evaluation. This transparency would enhance readers' understanding of the results and their implications and support future researchers in conducting more precise, accurate, and dependable studies. Additionally, regular and reliable data collection is required. Countries would benefit from improving their data reporting standards because they are the major recipients of research findings such as this study. Countries' accurate and timely data reporting would not only lead to more trustworthy research findings but would also allow policymakers to make educated decisions based on up-to-date and relevant information. Future studies should also look at the contextual elements that impact the success of various stabilization programs in affecting poverty. Given the varying economic, social, and institutional settings of different countries, an in-depth examination of the unique contextual elements that determine the success of stabilization policies would give significant insights for policymakers and scholars.

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Appendix:

Table 1: Countries Profiles

| Country | Population 2021 | GDP per Capita 2021 | Poverty Rate 2019 | Poverty Reduction Strategies |
|---------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------|--|
| Brazil | 213.4 million | \$16,836 | 21.2% | Bolsa Familia conditional cash transfer program, the National Plan for Social Protection and Promotion of Citizenship, and the Plano Brasil sem Miséria program (MDS, 2019) (Bacha, 2015) |
| Russia | 144.5 million | \$31,594 | 12.3% | The National Project for Overcoming Poverty: increasing the minimum wage, increasing access to healthcare, and improving infrastructure in rural areas (OECD, 2019) (World Bank, 2021) |
| India | 1.366 billion | \$9,443 | 9.2% | Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana: cash transfers, food subsidies, and employment guarantees, and the National Rural Livelihoods Mission: aims to provide sustainable livelihood opportunities to rural households (UNDP, 2020) (Government of India, 2020) |

| | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|----------|-------|--|
| China | 1.398 billion | \$18,478 | 0.6% | The National Strategy for Poverty Alleviation and Development: providing education and healthcare, improving infrastructure, and promoting economic development in impoverished areas (Xinhua NewsAgency, 2021) (World Bank, 2020) |
| South Africa | 60.2 million | \$13,255 | 55.5% | The National Development Plan: increasing access to education and healthcare, improving infrastructure, and promoting economic growth through job creation (Republic of South Africa, 2020) (World Bank, 2019) |
| Mexico | 130.2 million | \$22,370 | 41.9% | The National Crusade Against Hunger: cash transfers, food subsidies, and nutrition programs, and the Programa de Apoyo Alimentario: provides food assistance to vulnerable populations (World Bank, 2020) (Government of Mexico, 2021) |
| Indonesia | 276.3 | \$13,389 | 9.2% | The National Team for Accelerated Poverty Reduction: providing education and healthcare, improving infrastructure, and promoting economic development in impoverished areas (World Bank, |

The Role of Economic Efficiency and Business Strategy to Achieve Competitive Advantage among Companies within Industry in Indonesia: A Study Based on Agency Theory

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Abstract: This study aims to explore the synergy between Economic efficiency, Strategic Choice, and how it will endorse Competitive Advantages in Indonesian Business landscape. The author argues that by incorporating economic of scale and efficiency into products and service, it will improve business profitability in a long term, in addition to achieve competitive advantages. In organizational level, it is essential to consider agency theory as a tool to understand the dynamic of business management, by also considering how Principal-Agent relationship play out within various functional level, such as between owners and manager of the company. Furthermore, to take into account the attainable access to advance technology and innovation, Strategic Choice is a key aspect in the constant evolvement of market situation, since the more strategic innovation and organizational efficiency induced in managerial decision, market competition will be revamped broadly. The author believes that by integrating economic efficiency into Business Strategy, competitive advantages can be achieved, hence this writing elaborates how Agency Theory and Strategic Choices approach able to transform Competitive Advantages of Business Industry in Indonesia.

Keywords: Business Strategy, Competitive Advantage, Economics Efficiency

1. Introduction: In the competitive realm of business where similar products distributed, many companies face horizontal boundaries and must gain a competitive advantage in the industry to secure their market. Strategic decisions and calculations, according to practices of economic and agency efficiency and agency efficiency, will be more effective by harnessing dynamic capabilities, compare to other three classical theories,

since dynamic capabilities approach provides internal and external improvement of capabilities, to adapt into constant market changes. (H.-J. Chang & Wang, 2013; Hary Susilo & Julius, 2019; Kaleka & Morgan, 2017). Among many strategies, while the paradox of horizontal mergers often hinders welfare and productivity, incorporating microeconomics is considered a foundational cornerstone to business strategy, such as remuneration, and industrial agglomeration, which are related to economics scale and scope. Particularly, economies of scale encourage corporation to achieve a cost advantage over competitors in very tight industries and are key determinants of market structure and market entry due to the exposure and conditions of goods being spread to many places. (Cosnita-Langlais & Rasch, 2023; Hidayah et al., 2020; Ramachandran et al., 2020). Furthermore, to achieve long term competitive advantages in the industry that usually are linked to variety of products and services, it is essential to go beyond profit and embody humane business management, that evidently lead to a better product quality. Consequently, to enhance services, business strategy plays an important mediator role in harnessing organizational capabilities to gain profitability. Hence, to understand competitive advantage in the industry we have to analyze framework of organizational capabilities mediated with business strategy lead to competitive advantage, resulting certain level profits and higher wages. The structure is provided below, emphasizing on Dynamic Capabilities (Chakraborty et al., n.d.; López-Cabarcos et al., 2015):

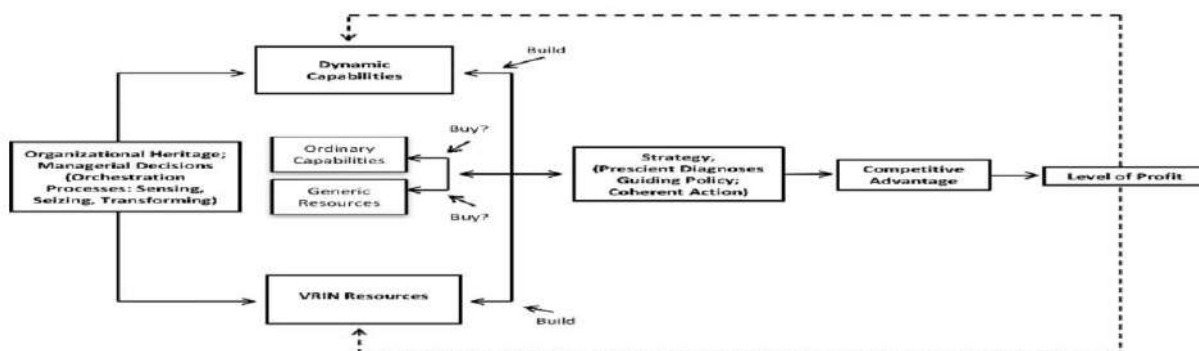


Figure 1. *The Logical Structure of Dynamic Capabilities Framework*

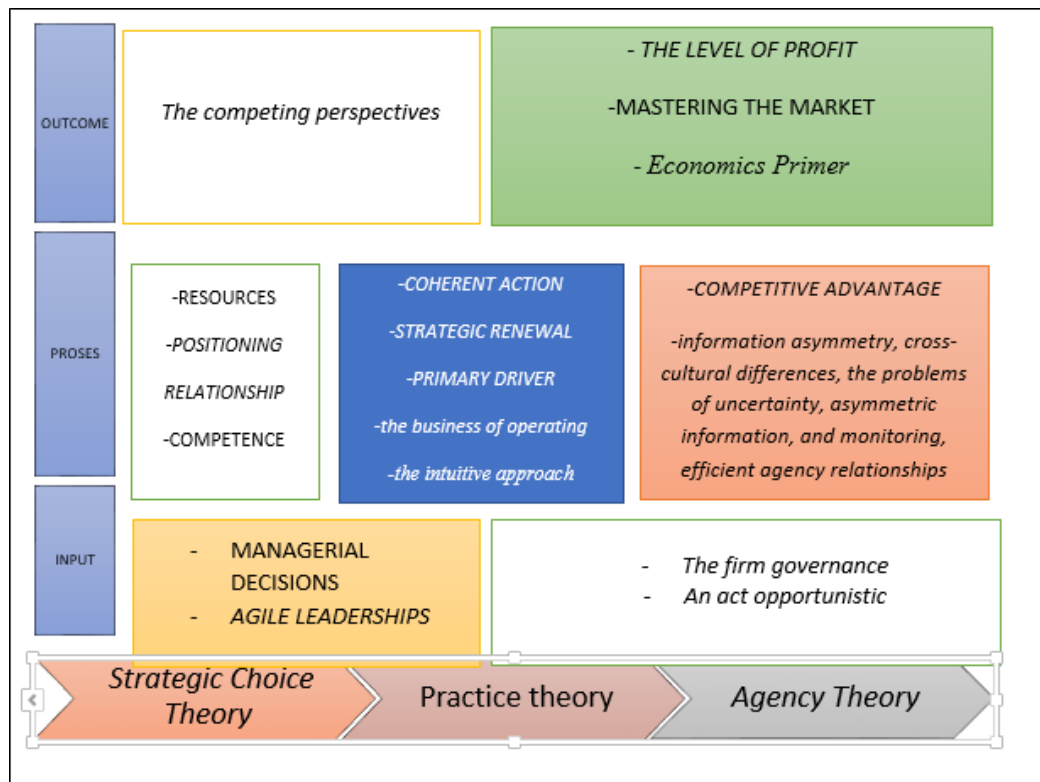
In micro level, based on cases in Ghana, it is concluded that strategic decision is efficient over and above efficiency-based economic models. Company regulation such as intervention to Working Capital Management are proven to support long-lasting firm-specific performance advantages, in addition to gross operating profit, net operating profit, and returns on assets. Furthermore, the need for management to consider internal organization specific traits will help to pursue continued competitive domestic and global gains. (Braumah et al., 2021). In line with strategic decision, intellectual capacities are key to sustainable growth assisted by sustainable competitive advantage. Cases from firms in China and Pakistan showcase that leadership has influence on strategic differentiation. Companies investing in intangible asset such as human resource capacities have favorable chance to attain optimal advantages, since strategies, that lead to cost efficiency, are conducive to shape growth performance within the industry. (Lu et al., 2021). On the outward, resources and commons has been transformed incrementally through social acceleration, from merely petty commodity to significant lifestyle and social movement. Hence, it is essentials to understand that market-driven production has become objective to many companies. As the result of social development and globalization, financialization of capital has increased, followed by direct and indirect foreign investment as well as privatization. Ultimately, the dynamic allocation of resources and capital reproduction has an objective to attain profit. (Arvidsson, 2020; Ferraz Raposo et al., 2022). In the field of business strategy, the capability of a company determines their productivity to deliver services. Interestingly, in the modern era, it has been concluded that dynamic capabilities are more adaptive to changing environment. Dynamic capability has a unique approach that enable companies to be profitable which is “doing the right things” as priority, instead of the approach of ordinary capabilities to “do things right”. With the exposure to high-level activities rather than performance of administrative, the company and its top management would have a broader perspective of customer preferences, strategic management, and technologies, while also validate and refine them; and then follow through by realigning assets and activities. (Teece, D. J. (2014). *The Foundations of Enterprise Performance: Dynamic and Ordinary Capabilities in an (Economic) Theory of Firms*. Academy of Management Perspectives) (Clegg et al., 2016; Hunt & Madhavaram, 2020). Additionally, according to David J. Teece (2014),

strong dynamic capabilities provide mindset of matchmaking customer needs and with technological and business opportunities, hence innovative to new product development, and new organizational culture. Suitable managerial modes include asset orchestration, entrepreneurial agility, and forward-looking leadership. For applied purposes, Dynamic capabilities comprise three main groups: (1) identification and assessment of threats, opportunities, and customer needs (sensing); (2) mobilization of resources to address new opportunities while capturing value from doing so (seizing); and (3) continuous organizational renewal (transforming). (Kohler, 2022; Sato & Aggarwal, 2020). Efficiency and doing thing right alone however practical, is not sufficient. The key of Dynamic capabilities is in the continuous or semi-continuous sensing and transformation, which are important to adaptive to constant challenge of customer behavior, competitor, and technological change. Dynamic capabilities reside, in part, with individual managers and especially top management teams, who are required to take on entrepreneurial roles in detecting and exploiting opportunities. Capabilities theories equip strategic management theory with tools to enhance competitive prowess such as proper information. Consequently, at certain moments, it will be reflected on the ability of the CEO and top management team to recognize key developments or trends, then describe the response and lead the company on its path forward..(H.-J. Chang & Wang, 2013; ma, 1999). A business case from Indonesia, where PT Semen Indonesia, a State-owned cement enterprise has aligned their business strategy with sustainability, while also targeting economic growth, climate and energy, circular economy, and society community relationship, still facing a gap in their business. In terms of financial performance, both SMGR and subsidiaries reported a net profit of IDR 2.02 trillion in 2021, marking a 27.61 percent decline compared to 2020's IDR 2.79 trillion. Additionally, the company generated IDR 34.95 trillion in revenue for the year ended December 31, 2021, reflecting a marginal drop of 0.60 percent from the previous year's IDR 35.17 trillion. Despite these figures, cement sales volume remains a significant revenue driver, amounting to IDR 28.54 trillion, albeit lower than 2020's IDR 29.02 trillion. Other contributing factors to SMGR's revenue were slag sales at IDR 3.19 trillion, finished and ready-mixed concrete at IDR 1.76 trillion, cement bags at IDR 128.7 billion, land rentals at IDR 35.03 billion, industrial estate land at IDR 58.91 billion, mining services at IDR 16.70 billion, and others at IDR 1.21 trillion. However, SMGR's cost of revenue escalated by 2.81 percent to IDR 24 trillion, compared to the previous IDR 23.3 trillion. This rise can be attributed to increased expenditures on raw materials amounting to IDR 1.64 trillion, fuel and energy manufacturing costs totaling IDR 8.59 trillion, and rent expenses of IDR 95.39 billion. Parallel with that, a Joint Venture with Taiheiyo Cement Corporation, a Japanese cement company, acquires shares held by PT Solusi Bangun Indonesia Tbk. through capital addition worth US \$220 million, from preemptive rights (HMETD) or rights issue. Executed in July 2021, this corporate action coincides with a cement offtake master agreement between SMCB (stock code: SMCB) and TCC. Contributing to SMCB's capital structure reinforcement and dynamic capabilities-driven business development. With the additional capital, SMCB hopes to strengthen its capital structure and develop business activities harnessing Dynamic capabilities. Aligned with figure 1 above, this study aims to highlight the incorporation of dynamic capabilities which is the role of managerial leadership to address the gap in Agency theory in the form of an asymmetric condition. With the framework grounded in dynamic capabilities, a better understanding towards strategic management of open innovation also can be obtained, facilitating a more comprehensive explanation of both success case and unsuccessful instances within the context of open innovation..(Bogers et al., 2019; K. Chang et al., 2016; Fu et al., 2020; Ross, n.d.). Furthermore, the purpose of this study is to establish an orchestration model to strengthen the selection of qualified business strategies so that reliable competitiveness based on Agency theory and Strategic Choice theory will be available, to fill the research gap that arises in business competition. Additionally, this article's primary contribution is to assess the core hypothesis linking high resource performance with specific attributes of top managers, alongside the firm's ownership and control structures. Strategic choice theory also concludes that managers' decisions playing a tremendous role in the company's success by anticipating corporate competition in complex industries. With strategic renewal and repositioning, companies can enact and actively shape a reliable organizational environment to support capabilities. (Karake, 1995; Malik et al., 2019; Putra Pratama et al., 2023; Sanderson, 2004; Tribbitt & Yang, 2017).

2. Literature Review: This chapter bring multifaceted landscape of cross-cultural influences, strategic decision-making, and agency theory in the context of complex and multinational businesses. It examines how these

elements interplay and shape organizational dynamics within the realm of competitive industries. By incorporating four areas of marketing organization namely: strategic marketing resources, marketing leadership and decision making, network alliances and collaborations, and the domestic and global marketplace, Agency theory centralize leadership and decision making in the proses of organization. Moreover, agency theory acknowledges the importance of collaboration such as hiring marketing leader that better at making strategic choices. With highlight to relations of principal hires agents (managers), to achieve a highly competitive advantage within the complexity of the industry, Agency theory explains that a strategic decisions or management could mean to employ marketing managers to lead the organization's marketing instead of the CEO or top managers of the company. (Hult, 2011). However, the central element of agency theory is the so-called agency problem which will arise when the interests of managers of different functional levels in running a business and the owners of the company have different interests from each other. Due to the information asymmetry between managers of various strategic functional levels and owners, it is likely that managers will act opportunistic, for the benefit of managers themselves, rather than the interests of owners.(K. Chang et al., 2016; Mitnick Professor Of Business & Katz, n.d.; Steen et al., 2006; Tate et al., 2010). According to cases in Argentina and Spain, as business internalization considered a strategy to expand market, strategic measure to overcome cultural diversity in cross-cultural market should be noticed seriously. In a relatively similar culture of Argentina and Spain, when a product expands from one area to another, the variable of e-service quality, satisfaction and loyalty still has slight differences. This magnify uncertainty issues in complex businesses with multi-industry, where efficient agency relationships required to be more innovative to deliver in multinational markets than in domestic markets.(Belanche Gracia et al., 2015). Strategic Choice Theory, a cornerstone of contemporary management theory, applies profound influence over organizational decision-making processes, particularly within the realm of complex and competitive industries. It provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how managers' choices steer a company's trajectory, impacting market positioning, product development, and adaptation strategies. As articulated by Bettis et al. (2014), Gulati et al. (2000), and Kipley et al. (2012), this theory emphasizes the dynamic interplay between managerial levels, the constant changing of market landscape fueled by technological advancements, and the relationship between managers and the dynamic market. By embracing the complexity of modern business environments and acknowledging the non-deterministic nature of organizational dynamics, Strategic Choice Theory offers a holistic lens through which to explore the strategic renewal, repositioning, and organizational learning that contribute to a resilient and adaptable business ecosystem. On the other hand, Strategic Decisions emerge as foundation for understanding the intricacies of organizational choices in a complex competitive industry. Strategic decisions are often made with the organization in mind as the primary driver, rather than a marketing channel or market partner. Organizations can adopt and adhere to certain types of development strategies that fit the company's core objective and dynamic capability window. Strategic choices articulate political processes, which bring agencies and structures into tension and place later in significant context. (Bakker, 2017; Marshak & Heracleous, 2023; Snihur & Eisenhardt, 2022a; Steen et al., 2006). The strategic choice approach offers valuable insight into the intersection between agency relationship, organizational structure and external environment within context of sustainable business practices. This approach portrays the agency's interactions with structural elements and the external landscape as responsive. By adopting a non-deterministic and evolutionary standpoint, the strategic choice approach not only bridges viewpoints but also will be able to place organizational learning in the context of the organization as a sociopolitical system.(Claro & de Oliveira Claro, 2011; Sanderson, 2004). The research model that will be proposed to find an orchestration model for strengthening the selection of qualified business strategies so that it has reliable competitiveness based on Agency theory and Strategic Choice theory, to fill the research gap that arises in business competition. (Arshed et al., 2022; Blackburn et al., 2022; Fernando et al., 2021; Ray & Miglani, 2022; Rojo Gallego Burin et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2022). The proposed research model orchestration model strengthens the selection of qualified business strategies so that they have competitiveness, can be seen in figure 2, below:

Figure 2: Proposed Orchestration Model to Strengthen the Selection of Qualified Business



Strategies and Reliable Competitiveness Based on Agency Theory and Strategic Choice Theory

2.1. Empirical Description: Empirical explanation that utilizes primary and secondary data, drawn from previous research and scientific literature reviews will establish a foundation of empirical evidence. This process entails constructing exploration or descriptive models through a Case Study design and Phenomenon approaches. These approaches facilitate the exploration of empirical experiences among experts within a Multinational Company. (Ivens et al., 2016; Meikle et al., n.d.; Zittoun, 2020). Consequently, the next model designed after this literature review, is a framework aims to bolster choices of business strategy adaptation to strengthen the selection of qualified business strategies and reliable competitiveness based on Agency theory and Strategic Choice theory in Indonesia.(Mishra & Dey, 2022; Siu-Lun Ting et al., 2009; Vanwynsberghe & Khan, 2007; Yin, n.d.).

3. Research Methods: This research method is based on a review of theory and literature to explore the role of managers in making the right decisions in choosing the right business strategy to win tight business competition. To follow up the study of the proposed model, with consideration of complex and sustainable business competition, researchers will continue exploration with a case study approach.(Ewing et al., 2022; Mathew, 2019). Further studies and research will be conducted with in-depth interviews with 30 participants, namely experts in the multi-industry field with a role as strategic business decision makers, for long-term business development.(Hung, 2018; Sanderson, 2004; Snihur & Eisenhardt, 2022b).

4. Result and Discussion: The initial phase of this study's findings focuses on the vertical boundaries that require companies to be more efficient, companies must decide what MAKE or BUY decisions need to be used. A firms' decision to conduct the activity itself or purchase from an independent firm is called a MAKE or BUY decision. Furthermore, MAKE means that the company performs the activity itself and BUY means it relies on an independent company to carry out the activity, possibly under contract. This analogy of making decision also can be enhances by incorporating "removal of the cast" effect, where a strategic decision can lead into the breaking of many constrain and limitations (Kurien, 2015). By integrating economics of scale, it is logical for a company that acquired an input supplier now MAKE input, as it performs activities inside the home. Typical MAKE or BUY decisions for manufacturers include whether to develop their own source of raw materials, provide their own shipping service, or operate their own retail website. Several companies are highly integrated, Kimberly owns Clark's Scott Paper division on woodland, wood mills, and produces consumer paper

products. Italian fashion icon Benetton dyes fabrics, designs and assembles clothes, and operates retail stores. Other companies carry out a narrow set of activities. Leo Burnett, who created Tony the Tiger, focused on creating brand icons for consumer products companies. However, while many studies primarily concentrate on the execution, waves or post-integration, it is important to have distinct approach by emphasizing pre-execution analysis and planning. (Chui & Ip, 2017; Mundi & Kaur, 2022; Smith et al., 2021). Many ordinary abilities can be acquired or supplemented by one of several methods. The following three options can be used alone or in combination: 1). MAKE: choosing to develop new capabilities in existing organizations by selecting and developing people, teams, tools, processes, then training them and in other ways exposing them to new ways of doing things, 2). BUY: gain new capabilities by purchasing existing organizations or by hiring key individuals with the required knowledge, 3). Rent: add new capabilities by hiring temporary contracts and consultants. (Marshak & Heracleous, 2023). Take these principles and explore how companies can strategize to overcome market forces. In the basic concepts in competitive analysis by discussing competitor's identification and market definition and considering four different ways in which there is a firm competition which includes: perfect competition, monopoly, monopolistic competition, and oligopoly. Furthermore, while the intuitive approach to identifying competitors is often sufficient for business decision making, it can be subjective. If possible, it is helpful to improve the intuitive approach with data. As shown in Economics Primer, the rate to substitute products for each other is measured by the cross-price elasticity of demand. (Bıçakcıoğlu-Peynirci & Morgan, 2022; Chen et al., 2022).

5. Conclusions and Advice: The proposed research model aims to address the utilization of effective business strategies that will enhance competitive advantages based on principles from Agency theory and Strategic Choice theory. This effort seeks to bridge gaps in existing research related to business competition dynamics. The integration of economies of scale and efficiency into product and service operations is pivotal toward sustainable profitability and competitive advantages. In another level, a company must achieve substantial market share to achieve minimum efficient scale, and otherwise may at significant cost suffer a loss impact. A firms' decision to conduct the activity itself or purchase from an independent firm is called a MAKE or BUY decision. Furthermore, MAKE means that the company performs the activity itself and BUY means it relies on an independent company to carry out the activity, possibly under contract. In a rapidly evolving and competitive business environment, the intersection of strategic concepts plays a pivotal role in shaping the success trajectory of companies. This study has explored the confluence of Agency Theory, Business Strategy, Dynamic Capabilities, and Competitive Advantages, reflecting their interdependence and significance in contemporary business landscapes. For instance, among company that acquired an input supplier, now MAKE input as it performs activities inside the home. Typical MAKE or BUY decisions for manufacturers include whether to develop their own source of raw materials, provide their own shipping service, or operate their own retail website. Simultaneously, Business Strategy enables companies to align their goals, resources, and actions with the broader market landscape, setting the stage for differentiation and growth. Dynamic Capabilities, on the other hand, act as the engine driving strategic agility and adaptability. Companies that cultivate Dynamic Capabilities can nimbly respond to market shifts, innovate, and capitalize on emerging opportunities.

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Social Media Selection Strategy by FANP Method

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Abstract: Social media plays an increasingly important role in various aspects of travel & tourism, especially in information search and travel decision-making behaviors. Previous researches ignore the characteristic of social media, interactions among people. Thus, an integrated model that incorporates all theoretical elements for social media selection is conducted by FANP method that eliminates decision-makers' uncertain and vague preferences. To demonstrate such an integrated model is viable, Taiwan Travel & Tourism industry is chosen as an illustrative example. A sample of senior citizens whose age is from 50-65 year olds, normally use the Internet, and had actual travel experiences in the previous 12 months. The results identify key criteria that affect tourists using social media and rank them according to their importance, but also rank social media alternatives: Youtube, Facebook and blog, according to their level of use for travel decision makers.

Keyword: Social Media, Fuzzy Analytic Network Process (FANP), Social Influence Theory, Technology Acceptance Model

1. Introduction: Building on the foundation of Web 2.0, social media applications have facilitated unprecedented growth in human interaction in Wendy times (Wendy & Elliot, 2012). These social media tools, has generated an enormous number of online user-generated contents on hotels, travel destinations, and travel services (Sigala, 2010; Ye, et al., 2011). Social media plays an increasingly important role in many aspects of tourism, especially in information search and decision-making behaviors (Fotis, 2012). Virtual tourist communities in which tourists exchange opinions and experiences have been around for more than 10 years now, but lately we have seen an expansion of Web 2.0 technologies into tourism. Thus, before and during vacation trips, tourists use the Internet to obtain information about the trips, share their experiences and compare services related to the trip (Parra-López, et al., 2011). Therefore, it is critical that tourism enterprises must realize the opportunities of social media applications offer in this dynamic environment. During the selection process of social media emphasized on interaction among people, many criteria should be considered and a decision should be made on their basis. As criteria and alternatives increase, it is difficult for a human brain to analyze the relationships between all the factors and to draw inferences therein. In these circumstances, it is necessary to utilize the fuzzy ANP method in this study. This study is to expand the existing models on the tourists' intentions to use of social media by proposing a model based on previous concepts. We apply ANP to construct a hierarchical model involving interactions among affecting factors for social media selection: rests on integrated assessment regarding to various theoretical factors, including social and technological factors.

2. Theoretical literatures of research:

2.1 Social media: Social media generally refers to web applications that allow for the user to post and share content. Common social media applications include Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and MySpace (Wendy & Elliot, 2012). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) divided social media into six types: blogs, social networking sites, virtual social worlds, collaborative projects, content communities, and virtual game worlds. Fotis et al. (2012) organized social media into four features: expressing, networking, sharing, and gaming. User generated content (UGC) is the means by which people use social media; the way they share ideas and collaborate. Examples of the content include the actual photos, blogs, micro blogs and videos that users share publicly (Wendy & Elliot, 2012). Castronovo & Huang (2012) indicated there are a variety of tools to choose from when formulating a social media strategy. These tools include chat room, blog, Youtube, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google Wave, and Four Square. Parra-López, et al. (2011) considered online social media area is one of the fastest growing segments on the web, and it includes social sharing of opinions through blogs and microblogs (i.e. Blogger and Twitter), social photo and video sharing (i.e. Flickr and YouTube), social sharing of knowledge (i.e. Wikipedia), social bookmarking (i.e. Delicious) and many other forms of user-generated content.

2.2 Social influence theory: Social influence plays an important role in determining technology acceptance and use, and has been widely used to understand group and collective behavior. A study from Song and Kim (2006) investigated how social factors affect behavioral intention to use a specific service from virtual communities. They argued that intention to use is a function of social factors. Subjective norm, social identity, and tendency to social comparison have significant impacts on intention to use. A research examined the relative impact of the three modes of social influence processes (compliance, internalization, and identification) on intentional social action to use. This empirical study of Facebook users found that collective intention to use a social networking site is determined by both subjective norm and social identity (Cheung & Lee, 2010). The purpose of Zhou's (2011) showed that both social identity and group norm have significant effects on user participation.

2.3 Technology acceptance model: Technology acceptance model (TAM) was originally developed by Davis (1986) to illustrate computer-usage behavior, and it posited people's acceptance based on the influence of two key factors: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Perceived usefulness refers to "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance." In contrast, perceived ease of use refers to "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort" (Davis, 1989). Davis et al., (1992) noted that perceived usefulness was considered a motivation to engage with the use of an information system, whereas perceived ease of use was regarded as an antecedent of perceived usefulness. Huang et al. (2013) extended the TAM to understand tourists' acceptance of 3D virtual worlds in travel and tourism marketing. Luo et al. (2006) showed that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness significantly affect the use of e-travel website. Adli et al. (2014) found ease of use and usefulness of technology give positive impact to actual travel website use.

2.4 FANP: Human sometimes lack the ability to make decisions rigorously because the problem at hand is too complex to be understood. Therefore, fuzzy logic with fuzzy numbers is useful in analyzing the processes of human judgment to eliminate vagueness, subjectivity, and imprecision (Lee, 2015). The ANP allows structuring a decision problem with a network incorporating interdependencies, outer dependencies and feedbacks among elements (Saaty, 1996). There have been many empirical studies of the application of FANP. Horng et al., (2014) applied fuzzy set theory with ANP and other method to evaluate important attributes of the tourism and gourmet business environment in Taiwan. In another research, four strategies identified as the most important ecotourism policies in Ramsar were prioritized by using FANP technique (Daroudi & Daroudi, 2015).

3. Research framework: This paper construct an integrated model for social media selection as the traveler makes the travel decision making process. In researching the matter, I use Taiwanese Travel & Tourism industry as a case study. Initially, a focus-group discussion (FGD) with ten Taiwan senior citizens whose age is from 50-65 year olds is held. FGD conducted on a sample of ten senior citizens who normally use the Internet and had actual travel experiences in the previous 12 months. The framework goal "social media selection" locate in the first level. Several factors are placed in the second level. The third level consists of three alternatives. Fig 1 shows the anticipated preliminary model.

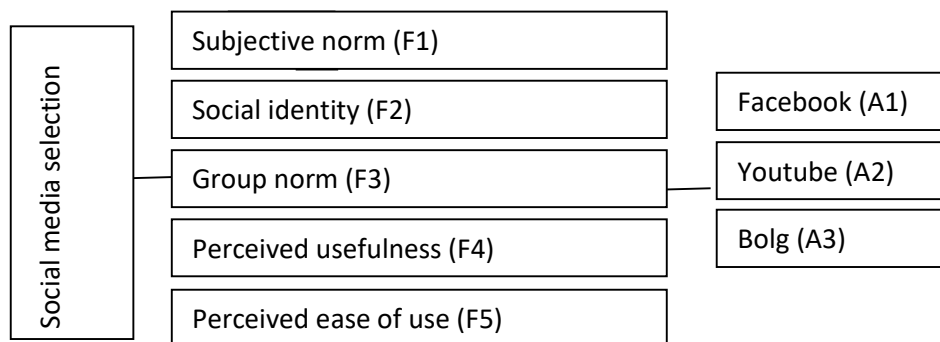


Fig 1: An ANP Model for Social Media Selection

4. Proposed model implementation:

4.1 Calculating the weights of each factor: In this step, factors' weights are determined. Table 1 presents the respective weights of the five factors.

Table 1: Pair-Wise Comparison Matrix and Weights

| Factor | F1 | F2 | F3 | F4 | F5 | Weights |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|
| F1 | 1 | 0.574 | 1 | 1.732 | 0.707 | 0.178 |
| F2 | 1.741 | 1 | 1.732 | 2 | 1 | 0.273 |
| F3 | 1 | 0.57 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0.174 |
| F4 | 0.577 | 0.5 | 1 | 1 | 0.408 | 0.127 |
| F5 | 1.414 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0.248 |

4.2 Determining the weights of alternative strategies with respect to each factor: After obtaining the weights for all factors, we compared alternative strategies to one another with respect to each factor. Table 2 presents the weights of the alternatives under each factor.

Table 2: The Weights of the Alternatives under Each Factor

| Factor | Alternative | | |
|--------|-------------|-------|-------|
| | A1 | A2 | A3 |
| F1 | 0.496 | 0.315 | 0.190 |
| F2 | 0.417 | 0.576 | 0.006 |
| F3 | 0.406 | 0.376 | 0.218 |
| F4 | 0.427 | 0.427 | 0.146 |
| F5 | 0.380 | 0.427 | 0.193 |

4.3 Determining the overall priorities of the alternatives, and obtaining the best “social media selection strategy”: In this step, we calculated the final weights of “alternative strategies.” By multiplying the weight of each factor with the values in Table 2, we obtained the priorities for the alternative strategy (as show following). Youtube alternative is the best strategy with a 0.516 value. Facebook alternative is the second best. The third ranking of the alternatives is blog alternative.

$$WA = \begin{bmatrix} 0.496 & 0.417 & 0.406 & 0.427 & 0.380 \\ 0.315 & 0.576 & 0.376 & 0.427 & 0.427 \\ 0.190 & 0.006 & 0.218 & 0.146 & 0.193 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} 0.178 \\ 0.273 \\ 0.174 \\ 0.127 \\ 0.248 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 0.421 \\ 0.516 \\ 0.140 \end{bmatrix}$$

5. Conclusion: Previous researches focused on antecedents of the tourists’ use and adoption of social media before, during and after the trip planning. To our knowledge, no study takes the characteristic of social media, interactions among people, into considerations, and incorporates all theoretical elements to conduct an integrated model for social media selection. Thus, ANP method is used, and fuzzy logic is applied to eliminate decision make’s uncertain preference owing to ambiguities judgments in this study. The results not only identify key criteria that affect tourists using social media and rank them according to their importance, but also rank social media alternatives: Youtube, Facebook and blog, according to their level of use for travel decision makers.

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Learning Effectiveness among Tertiary Students Using Augmented Reality (AR)-Based for Adapting to Industry 4.0

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects among tertiary students' learning acceptance, subjective norm, and self-regulation on Augmented Reality (AR)-based learning effectiveness. This study based on the theory of planned behavior and combined the technology acceptance model to verify research model use the structural equation model (SEM). Participants was 347 tertiary students use a questionnaire. This study found that in terms of learning acceptance, tertiary students have a positive evaluation and perception of using AR learning, with perceived enjoyment being the most significant factor. In addition, the impact of perceived innovation was significant in helping teachers understand students' learning outcomes. The interpersonal influence of subjective norms was also significant, indicating that current tertiary students are more likely to value their friends as sources of information. External influences on self-regulation were also significant, suggesting that teachers must consider the operability of AR learning technology, with particular attention paid to students' competency with the technology itself, as difficulty of use will reduce students' willingness to use AR.

Keywords: Technology acceptance model, augmented reality, Tertiary students, Industry 4.0

1. Introduction: In response to the recent rapid development and innovation of intelligent networking, Taiwan encouraged the growth of IoT technology in colleges and universities by introducing vertical integration systems, rewarding innovators and cultivating future talents with core competence in technological innovation (Globe Newswire, 2022; Reljić et al., 2021; Souza et al., 2023). Digital learning also offers flexible learning times, and reduces physical space constraints, allowing learning to take place anytime, anywhere, or learning and communicating with people on the other side of the world. Technology can bring about many advantages that is easier for people to obtain higher education opportunities via the Internet (Fernández-Batanero, Montenegro-Rueda, & Fernández-Cerero, 2022; Gargrish et al., 2021; Villagran-Vizcarra et al., 2023). There has been growing interest recently in the application of augmented reality (AR) to create a unique educational environment (Bellamy, Whitehead, & Ansell, 2022; Bölek, De Jong, & Henssen, 2021). The use of AR to promote the personalization of inclusive learning is also an area of increasing interest (Gargrish et al., 2021;

Garzón & Acevedo, 2019). AR has been used in education to explain a topic of interest and simultaneously provide additional information. AR educational games and AR for lab experiments are growing in popularity (Buchner & Zumbach, 2020; Zhao et al., 2020). The main advantage of AR is learning gains, while limitations primarily include difficulties in maintaining superimposed information, students paying too much attention to virtual information, and the consideration of AR as an intrusive technology (Souza et al., 2023; Villagran-Vizcarra et al., 2023). AR has been effective in producing better learning performance, learning motivation, student engagement and positive attitudes (Belda-Medina & Calvo-Ferrer, 2022; Chaudhry & Kazim, 2022; Cai et al., 2021). However, very little research to date has been conducted into such factors such as the advantages, limitations, effectiveness, challenges and characteristics of using augmented reality in educational environments. The technology acceptance model is used to explain and predict the behavior of users upon interacting with information technology, and to analyze the factors that affect users' access to information technology (Cai et al., 2021; Zhao et al., 2020; Zhao & Mcewen, 2022). Augmented reality (AR) as a technology has significant potential to improve student application and comprehension skills. The rapid development of the Internet and the resulting trends applying information available on the Internet have changed the nature of learning and learning behavior patterns of tertiary students (Atici-ulusu et al., 2021; Belda-Medina, 2022; Chou, et al., 2022). However, insufficient theoretical and empirical research on the effect of AR on learning attitude and learning effectiveness has been conducted for achieving any reliable understanding of the use of augmented reality (AR) learning by tertiary students (Garzón, Pavón, & Baldiris, 2019; Ziden, Abu Ziden, & Ifedayo, 2022). Therefore, this study not only refers to the acceptance model of science and technology, but also introduces the theory of planned behavior, expecting to increase other factors that may affect tertiary students' acceptance of AR learning, in order to explore and explain the behavior of tertiary students accepting AR learning more broadly.

2. Purpose: This study aims to explore the variables that may influence tertiary students' AR-based learning effectiveness and to find the relationships among the variables of learning acceptance, subjective norm, and self-regulation. The purposes of this study are to address the following two issues. 1. To explore the relationships between students' perceived learning acceptance, subjective norm, self-regulation, and AR-based learning effectiveness. 2. To identify a suitable model that can identify important implications and strengthen university students' AR-based learning effectiveness.

3. Methodology:

3.1 Participants: This study uses the technology acceptance model to predict and explain a user's willingness to accept AR learning. The sample of this study was mainly drawn from the network population, and the sampling time was one month; this study required participants to download the AR learning view first. The 378 questionnaires returned, 31 were invalid, resulting in an effective questionnaire rate of 91.80%.

3.2 Measurement: The questionnaire design of "Influence Factors of Tertiary Students Using Augmented Reality (AR)- Based Learning Effectiveness" used in this study was developed based on the relevant literature and then revised according to the research topic. Scholars were then invited to help review and correct the questionnaire. The quantitative variables of this research questionnaire were taken by Likert's five-point scale method: the unipolar 1 to 5 method was used for each question, respectively ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". The "internal consistency reliability" of the test scale was tested using Cronbach's α value; a coefficient of 0.82 or more indicated the degree of credibility, and items of insignificant importance were removed. In addition to "learning acceptance" and "external influence", some test results had to be deleted to obtain a factor of 0.78 or more. The Cronbach's α value coefficients of the other facets were all greater than 0.81, indicating a certain degree of reliability.

3.3 Data analyze: This study used SEM to analyze data to explore the causal relationships between study model variables. The most approximate likelihood estimation (MLE) was used to estimate the parameters, and the results were analyzed using LISREL software. Structural equation model evaluation should be based on basic fit, overall fit, and intrinsic fit.

4. Result:

4.1 Verification of this research model: This study used SEM to analyze data to explore the causal relationships between study model variables. The most approximate likelihood estimation (MLE) was used to estimate the parameters, and the results were analyzed using LISREL software. Structural equation model evaluation should be based on basic fit, overall fit, and intrinsic fit.

4.1.1 Basic adaptation degree: This study first performs screening and correction mode correction of abnormal estimation values, and modifies or deletes each variable according to MOD's proposed modification indicators to improve the mode's interpretation ability. By repeated inspection and mode adjustment, the correction results of each facet were obtained as follows: According to the SEM confirmatory factor analysis, the influence of the observed variables X6 and X7 on the "perceived ease of use" of learning acceptance was not significant. The effect of variable X16 on "Perceived enjoyment" was not significant, and the effect of X31 on "Self-evaluation" of the deconstructed surface of the control belief was not significant. These variables were deleted according to the suggestion of the revised index.

4.1.2 Overall fit: According to Hair et al. (1998), the overall model fit degree can be divided into three types: the measure of absolute fit, the incremental fit (incremental), and fit measures and parsimonious fit measures. The goodness of fit index (GFI) value obtained in this study was 0.88. Research indicates that the standard GFI value is greater than 0.9, and that the recommended GFI value should be greater than 0.8. The GFI value of this study was 0.84; although it does not meet the standard, it does meet the recommended values. The adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) should be greater than 0.9. The adjusted AGFI obtained in this study was 0.85, indicating that the AGFI value of this study did not meet the standard. The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) value is recommended to be less than 0.05. The RMSEA value of this study was 0.026, which is in line with this standard. The results of the absolute fit test indicate that the model constructed in this study is adapted to the observation data. The value-added fitness indices most commonly used to evaluate the overall mode adaptation degree are the normed fit index (NFI), the non-reference fit index (Non-Normed Fit Index, NNFI), and the comparative fit index (CFI). The NFI, NNFI and CFI values of this study were 0.98, 0.99 and 0.99, respectively, all reaching a standard greater than 0.9. This shows that the overall fit of the model constructed in this study and the observation data is ideal. Simple fitness is measured as PNFI (Reduced Baseline Fit Indicator): at least greater than 0.5, and PGFI (Reduced Suitability Indicator): at least greater than 0.5. According to Table 1, the PNFI and PGFI values for this study were 0.86 and 0.73, respectively, both greater than 0.5. The results of these studies show that the model constructed in this study should be a streamlined model.

Table 1: Overall Goodness of Fit Test Results

| Type of fitness | Fit index | Evaluation standard | Analysis of results not researched | Goodness of fit |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Absolute fitness volume | GFI | >0.9 | 0.966 | Acceptable |
| | AGFI | <0.9 | 0.86 | Poor |
| | RMSEA | <0.05 | 0.026 | Acceptable |
| Incremental fitness | NFI | >0.8 | 0.98 | Acceptable |
| | CFI | >0.9 | 0.99 | Acceptable |
| | NNFI | >0.9 | 0.99 | Acceptable |
| Parsimonious fitness | PNFI | >0.5 | 0.86 | Acceptable |
| | PGFI | >0.5 | 0.74 | Acceptable |

4.1.3 Intrinsic fit: Hair et al. (1998) advocate evaluating the intrinsic fit of the model from the measurement model fit. Based on the recommendations of Bagozzi and Yi (1988), this study selected the most commonly used individual project indicators to evaluate the measurement mode, as described below: (1) Individual item reliability: The reliability of each measurement index reflects the degree of consistency of the measurement tool used to measure the research facets. When using the LISREL mode analysis, the reliability index of each observation variable is the R-Square value, which is determined by the Squared Multiple Correlation (SMC). The higher the SMC, the higher the reliability; conversely, the lower the weight, the lower the reliability. The SMC

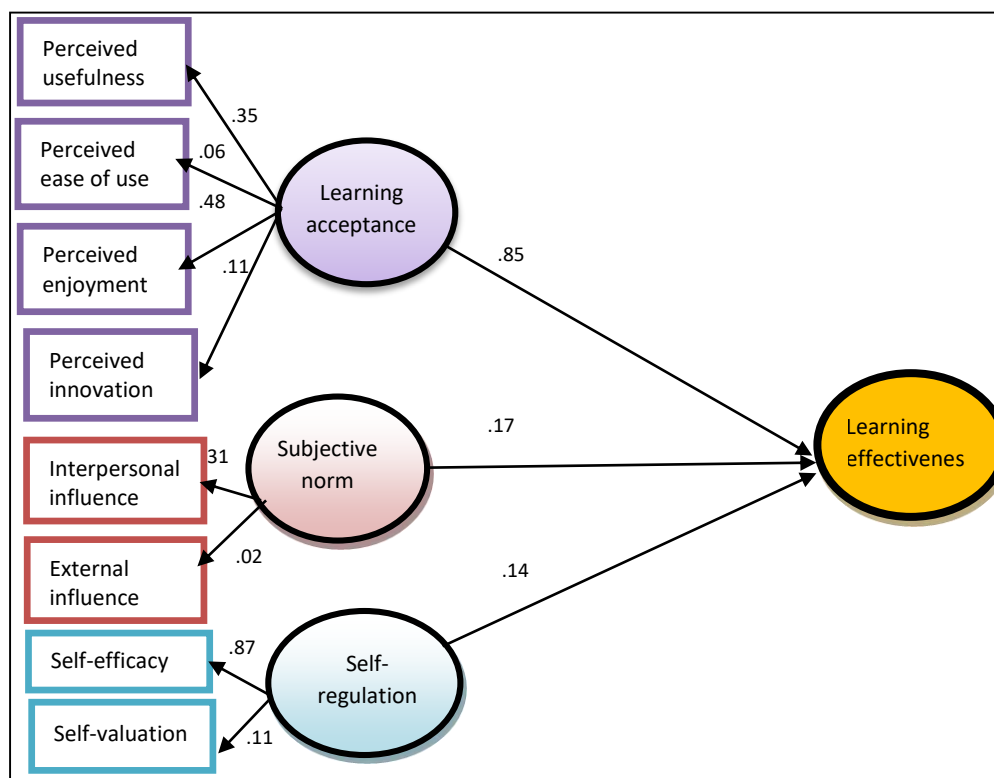
values of the observed variables are lower than 0.5 in the observed variables X3, X4, X5, X17 and X30, but the SMC values of most of the observed variables are greater than 0.5, indicating that the reliability of the overall measurement of the study is good. (2) Composite reliability (CR): The CR value of the potential variable refers to the reliability component of all the measured variables, indicating the internal consistency of the facet index. The higher the reliability, the higher the consistency. A consistency value of 0.7 is generally considered to be the lowest acceptable level. Table 2 shows that the CR values of all potential variables are above the 0.7 standard value, indicating good facet reliability. (3) Variance extracted (VE) of potential variables: VE of potential variables is a measure of the variation of each variable in the construct extraction; it is the ability to evaluate the variation of each potential variable. It can be used to examine the convergence validity of potential variables. If the VE value is high, it indicates a higher reliability and convergence validity of the potential variable, where the recommended value is 0.5 or more. As shown in Table 2, the VE of each variable in this research mode is 0.5 or more, in accordance with the recommended value, indicating that the study has good convergence validity.

Table 2: Reliability Analysis Table for Each Variable of the Research Model

| Item | Reliability | Extraction variation |
|-------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Perceived usefulness | .871 | .533 |
| Perceived ease of use | .924 | .752 |
| Perceived enjoyment | .917 | .787 |
| Perceived innovation | .894 | .691 |
| Interpersonal influence | .880 | .647 |
| External influence | .857 | .668 |
| Self-efficacy | .889 | .714 |
| Self-valuation | .795 | .566 |
| Learning acceptance | .918 | .705 |
| Subjective norm | .854 | .662 |
| Self-regulation | .873 | .697 |
| Learning effectiveness | .932 | .773 |

4.2 Mode explanation: The normalization coefficient in the structural equation model is like the beta weight of the regression. The larger the coefficient, the greater the importance in the causal relationship. It can be seen that among the eleven hypotheses of the research model, the remaining eight hypotheses reach a significant level. In the structural mode of Figure 1, the direct effect between the variables is clearly presented.

Figure 1: Model of Tertiary Students' Augmented Reality Learning Effectiveness



4. Conclusion: First, "learning acceptance" is the most important factor affecting "learning effectiveness", followed by "subjective norm" and finally "self-regulation". From the research results, among the factors affecting "learning effectiveness", the most important was "learning acceptance". In terms of whether AR learning can be used as the reading method adopted by tertiary students, the first consideration is the evaluation by, and feelings of, tertiary students about using AR learning, followed by the impact of the surrounding reference groups, and finally whether a learning infrastructure has the ability and resources to adopt AR learning. The "perceived enjoyment" assumption of "learning acceptance" is established; it has the most significant positive impact in fact. It can be seen that for tertiary students, the most important concern is whether the learning habits and needs of individuals are related to AR learning. The "perceived usefulness" hypothesis of "learning acceptance" is established, and has a positive influence. It can also be seen that the effect obtained by AR learning can be more or less similar to that obtained by ordinary early readers. The tertiary students gave a positive evaluation of AR learning. "Perceived innovation" is a hypothesis that "learning acceptance" is established and has a positive impact. This means that individuals who have a desire for new things or new technologies naturally have a positive perception of them, and are quick to adopt them. The situation of eagerness and sorrow may occur. "Perceived ease of use" does not support the assumption of "learning acceptance". The reason for this may be that the downloaded AR learning program required by the researcher is very simple, so it is not possible to say whether the impact is significant; users who use AR learning to generate good feelings are aware of the ease of use of AR learning, so this study cannot objectively claim that "perceived ease" significantly affects "learning acceptance". Second, "Interpersonal influence" supports the hypothesis of "subjective norm" and verifies the theory of innovation diffusion. Research indicates that the initial adoption of AR is still subject to many uncertainties. Potential users must be encouraged to seek the opinions of others to understand the adoption process of AR. Compared to external information, tertiary students place greater value in advice provided by their friends. Therefore, relevant industry develops promotion programs for this feature, and can launch an AR learning program offering access to friends of the tertiary students (restricting the number of readers), so that AR learning can be broadcast to attract others to read and achieve the publicity effect. Third, the impact of "External influence" on "Subjective norm" is not significant. It can be seen that tertiary students trust information conveyed by people with whom they are familiar more than information conveyed by TV media and Internet word of mouth. "External influence" holds the assumption of "self-regulation", which means that when consumers perceive their confidence and ability to adopt AR learning, the resources needed to adopt AR reading behavior are controlled. Last, the "Self-evaluation" does not hold the assumption of "self-regulation". The reason for this may be that tertiary students cannot evaluate the resources required for AR learning, or the current resources required for AR learning, such as the Internet, pose no barrier to access to the students; that is, the students do not feel that they have a higher AR simply because they have the resources to use AR learning. The control of learning makes this hypothesis impossible.

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Assessment in the History of Philosophy

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Abstract: The paper contains an elaboration of the assessment issue within the history of philosophy. The author strives to present the specifics of assessment in this area. They mainly consist in the almost complete absence of overcoming one philosopher by another. The main implement of the paper is the introduction of the division of the assessment approach. We recognize three assessment approaches in philosophy: formal - deductive, knowledge and skills assessment approach. The most used in the history of philosophy is the knowledge assessment approach. We present examples of good and bad practice in the implementation of knowledge verification. We consider a good knowledge verification structure to be the type of questions that will not mislead the student, and at the same time verify not only the philosopher's basic philosophical theses, but also various other ties (to contemporaries and subsequent philosophers, to science, to art, etc.). Please note that evaluating the history of philosophy is not an isolated examination of the biographies, written works, and theses of philosophers, but of theories conceived in the context of facts that respond to and influence other facts and theories.

Keywords: Assessment, History of Philosophy, Didactics of Philosophy, Education

1. Introduction: Perhaps the destiny of every philosophy course is to become a workshop of thinking, a space for joint reflection (Cerletti 2012). "Eliminating the teaching of philosophy and philosophizing in the educational system would mean the creation of a mechanized community, unable to raise its voice to express disagreement" (Acevedo et al. 2023, p. 38). This also applies to the history of philosophy course. There is an obvious difference between the history of philosophy and the history of science. Also, it is good to explain the history of science within the framework of an introduction to the questions of a separate science (chemistry, physics, mathematics, etc.). In the history of science, we can trace the stages, even if it seems to us that we are putting up with the cumulative development of science, which is rejected by Laudan, Kuhn, Lakatos and others. There are several problems in which the later development of philosophy would finally refute some of its statements, just as individual philosophical postulates were refuted by science (cf. Skalsky 1986). In the history of philosophy, it is practically impossible to talk about cumulative development. It would be senseless to elevate Husserl over Hobbes, Lyotard over Comte on the grounds that one surpasses the other. Although Comte speaks about the famous stages of the human spirit, no philosophy of the history of philosophy — neither Comte, nor Hegel, Marx, etc. — generally not applicable. We, of course, cannot talk about progress in the sense of victory over one philosopher and another philosopher. This is possible, for example, in chemistry, in a famous theory that introduced phlogiston as an essence into chemistry. The term was introduced into science by Georg Ernst Stahl. "Phlogiston is a chimeric stuff that could be exchanged between various substances" (Vančík 2021, p. 15). Today, this approach has long been overcome, mainly thanks to the experiments of Pierre Bayen, who disproved the existence of phlogiston as a real chemical compound. We can talk about theories that are no longer valid in the sense of science, but not in the sense of the development of philosophy. This fundamental difference between philosophy and science must be taken into account both when teaching philosophy and, of course, when assessing. There is simply no universal or even currently relevant philosophical theory that the philosophical community can agree on. Nothing that philosophers say as theories is said in unison. It can be required both vertically and horizontally. At the same time, geographical cultural features greatly reveal the topics and solutions interpreted within the corresponding cultural circle, as can be seen by reading philosophy journals from East Asia, from India, or by attending philosophy conferences in these regions. Philosophical solutions that we perceive only marginally in European and American cultural circles resonate quite strongly in other regions. Despite the mentioned facts, there must not be methodological pluralism in the history of philosophy, because this would lead to the questioning of the scientific status of the history of philosophy (Nikiforov and Sokolova 2018).

2. Philosophy and cultural circles: It is also necessary to remember the territorial division of philosophy and the fact that certain cultural circles did not influence each other, while others were, on the contrary, interconnected. Indian and Chinese philosophical circles had significant mutual contact. We can talk primarily about the Indian influence on the Chinese philosophical circle. We can see this especially in Buddhism. As a good example, we can cite Bodhidharma's arrival in China and his influence on the development of Chan in China. Original Chinese culture was primarily a written culture. Indian culture has long relied on genius memory. And vice versa was only a marginal philosophical movement. The Euro-American circle was also slightly influenced by the thinking of Jews and Arabs. There were rare intersections between Indian and Euro-American philosophy, detected e.g. in early Christian philosophy, or in Schopenhauer. There are occasional mentions of a strong connection between Christian gnosis and Indian philosophy, but in reality these are only marginal contacts. Hellenistic culture was really only minimally influenced by Indian culture, we cannot talk about taking over thought schemes, leitmotifs. The Aztec cultural circle can be considered independent, Aztec philosophy was not affected by any philosophical cultural circle and did not influence any other (León-Portilla 2003). The autonomy of philosophical circles, especially Indian and Aztec, is a determining indicator in the history of philosophy. It is also important to remember that in the field of Buddhism, Indian culture influenced Chinese culture and thus penetrated Chinese philosophy as well. These important facts need to be kept in mind when evaluating in the history of philosophy, especially in the area of focus of questions. The assessment should also check these realities.

3. Assessment approaches in the history of philosophy: In principle, different assessment approaches are used in various philosophical disciplines, as well as in the history of philosophy. Within them, closed and open questions are represented differently. It is possible to say that closed questions can mostly be solved in only one way, they are convergent tasks. Open questions requiring combination and heuristics can be characterized as tasks of a divergent nature. Due to its specificities, especially the absence of historical progress, the history of philosophy must use the system of convergent and divergent tasks very sensitively. In principle, a distinction can be made between three assessment approaches in philosophy. The first of these concerns formal logic. It does not concern the assessment of other problems, which, although they are sometimes passed off as logic, actually belong more to metaphysics. Under the term logic, we understand exclusively formal logic. Here it is necessary to realize that logic is extremely close to exact sciences. It is the most exact of the disciplines that are considered philosophical in the traditional sense. When evaluating, it is therefore necessary to choose an approach that closely corresponds to assessment in formal sciences (mathematics, computer science). It can be called a formal - deductive assessment approach. It is the most exact of all approaches. It consists of specific tasks such as the correct entry of a formula in the calculus of a logical system, negation of a statement, identification of quantifiers, identification of tautologies, neutrals and contradictions, etc. There are also several attempts to use formal methods in philosophy - e.g. Spinoza, to which there are mutually telling echoes in philosophy (Hansson 2022). Another of the possible approaches is the evaluative approach typical of classical philosophical disciplines, in addition to logic, as well as the history of philosophy. Here, the knowledge of realities and the depth of understanding of parallel philosophical theories can be evaluated. It is not possible to favor a specific theory within the philosophical discipline in the sense of its interpretation and practice, and thus not even within the assessment. It is also possible to evaluate the knowledge of connections - historical, interdisciplinary. We will thus verify the degree of understanding of various structural contexts that are intrinsically connected with the history of philosophy. It can be called a knowledge assessment approach. In the history of philosophy, this is the most frequently used assessment approach. The third assessment approach is connected with creativity. It is rather applicable to philosophical disciplines and can only be used to a limited extent in the history of philosophy, where the realities are simply given. Above all, within the framework of the history of philosophy, this applies to the higher cycles of the history of philosophy, which follow already after completing the basic course. It is about verifying independent philosophical thinking, the ability to autonomously argue philosophically. This method of assessment is partially usable in historically-philosophically oriented teaching of philosophy. We can call it a skills assessment approach. The application is possible through

open questions such as how a specific philosopher or his epigones would approach that problem. We can use it, for example, in the verification of creative skills in epistemology, in the philosophy of history, and the like.

4. Examples of good and bad practice for verification questions: The history of philosophy, especially when it comes to the cycle, which is the second or third continuation (after the basic course of the history of philosophy, which takes place mostly in secondary schools), has, in addition to the priority task of mastering the realities of the history of philosophy, also the task of mastering the competence to philosophize, to solve tasks on a general, philosophical level. Such sophisticated courses are already a space for the possibility to evaluate the basics of the mentioned competences. There are several examples of good practice in the framework of two assessment approaches (knowledge-based and skills-based) that can be used in the framework of assessment in the teaching of the history of philosophy. The specificity of the knowledge assessment approach is the verification of the historical context of the emergence and operation of philosophical theories. It is necessary to verify this not only in accordance with the stream of epigones, opponents and those who from the ranks of philosophers influenced the specific theory that is the subject of assessment, but also in the sense of the context of the history of science. Direct connections with scientific theories will often help to gain a deeper understanding of the interrelationships between the development of philosophy and science, as well as to gain a more comprehensive picture of the various schemes, approaches and concepts used by special sciences. Therefore, the topic of assessment questions should be enriched with connections connected with the history of sciences within the framework of the history of philosophy. The history of mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, sociology are in many cases intrinsically connected with the history of philosophy - compare (Krempaský 2016). We can cite several examples of good practice. We will divide them according to the approaches that can be applied in the history of philosophy. 1. Knowledge assessment approach: Convergent task: Who is the author of the work *Analysis of feelings*? What did Bodhidharma bring to China? Draw Plato's Parable of the Line and interpret it. Which four basic metaphysical causes does Aristotle recognize? Which classical ancient Indian school of philosophy deals largely with logic? Which ontological position did Tertullian hold and use in his works? Which philosopher shows connections with infinitesimal and differential calculus in his metaphysics? With which philosophical direction is the name Malanaga Vatsyayana associated? 2. Knowledge assessment approach: Divergent task: Evaluate the relationship between the concept of monad and differential calculus. Explain why the contemporary history of ancient philosophy deviates from Aristotle's interpretation of the Pre-Socratics? Explain what aspects of the scientific approach and what aspects of the anthropological approach Husserl's phenomenology has. Skills assessment approach: Divergent task: Write a brief reflection on the impact of the enlightenment on positivism. Write your opinion on the causes of Schopenhauer's negative reaction to Hegel. State who you consider to be the most important scholastic ethicist and justify your opinion. Do you agree with the opinion that Lenin and his philosophy is a degradation of Marxism or not? Justify the opinion. We are of the opinion that convergent tasks are not applicable when evaluating the results of the skills assessment approach. In this case, skills are the applications of the philosophical knowledge in practice. Philosophizing is intrinsically connected with not favoring one current, direction, position, especially in the field of studying philosophy. Therefore, the philosopher's creative approach must not be rigidly dogmatic, especially at the stage of study, to one single theory. Let's also give examples of bad practice, some are fictional, others the author knows from experience: Questions that are based on an outdated interpretation of the history of philosophy, which has already been overcome. For example questions that would implicitly contain Irene's and Hypolyt's perception of Gnostic trends as historically plausible. Questions implicitly containing peripatetic misinterpretations concerning the Pre-Socratics. For example: assign an ontological foundation to an individual Pre-Socratic philosopher. Today's interpretations have already abandoned Aristotle's image of assigning the elements to the pre-Socratic ones in the sense of ontological essence (Kočandrlle 2009). Questions influenced by the philosophy of the history of philosophy (e.g. Hegel, Marx). Questions focused on materialism and idealism before Plato. Questions with a problematic and ambiguous statement, aimed at the "founders" of schools and at pupils and their teachers, where this relationship is not documented (Xenophanes and Parmenides as teacher and pupil, the person of the founder of medieval philosophy, the father of law, etc.). Questions that implicitly contain problematic material that was used in the interpretation. For example, the division of philosophy XX. century on some scientific and

anthropological line, while this division is problematic and only approximate already in the XIX. century. Nonsensical questions: for example, state which dimensions of the manifestation of substance exist in Spinoza. He himself states that there are an infinite number of them. The questions are inherently divergent, but present in a form that requires a clear answer. For example, name the most important ethicist of scholasticism. If it is a closed question, it should be associated with one unequivocal answer. It is especially confusing if a divergent question is present in the form of a test, where one correct answer is required, but at least two of the options offered can be considered. For example, state only one of the correct options: Aquinas mainly developed this philosophical discipline in his works: a) cosmogony, b) metaphysics, c) ethics, d) logic. Everything can be marked here except logic, because Aquinas added nothing to logic as a discipline. This question confuses the student.

5. The focus of assessment in the history of philosophy: “Understanding and improving the quality of the educational process critically depends on two interrelated fields of study: epistemology and philosophy of education” (Alcívar-Loor 2023, p. 20). The focus in the history of philosophy, in the sense of assessment, should be primarily oriented towards understanding the ideas, the system of a particular philosopher. If a philosopher's philosophical system is complete, it essentially contains a conglomeration of opinions across the entire spectrum of philosophical disciplines. Such a comprehensive approach cannot be found in every philosopher. A positive example can be Plato, Aristotle, Hegel. On the contrary, an opposite example can be Kierkegaard, who showed no interest in logic, epistemology, metaphysics and many other philosophical disciplines at all. Most of his interests were ethics and anthropology. The assessment should focus on understanding the ideas, basic theses of a particular philosopher, or a philosophical system, if it was created. In any case, the teacher should avoid the system of "telephone lists", that is, the method of knowledge verification, where the focus of assessment would be the philosopher's biography, the chronological dating of his life and the list of written works. Such an approach has nothing to do with the actual teaching of philosophy. Reducing the history of philosophy to lists of written works is an unnecessary burden on the student's memory. Just as in the history of literature, it is also true in the history of philosophy that isolated knowledge about the ideas, theses of philosophers, about possible philosophical systems is far from a comprehensive understanding of the problem. In the history of literature, there is certainly a link to the history of art. For example, Hegel plays a major role in Slovak literature (Dupkala and Perný 2021). The history of philosophy shows several connections. These are primarily various reactions: adoption, variations, epigonism, rejection, criticism of the theses of predecessors and contemporaries. Another important connection is ties to the history of art and literature. There are also many common areas between the history of philosophy and the history of science. The history of philosophy is definitely not a collection of statements about who said and wrote what. A good teacher also focuses on the mentioned connections within the assessment. It compiles questions in such a way as to verify not only the understanding and knowledge of the basic theses of philosophers, but also the relational realities within the history of philosophy, and relations with literature, science and art. The absence of this connection within the student's knowledge would mean a significant deficiency in the understanding of the history of philosophy. There are researches and surveys that focus on students' mindfulness (Khonamri, Azizi and Králik 2020). It is known that the attentiveness of students is different, individual, but even a less attentive student should acquire basic orientation in contexts. Assessment in the history of philosophy must therefore be aimed at understanding the basic realities, theses, concepts of philosophers, and on the other hand, it must also include verification of orientation in relational contexts. Each individual topic must be verified not only from the point of view of content knowledge, but also from the point of view of context and wider context. Oral verification of knowledge is an excellent way to assess contexts and relationships. Its advantage is a high degree of flexibility. The oral form of knowledge verification can focus attention both on a systematic cross-section of the basic theses of the philosopher, the system, as well as the expression of sessions within the history of philosophy, history of sciences, literature and art. In our case, the oral form of knowledge verification can be connected with both the knowledge and the skills assessment approach. When formulating oral questions, we can ask both convergent and divergent tasks, which can be adjusted and refined ad hoc (Lokšová 2002). The written form of verification of knowledge from the history of philosophy requires asking precise questions. As for convergent questions and the knowledge value approach, we must ask them in this form only if the answer is not ambiguous, if the truth value corresponds to exactly one answer. Therefore, it is not permissible to ask about

ambiguous, debatable connections in this form (convergently, with the expectation of a single answer). For example, it is very difficult to ask a question in terms of the father of Indian philosophy, the father of patristics, the teacher Parmenides, the ontological essence in the teachings of individual Pre-Socratics, and so on. We can ask a definite question, for example, in which century did Hume live, who wrote the Parmenides dialogue, but not ask questions that require discussion. Convergent tasks can be assigned in the sense of explaining individual interpretations in the history of philosophy, for example aimed at explaining Aristotle's interpretation of Pre-Socratic ontology. The discussion itself is of course also possible in the ambiguous problems of the history of philosophy, which still have many open questions in the process of investigation (the form of the teachings of the historical Socrates, the real wording of the real theses of the Milesians, the problematic relationship between Xenophanes and Parmenides, etc.). In such a case, during the assessment, the teacher must not favor one scientific position and impose it on the student. Here it is possible to give divergent tasks for thinking, arguing. In the basic course of philosophy, this possibility is relatively limited in terms of the history of philosophy, it can be applied to the most prominent problems. More divergently oriented problems of the history of philosophy can be analyzed in the second or third course (usually in higher education) and verified with divergent questions, for which the student must be given adequate space in written form. Even such a form of questions is thus possible in the sense of a knowledge approach. The level of difficulty of the questions must correspond to the level of study. For example, the question to what extent all affects in Spinoza depend on some kind of beliefs (Aktas 2018) first belongs to the third level of higher education. It is also possible to enter written questions with the skills approach. These are divergent questions that are supposed to verify the student's creativity, based on the knowledge obtained in our case from the history of philosophy. It is possible to ask attitudinal questions, such as arguing peripatetically in the area of the attitude towards the role of the family in society, or how Plato would approach the problem of infanticide. Here, the teacher's task is to verify to what extent the student controls the views of a particular philosopher and how he can work with them in argumentation. Assessment should be focused on the content, understanding of a specific philosopher and his theses. The question of understanding is quite important. According to the results of research in Colombia, "students consider philosophical knowledge to be of little utility due to traditional teaching methodologies that rely on rote memorization, a lack of spaces for reflection, academic dogmatism, and insufficient teacher training in delivering philosophical knowledge" (Nieto-Mendoza 2023, p. 2). Fairly good maneuvering space for checking the level of understanding is provided by oral knowledge verification, as the teacher can ask many questions that verify the said understanding in depth. An experienced teacher should detect a case where a student learns something by heart without understanding. By means of additional questions, it is possible to find out about a basic misunderstanding, which lies in ignorance of basic terms, misunderstanding of structures, lack of grasping the context, etc. Plato will serve us as a classic model example. With Plato, the student should understand the concept of idea, understand the parable of the line, and then connect the mentioned structures with ethics, social philosophy, and the philosophy of education. The understanding should also be verified in terms of the influence and reactions to Plato, for example in the metaphysics of Aristotle, Plotinus, etc. Finally, according to the degree of study, it is desirable to verify other overlaps of Plato in various disciplines, for example, in art, history, religion and elsewhere. We would like to note that an assessment of the history of philosophy, which would ignore the basic historical lines, but would give more problem-oriented, systematic questions, can confuse the student to a great extent. Questions that focus on systematic philosophy should not be asked when checking knowledge of the history of philosophy. The own knowledge assessment approach can use them, but in a limited way, so as not to cause unnecessary chaos and not to ask about something that the student may not yet know, or is not expected of him due to the level of study. "When students enter higher education, they not only start learning and studying but begin a journey of becoming someone new in relation to themselves and to society" (Nieminen and Yang 2023, p. 2). The same applies to those who have philosophy as a subject of study at various levels. Let the process of their assessment in this field be such that it leads to their permanent knowledge.

6. Conclusion: In our paper, we addressed various assessment issues in the teaching of the history of philosophy. First of all, we have arrived at the division of the evaluative approach in philosophy. This moment is the neuralgic point of paper. We therefore propose dividing this approach into a formal - deductive, knowledge

and skills assessment approach. The division in question applies in philosophical disciplines, we do not claim that it can be extrapolated outside of philosophy. The history of philosophy primarily uses a knowledge-based assessment approach. We express the difference in the assessment of philosophical theories and scientific theories, while in philosophy we do not talk about overcoming and replacing one theory with another. This moment is also very important in the assessment. We tried to map the framework of the focus of the assessment. In addition to its own philosophical theses, it is also the context in the sense of the history of philosophy, the history of science, literature and art. Within this link, the questions themselves should be targeted. We also reflect on the issue of convergent and divergent questions in relation to assessment approaches, as well as in relation to written and oral forms of knowledge verification. In this context, we have given examples of good and bad assessment practice in the sense of asking questions. We also express negative recommendations, which the philosophy teacher should avoid during assessment. It is above all asking clear questions about ambiguous polemical problems, as well as orienting the assessment to biographies and works without connection to different contexts.

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The Nexus between Social Media and Generation Y's Purchase Intention: A Case of Undergraduate Students at a Tertiary Education Sector in Mauritius

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Abstract: The emergence of social media on the face of global society has created a new network of social connections. Generation Y constitutes a large proportion of world's population with immense purchasing power which are different compared to the earlier generation. This paper explores the impact of social media on the purchase behavior of an undergrad student population from generation Y of a tertiary education sector in Mauritius. A representative sample of 200 participants from each of the five faculties participated in this survey. Data was collected using a on line questionnaire, face to face and self - administered questionnaire. The findings of the regression analysis of the independent variables of the conceptual framework consisting of: Product informativeness, interactivity, eWOM, the involvement of an Influencer, brand image and brand awareness are discussed. The findings of this study show that there is a significant relationship between use of social media in influencing and purchasing intention and therefore, marketers and businesses can tap into this media to reinforce and enhance their marketing strategies.

Keywords: Generation Y, Purchase Intention, Social Media

1. Introduction: According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's report (2012), the Generation Y is born in the age of technology, between 1980 and 1999, including current and future graduates. By 2025, generation Y will be the second largest consumer group comprising of three quarters of the workforce worldwide and are expected to transform the market place (Tripathi, 2019). The interactive nature of social media has allowed a two-way flow of information that allows businesses to impact and have few effects directly on their purchase intention (Nolcheska, 2017).

2. Social Media in Mauritius: Social media penetration in Mauritius represents a rate of 68% as at January 2020, out of a population of 1.27 million (DataReportal, 2020). Facebook was mainly used as a marketing channel since it is the predominating social media platform in Mauritius comprising of 852 000 users, accounting to 66.6% of the entire population (NapoleonCat, 2020).

3. Problem Statement: Research evidence on this topic carried out globally have shown inconclusive and divergent findings and the benefit of social media in marketing strategies is still missing, in terms of influencing customers' purchase intention (Zhang & Mao, 2016; Hamouda, 2018; Irshad, 2018). In addition, while the Generation Y displays largest internet usage penetration of 98%, and favoring online shopping (DataReportal, 2019), there is little information on how social media platforms are influencing their purchase intention, especially in the Mauritian context. With increased used of social media marketing as part of the promotion mix, research in this area is important and necessary can make significant contribution to literature.

4. Literature Review

4.1. Generation Y and Social Media Usage Behaviour: Generation envisaged as generation Y (1990-1999)

has continual access to latest technology since birth. Nearly everything is done using social media, internet and other technologically advanced applications as they want information which can be referred at any time and easily accessed anywhere (Tripathi, 2019). The incredible rise in social media usage has led to strong connectivity, communication and content sharing amongst students influencing the youth's daily path (Rajeev, 2015). According to Statista (2016), more than 60% of all social media users form part of the Generation Y, being the very first generation to spend their lifetime in the online environment. Also, as stated by Bennett et al. (2008), around 90% of such generation makes use of minimum one social media platform every day. A review from Deloitte (2018) shows that generation Y spend around 17h per week on the digital activities such as internet browsing, watching movies and videos, social networking and banking transactions and as per Salim (2019), social media usage accounts for one third of the daily internet activities which is around 2 hours and 22 minutes. The heavy usage of the social media and internet by generation Y makes a desirable market for marketers and business owners (Wu, 2003).

4.2. Social media marketing channels: Marketers and businesses are taking advantage of social media to market and connect with existing and prospective customers on the different platforms available (Charlesworth, 2015). These comprises of advertisements in terms of company posts, pictures and videos, posters, in-stream advertisements where the content is introduced as a trailer prior to the actual video content being displayed and promoted accounts where business or marketer pays in the objective of being proposed to users and by search engine refinement.

4.3. Factors influencing Purchase Intention on Social Media

4.3.1. Product Informativeness: Social media offers a wide spread of informative content which social media users can use as a research tool, for example, when searching for relevant information about services or products of interest when taking purchasing decisions. Various social media platforms are increasingly used and became a more valuable access of information in comparison to traditional tools for accessing information. This enables a comparison of information about a certain subject of interest on different platforms available (Alalwan, 2018; Khatib, 2016; Carpentier et al., 2019). Easy access of information on social media provides both positive and negative aspects regarding the spread of information due to the availability of different information from various sources. For example, previous social media users of an item or service have the ability to provide their opinions about their post-purchases in the form of feedback and comments to peers which is accessible for other social media users in their pre-purchase stages (Khatib, 2016). Therefore, the following hypothesis is suggested:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between product informativeness on social media and undergraduates' purchase intention.

4.3.2. Interactivity: The interactive devices available on social media have paved a way for social media users to generate their own content and interact with those of other users (Johnson and Kaye, 2016) and also provided companies with the opportunities to exchange information and interact with consumers. Interactivity can be seen as important to users within social media (Alalwan, 2018) as companies can better understand the consumers' needs and on the other side, consumers are able to learn more about brands and its products through interactive communication and also enables brands to foster closer consumer relationships (Zhang & Lin, 2014). Since past studies indicate an impact of interactivity on purchase intention, hypothesis 2 is proposed:

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between interactivity on social media and undergraduates' purchase intention.

4.3.3. Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM): As per Voramontri (2018), the growing expansion of social media lead individuals towards new approaches of obtaining information in regards to products and services, leading to the creation of new ways of communication and methods to share personal views and experiences with others. As per Kudeshia and Kumar (2017) , social media users express their thoughts, opinions and perceptions about brands and product and the eWOM evolved in a valuable opportunity for enterprises (Erkan & Evans, 2016). Also, eWOM on social media are more accessible, trustworthy and

reliable resulting in a larger influence on the purchase intentions (Kim & Chen, 2018), the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: There is a significant relationship between eWOM and undergraduates' purchase intention on social media

4.3.4. Involvement of an influencer: Generation Y attitudes towards brands and their purchasing intentions sometimes do not arise from their own ideas or perceptions, but are rather influenced by people around them (Jin, et al., 2019). Influencers such as celebrities and successful entrepreneurs usually having a massive number of followers on social media, in addition to having a strong social influence (Jin, et al., 2019). As a result, the information and content posted on social media have a massive impact, and their influence may continue to grow through the eWOM communication (Audrezet, et al., 2018). Tri Hanifawati et al. (2019) determined that Influencers have a significant effect on consumer's attitudes towards brands affecting their purchase intention towards the product or service.

Hypothesis 4: The involvement of influencer on social media significantly affects undergraduates' purchase intention.

4.3.5. Brand Image: Brands are an integral part of consumers' everyday life and play a big role in daily choices (Grubor et al. 2017). According to Zhang (2015), brand image refers to an intuitive mental image of a brand shared by a category of customers making it easier in evaluating the characteristics in short period of time. Some factors influencing the brand image of a product or service include a better-perceived quality, brand attitudes and perceived value which lead to enhancement in loyalty, improved customer satisfaction leading to commitment towards the brand (Neupane, 2015). As such, hypothesis 5 is proposed:

Hypothesis 5: There is a significant relationship between brand image and undergraduates' purchase intention on social media.

4.3.6. Brand Awareness: Social media users will be familiar to the mere presence of the name of brands over the social media, thus creating brand awareness. Huang and Sarigöllü (2012) indicated that brand awareness is positively linked to customer's recognition of certain brand and the market performance where the influence of brands lies in consumer's memory. Romaniuk et al. (2017) defines brand awareness as the extent a consumer is able to acknowledge or remember that a certain brand belongs to a particular group of products. Brand awareness comprises of two components: brand acknowledgement, and brand remembrance. An individual's capacity to recall a brand name right after seeing a product category is called brand remembrance, and brand acknowledgement is individual's ability to acknowledge a product when there is a variety of brands. Hypothesis 6 is formulated as below:

Hypothesis 6: There is a significant relationship between brand awareness and undergraduates' purchase intention on social media.

5. Conceptual Framework: The conceptual model shown in Figure 2 has been adapted from the research model used by Yadav and Rahman (2017) who measured the impact social media activities like informativeness, interactivity and the online word of mouth on purchase intention in the industry of e-commerce and Febriyantoro, (2020) who examined the relationship between brand image and brand awareness on purchase intention through YouTube marketing communication among the millennial generation. The different variables influencing purchase intention can be interpreted in Figure 1 below where the involvement of an Influencer has also been added since 49% of consumers nowadays depend on Influencer's recommendations for their purchase decisions and is considered to be the modern version of the online word of mouth (Ara, 2020).

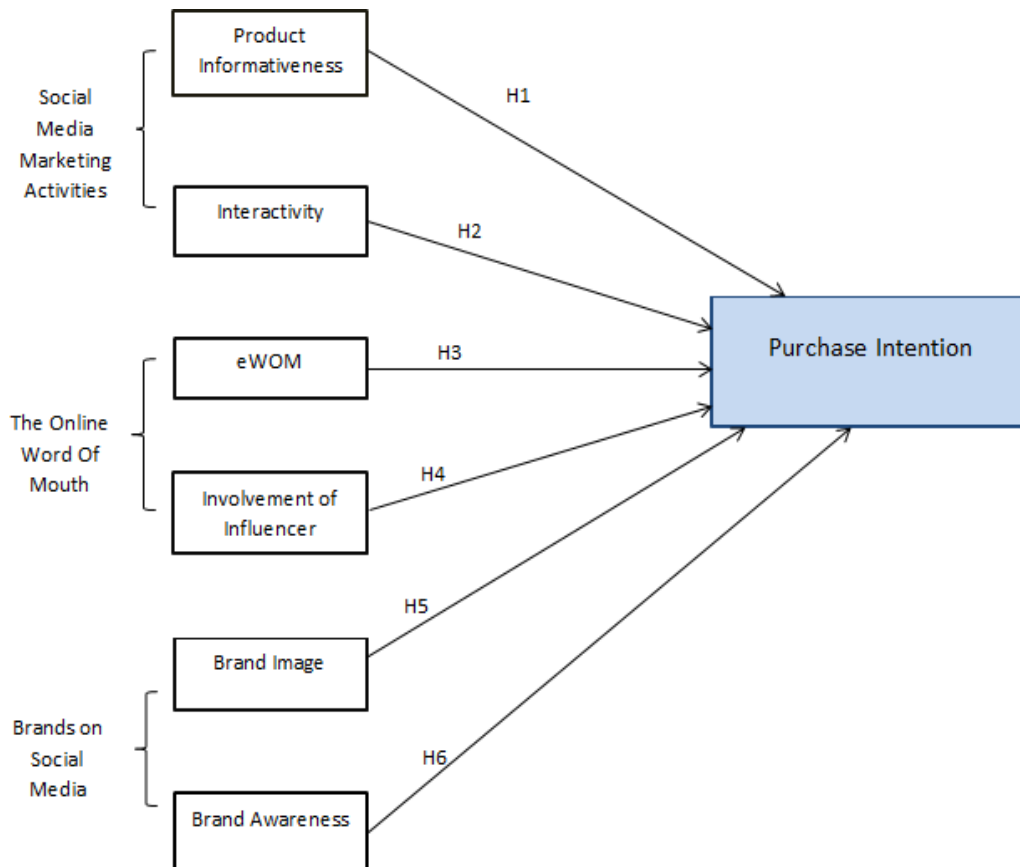


Fig 1: Conceptual model for purchase intention adapted from Yadav & Rahman (2017) & Febriyantoro (2020)

6. Methodology: For this study, a convenience sample of 200 students, representative of the five faculties was chosen. The questionnaires were distributed to students who were easily available and who voluntarily agreed to take part in the survey. Snowball sampling method was used since some students were asked to forward the questionnaires to students within their own faculty in order to increase the spread of and response rate of the questionnaires. Cronbach Alpha tests for the variables ranged from 0.769 to 0.951, indicating reliability of the questionnaire.

7. Analysis and interpretation of findings: Out of the 200 respondents, females represented 63.5% of the sample compared to males with 36.5% only, which was in line with the proportion of male to female students across the University generally. The majority of the students (94%) belong to the 21-25 category age groups, and the least number of students form part of the 18 – 20 age group (2%). This can be due to majority of students being in year 3 forming part of the Generation Y.

8. General Opinions on Social Media Usage: The following section is based on the respondents' opinions concerning their usage on social media. Figure 1 below gives an indication of the most used social media platforms among undergraduates. Facebook is the largest social media platform, with 182 users, followed by Instagram and YouTube and Pinterest being the last, with only 26 users. This was in line with the result of NapoleonCat (2020), where Facebook is said to be the most used social media network in Mauritius, followed by Instagram.

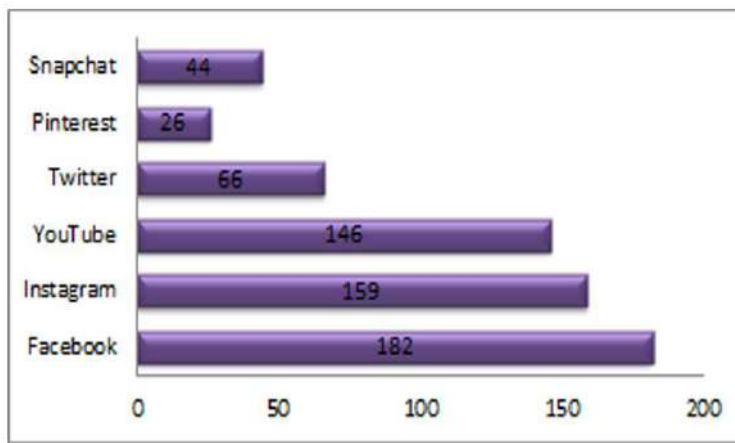


Fig 2: Social Media Platform usage

Concerning the time spent on social media per day, 59% of undergraduates used social media between 2-4 hours, followed by 22% using it more than 5 hours, 13% using for 1 – 2 hours and only 6% of them used less than one hour. This is in line with the Statista report, published in February 2020, where the average daily social media usage of internet users globally amounted to 2.4 hours per day

9. Regression Analysis: Regression analysis was carried out in order to predict the factors that impacted purchase intention the most and allowed us to assess the connection among the independent and dependent variable, being purchase intention, Fig 3 below. Taking the Adjusted R Square in the Model Summary table below, it can be concluded that the independent variables Product Informativeness, Interactivity, eWOM, Involvement of Influencer, Brand Image and Brand Awareness causes 73.3% variance on purchase intention. Also, the Durbin Watson Value is 2.23, which is in the acceptable range (from 1.5-2.5) is considered to be relatively normal. The ANOVA table illustrates that the variables are statistically significant since the significance value is 0.000 (<0.05), therefore, can conclude that it can represent the whole population. The report model significance can be reported as the equation $F(6,193) = 91.101, p = .000$.

Model Summary^b

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | .861 ^a | .741 | .733 | .51577 | 2.230 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), brand_awareness, interactivity, brand_image, involvement_of_influencer, product_informativeness, eWOM
b. Dependent Variable: purchase_intention

ANOVA^a

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 146.881 | 6 | 24.447 | 91.901 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 51.341 | 193 | .266 | | |
| | Total | 198.022 | 199 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: purchase_intention
b. Predictors: (Constant), brand_awareness, interactivity, brand_image, involvement_of_influencer, product_informativeness, eWOM

Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | -.644 | .201 | | -3.201 | .002 |
| | product_informativeness | .505 | .104 | .410 | 4.857 | .000 |
| | interactivity | -.140 | .058 | -.139 | -2.390 | .018 |
| | eWOM | .360 | .124 | .297 | 2.906 | .004 |
| | involvement_of_influencer | .155 | .110 | .119 | 1.411 | .160 |
| | brand_image | .026 | .080 | .021 | .323 | .747 |
| | brand_awareness | .218 | .110 | .166 | 1.979 | .049 |

a. Dependent Variable: purchase_intention

Fig 3: Regression Analysis

The Coefficients table further proves that there is a statistically significant impact on the purchase intention. Predicted purchase intention can be calculated in the equation below;
 Purchase Intention = $-.644 + .505$ (Product Informativeness) + $-.140$ (interactivity) + $.360$ (eWOM) + $.155$ (Involvement of Influencer) + $.26$ (Brand Image) + $.218$ (Brand Awareness).
 The above table suggests that Product Informativeness is the strongest predictor for purchase intention ($\beta=0.410$). It implies that for each unit increase in Product Informativeness, Purchase intention will increase by 0.505.

10. Hypotheses: Whenever p-value exceeds the significant level of 5 % (0.05), we would accept the null hypothesis and means that there is no significant relationship between the variable and purchase intention. In order to accept the hypotheses, the significance value should be below 0.05. From table 1 below, Involvement of an Influencer (0.160) and Brand Image (0.747) exceeds the significance value, which means that we will reject these hypotheses and the null hypotheses will be accepted. Therefore, H4 and H5 will not be supported as shown in table 23.

| Hypotheses | Description | Results |
|------------|--|---------------|
| H1 | There is a positive relationship between product informativeness on social media and undergraduates' purchase intention. | Supported |
| H2 | There is a significant relationship between interactivity on social media and undergraduates' purchase intention | Supported |
| H3 | There is a significant relationship between eWOM and undergraduates' purchase intention on social media. | Supported |
| H4 | The involvement of influencer on social media significantly affects undergraduates' purchase intention. | Not Supported |
| H5 | There is a significant relationship between brand image and undergraduates' purchase intention on social media. | Not Supported |
| H6 | There is a significant relationship between brand awareness and undergraduates' purchase intention on social media. | Supported |

Table 1: Summary Hypotheses table

In contrast to the results of Tri Hanifawati et al. (2019) which proved that Influencers significantly affects consumers' attitude and purchase intention, the current findings proved the opposite since significance level is found to be > 0.05 . The reason for this may be due to involvement of Influencers being new marketing strategies which have not yet gained the trust of undergraduates and if paid Influencers are promoting certain products or being sponsored; their posts and reviews might be biased, therefore not affecting purchase intention.

The case of H5 of brand image is also not supported, and is unlike previous researches by (Cretu et al. 2007) and (Kumar et al. 2020) who showed that a brand image on social media actually boosts purchase intention and helps customers remain loyal to the brand. This may be because their view concerning the brand image may be changed by different perceptions and opinions on social media. On the other hand, it can be found Product Informativeness (0.000) has value < 0.05 and will therefore impact purchase intention. This is in line with the result of Khatib (2016), Alalwan (2018) and Arli (2017) who showed that easy access to product information on social media significantly impacts purchase intention. Furthermore, Interactivity (0.018) also influenced undergraduates purchase intention. Interactivity, also proven by Alalwan (2018) in his research is said to be a leading predictor in consumers' purchase intention due to the two-way interactions between marketers and

customers on social media. Studies by Kim & Chen (2018), Kudeshia and Kumar (2017), Lou et al. (2019), and Erkan & Evans (2016) justified that eWOM, whether negative or positive, significantly affects consumers' purchase intention. eWOM has significance value of 0.004, meaning a strong connection between the variables, and therefore the hypothesis is accepted. Hypothesis of brand Awareness (0.049) is also accepted and is in line with studies by Martins et al. (2019) who showed that it has a crucial role to play in purchase intention and consumers tend to purchase popular and familiar products (Asamoah, 2014).

11. Summary of Findings: A summary of the findings can be shown in figure 3 showing hypotheses which are supported and not supported.

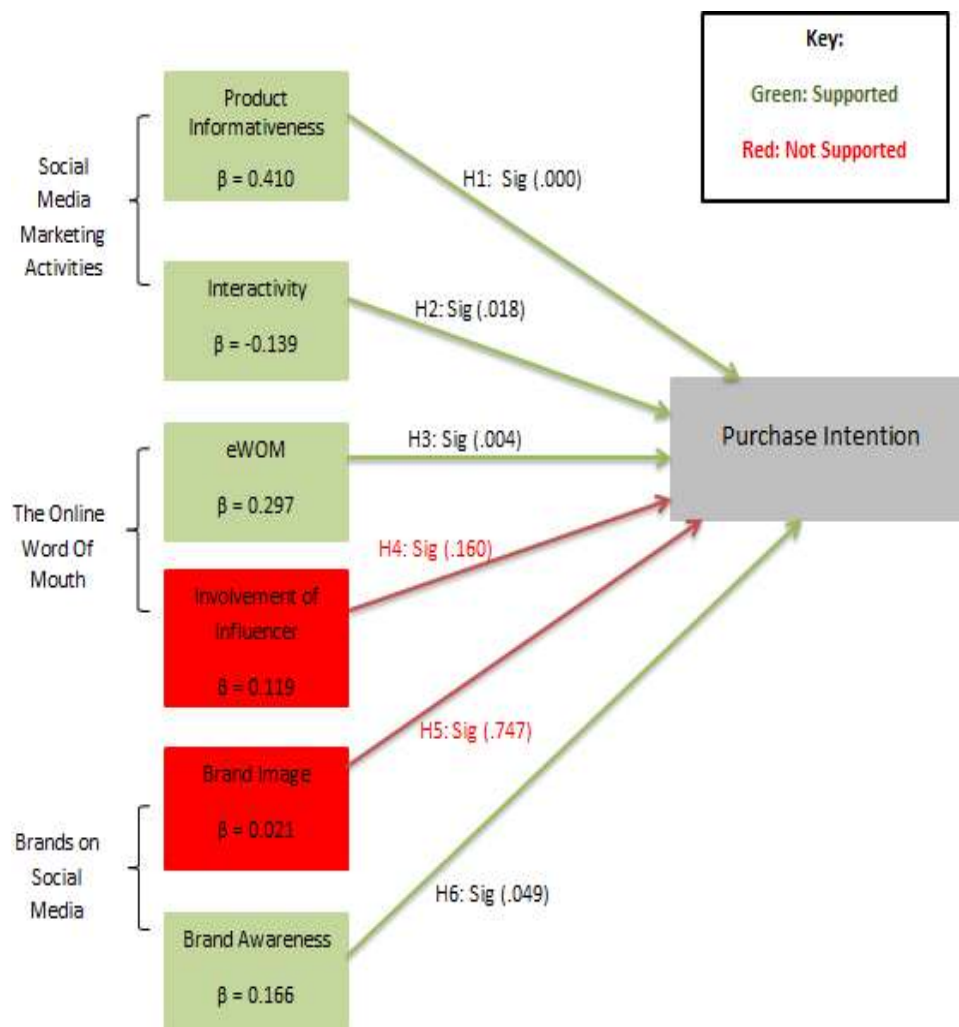


Fig 3: Summary of Findings

11.1. Recommendations: It is clear from the analysis that there is a nexus between SM and undergraduates' purchase intention. The following recommendations have been made based on the findings of this study, helping to design suitable and cost-effective SM strategies to engage the generation Y, targeting customers and influencing their purchase intentions.

11.2. Choosing the right social media channel: While selecting social media channels to connect with the generation Y, marketers must ensure that they choose channels that target customers frequently use and tend to spend more time. According to the findings of this study, the social media networks that marketers can consider for connecting with Generation Y customers are: Facebook being the most used (91%), followed by Instagram (79%), YouTube (73%). Marketers also need to make sure that they post content on multiple channels simultaneously. This will increase visibility of the brand to targeted customers as 59% of

respondents spend 2- 4 hours of their day on social media and 22% spending 5 or more hours. Being visible is the first step to creating a connection with the customer.

11.3. Increase of social networking in business operations: Marketers are recommended to boost the usage of social media in all their marketing operations in order to reach consumers easily and to encourage customer feedback. This will assist to promote communication, recognizing emerging consumers' needs and increasing interactivity together with reinforcing consumer engagement. According to 41% of respondents, interactions on social media with brands allow them to better understand the products or service. Customers will also benefit to get more information about products or services which impacts their purchase intention according to 40.5% of respondents.

11.4. Developing Content for Interactions or Social Media Marketing: Most undergraduates involved in social media platforms as spectators who mostly read, watch and listen on social media. Marketers can create content that is, 'like worthy', and 'share worthy' as 78% of respondents tend to share interesting content. Also, content that will elicit positive comments will increase the viewership of the posts, thus increasing awareness of the brand. According to 43.5% of students, being aware of a brand will further increase their purchase intention. Furthermore, marketers may employ dedicated personnel or 'Chatbots' to handle customer service - related queries, comments and complaints on social media platforms on a real time basis if, they want to engage customers in the long run, building brand trust and loyalty.

11.5. Marketers and Businesses should set measurable objectives on social media: Describing how the business will benefit from social media and demonstrating goals will aid in focusing on favorable plans and swiftly pivot as circumstances change. For instance, to increase the brand image or increase brand awareness, the name of the brand should be familiar to the public, with a positive impression of it. 45% of undergraduates are influenced by recommendations of friends and families on social media who are already familiar to particular brands. Also, the viewpoint of the business should be constant over all platforms making it easier for customers to acknowledge the business by keeping consistency; an example could be using same logotype and tagline of the brand.

11.6. Involving Influencer in posts on social media: Even though the hypothesis of Influencer was not supported, according to 52% of undergraduates, whenever their favorite influencer recommends a brand, they are likely to buy it even if no need arises and 48.5% said that they search for more information about brands included in Influencers' posts on social media. Brands can make use of popular millennial icons and achievers who having huge following on social media platforms to become influencers for the respective brands. If users with a huge follower base endorse products or share brand content, then many of their followers too would look up to the brand, follow it and purchase it.

12. Limitations and directions for future research: This research has successfully demonstrated the nexus between social media and undergraduates' purchase intention but this study focused only on one generation: The Generation Y. Respondents included in this research were just a small proportion of social media users, being undergraduates' students of the University of Mauritius. Furthermore, although there are currently many social media that influence purchase intentions, this study was limited to the social networking platforms. Therefore, possibilities for inter-generational replications of this research rest open for future research within different contexts. Future research could investigate other different consumer groups such as generation X, since social media is expected not only to have influence on younger customers' purchase intention and the challenges older generation find while using social media channels is interesting to study as well. This would permit comparability and extensive research to be made between generations, consequently giving further advice to businesses on how to target different generations. Moreover, a quantitative replication study involving students from several universities across Mauritius could be conducted to validate the findings of this research and other related factors influencing purchase intention can also be integrated in further researches to understand the impact of social media in an extensive and comprehensive technique.

13. Conclusion: The main goal of this study was to explore the nexus between social media and Generation Y's purchase intention. Social media became a fundamental part of our everyday life as a platform where people are sharing their own consumption behaviour, opinions, product preferences, and experiences online therefore influencing purchase intentions. The study was based on 200 undergraduates from the University of Mauritius forming part of the Generation Y. Brands are capable of penetrating through picture updates, reviews and likes by social media users on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube which attract and allows two-way interactions between businesses and customers. Also, it eases a straight association with the generation Y, attracting more customers and evokes buyer's loyalty. Businesses are also adopting social media in their marketing practices to increase their brand awareness by promoting their brands, having feedback reviews and opinions from clients and also by interactions with current and potential consumers. The current research demonstrates that social media has an impact on the stages of the buyer's purchase decision process on each stage. At present, potential clients tend to search for previous opinions and reviews, how much likes and shares a product got in order to aid them in their purchase decision and to see if the product is value for money. The online word of mouth on social media eventually gives reasons why brands are able to draw attention of consumers and impact others who obtain information, and influence them in purchase decision. In line with the findings of prior studies, this study found that the online word of mouth, product informativeness, interactivity and brand awareness does have a significant positive impact on purchase intention. In addition, whenever a product goes viral, a need might be created in the mind of the user even they did not have the intention to make purchase decision. To conclude, the Generation Y is heavily influenced by social media during their purchase decision. Businesses should recognize the usefulness of social media in Mauritius as a powerful medium for marketing activities and integrating practices on social media in their marketing strategies.

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Artificial Intelligence (A.I) and Regulation: Analyses of the Regulatory Landscape for AI, Such as the Need for Government Oversight or the Development of Ethical Guidelines for the Use of AI.



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Abstract: Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a transformative technology with the potential to revolutionize various aspects of human society. As AI adoption grows, concerns have arisen about the ethical and social implications of AI, including the potential for unintended consequences and the risk of discrimination and bias. The regulatory landscape for AI is still evolving, and there is an ongoing debate about the need for government oversight and the development of ethical guidelines for the use of AI. This paper provides an analysis of the regulatory landscape for AI, examining the different approaches taken by governments and international organizations. The paper also explores the challenges associated with regulating AI, such as the difficulty of defining AI and the speed at which the technology is evolving. Finally, the paper discusses the potential impact of AI regulation on innovation and the development of AI. The analysis reveals that there is a growing consensus among governments and international organizations that some form of regulation is needed to address the ethical and social implications of AI. However, there is still a lack of agreement on the specific regulatory approach, with some advocating for a light-touch regulatory framework, while others argue for more extensive oversight. The paper concludes that while regulation is necessary, it should be designed to balance the benefits of AI with the need to protect society and ensure ethical and responsible use of the technology.

Introduction: Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the potential to revolutionize various aspects of human society, from healthcare and education to transportation and manufacturing. However, as AI adoption grows, concerns have arisen about the ethical and social implications of the technology. The rapid advancement of AI and its potential to affect human lives on a massive scale has sparked a growing debate about the need for regulation to ensure that the technology is used ethically and responsibly.

This paper aims to analyze the regulatory landscape for AI, focusing on the need for government oversight and the development of ethical guidelines for the use of AI. The paper will examine the different approaches taken by governments and international organizations in regulating AI, the challenges associated with regulating AI, and the potential impact of AI regulation on innovation and the development of AI.

The first section of the paper will provide an overview of the current state of AI technology and its potential impact on society. The second section will examine the different approaches taken by governments and international organizations in regulating AI, including the need for government oversight and the development of ethical guidelines for the use of AI. The third section will discuss the challenges associated with regulating AI, such as the difficulty of defining AI and the speed at which the technology is evolving. Finally, the paper will conclude with a discussion of the potential impact of AI regulation on innovation and the development of AI, highlighting the need for a balanced approach that balances the benefits of AI with the need to protect society and ensure ethical and responsible use of the technology.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become an increasingly ubiquitous technology in recent years, with applications ranging from self-driving cars to medical diagnosis and even military operations. However, as AI systems become more advanced and integrated into our daily lives, concerns have arisen about their ethical and social implications.

One of the main areas of concern is the potential for AI systems to discriminate against certain groups of people or to make decisions that have unintended consequences. For example, an AI system used in hiring processes may inadvertently discriminate against certain job candidates based on their gender or ethnicity, or an AI system used in criminal justice may make decisions that result in unfair treatment of certain groups.

To address these concerns, there has been a growing call for regulation of AI systems, either through government oversight or the development of ethical guidelines for their use. Governments and international organizations have taken different approaches to regulating AI, with some advocating for a light-touch regulatory framework that encourages innovation and development, while others argue for more extensive oversight to ensure that AI systems are used ethically and responsibly.

In addition to concerns about discrimination and unintended consequences, there are also concerns about the potential impact of AI on employment and the economy, as well as the potential for AI systems to be used for malicious purposes such as cyber-attacks or surveillance.

As the technology continues to evolve and become more integrated into our daily lives, the regulatory landscape for AI will likely continue to evolve as well. It will be important for governments, industry leaders, and other stakeholders to work together to develop regulatory frameworks that balance the benefits of AI with the need to protect society and ensure ethical and responsible use of the technology.

Statement of Problem: The rapid development and increasing adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) have raised concerns about the ethical and social implications of the technology. As AI systems become more advanced and integrated into our daily lives, there is a growing need for regulatory frameworks that ensure that the technology is used ethically and responsibly.

The regulatory landscape for AI is complex and evolving, with different approaches taken by governments and international organizations. Some argue for a light-touch regulatory framework that encourages innovation and development, while others advocate for more extensive oversight to ensure that AI systems are used ethically and responsibly.

Additionally, there are challenges associated with regulating AI, such as the difficulty of defining AI and the speed at which the technology is evolving. There is also a need to balance the benefits of AI with the potential risks, including the potential for discrimination and unintended consequences.

Therefore, the problem is to analyze the regulatory landscape for AI and determine the best approach to ensure

that the technology is used ethically and responsibly, while also promoting innovation and development. This involves examining the different approaches taken by governments and international organizations, the challenges associated with regulating AI, and the potential impact of AI regulation on innovation and the development of AI.

The rapid development and increasing adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) have raised concerns about the ethical and social implications of the technology. As AI systems become more advanced and integrated into our daily lives, there is a growing need for regulatory frameworks that ensure that the technology is used ethically and responsibly.

According to a report by the European Commission, "AI has the potential to cause significant harm if it is not developed and used appropriately." The report emphasizes the need for "trustworthy AI" that is developed and used in a way that is transparent, ethical, and respects fundamental rights.

Various governments and international organizations have taken different approaches to regulating AI. In the United States, there has been limited federal regulation of AI, with most regulation taking place at the state level. However, in April 2021, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued guidance on the use of AI in decision-making, highlighting the need for transparency, fairness, and accountability in the use of AI systems.

The European Union has taken a more proactive approach to regulating AI, with the release of a proposed regulatory framework in April 2021. The framework, known as the AI Act, includes provisions for transparency, accountability, and ethical use of AI systems. The framework also includes a ban on certain types of AI systems, such as those that use subliminal techniques to manipulate behavior.

There are also challenges associated with regulating AI, such as the difficulty of defining AI and the speed at which the technology is evolving. According to a report by the Center for Data Innovation, "defining AI is challenging because it is a moving target." The report emphasizes the need for a flexible and adaptive regulatory framework that can keep pace with the evolving technology.

Furthermore, there is a need to balance the benefits of AI with the potential risks, including the potential for discrimination and unintended consequences. As noted in a report by the World Economic Forum, "AI can be a force for good, but only if we ensure that it is trustworthy and aligned with societal values." The report emphasizes the need for collaboration between stakeholders, including governments, industry leaders, and civil society, to ensure that AI is developed and used in a way that benefits society as a whole.

Therefore, the problem is to analyze the regulatory landscape for AI and determine the best approach to ensure that the technology is used ethically and responsibly, while also promoting innovation and development. This involves examining the different approaches taken by governments and international organizations, the challenges associated with regulating AI, and the potential impact of AI regulation on innovation and the development of AI.

- Problem Question:**
1. What are the different approaches taken by governments and international organizations to regulate AI? (Reference: European Commission, 2021; Federal Trade Commission, 2021)
 2. What are the challenges associated with defining AI, and how can a flexible regulatory framework be developed to keep pace with the evolving technology? (Reference: Center for Data Innovation, 2019)
 3. How can the potential impact of AI regulation on innovation be balanced with the need to ensure that AI is used responsibly and ethically? (Reference: European Commission, 2021)
 4. What are the ethical principles that should guide the development and use of AI, and how can ethical guidelines for AI be developed and implemented? (Reference: Montreal Declaration for a Responsible Development of Artificial Intelligence; IEEE Global Initiative on Ethics of Autonomous and Intelligent Systems)
 5. What is the role of government oversight in ensuring the responsible and ethical use of AI, and how can government oversight be effective without stifling innovation? (Reference: Federal Trade Commission, 2021; European Commission, 2021).

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Gender-Based Violence amid Covid-19 Pandemic: A Qualitative Study in Mauritius

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Abstract: This paper investigates the profound challenges faced by women victims of Gender Based Violence GBV amid the COVID-19 lockdowns in Mauritius. A qualitative study was carried out to unveil the lived experiences of GBV victims during confinement periods through semi-structured interviews. The main themes that were found in the study are economic insecurity, anxiety and depression, health complications, stigma and self-blame, and lack of support systems. The study also engages in a focus group discussion with frontliners involved in addressing GBV cases, revealing the existing gaps in the different types of support systems. The research highlights the need of a holistic approach to address the heightened vulnerability of women facing GBV during emergency crises.

Keywords: Gender Based Violence, COVID-19 lockdowns, challenges, women victims, economic insecurity, anxiety, depression, health complications, stigma, support systems

1. Introduction: Gender Based Violence (GBV) is a phenomenon which is strongly imbedded in different societies across the world. It is considered to be one of the main violations of human rights and GBV aims at targeting one person primarily due of their gender. Though the victims are usually both men and women but women are primarily found to be the prey to GBV most of the times (Heise et al., 2002). Women who experience GBV are denied their rights to fully participate in the economic, socio-cultural, geographic spheres of their lives.

Harmful behaviours associated with GBV are as physical, verbal, emotional and sexual abuse of the wife, under-nourishment of girls and daughters, women and girls forced into sex work, female genital mutilation amongst others. Violence against women may also be psychological in the sense that women feel excluded from the society and among their friends, families and social circles. Several studies have been conducted on GBV across the world (Heise et al., 2002; Munuleh et al., 2020; John et al., 2020; Castañeda et al., 2020; Hadi, 2017) and they focus on several aspects of violence against girls and women in different contexts and situations. The UN has labeled GBV as a global issue in terms of health and development and has highlighted the need to put in place policies, programs, sensitization campaigns all around the world with a view to preventing violence

against women and girls. Apart from abuse of power, intimate partner violence, issues related to sexuality, there are other challenges that women and girls face related to GBV such as the portraying of women as a sexual object by the media and its cultural implications (Klugman, 2017). Victims suffering from domestic violence have low self-esteem and are not in a stable mental state, they suffer in silence. Studies conducted on domestic violence view sexual abuse as very common between spouses (Irwan and Margaretha, 2020).

1.1. Rationale: As a public health problem, GBV is associated with not only morbidity and mortality of women but also health implications for themselves and their children (Munuleh et al., 2020). Violence against women occurs around the world regardless of race, colour, creed and community. Victims of GBV suffer in silence due to the barriers of reporting such as fear and shame, guilt, trauma, financial dependence on the perpetrator amongst others (Castañeda et al., 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has re-surfaced existing inequalities in the socio-economic and cultural systems where the whole world has witnessed a rise in the number of cases of GBV during the emergency quarantine (John et al., 2020). In a situation where half of the world population were confined to the four walls of the house, the rate of GBV had increased drastically in almost all countries, by 30% in France, 33% in Singapore, 25% in Argentina and Spain (Johnson et al., 2020). The different authorities reported that more and more women wanted to be accommodated in a shelter to evade the torture they were enduring in their houses due to the permanent presence of their perpetrators (Kumar et al., 2021).

Mauritius, a small country in the Indian Ocean, is also not spared from the global epidemic of GBV. It remains one of the main causes of violence in the country urging the different stakeholders to take actions to prevent GBV cases from rising up (Beebeejaun et al., 2022). The Mauritian society is a highly patriarchal one and the country has witnessed a number of passionate crimes in the last decade (Deenoo, 2021). There was a rise in the number of GBV cases during the COVID-19 lockdown, in only eighteen days, there was an increase of two hundred and ninety-three reported cases of GBV in Mauritius (Beebeejaun, 2021), the under-reported cases being unknown. The victims had no choice but to stay with their perpetrators. Five hundred and twenty victims cases were reported to the Police Family Unit during the first lockdown, 39 of which were male victims and 481 female victims. Around one hundred and eleven female victims had to be placed in a shelter during the lockdown period as their lives were in danger (Ramdawor et al., 2022). This is an indication of the vulnerability of women and girls especially in a patriarchal setting. Being confined within the four walls with the perpetrator led many victims fall prey to their perpetrators.

1.2. Aims: The key to preventing domestic violence is changing the attitudes and behaviour conducive to this form of violence. Consequently, this study will examine the lived experiences of women victims of GBV amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher will identify the main factors causing GVB in Mauritius during the COVID-19 lockdown, examine the victim's knowledge of GBV and its implications as well as investigate on the coping strategies the victims used in their daily routine.

Gender Based Violence is an epidemic which has been deeply engrained in the Mauritian patriarchal system since many years now. In the section above, we have got a glimpse of the studies carried out in Mauritius on the GBV as well as a few research work carried out on GBV and COVID-19. Most of the studies focused in the different factors causing violence, analyzing the policies put in place by Mauritian stakeholders and health implications. This study will contribute to the research being carried out on GBV amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The research will focus on the lived experiences of the victims of GBV during the subsequent lockdowns in Mauritius. The country had witnessed two lockdowns one being full lockdown and the second one a partial one. Being confined within the four walls of the house have revealed to be difficult for women living in difficult circumstances amid violent partners together with other challenges. Thus, the study will examine the lived experiences of women victims of GBV amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The coping strategies that the victims may have adopted will also be looked into.

2. Literature Review: Domestic Violence is defined by the WHO (2023) as the 'use of force or physical strength on another person or another group of individuals that result to mental health problems or physical injuries' (Berg et al., 2022). Violence occurring in couples have been termed by researchers as men being the aggressors and women as the sufferers. As we have seen above, Violence among couples is not only physical but it takes

psychological, emotional and even mental forms. Violence also results in death of women and since it an activity happening within the four walls of the house, it is largely under-reported. Studies from different countries around the world including Canada, Australia, Israel, South Asia and the United States of America show that around 47% of women lost their lives due to domestic violence (Circi et al., 2023). The figures of domestic violence worldwide are significant and one in three women have experienced domestic violence at least once with their partners (Keratiloe et al., 2022). Gender-related deaths have increased drastically from 2019 to 2020 across the world. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on the rate of domestic violence around the world where there was a considerable increase across the world in the figures. In Western Europe by 11%, in Southern Europe by 5%, North America by 8% and in South Africa by 5% (Pycroft, 2022). Around 1.6 million women and girls have faced domestic violence in the year 2021 in England and Wales, without overlooking the fact that the figures may be largely under-reported. As per the WHO, the frequency of domestic abuse and gender based violence was 22% in the Western Pacific, 31% in the Mediterranean region and 23% in Southeast Asia (WHO, 2023). The pandemic has impacted on families worldwide both economically and socially. The partners were confined in between the four walls of the house leading to more exposure which would eventually result into violence and intimate abuse.

As we have seen above, GBV is a form of abuse in a relationship where one partner use power to control the other either by physical force, verbal abuse, manipulation, threat, humiliation, intimidation and sexually abusing the person (Raj et al., 2020). Relationship violence exist in many forms such as physical, verbal, sexual, psychological and economic abuse. Among the forms of physical and sexual abuse that victims of GBV face are sexually transmitted infections, burns and bruises, injuries, pelvic inflammatory diseases and menstrual irregularities. The psychological problems include mainly post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety, low self-esteem, insomnia, increased substance abuse, self-harm and suicidal thoughts (Murhula et al., 2021). According to the UN (2020), GBV has increased drastically due to economic stress and uncertainty, couples with restricted movement and isolation (Spencer et al., 2022).

GBV is and will remain one of the biggest challenge of women's health and well-being. According to the WHO, 37% women have been victims of GBV at least once in their lives and around 137 women have been killed by their partners (Ramdawor et al., 2022). Coupled with physical abuse, women also are victims of psychological trauma and reported higher rates of depression, abortion and HIV infection as compared to women who are not victims of GBV (Guidorzi, 2020). The detrimental impact of GBV should not be under-estimated as they can be life changing and victims usually endure long term consequences. During the pandemic where the world was facing lockdown, women and girls were forcefully stuck with abusive partners placing their lives at risk.

Several Studies were also conducted on GBV amid and post COVID-19 pandemic. Mathathu et al., (2024) revealed that Zimbabwean women were already facing a lot of trouble due to GBV and flood disasters and COVID19 exacerbated the issue by causing physical and mental vulnerability of these rural women. Seedat and Zulueta (2024) analysed the alarming rise in the GBV cases globally and also connecting the Global North with the Global South. In another paper, Seedat (2021) highlighted how female Health Care Workers faced multiple difficulties and challenges amid the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic whether it was the absence of PPE, their increased levels of fear and anxiety and the risk of exposure to the virus for themselves and their families. In 'Reflections on COVID-19: Interventions and Changes', Seedat and Zulueta (2023) give an insight on the events surrounding the COVID-19 period and examined gendered experiences with a focus on the family, work and the community. Beebeejaun et al., (2022) analysed the ambiguities present in the existing Mauritian law system that is employed to combat GBV especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. There was also socio-economic challenges as well as educational challenges between the haves and the have not during the confinement period (Jugessur, 2020). Rambaree and Rambaree (2021) state the lack of an organized structure and procedural mechanism put in place disaster management in Mauritius.

Studies have been conducted in Mauritius based on GVB by several authors (Bhowon and Munbauhal, 2005; Agnihotri et al. 2006; Neeliah and Peedoly 2013; Childress, 2013). Bhowon and Munbauhal (2005) discussed about the lived experiences that victims of GBV faced which were jealousy, lack of trust, incompatibility, anxiety and isolation, financial dependence on the abuser and unequal power relations. Agnihotri et al. (2006) discussed about the health implications and risk factors of GBV in Mauritius. The past abusive experiences, sexual problems and issues concerning children were found to be the main factors that triggered GBV by Neeliah and

Peedoly (2013).

2.1. Theoretical Framework: Socio-Psychological Theories on GBV and the Ecology Approach: Several theoretical perspectives are related to GBV and intimate partner abuse. The theories referred below describe how victims internalize their sufferings, the main factors causing the abuse and also the socialization process. The Social Learning Theory, by Bandura, focused mainly on the environmental aspect of violence. He states that people learn within their environments and children imitate their parent's behaviour through observation and direct experiences. According to him, it is very likely that if a child grows in a violent environment, he is more likely to indulge into violent behaviour when he grows up as an adult. Feminist theorists have been continuously highlighting the patriarchal system where male domination continues to remain a reality, thus causing problems like GBV. They focus mainly on gender patriarchy which, according to them is the main cause GBV but question why some males resort to violence and why others don't do so (Hernandez, 2019). The main argument of the feminists, including the Marxist feminists, is that there are unequal power relations between man and women in the society.

The Cycle Theory of Violence refers to the three different cycles of violence that partners go through in GBV namely tension building, battering and the honeymoon stage. Walker (1979) explains about the first stage as encountering conflicts and tension building, the second stage being mainly about physical battering and emotional abuse and the third one is the honeymoon stage which involves peace making between the partners until the cycle continues (Sallah and Shinco, 2022). The Power and Control Theory states that conflicts in the family happen when one partner intends to maintain control over the other through their actions, feelings and thoughts. The 'Power and Control Wheel' describes the different ways and means the perpetrator may use to keep and maintain control the abuser (Shi et al., 2023). Therefore, according to the 'Power and Control Wheel', victims can easily identify the types of abuse they are facing and thus it helps the survivors to understand the abuse they face.

The conflict perspective refers to the power relations between two groups of people namely the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The groups holding power being the bourgeoisie and the working class have been termed the proletariat. The conflict theorists are not agreeable to the fact that the working class are selling their labour but are being remunerated appropriately. They advance that the proletariat are living in a false consciousness. This is in complete discordance the conflict perspective where the protagonists call for a revolution by the proletariat (females). They advance that the proletariat are living in a false consciousness, and they will always be victimized unless and until they rebel.

Reference is also made to the Ecological model and GBV. This model provides a framework for understanding the complex various factors that relate to GBV. It describes multiple levels including the societal, community, relationship and the individual level. At the societal and community level, GBV is related to the norms and values pertaining to the society and in the Mauritian context, the patriarchal society empowers men with the male hegemony and decision making over women. This has a direct effect on the individual and relationship level. In addition, exposure to violence during childhood, internalising violence among young girls and women, substance abuse, economic stress and low levels of self-esteem are factors contributing to GBV (Murhula et al., 2021).

3. Method and Findings: This study employed an exploratory qualitative method among victims who encountered GBV amid the COVID-19 lockdown. While exploring human actions and experiences which cannot be quantified, qualitative approach is deemed most appropriate. The phenomenological approach provided the researcher with an appropriate method to study the lived experiences of GBV victims during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was conducted in a shelter where the victims were brought after the intervention of the police and family support unit during the confinement period. Qualitative approach is also appropriate for a study of this nature because it gives depth to and detail of the phenomena –something which is difficult to convey with quantitative methods. This method allows for the opportunity to provide insight into the world of the participants in their own language and promotes self-disclosure in a friendly and confidential environment. Thirteen victims who faced GBV amid the COVID-19 pandemic, were selected using convenience and snowball sampling techniques. They were interviewed using semi-structured in-depth interviews. The participants were

aged between twenty-three to forty-eight years. An open-ended interview schedule was used to guide discussions with the participants. Along with the in-depth interviews, focus group discussions were carried out among Family Protection Officers from the Ministry of Gender equality, Child Development and Family Welfare and Police Family Protection Unit. The guiding questions for the officers consisted mainly about the support they would provide to the victims of GBV during lockdown and the emergency measures adopted.

Immediately after each interview, the data was transcribed and translated into English. The data was then analyzed thematically using Braun's and Clark Thematic analysis which consisted of the following steps: becoming familiar with the data, generating the codes and themes, reviewing the themes and defining the themes. The main themes identified from the in-depth interviews with the GBV victims are: economic insecurity, increased anxiety and depression, lack of support systems, health complications, stigma, guilt and discrimination.

3.1. Economic Insecurity: One of the main themes that emerged from the study is economic insecurity. The majority of women interviewed encountered problems with their jobs and has unstable income; they were either working in the private informal sector, the tourism sector or they had small businesses. A respondent named Asha (pseudonym) who worked in the tourism industry shared, "My contract had come to an end by February, it was about to be renewed by March 2020 when we had the first lockdown, so my contract was cancelled due to closure of the frontiers." The respondents had no choice but to stay at home and thus were financially dependent on their partners/husbands. Another respondent, Clara (pseudonym) revealed that she had a small business of makeup and hairdressing. When COVID-19 pandemic hit she said "all my appointments were cancelled because we could not hold weddings, engagement or birthday parties. My husband who is a carpenter was also not working and we faced financial issues. We even lacked basic needs, like milk for our little girl aged 3 years." This is congruent to what we have seen the literature that women accounted for 63% of the job losses in Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic (Smith et al., 2022). Phillimore et al., (2022) discussed about how Turkish women faced economic hardships and lost their jobs. In another study, Murray et al., (2023) stated in their findings about how women revealed that they lost their jobs and found themselves in difficult situations with regards to their financial dependencies.

3.2. Anxiety and Depression: Another recurrent theme encountered in this study is about anxiety and depression that the victims of GBV faced amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Opanasenko et al., (2021) stated that COVID-19 brought along specific stressors to the victims of GVB such as health and anxiety and depression. In the same line, Murhula et al., (2021) found that victims of GBV encountered feelings of anxiety, worry, and depression during the lockdown period. The current study also found that the majority of GBV victims faced anxiety and depression as they were confined with their perpetrators on a permanent basis. One respondent Rani (pseudonym) mentioned that she was always in a state of constant fear because her husband could become very violent at any moment. Another participant Lama (pseudonym) stated "My children and myself were witnessing my husband's harsh and foul on a permanent basis. We had to obey his orders and he would beat us if we did not reply to his commands. This was really stressful and we were quite depressed." As seen in the literature, Raj et al., (2020) revealed that time during the pandemic has come to a standstill and this was associated with increased challenges of depression and anxiety symptoms which can be worst for the GBV victims.

3.3. Health Complications: The risks associated with health complications with regards to gender differences had expanded during the COVID-19 pandemic. The victims of GVB, women in particular revealed that they experience a lot of challenges and barriers to have access to their routine health care as well as taking their medications regularly. One respondent Juhi (pseudonym) from the current study mentioned that she could buy her medications once her stock was over. Her husband, a drug addict was never concerned with that and as a result both her diabetes and blood pressure levels would rise. She felt unwell, dizzy but she had no choice and had to manage without her medications. Another respondent Willy (pseudonym) talked about she felt helpless when her husband was being violent and was not ready to buy her contraceptive pills. She fell pregnant due to lack of contraceptives during confinement period. The pregnancy aggravated her health severely as she was

advised by her gynecologist to avoid pregnancy due to pre-existing medical complications. Thus, we see a heightened risk of negative health implications due to lack of health care, support from partners/husband and economic problems for women typically during the pandemic. As stated by Connor et al., (2020), women victims of GBV experienced unique health risks and outcomes exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. This should be of concern to the authorities and relevant stakeholders so that access to health care remain a priority even during crisis and emergencies (Lundin et al., 2020). These health complications were also related to stress disorders which led the victims of GVB to experience mental health problems.

The majority of respondents reported that they had to endure physical violence in the form of slaps, pinches, kicks, pushes during the lockdown period, resulting to serious injuries and they had resort to home emergency kits only to comfort themselves.

3.4. Stigma, Self-Blame and Guilt: Stigma in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic is seen as an ongoing phase of self-blame and tolerance for the GVB victims. In the current study the majority of the respondents reported that they had absolutely no support from other family members when they faced either physical or psychological abuse from their husbands/partners. The associated trauma was seen as normal and accepted by their own immediate family and even in the neighbourhood. This is highly related due to the patriarchal nature of the Mauritian society where violence against women is not really voiced out. Despite laws and measures taken by the authorities and stakeholders, GBV is culturally accepted (Ramdewor et al., 2022). The victims of GBV are sometimes blamed for either their behaviour or physical appearance causing them to internalize the guilt and accept the blame. They feel stigmatized due to their sufferings and are discouraged to voice out (Keratiloe et al., 2022). The majority of respondents in the study talked about being blamed by their in-laws whenever they would face violent behaviours, thus encouraging the perpetrators to continue harming their victims either physically or psychologically.

3.5. Lack of Support Systems: The majority of GBV victims reported that they lacked support in all its forms during the lockdown. They were confined to the four walls of the house, shelters were closed, they could not have access to basic amenities and they were in feelings of helplessness. They had only the hotlines where they could call the Police Family Unit and officers from the Ministry could attend to only by phone as no visits were allowed during the lockdown period. The respondents were living in an ongoing state of fragility and were prey to any sudden violent behaviour by their husbands. One respondent Jaya (pseudonym) stated “I had no one to resort to. I had lots of bruises, burns on my hands and shoulders. The police came once or twice but they did not do anything, the courts were closed and after the police visits, I suffered more in fact. My husband was very angry and became more aggressive”. The majority of the victims stated that at least some type of support for instance relocating them in a shelter would be of great help.

3.6. Focus Group Discussion with the Personnel: Amid the COVID-19 pandemic emergency crisis, countries around the world were facing challenges and they were trying their best to contain the spread of the virus. Individuals, groups of people, communities were joining hands together to work towards a common goal. Amongst them were the police officers and staff of the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child welfare and Protection who participated in a focus group discussion for the current study. They were termed as ‘frontliners’ during the pandemic as they were at the forefront of the fight against the virus. The police officers revealed that they had many cases of GBV to deal with during the pandemic. However, the available support was only a hotline. The majority of the victims could not be relocated because the police did not receive orders. The confinement orders were very strict and there was no choice but to adhere to the strict rules and regulations. One police officer stated “we received several calls where the victims were enduring physical violence. We tried to talk to them and even went to their residence but could not do more. In a few cases, where the lives of the victims were in danger, we had to issue protection orders. The Family Welfare Protection Officer from the Ministry of Gender would then take the victims to some shelters which were operating under strict guidance”.

The data which revealed form the Focus Group Discussion showed that there were some shelters operating during the lockdown period but under strict surveillance of the police and the staff from the Family Service

Bureau. The Family Welfare Protection Officers (FWPO) were involved in the cases and they accompanied the victims from their residence to the shelters. They were equipped with the Work Access Permit (WAP) and had frequent visits to the victim's residence. However, only the FWPO could deal with the victims and relocate them in shelters. The officers also revealed that the COVID-19 lockdown was very stressful and they had to work under harsh conditions risking their lives being exposed to the virus and they were much concentrated for their families who were also at risk.

4. Conclusion: On a conclusive note, we have seen in this paper that the GBV victims have been facing numerous challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. The main themes that emerged from the study are economic insecurity, anxiety and depression, health complications and mental health problems, stigma and self-blame and lack of support systems. The focus group discussion with the personnel also revealed the absence of support to GVB victims during the confinement period. There is a need to have a more holistic approach towards emergency crisis such as COVID-19 lockdown in the future. A preparedness plan or a back-up plan for all institutions relating to GBV such as health care professionals, psychologists, counsellors, the court and justice system and the Family Police Unit.

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XI. List of Abstracts

Exploring the Effectiveness of Using Quizlet on Learning Dental Terminology

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Abstract: The main research goal of this project is to evaluate effectiveness of learning English dental terminology via the online flashcard software Quizlet. There were 100 EFL participants in this study, aged 17-19, from two intact classes (hereafter D1 and D2) in the department of dental technology of a five-year junior college in southern Taiwan. There were 281 dental terms selected from the four units—dental anatomy, oral anatomy, crown and bridge prosthetics, and plate denture prosthetics—for the study. To maximize the benefit of this technology-assisted intervention, both D1 and D2 had access to Quizlet for two units. In other words, D1 learnt 140 dental terms in units 1 & 2 with the help of Quizlet while D2 used Quizlet to learn 141 words from units 3 & 4. Vocabulary quizzes from the four units were compared to measure the effectiveness of the software. Additionally, a questionnaire was distributed at the end of the experiment to evaluate satisfactory features of the software. Preliminary research findings have shown there is positive correlation between frequency of Quizlet use and the acquisition of dental vocabulary, at a significance level of $p < .001 \sim .005$. In addition, the participants gave positive feedback on Quizlet's functions with mean scores ranging from 4.71~5.0 (on a 6-point scale). The study contributes to existing literature about using Quizlet to learn English dental terms. The most effective applications of the software in class will be discussed.

Keywords: Quizlet, Technology-Assisted Learning, Dental Terminology, EFL, Online Learning

Scarred by Conviction: Indian Female Convicts in Colonial Singapore



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Abstract: In the nineteenth century, Singapore was one of the most important British penal colonies among the Straits Settlements. Over the decades, more Indian convicts were transported from colonial India to Singapore, as compared to Penang and Malacca. While recent scholarship has acknowledged the male convicts as convict workers, little is known about the female convicts transported to and incarcerated in Singapore. By situating these women in the broader process of Indian labour migration across the Indian Ocean to overseas British colonies under British imperialism and by unpacking the colonial practice of classifying its subjects, this dissertation identifies these Indian women as part of early immigrants to Singapore. More specifically, to overcome some limitations of gendered studies, the classification system, which was used in the management of Indian convicts in Singapore, has been used as object and tool of analysis to retrieve, if only partially, the experiences of these female convicts. The female convicts in Singapore were subjected to the classification/management system that was developed to transform the male convicts into a productive labour force. However, deemed unsuitable for hard and outdoor labour, the female convicts were relegated to the last

class of the classification system. Consequently, the classification system framed them as economically unproductive, wretched characters and lacking in agency. By unpacking the colonial discourses that constituted the classification system and by comparing their experiences with that of female convicts transported to other penal colonies and female indentured labourers transported from colonial India, this dissertation has attempted to reconfigure the economic productivity, complex identities and the agency of the female convicts transported to Singapore.

Development of an integrated model for business opportunity discovery through intelligent analysis and a combination of multi-layer data

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Abstract: In the rapidly changing global competition system of modern society, the need to overcome finite resource constraints and discover new promising businesses for competitive advantage is emphasized, and national-level competition for business leadership is intensifying. Accordingly, research has been conducted to propose and improve business opportunity discovery methodologies from a qualitative perspective, and most recent studies have been conducted to directly discover business opportunities using data from a quantitative perspective, especially through a quantitative approach. These studies were conducted based on formal information (bibliographic information) of patent data, and recently, some studies using semantic-based analysis or topic modeling using unstructured information (text) of patent data have been conducted. However, these quantitative studies are limited to providing clues to new businesses using simple bibliographic analysis or text mining, and no research has been conducted to date to create a model for discovering business opportunities by considering both technology and user needs. Therefore, in this study, big data analysis techniques are directly applied to technology data and user data to respond to social issues, and large-scale multi-tier data is built to discover business opportunities.

Keywords: Business opportunity, multi-layer data, Intelligent analysis, Big data, Technology, User, Social data

Influence of IoT on Smart Logistics



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Abstract: The aim of this study is to present smart solutions to all logistics issues in an organization. Innovation in logistics is an indicator of modernity. One of the main emerging technologies is the Internet of Things (IoT), which allows objects to communicate with one another and to various platforms. In addition, the factors influencing the implementation of IoT in smart logistics should be studied to solve the current issues faced in the logistics industry. The IoT is a global network of smart devices that integrate the digital world, enhancing a logistics organization's productivity and efficiency. The Internet of Things is a logistics industry revolution enabling operations, transportation, storage, and all other necessary information at each logistics activity. The

Internet of Things (IoT) has witnessed a massive revolution in logistics over the next decade. This creates new business benefits by minimizing the price of device components, increasing the speed of wireless networks, and expanding the ability of the network to receive data. This work focuses on implementing IoT Logistics, real-world examples of its use among transport companies, and perspectives on developing new technology. The research problems and objectives were deduced from a literature review of the gap variables and the scope of future research. The paper concludes by analyzing and discussing the outcomes of the novel research framework based on the interaction between dependent and independent variables. It also critically analyzes the framework of the outcome measures.

Critical Success Factors (CSF) of Indian Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises (SMMEs)



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Abstract: Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are core growth drivers for any economy and more so in the case of an emerging market like India. They are a source of employment for the wider population and act as a key driver of wealth creation among the larger population. Covid 19 pandemic has had a broad impact on the world economy. The impact of the disruption was accentuated and severe in the case of SMEs given the way they were structured, managed, operated, and funded. This disruption has resulted in creating a distressing situation on the back of the lockdown leading to supply/demand and labor side disruption in the entity's operations. The aim of the review is to analyse available literature and identify Critical Success Factors (CSF) factors for achieving Sustainable business performance (SP) by Indian Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises (SMMEs), especially in recent times post-Covid 19. This knowledge would help the stakeholders to create a stable business with sustained growth going ahead. The findings would help these enterprises in ensuring stability going ahead when faced with adverse business cycles and challenges. The outcome of this study will also assist the policymakers in refining their approach to the development and support of the SMME's ecosystem.

Keywords: Small and Medium Enterprises, Sustainable Financial growth, Sustainable profit, COVID-19 Impact, Indian SMEs

Impact of Sustainable Supply Chain Management in the Healthcare Industry



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Objective -The Objective of this research is to design an efficient Healthcare supply chain framework based on the three sustainable dimensions: Social, Economic and environmental factors.

Design/Methodology/Approach-The proposed research methodology involved three independent variables leading to an efficient, sustainable SCM framework for the healthcare industry, which were identified based on the research gaps, solidly supported by latest quality literature review. The data are gathered using a closed-ended questionnaire together with a scheduled interview. The study adopted a quantitative survey approach to randomly collect and analyse the primary data from a large sample of 400 supply chain and health care executives and was analysed statistically using Adanco 2.3.2. The findings were further analysed to search for areas that necessitate research to understand a sustainable SCM framework to gain a competitive edge and operational efficiency, reduce costs and improve profitability with societal impact on socio-economic and environmental factors. Findings & Research Outcome-Social dimension has significant outcome on sustainable supply management through perceived value proposition, customer satisfaction index, informational quality, fair operating practises and Involvement & relationship level. The implementation of green supply chain practices has positive outcome, such as increasing the productivity of the organisation in terms of financial and operational efficiency, improving environmental accomplishments for better performance and identifying organisational development trends and models. Technology was found to have a positive outcome on supply chain management through customized information technology, use of block chain and machine learning, smart practises implementation, sophisticated IT applications and user-friendly smartphone interface. The use of technology improves automation, reduces counterfeit medicines and ensures secure data storage.

Future research -Since the research is being conducted in UAE, Country specific research to be done in order to have closer observations for designing the supply chain framework to cope with the market dynamics of that particular country. Future research needs to have more focus on the social aspect of sustainability considering the different culture, Government policies and best in class HR practises.

Originality/Value- This Paper presents a new vision and direction for attaining sustainable supply chain practises and guidelines for the United Arab Emirates (UAE) health care industry that focus on and investigate the appropriate selection and evaluation of suitable suppliers to gain an organisational competitive advantage through socio-economic and Environmental factors. Having all the sustainable supply chain factors, such as the social dimension, a green supply chain and Technology, embedded in an organisation means a competitive and efficient supply chain network can be built to compete and attract the major multinational companies planning

to enter the UAE healthcare market.

Keywords -Sustainability, Green Supply Chain Management, Social Dimension, Technological Advancements

Impact of Employees' Resistance to Change on Mergers and Acquisitions in Services Sector in India



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Abstract: Mergers and acquisitions (M&As) are an important strategic option for a corporate to drive higher growth and profitability. Despite significant investments being made in carrying out M&As each year, past experiences indicate that not all M&As are successful. The failure of a M&A is often attributed to an organisation's inability to effectively execute its post-merger integration strategy in the face of employees' resistance to change. There are several organisation and individual level factors that lead to employees' resistance to change. The purpose of this study is to determine factors causing resistance to change and impact of that resistance on outcome of M&As. The methodology comprises of conducting a systematic review of empirical studies to identify unresolved areas and a field study amongst corporates from services sector in India who have been part of at M&A transactions. The study findings will enable formulation of effective strategies in managing resistance to change during M&As. The study outcome will help corporate executives as they design post-merger integration programs and facilitate efficient use of financial and managerial capital being invested in M&As.

Keywords: Mergers & Acquisitions, Resistance to Change, M&A Strategy, Post Merger Integration

Analysis of the Emotional Design of a Blind Box



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Abstract: This study proposes new design directions for blind box characters. The study considers blind box characters as the research object, utilizing the principles of emotional design to analyze design elements of blind box characters, and identify emotional design elements for these characters. Reviewing previous studies, confirms that the emotional design elements of a blind box include sensibility of shape, color, form, structural factors, psychological factors, and sensory sensibility. Then, a case analysis is employed to discuss the application methods of emotional design elements in blind box characters. From the theoretical perspective of emotional design, this study concludes the optimal design method for blind box characters. Through this method, a positive resonance relationship may be established with consumers, thereby positively impacting the promotion of industry development and social progress.

Keywords: Emotional Design, Character design, Blind box, Design Case of Blind Box, Emotional Resonance

Healthcare Service Design for Older Adults with Chronic Diseases



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Abstract: Chronic diseases can be prevented even by improving small lifestyle habits, but the incidence of chronic diseases in Korea continues to increase. The Korean government and companies are developing various programs to prevent chronic diseases in the elderly using mobile applications, but they are having difficulty using applications to prevent and manage chronic diseases due to technical difficulties, physical and cognitive restrictions. Despite technological advances, there is still a limit to the use of applications by the elderly. Therefore, this study attempted to overcome these limitations and seek alternatives to improve the quality of life. In addition, solutions were explored and service cases that helped improve the quality of life and health care of the elderly were investigated and analyzed. In addition, implications were derived through in-depth interviews after survey by dividing the healthcare service UX area and health care quality area for the elderly with chronic diseases. Later, a persona and customer journey map were designed to propose a healthcare application design that considers psychological and physical changes based on the needs of the elderly with chronic diseases. As a result of the study, it supports the improvement of eating habits of the elderly, provision of customized diets, introduction of exercise methods, health-related education, and telemedicine, and is implemented to minimize inconvenience in using applications. In addition, functions such as drug taking notification, Water drinking notification and health data management, sleep data analysis, and hospital schedule management were applied. Accordingly, it was proposed to design an interface for a mobile app that allows the elderly with chronic diseases to manage their health. Through this study, we look forward to the development of effective healthcare concierge services that can help elderly people with chronic diseases solve problems on their own and contribute to health care and quality of life improvement.

Keywords: Chronic Diseases, Older Adults, Healthcare Service, Mobile Applications

Factors Affecting the Quality of Financial Reporting Information: An Evidence from Local Government

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to investigate the factors that impact the quality of financial reporting within a local government entity. Questionnaires were distributed to accountants employed in a local government, resulting in 400 valid responses. The collected data was subjected to analysis using descriptive statistics and multiple regression techniques. The findings indicate that the internal control environment positively affects the quality of financial reporting, demonstrating statistical significance at the 0.05 level. Conversely, the study reveals no significant relationship between understanding of public sector accounting standards and financial reporting information quality. This study contributes to the management of a local government by highlighting the importance of establishing a robust internal control environment. Enhancing financial reporting information quality can be achieved by implementing various measures, such as providing clear job descriptions and specifications for all positions, as well as designing an organizational structure and chain of command that align with the size and nature of operations.

Keywords: Internal control, financial reporting, Information quality, Local government

Embedded Insurance / Micro Insurance in Financial Services – Key to Financial Inclusion



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Abstract: Embedded insurance with online spends on products/services is seeing an exponential growth as customers find usage-based instead of time-based insurance relevant and convenient. Thus, even short journeys undertaken on a daily basis can be insured at the time of booking/ payments itself, as companies like Uber and Ola have shown us. Insurance is now getting embedded into financial services too and therein lies the key to increasing the broadening and deepening of the formalization of the economy. Lenders, for example, are able to lower their risks substantially by embedding insurance into loan contracts for both individual and corporate unsecured/partially secured borrowings. The borrowers, through such insurance, may also be saved from falling into debt traps; however, the insurance product is designed with an aim to protect the lenders' interests. Borrowers, too, need protection against fake lending apps; frauds in loan contracts and coercive collection behavior of lenders. Such kind of embedded insurance in borrowings will be based on entirely different parameters from the current lender-focused insurance available now. Similarly, depositors need to be insured adequately. Even in such heavily regulated entities as banks, there is only a meagre insurance for the depositors. We have seen far too many cases of bank failures wiping out the depositors' money with some of the senior

citizens even losing their lives due to the shock of losing their entire life savings. The same is the case with SMEs, with firms already starved of working capital, facing tremendous hardship when their deposits disappear altogether when lenders get into difficulties. Good deposit growth is key to the formalization of the economy and that will happen primarily when depositors know that their money is safe. Safety is a hygiene need which can be provided through embedded insurance by private insurers in the absence of government/federal insurance. Through technology, fintechs may have enabled the banks to get more depositors and deposits but they have not enabled the depositors to get more safety for their deposits. Similarly, deposits with other financial institutions need to be protected, even if it comes at a slightly higher cost for the depositors. And the argument can be extended to corporate deposits and corporate debt instruments too such as non-convertible bonds/debentures. Today, depositors or investors in debt instruments have to depend entirely on rating agencies to gauge the safety of their investments. Rating agencies have also come under watch at times when their ratings have differed widely from the actual situation that got developed later. Another area where insurance is likely to benefit substantially is trade credit. Currently, trade credit insurance is available only for international trade. While it is correct that risks in international trade far outweigh those in domestic trade, it certainly is the case that risks in domestic trade remain at elevated levels as delays in receiving payments are very common in the case of small firms. SME credit is rather constrained despite present mechanisms facilitating bill discounting such as factoring or forfaiting. These mechanisms facilitate the transfer of risks of non-payment by the buyers to the factoring or forfaiting agencies. These agencies manage these risks in different ways including insurance. This benefit of insurance should be available directly to the traders through embedded insurance. Insurers are now much more agile and open to adopting new business models. A sandbox approach to innovation has been adopted by the insurance regulators as well quite like that adopted by the Central Banks in most countries. The Indian insurance regulator – IRDAI (Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India) has set up a mission of ‘Insurance for All’ by 2047. Today, the insurance sector in India is growing at a CAGR of approximately 40%. Apart from life and asset insurance, crop insurance has received a big boost from the government-led crop insurance scheme bring multiple stakeholders on to a single platform. The reinsurance market has also set its firm foothold in India showing a CAGR of 18-20%. These are ripe conditions for a truly all-encompassing transformative experience into embedded insurance for consumers and small businesses in India.

Keywords: Embedded Insurance, Lender Insurance, Borrower Insurance, Deposit Insurance, Trade Credit Insurance, Crop Insurance, Sandbox Approach to Innovation, Re-Insurance

The East Perceived through Western Perspective: Fausto Zonaro and Istanbul



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Abstract: For many centuries, Istanbul, as a city of culture, has been a source of inspiration for artists from many different countries. Italian artists were especially influenced by the Eastern world, and reflected this influence in their work in almost every era. When we talk about “Western orientalists on Ottoman lands”, we doubtlessly first think of Italian Orientalists such as Gentile Bellini, Fausto Zonaro, Leonardo de Mango, Amadeo Preziosi, Salvatore Valeri, Luigi Acquarone, Raimondo D’Aronco, whose paths crossed through the Ottoman Empire, and who built bridges between these foreign cultures by depicting these exotic lands in their works. During the reign of Sultan Abdulhamit the Second in particular, many Italian artists visited Istanbul and shared the impressions

the Eastern world made on them in their art. During this period, Fausto Zonaro (1854 – 1929) assumed the title of “Palace Artist” after the Italian artist Luigi Acquarone. Zonaro, as well as being recognised for his genuine and realistic depictions, became well-known for introducing the newly emerging Western art movements in the Ottoman art circles during its initial stages and became influential by nurturing a new generation of young Ottoman artists by providing training. According to some researchers, it is also possible to consider him as the last representative of the “Turquerie” fashion. Without a doubt, being the last representative of this fashion is not the sole reason why Zonaro stands apart from other Orientalist artists. The way Zonaro perceived Istanbul and the local culture through an Italian perspective, and his difference from other Orientalist artists are crucial in making him a pioneering figure in the history of Turkish painting.

Keywords: Italian Orientalists, palace artist, Fausto Zonaro.

Overview of Turkish Fashion and Clothing Industry in the Globalization Process

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Abstract: Innovation in economic systems the technological, communication vehicles and globalization have led to innovation in economic system and made the business climate more sophisticated and competitive. In the global economic outlook, high value added production capacities of the countries are essential to become top rank of the world economic system. Fashion and Clothing industries are mostly known as locomotive sectors for Turkish economy with the 59,000 textile companies producing approximately 65 billion dollars’ garment and fashion goods. These sectors have also a great share in in total export volume of Turkey economy. This study evaluates the Turkish fashion and clothing industry in terms of strength and weakness side and provide some policies for the future strategies of business player in economy.

Importance of Creative Industry Trade Focusing on Fashion Sector and a Case on Competitive Advantages of Brics-T Countries

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Abstract: Creative industries encompass music, crafts, film, video games, museums, publishing and libraries, design and fashion, architecture, and advertising, covering all aspects from production to marketing. These sectors contribute to economic growth in society through the products and services derived from the relationship between culture and creativity. In 2020, the export of creative industries rapidly grew in international trade, reaching around \$1.6 trillion, with \$524 million in goods and \$1.1 trillion in services. As with all trade areas, South-South trade has increased, and these countries have diversified their trade agreements and exports, particularly in the field of creative industries. BRICS-T countries in this region, especially after the 2008 crisis, have become significant actors in reducing the income gap with developed countries through their competitive efforts, and they have rich cultural heritage in areas such as fashion, music, film, theater, and dance. Therefore, the competitive situation of BRICS and Turkey in the fashion sector, among other creative industry sectors, has been attempted to be determined using the Revealed Comparative Advantage Index (RCA) method based on data from 2002 to 2020. According to empirical results, Turkey ranks third in competition after China and India. Considering the analysis results, it can be observed that the key factors determining competition in the creative sectors, such as financial and capital resources, human resources, intellectual property rights, and market conditions, are at a higher level in China and India. If Turkey aims to excel in these sectors, it needs to develop strategies and improve its performance.

Keywords: Global Trade, Creative Industries, Fashion, Competitive Advantage, BRICS-T countries

The Integration of Human Resource Management into Organizational Strategy of Manufacturing Companies of Addis Ababa

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Abstract: This study sought to investigate the integration of human resource management into organizational strategy with particular reference to manufacturing companies in Addis Ababa. The integration between human resource management and organizational strategy contributes to improvement in organizational performance and the success of a particular business. However, most of the concepts and studies concerning strategic human resource management practices have been conducted in the US, across Europe, and emerging countries, hence, there is a need for further empirical investigations from developing countries like Ethiopia. Making use of a mixed research approach with pragmatism research philosophy, data was collected through a detailed structured questionnaire distributed to 282 randomly selected respondents and 24 key informant interviews were conducted with purposely selected HR managers from manufacturing sectors. The finds show that there are upright strategic human resource orientations in the manufacturing sectors of Addis Ababa. However, the orientation of strategic HRM is taking place in an environment of low involvement in strategic development and the absence of a written HR strategy. This study argues that the alignment of HRM with organizational strategy requires supportive environmental settings beyond aspirations. Therefore, managers and practitioners need to be aware of the importance of both strategic orientations and strategic development in strategic human resource management. In addition to the alignment of HR practices with generic business strategies, SHRM also can be measured from strategic orientations and strategic development matrix perspectives.

Keywords: Integration, HRM, Strategic orientation, Strategic development, manufacturing company.

Return to the Batcave – How Did Club Dancing Save the Goths in Japan?



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Abstract: Goth subculture in Japan underwent a strong crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. After the end of this lockdown, goths still had the strong urge to re-unite in their own underground cultural world. This could have been done by goth club dancing parties in small venues – the essential part of the goth subculture all over the world, especially since the legendary 1980s London Batcave club's golden years. The study took place in Japan (Tokyo, Yohokama, Osaka, Nagoya), 2023 during the two-moth field research and was based on participatory observation, interviews and preliminary source research. The aim of this speech is to show how goth contemporary subculture in Japan, after the pandemic lockdown crisis, is returning to the roots of gothic club dancing. Indeed, it plays a significant role in reuniting the goths in small venues with an exclusive

atmosphere and marketing, featuring the semi-private style of the parties. Also the gothic dance is an important medium – allowing both individual self-expression and integration of the members.

The Role of Interactional Justice in the Impact of Occupational Safety Perception on Organizational Change Cynicism and Unethical Behavior

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Abstract: Enhancing business performance, which is a significant component of sustainable competition, is a crucial issue in the realm of business. In resolving this issue, identifying and optimizing elements that reduce job performance are considered to play a pivotal role. The perception of occupational safety is a precursor to many factors that affect employee performance. It is believed that reducing this perception, which is deemed to influence negative behaviors such as cynicism and unethical conduct, can positively impact employee performance. Interactional justice is considered to play a significant role in mitigating these adverse factors. In this context, a study was conducted on healthcare workers in Antalya province (n=344). This study evaluated the impact of occupational safety perception on cynicism and unethical behavior and the role of interactional justice in this relationship. The research conducted in private hospitals in the healthcare sector revealed that the perception of occupational safety has positive effects on employees' cynicism and unethical behavior, and interactional justice plays a role in these relationships.

Keywords: Occupational Safety, Organizational Change Cynicism, Unethical Behavior, Interactional Justice, Health Sector.

The Influence of Workforce Practices on Firms' Sustainability Performance: An Empirical Study of Canadian Firms Listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX)

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Abstract: Growing awareness of the influence of workforce practices on financial results and mounting stakeholder demands for environmental and social performance are driving the increasing rate of sustainability initiatives. As research in workforce practices matures, academics need to move beyond simply justifying practices. They now need to better understand how these practices affect various aspects of business performance, such as financial, environmental, or social aspects. This paper draws on the signaling theory as a starting point to empirically investigate the contextual factors that influence the relationship between various workforce practices and sustainability performance of firms listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX). This paper builds on the signaling argument and empirically tests the influence of four different contextual workforce practices impacting the environmental and social performance of firms. These four orientations or types of workforce practices include diversity and opportunity, employment quality, health and safety requirements, and training and development. This research marks the first empirical study to differentiate workforce practices into four separate yet related bundles. The paper contributes to the signaling perspective of business management, and empirically addresses the question "How can firms adapt different contextual workforce practices to achieve better environmental and social performance?" The findings have implications for firms in selecting the right mix of practices to tailor workforce management and achieve better sustainability performance from their environmental and social initiatives.

Contingency Factors Influencing the Ethical Behavior of Small Enterprises



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Abstract: The ethical behavior of small enterprises is less understood than those of large companies, because of their diversity, size, entrepreneurial management, as well as the methodological problems related to data collection and analyses. Extant studies and reports indicate however a tentative list of ethical principles and best practices for small business organizations, including accountability, care and respect for stakeholders, honesty, healthy competition, loyalty and respect for commitments, information transparency, and respect of the rule of law. Unfortunately, these general standards are not telling us anything about the main ways in which small firms trespass ethical practices, and the contingency factors determining their specific behavior. The importance of this research is paramount because the measures and sanctions adopted and applied to eliminate unethical behaviors have to be tailored for various types of firms, working in different socio-economic contexts. Our main research objective is thus to identify the main contingency factors that shape the unethical behavior of small business organizations. We organized a series of online focus groups with customers and entrepreneurs from three different European countries – France, Italy and the UK - in the first six months of 2023. In total, 36 customers and 27 entrepreneurs participated in these focus groups (three focus groups organized in every country). The moderated interactions were registered with the consent of all participants, who required the anonymity of their identity in data reporting and analysis. The findings indicate three contingency factors that mainly shape the unethical behavior of small organizations: the time horizon of organizations' existence, their embeddedness in value added chains and/or networks, and their type of customers. Considering these contingency factors, our study discusses their influence on the ethical behavior of small enterprises and develops propositions regarding the implementation of social or market controls to reduce the number of unethical practices.

Keywords: Small Enterprises, Unethical Behavior, Contingency Factors, Focus Groups, Customers and Entrepreneurs

Comprehensive Model of Opportunity-Based Approach to Innovation Management in Small Business



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Abstract: Opportunity based-approach offers significant insights into dynamic and complex relationships

between modern enterprises and their external business environment (Alvarez & Barney, 2007; Ramoglou & Tsang, 2016; Davidsson, 2017), mainly in the fields of entrepreneurship (Alvarez & Barney, 2020; George et al., 2022) and strategic management (Fuertes et al., 2020; Benzaghta et al., 2021). In general, it includes exploring and exploiting opportunities to achieve specific development benefits and sustainable competitive advantage of the organization. It is essential for small business (micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, SMEs), whose market success and innovative performance depend significantly on its ability to explore and exploit the potential of the external business environment (Elfahmi et al., 2021; Pulka et al., 2021; Fu et al., 2021; Nasiri et al., 2022). A wide variety of approaches to exploring and exploiting opportunities are proposed in the scientific literature (Vogel, 2017; Esfandiar et al., 2019; Cantner et al., 2021). Their weakness, however, is the failure to capture the broader organizational context of the activities undertaken in the process of exploring and exploiting opportunities, insufficient emphasis on the specificity of small business, and a blurred link between opportunities and the effective implementation of innovations. This indicates specific research gaps that justify undertaking this research problem. Considering this, this paper aims to conceptualize, operationalize, verify, and interpret a comprehensive model of opportunity-based approach to innovation management in small business. The proposed model consists of two main components: (1) potential and (2) action components. Within this conceptualization, a set of specific meta-rules has been proposed. They characterize the opportunity-based approach to innovation management in small business as the antithesis of the administrative and internally-oriented approaches to management. The proposed model was operationalized on the basis of expert research using the Delphi method within a group of 10 researchers in the field of management and entrepreneurship. Empirical validation of the model was based on survey research on a sample of 978 SMEs from 6 European countries with different levels of innovation potential according to the Innovation Union Scoreboard (Hollanders, 2020; Hollanders & Es-Sadki, 2021): the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Poland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Results show the significant and positive impact of the opportunity-based approach on SMEs' innovation management performance. Implementing the proposed model increases the novelty/originality of implemented innovations, boosts the benefits of implemented innovations, and reduces the barriers to small business innovation management.

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Advertising Review in the Banking Sector in terms of Green Marketing and Sustainability Marketing Communication: Yapi Kredi Step Example

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Abstract: In today's conditions, where problems such as climate change, environmental destruction, shrinkage of living spaces, increase in poverty, deprivation of life in a quality and healthy environment, decrease in responsible production and consumption opportunities are highly discussed; The global development goals set by the United Nations need to be implemented urgently. In line with these purposes, businesses in different sectors set and implement targets. Likewise, responsible consumers follow these steps in the products they prefer. In this context, the aim of the research is; the aim of this study is to examine a project implemented by a business operating in the financial sector as a sustainable preferences program and to analyze the objectives and purposes of the construction loan STEP program with 17 steps determined by the United Nations in the sustainable development goals. As a result of the research, it has been concluded that the principles stated in 17 steps as Turkey's Sustainable Development Goals fully overlap with 13 purposes in terms of messages examined in the context of marketing communication, and 4 purposes implicitly overlap.

Keywords: Green Marketing, Sustainable Development, Marketing Communication

Enhancing Social Structure on Developing an Inclusive Growth through Entrepreneurship



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Abstract: Entrepreneurial spirit as an inner-drive of organizations can be regarded as an emerging and challenging area of business management research. Economic and business growth are shaped not only through cognitive development of the firms but also by the social activities and social structures. Recent research has highlighted the need for social infrastructure on establishing norms and standards to elevate an inclusive growth logic. Without a strong social structure and social infrastructure entrepreneurial spirits will have difficulties surviving due to limited dissemination of informational, and thus a lack of knowledge accumulation. Building on these prior findings, this paper challenge the exclusive pursuit of high-growth entrepreneurship for poverty alleviation and suggest that entrepreneurship-driven toward inclusive growth requires cohabitation of social structure and social infrastructure at varying scales.

Analysis of Supply and Demand between Companies and Vocational Training



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Abstract: Kosovo is characterized as one of the countries with the youngest population in Europe, but the need of companies for workers with vocational training and the lack of new jobs is a mismatch between professional

training and the requirements of the labor market. This gap between them is one of the challenges that still affects the high percentage of unemployment in Kosovo. The main purpose of this study is to analyze the supply and demand between companies and vocational training in Kosovo in order to influence the personal development of individuals, the reduction of unemployment, meeting the needs of the market, and the economic development of the country. The data was obtained through a questionnaire designed for companies in different regions of the country, as well as through interviews with vocational schools in Kosovo, various existing reports, and other sources for professional training. The questionnaire was distributed to companies regarding employees with vocational training, it also included questions about current problems that include the social and economic aspects of employees with vocational training, and one of the most effective current events that has influenced this project is the departure of workers from Kosovo (immigration). The results of this research show the orientation of candidates in certain directions in relation to the demands of companies according to regions. Taking into account the lack of sufficient knowledge and the skills of individuals with vocational training, we can say that the curricula of vocational schools must be continuously monitored so that they are in line with the demands of the labor market. It is also important to monitor the activity of counseling and career guidance centers at the municipal level as well as provide other municipalities with such centers. For the vocational training system in Kosovo to be at the service of building human capital, competitiveness, and economic growth, comprehensive reforms of the system are needed, encouraging better cooperation between employers and vocational schools.

Keywords: Companies, Vocational Training, Vocational School, Kosovo.

The Right to One's Own Image as a Right of the Human Personality in the Regulation of the Romanian Constitution The Civil Code and the Legislation on the Protection of Personal Data: Solutions of Romanian Jurisprudence

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Abstract: Through a theoretical and practical approach, the study proves that the regulation of the right to image, as an autonomous subjective right included the sphere of human personality rights, represents an innovative, progressive aspect of the current Civil Code, as a part of the modern trend of the civil law of protection of the human being. The study deals with issues of practical interest such as jurisprudential solutions in Romania regarding violation of the right to one's own image in the online environment (Facebook, Instagram), television shows and press articles. Also, the study deals with the much-disputed issues of using the person's image in the procedures for sanctioning the employees, making an analysis of the way in which the National Supervisory Authority for personal data in Romania sanctioned the abuses of the employers. The case studies followed by a doctrinal analysis can be useful tool for the theoreticians, but also for the practitioners of law, in achieving the complexity of the problems, from the perspective of the legal discourse of the controversial issues, as well as of the didactic one.

A Proposed Model for Developing the Performance of University Faculty Members in the Light of Contemporary Challenges

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Abstract: Given the importance of universities in sustainable development events in and around the environments in which they operate, the importance of faculty members and the importance of developing their performance is highlighted, especially in light of contemporary changes and challenges, in the hope of building an attractive and healthy university environment for distinguished teaching, research and volunteer practices by faculty members, and thus developing their performance , which reflects positively on the performance of universities in general. Therefore, this study aims to present a proposed model for evaluating the performance of faculty members in universities in the light of the most prominent contemporary challenges through; Identifying the most prominent contemporary (educational, research, social and administrative) challenges. Then identifying the most prominent goals and behavioral competencies of the faculty member that he must practice and be characterized by. The study also seeks to reveal the challenges facing the performance appraisal process and the requirements for its development. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher used the mixed approach with its sequential exploratory design, as he used interviews with a selected sample of faculty members who are assigned leadership, administrative, supervisory and advisory work amounting to (23) participants from some universities to answer the study questions. Then he built a questionnaire based on the results of analyzing the statements of the participants in the interviews; To ensure the importance of these dimensions from a large segment and to include them in the proposed model for its circulation, the questionnaire was applied to a random sample of faculty members and those assigned to the University of Bisha, which amounted to (308) members. The study found a "very high" importance for all dimensions of the model represented in; Objectives, competencies, challenges, and requirements for organizational, administrative, and human development from the point of view of the application sample, and they were included in the proposed model, which included six main goals and six behavioral competencies for each faculty member, identifying their criteria, practices, data sources, and evaluation tools, and identifying the most prominent challenges that they may face. The model, suggestions for overcoming it and minimizing its impact, as well as the requirements for developing the performance evaluation process. The study also made several recommendations, most notably adopting the proposed model, providing the requirements for its application from the necessary electronic systems and automating them, qualifying the participants and training them on the mechanisms of using, activating and developing the model.

Keywords: Model, Performance Development, University Faculty Members, Contemporary Challenges

Instructors' Perceptions of Online Learning in Kuwait



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Abstract: The ability of instructors to manage e-learning during the Covid-19 pandemic is crucial for its successful implementation; however, the abrupt transition from traditional to online methods, with little time for preparation or training, has eroded the confidence of some instructors. This study evaluates instructors' perceptions of e-learning at the College of Business Studies (CBS) in Kuwait, shedding light on factors such as learning competency, motivations, commitment to, and perception of online learning, in order to identify barriers to the use of technology in this area in order to assist instructors in taking an active role in their careers. In light of this, a qualitative and quantitative method was implemented at CBS in Kuwait. First, a focus group was conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the topic, and then the results of the focus group assisted in the development of a survey questionnaire that was distributed to 309 college instructors to disclose both the challenges and the opportunities presented by online learning. However, obstacles such as inadequate helpdesks, a lack of training, a lack of management motivation, and a scarcity of electronic educational materials were identified.

Keywords: Online learning, e-learning, faculty members, Instructors, Evaluation

The Role of Monarchy Institution in Sustaining Political Stability: The Case of Sabah

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Abstract: Monarchy is one of the government political institutions that had ever ruled the larger part of the world empires. Nonetheless, since the post-World War II, many old monarchies and royal dynasties have been swallowed by the modern political system, and only a few have survived until today. Malaysia is one of the countries that still preserve the monarch system by embracing a form of constitutional monarchy government after achieving independence in 1957. Based on this, Malaysia has so far succeeded in maintaining political stability, especially when no single party was able to win majority seats in the general election in order to form a mandatory government. This is because when a deadlock occurs to appoint a Prime Minister, Yang di-Pertuan Agong of Malaysia (YDP Agong) will grant his constitutional monarch power to select among the best candidate as the Prime Minister and whom later will form a cabinet minister. Hence, this is the aim of this article to analyse the role of Yang di- Pertuan Negeri of Sabah or called as 'Tuan Yang Terutama' (TYT), as representative of Yang di-Pertuan Agong at the state level, to end political stalemate when those competing political parties

failed to win majority seats in the state election. In further discussing this, the article will focus on three cases of state election held in 1985, 1994, and 2018 which had caused Sabah government in limbo. These four cases created a political impasse, and inevitably called for TYT's intervention. Upon exercising its 'monarch' power, TYT has played impressive role in maintaining political stability in Sabah.

Keywords: Monarch, Sabah, Tuan Yang Terutama, Election, Political Stability

Could Central Asia become the Heart of Global Trade Again? From the Great Silk Road to the Belt Road



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Summary: Central Asia is a unique central region in terms of its location. It is possible to reach all the great civilizations in Eurasia from Central Asia. Located at the crossroads of trade and transportation routes, this region connects Iran to China and China to India. Therefore, the meeting point of the Middle East, Europe, China, and India is Central Asia. In the past, a source of Central Asia's wealth has been long-distance trade. The historical trade route, known as the Silk Road, started from China and connected Asia, Africa, and Europe. This road has not only been the route of trade goods but also of ideas, religions, cultures, sages, and armies from east to west and west to east. This route played an important role in the history of civilization and greatly contributed to the economic and cultural development of the world. However, as a result of the functional maritime trade routes, this trade route lost its function over time. Central Asia, which has an important strategic position in terms of global geopolitics, plays an important role in terms of regional geopolitics, energy security, and regional cooperation for the Belt and Road project, which China has an idea. Energy resources are another factor contributing to Central Asia's important role in global politics. Most of the resources in the region, especially oil and natural gas in inland waters, are raw materials. Central Asia remains one of the few regions in the world with great potential for energy development in the twenty-first century, trailing only the Middle East and Siberia as the world's third-largest oil reserves. Central Asia will be much more important in the regional sense as the heartland of Asia, where the balance of power has shifted in the "Asian Century". The importance of Central Asia is also increasing in the new era, which has a strong theory that it will come to the fore with some opportunities in a China-centered stakeholder world economic system. In this article, we will go into detail about these issues.

Keywords: Central Asia, Eurasia, China, Silk Road, Belt and Road

Consumer Protection Prospects from “Surprise Factor” under Islamic Law: The Right to Reconsider as a Model

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Abstract: As an exception to the general norms of contract law, consumer protection legislations grant one of the contracting parties (the consumer) the right to cancel contracts made remotely without providing any

justification for exercising such a right. In this scenario, the consumer has the option of returning the products and obtaining a refund of the amount paid. Although the right to withdraw provides high protection for the rights and interests of the consumer, it has been subject to much criticism, which has led to reflection on its adequacy in protecting consumer rights. This study aims to critically evaluate the arguments for and against giving this right to consumers and then to determine the viewpoint of Islamic law on that matter. The doctrinal approach was chosen to achieve this research purpose. This paper argues that both standpoints, whether in support of or against the right to withdraw in distance contracts, are based on arguments that are not without criticism. Therefore, the consumer's right to withdraw seems justifiable as a measure of protection, unless doing so would detract from rather than strengthen his position. However, Sharia law offers alternatives that could support consumer empowerment without harming the trader's interests, thus creating a fair balance between them in the contractual relationship.

Crafting Structural Job Resources: Implications for Psychological Ownership and Job Satisfaction



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Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic has had a worldwide impact on all sectors of the global economy leading to mass layoffs and resignations. The Indian IT and ITeS sectors are a backbone of India's growing service sector economy. Hence it is a critical question to address how to enhance the job satisfaction levels of the employees associated with this sector especially in the aftermath of the pandemic. Using the extended model of the JD-R based psychological ownership theory, this study seeks to empirically examine how psychological ownership can lead to employee satisfaction. The respondents for the study included 643 knowledge professionals associated with the Indian IT and ITeS sectors. We used SPSS and AMOS to examine the relationships. Psychological ownership emerged as a significant predictor of job satisfaction of Indian IT sector employees. The study's findings reveal that psychological ownership can have positive connotations for employee job satisfaction. The results provide Indian managers with empirical evidence of the positive role of psychological ownership. The theoretical and practical implications of this study are further discussed.

Racism, Sovereignty, and the Media

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Abstract: We exist in a significant geo-political nexus in the history of global development. African nations of the Sahel and indigenous peoples around the world have begun to kinetically resist neo-colonial initiatives to redirect/impose past suppressions. This paper will survey developments from 15th and 16th Century Papal Bulls through, government legislation and policy developments including the American Indian removal act of 1830, Berlin Conference of 1884-85, the Morgenthau Plan, late 20th Century Neo-Colonial exploitation and continuing

early 21st century attempts at reinscription of emergent rentier oppressions and trajectories. Within this context, the piece will conclude with a pointed discussion of recent geo-political developments in Sub-Saharan Africa, China, and the role that social media plays in providing agency and as a tool of resistance against the recent history of mediated propaganda.

Keywords: Racism, Subservience, Genocide, Indigenization, Sahel, Huawei Mate 60Pro

The Correlation of a Country's Supply Chain Performance through Logistics Performance Have on Country's Economic Condition: A Comparative Analysis between Developing and Developed Countries

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Abstract: Logistics sector is raising attention as previous studies have shown that it could directly affect a country's economic condition positively. Developing countries recognizing this opportunity should be trying to pursue and improve their logistics condition so that they can catch up and mature in their own economic condition just like the developed countries. Yet, how close the gaps between are developed and developing countries if we look at the perspective of supply chain through the logistics sector. In this research, a total of 588 observations were divided and classified into 2, namely developed and developing and analyzed whether supply chain performances through logistics performance have direct correlation with that country's economic condition and the comparative analysis the difference between the uses of the logistics sector in each classification economic condition. This research finds that supply chain performance through logistics performance do have a direct impact on a country's economic condition. However, it was also found that the impact is statistically insignificant as there are limited data samples and other variables that were not considered. This research will covet the supply chain and economic condition field of studies and this research also provides recommendation for future research.

Keywords: Logistics, Supply Chain Management; Supply Chain Performance, Logistics Impact on Country's Economy, Country's Economy, Developed and Developing Countries

An Exploratory Study of Adventure Tourism Activity Preferences and Preference Demographic Variables Analysis in Gauteng, South Africa



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Abstract: Adventure tourism is nature-based tourism and occurs in rugged outdoor areas where adventure tourists interact with the natural environment. It is a type of tourism where its participants seek to come out of their comfort zones through participating in hard and soft adventure activities. These activities possess elements such as risk, danger, novelty, challenge and excitement. To participate in adventure tourism activities, the demographic factors such as age, gender, sexual orientation, occupation, education, income, race, family life-cycle stage, marital status and household size influence the decision making of adventure tourists. This paper sought to explore the adventure tourism activities that are preferred by adventure tourists in Gauteng, South Africa. The research data were collected quantitatively through a self-administered questionnaire. Respondents were chosen utilizing a snowball sampling technique. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics, Mann-Whitney test and Kruskal-Wallis test, were applied, and the results were presented using tables, figures and charts. Based on the results presented, adventure tourists in Gauteng have certain adventure activities they prefer more than others. They prefer participating in hard adventure activities that are land-based. Examples of these activities include among others, hiking, abseiling, mountain biking, climbing, backpacking and adventure racing. The results further indicate that gender, age, highest qualification and income have a significant effect on the level of preference of adventure tourism activities. These findings will help adventure tourism organisations in planning and development of adventure activities according to the preferences of the participants.

Keywords: Activity Preference, Adventure Activities; Adventure Tourism; Adventure Tourist; Demographic Profile, Natural Environment

A Discourse Analysis of the Newspaper Advice Column



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Abstract: While most women and men may not have probably written a letter either in newspaper or magazine advice column, surely most are familiar with an advice column. DeCapua and Dunham (cited in Locher, 2006) define advice as opinions in the form of suggestions which are provided by the advice-givers who are deemed knowledgeable and in which the advice-seekers see them as credible sources of information. This study investigated the feminist voice revealed in the advice-transaction column Women's World, Sunday issues of SunStar Daily newspaper. Specifically, as implied by the verbal transaction, it focuses on these feminist aspects: societal roles of women as advice-seekers and as advice-givers. Also, this research illustrated the socio-psychological thematic issues involved in this advice column. The data of this study were the advice columns in the Women's World published in SunStar Daily every Sunday of the week where twenty-two issues were examined. The results showed that women face particular and complicated obstacles in life and play a variety of roles in society. Their varied experiences have revealed insightful facts, such as the fact that women worry about things like their weight and appearance, patriarchal obligations, relationships, and career goals, among other things. These problems provide as an example of the intricate and varied difficulties that women

encounter in daily life. The study found that women who seek guidance have a number of socio-psychological issues that represent the worries and difficulties they face in their daily lives, including psychological issues, relationship infidelity, family troubles, commitment uncertainty, and professional obstacles. The study also emphasizes the significant contribution that women have as advice-givers in newspaper advice columns. Women offer guidance on a range of subjects, such as family problems, romantic relationships, and raising kids. This conclusion emphasizes the importance of women's support and guidance of others and the necessity for support systems that empower women to have fulfilled lives.

Keywords: Advice Column, Advice-Giver, Advice-Seeker, Newspaper Column, Societal Roles, Socio-Psychological Issues, Women

Communication Styles and Interpersonal Communications of Mobile Legends Bang-Bang (MLBB) Players



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Abstract: This study explored the Mobile Legends Bang-Bang (MLBB) players' dominant communication styles and how their participation in this online game contributed to their interpersonal communications. The researchers utilized a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire based on Bourne's (1995) Communication Styles and an open-ended questionnaire that elicited qualitative responses from the 30 respondents for the players' interpersonal communications within family interactions. Data reveal that MLBB players often utilize the Aggressive Communication Style, given the nature of the game that involves competitiveness and quick decision making in order to win. In addition, Passive-Aggressive and Assertive Communication came close as other dominant styles since players could also be subtle in their aggression and at the same time positively straightforward in their communication to support or lead team members in defeating the game opponents. Data also show as revealed by the players' siblings that the Interpersonal Communications of the MLBB players might have been strengthened in terms of displaying assertiveness, clarity and directness in communicating their thoughts and feelings to the family members. On the other hand MLBB engagements might also have weakened interpersonal communications as some of these players demonstrate aggressiveness which could include the use of harsh words in interacting with their siblings on certain occasions.

Keywords: Online Game, Communication Styles, Interpersonal Communications

Elderly Customer Engagement with Online Brand Communities in the UK Health Sector

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Gap: The global demographic landscape is undergoing a profound transformation, marked by a rapid and substantial increase in the elderly population. However, in the midst of burgeoning technological advancements, mobile software solutions have not adequately addressed the unique needs of this growing demographic, leaving a critical gap in their engagement with modern technology. To address this pressing issue, this study focuses on investigating the engagement of elderly customers within the context of online communities in the UK healthcare sector.

Objective: The primary objective is to delve into the motivating factors that drive elderly individuals to actively participate in these online communities, while also identifying the barriers that hinder their engagement.

Methodology: The study employs a qualitative research approach, relying on in-depth interviews conducted with elderly residents of London.

Findings: The expected findings suggest that elderly customers are motivated to engage in online communities for a variety of reasons, ranging from the pursuit of valuable information and support to the desire to maintain social connections and foster a sense of belonging within a community. However, the research is also expected to uncover several impediments, including technological barriers, a limited familiarity with online platforms, and concerns related to privacy and security.

Outcomes: The study's outcomes hold significant implications for businesses and organizations, as they provide valuable insights that can inform the development of strategies tailored to enhance the engagement of elderly customers through online channels.

Future scope: In terms of future prospects, this study paves the way for further research in the field of elderly customer engagement within online communities. Future studies could delve into the implementation of specific strategies to overcome the identified barriers, conduct cross-cultural comparisons to gain a broader perspective, or explore the impact of technology training programs on the online participation of the elderly.

Keywords: Online community; Elderly; Healthcare; United Kingdom.

Exploring the Dark Side of Empowering Leadership

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Abstract: In contrast to the prevailing perspective that emphasizes the positive effects of empowering leadership highlighted in numerous prior studies, this research focused on the potential negative consequences of the authority, autonomy, and responsibility conferred through empowering leadership, which may lead to physical and psychological burdens for members. Based on role theory and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, this study hypothesized and empirically examined the negative mechanism by which empowering leadership increases job stress through the mediation of workload. To achieve the research objectives, a survey was conducted among 401 members employed in various S. Korea companies and organizations. The collected data were analyzed through regression analyses using Process Macro for SPSS. The results founded that empowering leadership had a positive effect on workload. Additionally, workload had a positive effect on job stress. Furthermore, workload was found to mediate the relationship between empowering leadership and job stress. Building upon these research findings, this study presents the negative mechanism of empowering leadership and suggests strategies for its effective functioning. First, to counterbalance the increased workload resulting from empowering leadership, it is essential for supervisors and organizations to provide additional job

resources and growth opportunities. Second, to prevent an escalation of workload due to empowering leadership, it is necessary to offer empowerment in levels that are acceptable based on the competence and experience of organizational members. While this study provides valuable insights, it is limited by its exclusive focus on workload as the mediating variable between empowering leadership and job stress. Various potential mediators (e.g., role conflicts, and role ambiguity) or moderators (e.g., personality traits, power distance orientation) may exist in the relationship between empowering leadership and job stress. Therefore, future research should explore a broader range of latent variables as potential mediators or moderators to derive more comprehensive insights.

Keywords: Empowering Leadership, Workload, job Stress, Mediation Effect, Dark Side

Adaptation, Validity and Reliability of University Markor Scale



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Background: Adopting Market Orientation (MO) is crucial for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to adapt their academic offers, business models, and stakeholder interactions. Although the availability of numerous MO scales adapted to the context of higher education, none have been applied to students as a sample of respondents, despite their aim to measure student-centred MO. This study contributes to the field of service and educational marketing by evaluating the psychometric properties of the MARKOR University scale in the Colombian higher education context. Method: The scale was administered to a sample of 997 undergraduate students. An Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to identify latent variables. Then, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted through an Exploratory Structural Equation Model (ESEM) to ensure consistency with the original scale. Results: Six models were tested, and the best fit was found for the 4-factor model ESEM (SRMR = 0,016; RMSEA = 0,039; TLI = 0,971; CFI 0,984). Conclusions: The results demonstrated the scale items' clarity and comprehensibility, affirming the instrument's robustness and validity in the Colombian context. Using exploratory structural equation modelling (ESEM) for scale validation is a novel and robust alternative that integrates better features than traditional EFA and CFA techniques.

Keywords: Market Orientation, Undergraduate Students, Psychometric Validation, Exploratory Structural Equation Model, Higher Education Institutions.

The Impact of TMT's Diverse Career Background on Dividend Payout Policy: Evidence from China

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Abstract: The dividend payout policy constitutes a crucial internal decision within corporations. Hence, this study aims to investigate the potential relationship between the diverse career backgrounds of Top Management Team (TMT) members and the dividend payout policy. Additionally, we explore how TMT's diverse

career background impacts the dividend payout ratio. The findings indicate a positive influence of TMT's diverse career background on the corporation's dividend payout policy. Corporations with a complex and diverse TMT career background tend to exhibit higher dividend payout ratios. This association may be attributed to the impact of TMT's career experience on their decision-making processes, where greater diversity correlates with an inclination toward higher dividend payouts. Moreover, we conducted further tests to assess the moderating effect of marketization level. The results suggest that corporations with higher marketization levels are more strongly influenced by TMT's diverse career background. This could be attributed to the heightened competition prompting corporations to enhance dividend payout levels to attract investments and sustain operational activities. Our discovery that TMT's diverse career background positively influences the dividend payout ratio adds valuable insights to the literature on the determinants of dividend payout ratio and the characteristics of TMTs.

Keywords: Top Management Team, Corporate governance, payout policy, Dividends, China
JEL Classification G30, G32, G35, M12

Strategic Alliances Participation and Performance of Firms

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Abstract: This paper empirically investigates the impact of strategic alliances on the firm's performance with the help of a unique panel data set of observed strategic alliances deals in electronics industry. Especially, we deal with endogeneity problem in estimating the model by employing the method of two-stage least squares (2SLS). This study deals with endogeneity problem in estimating the model by employing the method of two-stage least squares. The results show that frequent participation in strategic alliances increase firm's sales growth. Our model suggests that aggressive management strategy of collaborating with others through strategic alliances would be beneficial to companies.

Keywords: Strategic Alliances, Firm's Performance, Two-Stage Least Squares

Public Service Delivery-A New Architecture for Good Governance



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1. Introduction

'Gradually but steadily, public service delivery has been perceived as a fundamental function of the modern governments.'

(Public Service Delivery --Get-rights, Challenges and Success-es: Frost & Sullivan, Public Sector Practice June 2012).

'The reality of the public sector today is that it is assessed by the efficiency of its service delivery. No longer is the effective-ness of the public sector measured by the revenue it generates or the employment it provides...'
(R Chandrashekar, former Additional Secretary, e-Governance, Government of India).

As the above quotes indicate, Public Service Delivery (PSD) is considered central to Good Governance. It is all

the more sur-prising that no comprehensive, coherent and exhaustive conceptual or practical framework exists to bring together its different components. This Paper will address this lacuna by suggesting a new architecture of PSD.

2. Definition

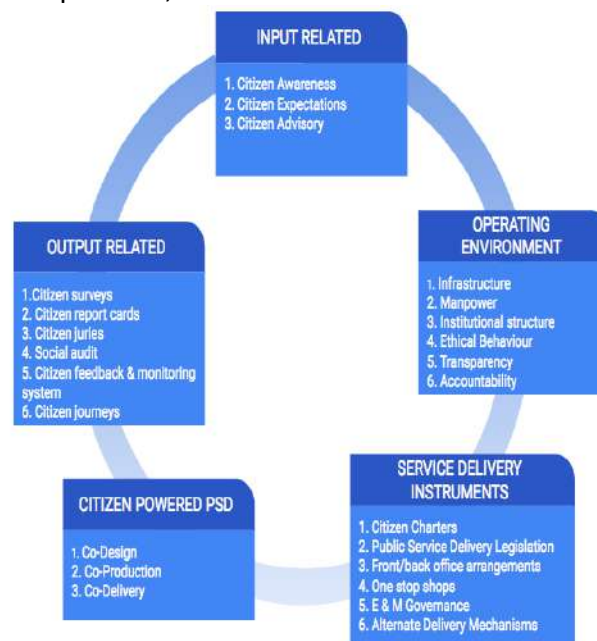
There are several definitions of PSD by reputed organisations, some being as follows:

- (Public) Service delivery can be defined as any contact with the public administration during which customers – citizens, residents or enterprises – seek or provide data, handle their affairs or fulfil their duties. (OECD).
- It is the mechanism through which public services are delivered to the public by local, municipal, or federal governments. (IGI Global).

For the purposes of this Paper, PSD refers to the provision of goods and services to citizens by the State or any other agency authorised by the Government to do so.

3. A New Architecture of PSD

PSD consists of five inter-related components, as shown below:



1. The Input Related items are related to the demand side of PSD. Citizen awareness of the services offered by the Government is key, reinforced by citizen expectations. In some countries, these have been institutionalised in the shape of Citizen Advisory Councils.

2. The Operating Environment is critical to the provision of PSD. This includes infrastructure, particularly IT services, manpower, Institutional arrangements, ethical outlook of staff, transparency of procedures and accountability of officials.

3. Service Delivery Instruments form the nuts and bolts of the PSD mechanism. Citizens' Charters, pioneered in the UK, were a landmark innovation in this regard, followed by PSD legislation to give it a statutory backing. Front/ Back Office arrangements, as set-up in Malaysia, and One-Stop Shops, as exemplified in Azerbaijan, are geared to provide citizen satisfaction. e- and m-governance provide extensive Government outreach, while alternate delivery mechanisms, particularly PPP, are favoured in resource-crunch situations.

4. Citizen Powered PSD is the latest innovation in this sphere, where citizens are co-opted in the design, production and even delivery of services.

5. Finally, Output Related feedback goes into the loop for improvement of the PSD mechanism. There are a host of such instruments, including Citizen Surveys (Canada), Citizen Report Cards (Bengaluru, India), Citizen Juries (U.K.), Social Audits (Andhra Pradesh, India), Pakistan's Citizen Feedback and Monitoring System and mapping of Citizen Journeys.

Conclusion

What is required is a complete overhaul of the PSD paradigm, as expressed in the following quote:

"Meeting customer expectations calls for a customer-centric approach – one that is built upon integration

between public sector agencies and that leverages technology and, where relevant, private sector expertise to develop new public service delivery models.'

PricewaterhouseCoopers (2007, January) 'The road ahead for public service delivery: Delivering on the customer promise.' Public Sector Research Centre, PwC.)

Painting the Canvas of Collaboration: Exploring Stakeholder Dynamics in Indonesian Food Banks

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Abstract: The Indonesian government has prioritized food security as a measure to tackle hunger. Unfortunately, approximately 33% of the global food supply is wasted, with Indonesia ranking as the second-largest contributor to this issue. As a result, food waste management needs to be conducted. One strategy involves implementing the Food Recovery Hierarchy, which entails donating excess food to other that facilitated by food banks. Regrettably, food banks remain unpopular among the citizens of Indonesia. Holistic collaboration among stakeholders is essential for the functioning of food banks, which are non-governmental organizations reliant on donations. Limited research exists on the efficacy of food banks in Indonesia as a means to attain zero hunger. Research on stakeholder collaboration in food banks is necessary. This study will utilize semi-structured in-depth interview to gain insights into the current circumstances and obstacles encountered by seven stakeholders that involve on food bank, government, community, and donor. The lack of donor protection regulations is a significant challenge faced by food banks and the food sector. The food service sector, particularly hotels, harbors significant apprehension regarding food donation. The focus on reducing food waste is new and currently involves coordinating efforts from different government agencies. Community movements are emerging to actively promote the reduction of food waste, enabling bottom-up implementation of food bank strategies to raise awareness.

Keywords: Food Bank, Stakeholder Engagement, Zero Hunger

Consumer Purchase Intention and Purchase Behaviour for Green Fast Moving Consumer Goods



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Abstract: The motives for buying green products have generated scholarly interest, mainly due to concern for the environment. There is, however, a gap in the literature on understanding consumer green purchase intention and actual purchase behaviour in developing countries such as South Africa. This study, therefore, aims to develop and test the applicability of green consumption of FMCG products grounded in the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and thus address the “attitudes–behaviour” gap documented in the literature from the perspective of South African consumers. The study uses non-probability, convenience sampling and collected data from 381 consumers residing in the greater Durban area of the KwaZulu-Natal province. Structural equation modelling was applied in analysing the data. The findings of the study indicate that pro-environmental attitude, perceived value (quality) of green FMCG products positively influenced green FMCG purchase intention, which in turn, positively influence the actual purchase behaviour for green FMCG products. The findings further show that perceived price may be a barrier to green FMCG purchase intention although the relationship was not significant.

An Analysis of How Brand Value Perceptions and the Mediating Role of Brand Attachment Impacts Purchase Behavior towards Luxury Fashion Brands in Indonesia

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Abstract: The trend of luxury fashion goods is very high in several countries, including Indonesia. Indonesia’s luxury market is growing annually, causing the consumption of luxury goods to increase as well. With the growth of the luxury market in Indonesia, it is important to study the contributing factors that drive these consumers’ luxury fashion purchase behavior. The purpose of this study is to understand the Indonesian luxury fashion consumers behavior and how the role of brand value perceptions and brand attachment impacts it. The research is based on a survey of actual luxury consumers who have purchased products from two categories of international luxury brands (Apparels, Footwear, and Handbags). This study examined several variables, comprising functional value perceptions, personal value perceptions, and social value perceptions, in order to determine which factors had the most influence on respondents’ intentions to buy luxury goods. For data analysis in this study, SMART PLS and PLS SEM are used.

Keywords: Luxury Fashion Goods, Brand Value Perceptions, Brand Attachment, Purchase Behavior

Weight Loss Supplement Marketing Method: Ethical Concern and How It Influence the Consumer Behaviour in Indonesia

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Abstract: Due to the increasing amount of consumption of entertainment and media, many individuals in Indonesia are faced with the beauty standards that these media and entertainment brought to the society. As a result, numerous people tried to diet in the hope of getting an ideal body like the public figures shown in the media. Consequently, people attempted to take shortcuts, one of the ways is to consume weight loss supplements. In Indonesia, the supplement industry is also growing. Moreover, due to COVID-19 pandemic, more and more people are starting to become aware of their physical health and want to have a healthier

lifestyle. On the other hand, a meta analysis review by Singh et al. (2022) showed people with obesity have a higher chance of catching COVID-19. In reaction to this, people that initially do not mind about their health also want to lose their body fat. This situation is exploited by weight loss companies to sell their products, and in this study, the researcher aims to investigate what are the marketing strategies used by weight loss companies related to marketing ethics and what are the factors influencing the purchase decision on weight loss supplements. To investigate the latter, the researcher creates a survey to understand what truly drives consumers to purchase weight loss supplements. The research uses IBM® SPSS®, which is a software that is used to conduct quantitative analysis. Using the software, the research measures the validity and Cronbach's alpha coefficient to measure the reliability of the test. The result of the survey with 80 respondents, the research discovered that the role of brand ambassador and celebrity endorsement is pretty crucial in driving the products' sales. This is because consumers trust KOLs more than they trust companies. Therefore when weight loss companies sign public figures as their brand ambassador, their followers have more tendency to purchase the product, because they assume the brand ambassador is also using the product.

Keywords: Weight Loss Companies, Consumer Behaviour, Key Opinion Leader, Supplement Marketing, Purchase Decision

XII. List of Listeners

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XIII. Upcoming Conferences:

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<https://sshraevents.org/symposium>

<https://sshraweb.org/sshra>

<https://sshraweb.org/symposium>



EURASIA RESEARCH



