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The Passive Voice in Urdu: A Syntactic Investigation and Transformational Analysis

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Article Information	ABSTRACT
 Copyright: **Corresponding Author:** Mashhood Ahmad mashhoodahmad216@gmail.com	This paper explores passive structures in Urdu language. It aims to understand their syntactic configuration and how to convert active sentences into passive ones. Limited research exists on Urdu's passivization compared to English. The research questions focus on the structure of passive sentences in Urdu and the necessary modifications for passivization. A qualitative research methodology is used, analyzing written texts and daily conversations of native Urdu speakers. The literature review compares Urdu's passive structures with English, including the standard "be" passive and less common "get passive" and "have passive." Findings show that Urdu passives use the auxiliary "*Gaya*" and the agent can be explicitly mentioned using "from-PP" rather than "by-PP." The paper also covers passivization in imperative sentences, using "*ja:*" and "*cha:hi:e*" morphemes. Moreover, voice neutrality is examined, showing that passive and active sentences in Urdu often convey the same event with similar agent-patient relationships. The study's conclusive remarks on passive construction in Urdu have the potential to ignite future research in this domain. The paper contributes to the knowledge of passive constructions in Urdu which can significantly impact translation accuracy and interpretation between Urdu and English. This research also adds to the big picture of how languages work. **Keywords:** Passive Transformation, Passive Construction Urdu Passive, Urdu Syntax

1. INTRODUCTION

Language has significant importance in human affairs. It serves as a fundamental pillar of communication and social cohesion. It facilitates the exchange of ideas, emotions, and knowledge. Furthermore, it shapes cultures, traditions, and identities. Language is essential in nearly all aspects of human life. It plays a vital role in the complexity and richness of human interactions (Sirbu, 2015). All languages, including English and others, have specific structures to convey messages. The two common structures found in languages worldwide are Active and Passive structures (Myhill, 2003). This study analyzes the syntactic configuration of Passive structures in the Urdu language. While English passivization

has been extensively studied, more research needs to be conducted to analyze Urdu's passivization and various passive structures found in English syntax. This study aims to bridge this gap by analyzing Urdu's written and spoken passive structures.

This research study will undertake a syntactic analysis of passive transformation in the Urdu language. The main goal of this research is to look carefully into passive construction in Urdu. It is not confined to textbook rules. Instead, it also looks at real people's use of language in everyday conversations. It aims to understand how and why Urdu active and passive sentences are put together. The study intends to get a better idea of the language structure of Urdu. It will also discuss how Urdu passive construction differs from other languages like English. This understanding could be beneficial for people who study languages. It will also be beneficial for anyone interested in learning more about Urdu.

The research holds both theoretical and practical significance. Syntactic analysis of Urdu passive voice sentences will enlighten the scholarship about the structural complexities of this language. This knowledge can help teach Urdu and translate it into other languages, such as English. This understanding enriches linguistic theory. Also, it has practical implications for language teaching and translation. This research can also be a helpful starting point for other studies on Urdu grammar.

1.1. Problem statement

Urdu grammar books do not focus enough on the structure of passive sentences. It is obvious that passive sentences are common in Urdu, but there needs to be more knowledge about the syntax of these sentences. This research aims to look into Urdu passive sentences. It intends to figure out the rules and patterns of passive construction of Urdu. The study hopes to provide a better understanding of Urdu passive sentences to improve language teaching and translation.

1.2. Research Questions

1. What is the syntactic configuration of passive structures in the Urdu language?
2. What modifications are required to convert an active sentence into a passive one in Urdu?

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research Design

This study uses a qualitative research design. It aims to gain an in-depth understanding of passivization in the Urdu language. The qualitative research method is used because it can explore complex phenomena. This approach involves a detailed analysis of the syntactic structures of passive sentences in Urdu.

2.2. Research Philosophy

The researcher thinks it is essential to understand how people interpret and use language in their everyday lives. Language is dynamic and can change depending on the context and the speaker. Therefore, the researcher focuses on understanding how Urdu speakers use passive sentences in their contexts.

2.3. Data Sources

Data for this paper is collected from multiple sources. The aim is to ensure that very common sentences are gathered for analysis. Written texts, including literature, newspapers, and online resources, are analyzed to explore formal language usage. Spoken language data is collected from natural conversations among native Urdu speakers.

2.4. Measures

The primary measure for this study is the syntactic structure of passive sentences in Urdu. The focus is on figuring out where the subject, object, and verb go. Qualitative measures are used to catch the complex meanings conveyed through passive constructions.

2.5. Data Collection Process

The researcher follows a systemic plan to collect written and spoken language examples. Written texts are collected from a diverse range of sources. Spoken language data is obtained through audio recordings of everyday conversations. The researcher then transcribes and analyzes the collected data. The analysis focuses on examples of passive constructions to identify patterns, variations, and grammatical principles involved in Urdu syntax.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Urdu belongs to the Indo-Aryan language family. Initially, it was called Rekhta. It became known as Urdu during the Mughal Empire. Rekhta is a word borrowed from Turkish, which means "army," and is still used in Urdu. Various languages influenced Urdu. Turkish and Persian are the most important ones which impacted Urdu during the Mughal period. Other influential languages include Arabic, Hindi, Punjabi, and Sanskrit (Barz, 2012).

Urdu is Pakistan's national language and is widely spoken across South Asia. It is well known for its beauty and poetry. The syntax of Urdu is very important for its elegance and expressiveness. Unlike English and other similar languages, Urdu typically follows a Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) word order. Knowing the basic components and rules of Urdu syntax is essential to creating and comprehending meaningful sentences (Naz & Mahmood, 2022).

In Urdu, sentences usually start with the subject, the object, and the verb. For example, "I read a book" follows this pattern: "میں کتاب پڑھتی ہوں". However, Urdu is flexible. One can change the order to emphasize things or to add different meanings. Sentences are usually in the SOV (Subject +Object +Verb) order; however, questions can have the verb at the beginning. In casual talk, sentences typically start with the subject (Butt et al., 2022).

Passivization in English involves using "be" and the past participle form of a verb (e.g., "The door was closed by him"). It emphasizes the receiver of the action or when the doer is unknown. Animate agents, like people, often perform actions in passive sentences (Yule, 1996). The standard form for constructing a passive sentence in English is as follows:

Subject + auxiliary verb "be" + past participle form of the main verb + optional agent (by + doer of the action)

For example:

1 (a). Active Voice: "Aliza reads the book."

1 (b). Passive Voice: "The book is read by Aliza."

In this passive construction, "is" is the auxiliary verb "be" in the present tense, "read" is the past participle form of the main verb "read," and "by Aliza" shows the optional agent or the doer of the action. The agent can be omitted if it is not relevant or unknown. Passivization is a common grammatical feature in English (Mahara, 2009). It is used in various contexts to shift the focus of a sentence from the doer of the action to the receiver or the object of the action.

There are also two less commonly used passive voice constructions in English: the "get passive" and the "have passive." These passive forms are not as common as the standard passive voice formed with the auxiliary verb "be" (e.g., is, am, are, was, were) followed by the past participle of the main verb.

I.   "Get Passive": The "get passive" is a variation of the standard passive voice. It uses the verb "get" followed by the past participle of the main verb to form passive constructions. For example:

2 (a). Standard Passive: "My car was stolen last night."

2 (b). Get Passive: "My car got stolen last night."

The "get passive" is often used in informal or colloquial contexts. It is more common in spoken English than in written English.

II.   "Have Passive": The "have passive" uses the verb "have" in combination with the past participle to form passive structures. It is less common than the standard "be" passive. It usually emphasizes a sense of possession or responsibility for the action. For example:

3(a). Standard Passive: "My wallet was stolen on the bus."

3 (b). Have Passive: "I had my wallet stolen on the bus."

The "get passive" and the "have passive" are considered less formal and less frequently used in writing or formal speech (Collins, 1996). In most formal contexts, the standard "be" passive is preferred for clarity and simplicity (Hasegawa, 1968).

Understanding passivization in English is closely connected to the distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs. The significant difference between transitive and intransitive verbs is that of taking an object. Transitive verbs can take both direct and indirect objects. Intransitive verbs do not take objects. In the passive voice, the subject of the active voice sentence becomes the object (Fiktorius, 2019). For example:

4 (a). Active: Ali writes a letter.

4 (b). Passive: A letter is written by Ali.

Bhatt (2003) is of the view that passive voice in Urdu can be formed both with transitive and intransitive verbs. However, intransitive unaccusative verbs (verbs with no external agent and no direct object) do not typically allow for passive voice formation. Davison (1982) also contends the same about Urdu-Hindi Passive constructions. Bhatt (2003) adds that passives of passives (i.e., double passives) are not grammatically allowed in Urdu language. For example;

5 (a). "Party Main Khob Kebab Khaey Jaen-gy"   (Passive)

(A lot of Kebabs will be eaten at the party)

5 (b). "Party main Khaey Jaen-gy"   (double passive)

(Will be eaten at the party)

According to Kidwai (2022) Urdu has analytic passives formed by employing the morpheme "jaa." This morpheme exhibits inflection for tense and aspect, while the main verb adopts the perfective form. The agent's presence is optional, and if overtly expressed, it assumes the instrumental case.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Syntactic Configuration of Passives in Urdu

This section discusses two main aspects of passives in Urdu: syntactic structures and the treatment of agents. Unlike active sentences, passive structures in Urdu typically do not include agents. In a passive construction, the sentence's action originates from the subject and is transferred to the object. However, the newly derived subject does not phonologically manifest in the sentence. It means that the agent (the 'doer' of the action) is not explicitly mentioned in the passive construction. For example;

6 (a). "Mujhay Daraya Gaya"   (I was intimidated)

مجھے ڈرایا گیا

However, the active sentence of the above sentence will be like;

6 (b). "Osne Mujhay Daraya" (He scared/intimidated me)

اس نے مجھے ڈرایا

A more detailed syntactic description becomes necessary when considering passives that include realized agents. The projection rules for an active sentence can be formulated as follows:

In an active sentence, we have the combination of:

i.   NP1: The first noun phrase representing the grammatical subject.

ii.   NP2: The second noun phrase representing the object of the sentence.

iii. V: The verb of the sentence, indicating the action or state.

iv.   Aux: An auxiliary verb, if present, used to form different tenses or aspects.

Together, these components form a complete active sentence in Urdu like this.

(i) "NP1 + NP2 + V + Aux"

Applying this projection rule to 6 (a), we get 7 (a);

7 (a). "Osne (he) + Mujhay (me) + Daraya (scared)"   (He scared/intimidated me)

اس نے مجھے ڈرایا

      NP1   NP2   V+ Past (Aux)

However, in passive constructions, the focus is on the object and its transformation into the subject, with a tendency to omit explicit agents. This omission is characteristic of most passive sentences in Urdu. The Passive sentence 1 can be represented as (ii);

(ii) "NP2 +V+ Aux."

The projection rule will give the following structure 7 (b);

7 (b). Mujhay (me) + Daraya (intimidated) + Gaya (was). (I was intimidated)

مجھے ڈرایا گیا

     NP2   V   Aux (passive)

7 (b) shows that "Gaya" is added as an auxiliary in passives.

In Chomsky's X-bar module, the relationship between the headword (X) and the complement (WP) is represented using specific notations (Ali, 2021). In English, the notation is expressed as follows:

(iii). "X' → X (WP)"

This notation indicates that the headword (X) takes the compliment (WP) to its right side in English. However, the situation is different in Urdu, which is a right-branching language. The complement (WP) appears to the left of the headword (X), and this relationship is represented as:

(iv). "X' → (WP) X"

Thus, in Urdu, the complement comes before the headword in the syntactic structure, unlike in English, where the complement comes after the headword.
For example;

      8. "Osne Zaid Ko Daraya" (He intimidated/scared Zaid)
      اس نے زید کو ڈرایا.
      NP1   NP2   V

When using the X-bar module paradigm for the passive structure, we obtain the following projection rule:

(v) "NP2 + V (passive participle) + (Aux)"

In (v), we observe that NP2 is the complement of the passive verb V at the deeper level of the sentence. When NP1 moves to the adjunct position, the subject slot is empty. To fill this vacant subject position in the passive structure, NP2 moves to become the subject. In other words, NP2 takes on the role of the subject in the passive construction after NP1 has moved to a different position. In active sentences, as in 7 (a), the complement of V NP2, "Mujhay" (me), is to the left because Urdu is written from right to left. If 7 (a) is transcribed in Urdu, it will appear as (9).

      9. "Osne Mujhay Daraya."   (He scared/intimidated me)

اس نے مجھے ڈرایا

10. "Daraya Osne Mujhay" (He scared/intimidated me)

ڈرایا اس نے مجھے

The auxiliary "Gaya" is not used in Urdu active sentences. However, the auxiliary "Gaya" is included in passive sentences, similar to English. This "Gaya" auxiliary is a distinctive marker and can be recognized as "Be" passives in Urdu. It can be of two types: agentive, involving a mentioned agent, and non-agentive, where the agent is not specified. The most common and straightforward type among these passives is the agentless passive construction. Let's examine the following examples.

11 (a). "Main Apki Madad Karunga."   (I will help you)

میں اپ کی مدد کروں گا

11 (b). "Apki Madad Hojaegi"   (You will be helped)

آپکی مدد ہوجائیگی

In sentence 11 (a), the sentence's subject has a phonological realization. However, when we change the sentence to the passive voice, this subject becomes silent or "disappears" from the sentence, i.e., gets a null position. Let's consider;

12 (b). "Azaan De Ja Rahi."   (call to prayer is being given)

اذان دی جا رہی ہے

Its active sentence will be;

12 (a). "Imam Azaan De Raha Hai."   (The imam is giving the call to prayer)

امام اذان دے رہا ہے

4.2. Agentive Passives in Urdu

In Urdu passives, the phonological realization of the agent is also possible, viable, and fits grammatically. For example;

13 (a). "Main Ne Ghalat Button Dabaya."   (I pressed the wrong button)

   NP1   NP2   VP

میں نے غلط بٹن دبایا

13 (b).   "Ghalat Button Dab Gaya."   (The wrong button pressed/ the wrong button was pressed)   NP2   VP

غلط بٹن دب گیا

However, in this passive construction, there is an option to include an explicit or overt agent, and it is done as shown in the following example.

14 (a). "Mujh Se Ghalat Button Dab Gaya."   (I have pressed the wrong button)
    NP1   NP2   VP

مجھ سے غلط بٹن دب گیا

14 (b). "Ghalat Button Mujh Se Dab Gaya" (I have pressed the wrong button)
    NP2   NP1   VP

غلط بٹن مجھ سے دب گیا

In sentences 14 (a) and (b), the agent "NP1, i.e., Mujh Se" (I), is positioned differently in each sentence. In 14 (a), the agent is placed at the beginning of the sentence, and in 14 (b), it appears in the middle after the patient. Both structures show that the agent "Mujh Se (I)" is now the main focus of the sentence, and it is in the passive form, taking on the action of pressing the patient "the button."

The key distinction between the two structures lies in topicalization. In 14 (a), the agent "Mujh se" is the sentence's topic, receiving special attention. On the other hand, in 14 (b), the patient "Ghalat Button" has been topicalized, making it the central point of focus in the sentence. Sentence 14 (a) can be illustrated using the tree diagram (1), displaying how the words and phrases in the sentence are organized hierarchically.
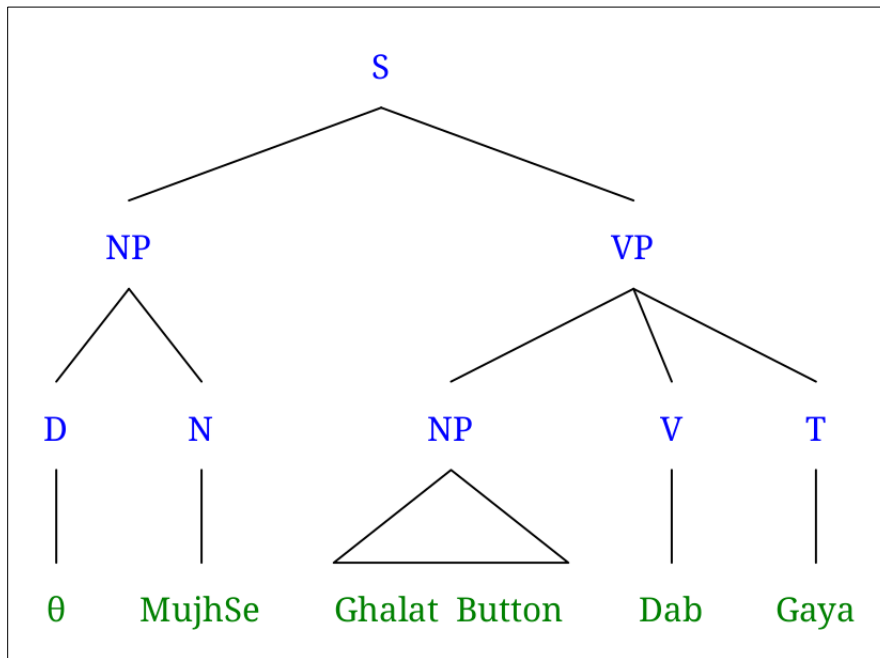
Diagram: 1

Consider the following passive sentence;

    15 (a). "Darwaza Khula Chorra Gaya."   (The door was left open)

        NP2   VP

دروازہ کھلا چھوڑا گیا

The corresponding active structure would be;

15 (b). "Main Darwaza Khula Chorr Gaya[1]"   (I left the door open)

NP1   NP2   VP

میں دروازہ کھلا چھوڑ گیا

There can be an agent in the passive constructions. Like;

15 (c). "Mujh Se Darwaza Khula Reh Gaya."   (The door was left opened by me)

NP1   NP2   VP

مجھ سے دروازہ کھلا رہ گیا

Or

15 (d)   "Darwaza Mujh se Khula Reh Gaya."   (The door was left opened by me)

NP2   NP1   VP

The difference between the agentive 15 (c) and 15 (d) is that of topicalization. In 15 (d), NP2 has been brought to the starting position in order to focus on the "door" instead of "by me" in the case of 15 (c).

The examples, such as 14 (a) and 15 (c), suggest that agentive Urdu passives involve an agent expressed through a "from-PP" (prepositional phrase) rather than a "by-PP." In these constructions, the agent's source or origin is indicated using the preposition "from" rather than "by." However, they are translated as "by-PP" into English. This distinction highlights the diverse ways Urdu can form passive sentences. It offers various options for expressing agents and emphasizing different aspects of the action.

Agent movement occurs in Urdu for various reasons. It includes emphasizing the focus or action of the agent within a sentence. When the agent is stated at the beginning of a sentence, the focus shifts to the agent. It shows that the agent is primarily responsible for the action described. On the other hand, when the agent is placed later in the sentence, the focus shifts to the action itself. It draws attention to the action rather than the agent. This word order suggests numerous expressions. It thus impacts the overall meaning and interpretation of a sentence.

Observations from listening to native speakers confirm that such word order variations are common in Urdu natural language use. Native speakers usually use agent movement in Urdu syntax in order to convey different types of meaning. They use it to get specific communicative goals. This observation aligns with the concept that agent movement is a regular and accepted practice in Urdu language usage. So, agent movement in Urdu has a pragmatic function.

Considering the following examples;

16 (a). "Kam Khatam Kia Gaya."   (The work was done)

---

[1] In Urdu, it is acceptable to write the sentence as simply "Chorra" without adding "Gaya." Both structures are grammatically valid in the language.

16 (b). "Bakar ne Kam Khatam Kia"   (Bakar finished the work)

NP1   NP2   VP

بکر نے کام ختم کیا

In sentence 16 (b), NP1 serves as the agent, and NP2 functions as the complement of the verb phrase (VP). NP2 is the patient, which receives the action of the verb "finishing." As a right-branching language, Urdu's complement NP2 "Kam" comes before the main verb "Khatam."

When the sentence undergoes passive transformation, NP1 moves to the object position and becomes a silent or null NP (not explicitly mentioned). At the same time, the complement of the verb "Khatam" shifts to the subject position to fill that slot and become the new subject of the passive sentence. This transformation changes the sentence's focus, making the previous agent (NP1) less prominent and putting the former complement (NP2) in the spotlight as the subject.

Also, the auxiliary "Gaya" (T) in this example is observed to appear to the right of the passive participle "Khatam Kia" within the VP. This indicates that the passive auxiliary is part of the VP constituent, as illustrated in the tree diagram (vii).
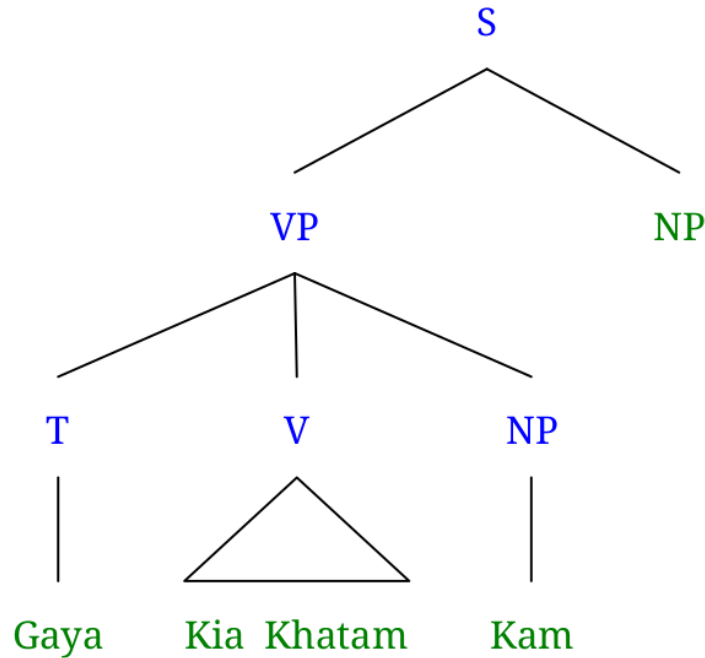
Diagram: 2

We can see in the tree diagram (2) that In Urdu, as a right-branching language, complements like "Kam" come before their head verbs, such as "Khatam Kia." This contrasts with English, where compliments typically appear after their head words.

4.3. Analytic Passives in Urdu

The Urdu language also has analytic passives (Bhatt, 2003). They are formed by using the morpheme jaa. The "jaa" morpheme used in Urdu's analytic passives carries information about tense and aspect. This morpheme is thus inflected accordingly. At the same time, the main verb in such constructions is in the perfective form. Whether or not to include the agent who performs the action is up to the speaker. If the agent is mentioned, it takes the instrumental case (Kidwai, 2022). Consider the following active sentence.

17 (a). "Ali ne Ahmed Ko Pakra"

علی نے احمد کو پکڑا

(Ali caught Ahmed)

The corresponding passive structure will be;

17 (b). "Ahmed Ali se Pakra Gaya"

احمد علی سے پکڑا گیا

(Ahmed was caught by Ali)

However, the "Jaa" morpheme is not specific to passive structures. It is also used as the main verb "go" and a light verb (LV) in Urdu (Kidwai, 2022; Kidwai, 2000). For example;

18. "Ali Jaa-raha hai."   (used as the main verb "go")

علی جا رہا ہے

(Ali is going)

19. "Umar Su Gaya."   (LV)

عمر سو گیا

(Umar fell asleep)

20. "Wo Sab Chalay Gaey.   (LV)

"وہ سب چلے گئے"

(They are all gone)

4.4. Passivization in Urdu Imperatives

Imperative sentences are sentences that tell or ask someone to do something. They are like commands or requests, giving directions or expressing desires for action. For example, "Please close the door" or "Go to bed" are imperative sentences. Following are examples in Urdu language.

21 (a). "Gharebon ki madad karo."   (Help the poor)

<div dir="rtl">غریبوں کی مدد کرو</div>

21 (b). "Baith Jao."   (Sit down)

<div dir="rtl">بیٹھ جاؤ</div>

Imperative sentences in Urdu are passivized by adding both the past participle-ya: and the passive auxiliary verb *ja: +y:* at the end of the root verb. Consider the following example;

22 (a). "Darwaza Band Karo."   (Close/shut the door)

<div dir="rtl">دروازہ بند کرو</div>

Its corresponding passive structure will look like this;

22 (b). "Darwaza Band Ki*ya* Ja:*y*."   (The door should be closed)

<div dir="rtl">دروازہ بند کیا جائے</div>

Similarly;

23 (a). "Khana Banao."   (Cook/make food)

<div dir="rtl">کھانا بناؤ</div>

Its corresponding passive will look like this;

23 (b). "Khana bana*ya* Ja:*y*."   (Food should be made/cooked)

<div dir="rtl">کھانا بنایا جائے</div>

In Urdu, when an imperative sentence includes advice or suggestions, it can be transformed into the passive voice by adding "*ana: cha:hi:e*" at the end of the root verb. For example;

24 (a). "Hamesha Sach bolo."   (Always speak the truth)

<div dir="rtl">ہمشہ سچ بولو</div>

Its passive sentence would be like this;

24 (b). "Hamesha Sach Bol:*na Cha:hi:e*."   (One should always speak the truth)

<div dir="rtl">ہمیشہ سچ بولنا چاہیے</div>

4.5. Voice Neutrality

Voice neutrality means passive and active sentences convey the same event with similar agent-patient relationships. The passive and active forms convey the same event or action in a given context and portray the exact relationships between the agent (doer of the action) and the patient (receiver of the action). Postal (1976) discussed this phenomenon. Palmer (2014) coined the term "voice neutrality" to describe this

phenomenon. He highlighted that the meaning remains consistent regardless of whether the sentence is in the active or passive voice. Similarly, the thematic relations in the sentences remain the same. For example;

25 (a). Peter broke the window.

25 (b). The window was broken by Peter.

In sentence 25 (a), Peter acts as the agent of carrying out the action to break the window. The same happens in its corresponding passive sentence 25 (b), where the window receives the same action of breaking carried out by Peter.

If we analyze 25 (a) and 25 (b) in the Urdu language. It will look like;

26 (a). "Peter ne kherki toor di."   (Peter broke the window)

پیٹر نے کھڑکی توڑ دی

26 (b). "Kherki toor di gai."   (The window was broken)

کھڑکی توڑ دی گئی

In both cases, the window received the action of being broken. Thus, there is no change in Peter's role in both active and passive constructions.

While voice neutrality holds true in many cases between passive and active sentences, there are exceptions as noted by Chomsky (1957). He provides examples where the semantic equivalence breaks down:

27 (a) "Everyone in the room knows at least two languages."

27 (b) "At least two languages are known by everyone in the room."

While the active sentence 27 (a) keeps the languages non-specific, the passive sentence 27 (b) specifies the two languages. It thus causes a distinction between the two constructions. To verify the validity of the given examples in Urdu, consider 28 (a) and 28 (b).

28 (a). "Kamray main har banda kam az kam dou zabanain bolta hai."

(Everyone in the room speaks at least two languages)

کمرے میں ہر بندہ کم از کم دو زبانیں بولتا ہے

28 (b). "Kam az kam dou zabanain kamray main boli jaati hain"

(At least two languages are spoken by everyone in the room)

کم از کم دو زبانیں کمرے میں بولی جاتی ہیں

The passive structure here renders the two languages as definite. However, the definiteness determination may heavily rely on the stress placed on the word "dou" (two). The reason is that tone holds significant importance in Urdu for conveying the sentence's intended meaning.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study suggest that Urdu passive constructions shift the focus from the subject to the object. The syntactic configuration of passive constructions in Urdu shows that the derived subject does not manifest itself phonologically in the sentence. These passives emphasize the focus on the object's transformation into the subject. In active sentences, components like NP1 (grammatical subject), NP2 (object), V (verb), and Aux (auxiliary verb) combine to form a complete structure. However, in passive constructions, the focus shifts to the object, which becomes the subject. Then, an auxiliary verb, "Gaya," is added to make the passive voice (Kidwai, 2022).

In Urdu, Passive sentence actions are conveyed without explicitly mentioning the agents involved in the action. However, there is the possibility of including an explicit agent in the passive construction. The examples show that agents can be expressed through prepositional phrases ("from me"). Also, they are positioned differently within the sentence for emphasis. This omission of agents is a defining characteristic of Urdu passive construction. This characteristic differentiates the passive from the active sentences. It is also observed that Urdu passives usually use the auxiliary "Gaya" to facilitate structural transformation. This property shows a fundamental difference from English passive constructions (Kidwai, 2024).

The findings also looked into the analytic passives in Urdu. These passives are formed using the morpheme "Jaa." It carries information about tense and aspect. It explains that the inclusion of the agent in analytic passives is optional. Thus, it gives speakers flexibility in expressing passive constructions.

Regarding imperative sentences, they can be transformed into the passive voice by adding specific morphemes and auxiliary verbs. Another critical aspect of the findings is that of voice neutrality. It refers to the consistency in conveying the same event and maintaining agent-patient relationships between active and passive sentences. Voice neutrality holds true in many cases. However, exceptions are there when semantic equivalence breaks down. This emphasizes the complexity of language structures in Urdu.

Comparative analysis of Urdu passive structures with English passive structures shed light on the difference between the two languages. In English, passive constructions generally include explicit agents. However, Urdu passives frequently omit such agents (Maroof & Zafar, 2023). It suggests that Urdu passives emphasize the action itself rather than its performer. Understanding this can help translators know about Urdu syntax's complexities more effectively. This, in turn, enhances language comprehension.

The comprehension of passive structures is important for learners and users of Urdu. It is incredibly vital for those engaged in language learning and education. Language learners can increase their proficiency in constructing and comprehending different sentence types once they understand passives' syntactic configuration. This understanding enables learners to express ideas effectively. This knowledge also allows language users to make sentences that convey subtle nuances in meaning. Speakers and writers can manipulate focus by using passive constructions efficiently. For example, passive voice provides a concise and focused expression when the agent of an action is irrelevant. On the other hand, the active voice may be preferred where the agent's identity is important. Thus, this understanding develops the communication skills of the learners.

Knowledge of passive constructions in Urdu also holds practical implications for translation and interpretation tasks. Translators and interpreters come across passive sentences in source texts. They must

accurately convey their meaning in the target language. A good understanding of passive structures enables translators to produce faithful and idiomatic renditions. It helps them preserve the intended message.

This discussion of passive constructions in Urdu also highlights the importance of linguistic typology. Comparison of Urdu syntactic configuration with that of other languages provides an understanding of universal principles of grammar. Such Comparative studies of passive constructions across languages also increase our knowledge of language teaching methodologies. Therefore, this study contributes to the broader discourse on linguistic diversity and universality.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to its syntactic complexities, passive transformation is a subject of considerable debate within linguistic circles. Different from English, Urdu shows a highly limited usage of passive constructions. English has a wide range of passive sentence structures, but Urdu has a different level of variety. Both English and Urdu have more similarities than differences in their passive sentence structures. They both use a similar method to form passive sentences, involving changes in word order and adding specific markers. However, one notable distinction is that in Urdu, passive sentences often do not explicitly mention the agent (the doer of the action). The sentence's action is transferred from the subject to the object, and the newly derived subject does not manifest itself phonologically. On the other hand, in English, the agent is sometimes included in the sentence. Urdu and English construct passive sentences using passive participle and a specific auxiliary verb. In Urdu, the common auxiliary is "Jaa" (alternatively "Gaya" in accordance with tense or aspect), whereas in English, "Be" is used for the same purpose. These auxiliary verbs are essential components in creating passive structures in both languages.

The syntactic difference between English and Urdu is evident in their sentence structures. English typically follows the Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) order, while Urdu uses the Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) order. This distinction in word order affects the way sentences are constructed and understood in each language. In Urdu, a right-branching language, the complement comes before the headword. It contrasts with English, where the complement follows the headword.

Moreover, in Urdu, tone plays a vital role in adding meaning to specific structures. Different tones add extra meaning and depth to the language's sentences and expressions. Passivization of imperative sentences in Urdu is achieved by adding "*ya:*" and the passive auxiliary "jaa" at the end of the root verb. Furthermore, imperative sentences with advice or suggestions can be passivized by adding "*ana:*" "*cha:hi:e*" at the end of the root verb. Lastly, the concept of voice neutrality shows that, in most cases, passive and active sentences in Urdu convey the same event and maintain similar agent-patient relationships. However, some exceptions may arise. These exceptions cause distinctions between active and passive constructions based on context and stress in Urdu.

Based on the findings of this paper, it is recommended that the pragmatic implications of passive transformations in Urdu be explored further. How passive constructions are perceived and understood in different contexts needs to be investigated. It will be helpful for better language usage. It is also essential to look into the pedagogical implications of teaching passive transformations in Urdu. Comparative studies between Urdu and other languages with similar syntactic features, such as Pashto, could enlighten scholarship on cross-linguistic variations in passive constructions. Further research into passive transformations in Urdu can offer an understanding of language structure, usage, and cognition.

7.   LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This paper tried to touch on every aspect of Urdu's structural analysis of passive transformation. However, there are several limitations. Firstly, this study focuses on syntactic elements. It does not explore the semantic or pragmatic dimensions of passive constructions. Future research can consider this in order to get a comprehensive understanding of passive transformations in Urdu. Secondly, the scope of this study is limited to standard Urdu. Variations across different dialects are not examined. Looking into the structures of regional varieties and dialects of Urdu can help researchers get a better idea of this phenomenon. Thirdly, the sample size of examples analyzed in this study is relatively small. A broader corpus-based analysis could provide more insights into passive transformations in Urdu. Larger datasets and quantitative methods could offer more statistically comprehensive findings. Fourthly, this study focuses on the structural aspects of passive transformation. It does not address sociolinguistic factors that can influence language use. Future research could explore this aspect as well.

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The Role of Children's Picture Books in Promoting Innovation and Creativity among Children in China

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Article Information	ABSTRACT
 Copyright: **Corresponding Author:** Peng Yang **1371985608@qq.com** **ORCID:** https://orcid.org/0009-0004-2054-6243	This study explored the role of children's picture books in promoting innovation and creativity among young learners in China. Recognizing the potential impact of early literacy on cognitive development, this research aimed to objectively measure how engagement with picture books influences children's creativity. Employing a quantitative research methodology, the study gathered data from a diverse sample of 1000 children aged 5 to 8 years across various urban and rural schools in China. The study utilized a stratified random sampling technique to ensure a representative distribution across socioeconomic, educational, and cultural backgrounds. Our findings reveal a significant correlation between creativity, the frequency of reading, and the diversity of books read. Moreover, parental involvement emerged as the most influential predictor of creativity scores. Although digital books positively impacted traditional reading interactions, they substantially attained higher creativity levels. The study's robust statistical model explains 72% of the variance in creativity outcomes, emphasizing the predictability of factors. The conclusion underscores the essential role of diverse and interactive reading practices in fostering children's creativity. Implications of these findings suggest that integrating a variety of picture books and encouraging parental engagement in children's reading routines can significantly enhance creative development. **Keywords:** Children's Picture Books, Creativity, Innovation, Cognitive Development, Reading Habits, Educational Implications

1. INTRODUCTION

Children's literature, particularly picture books, plays a pivotal role in young readers' cognitive and emotional development. In China, where educational models have traditionally emphasized rote learning and conformity, introducing picture books designed to foster innovation and creativity represents a significant shift towards more holistic educational approaches (Young et al., 2020). This study explores how children's picture books can act as catalysts for cultivating these essential skills among young Chinese learners. Cheung (2018) found two significant effects of early childhood education: cognitive and creative development.

Many techniques and aids are used in the initial stages of teaching. However, pictorial books for children remain a particular component. Enhanced by vibrant illustrations and fast-paced narratives, fun books, along with their integrated pictures, are sources of entertainment for children and a catalyst for imagination, creativity, and innovative thinking (Li, 2009).

A robust cultural inheritance enriches this nation but simultaneously faces altered educational values, which are more prone to target desired competencies than let creativity and free-thinking nurture the nature of the child. However, in the 21st century, the growing need for innovative and creative answers to seek possible answers to impossible questions is the new way of modern thinking, thereby culminating in personal, societal, and economic growth (Xu, 2018). Illustrated books have the crucial power of opening the way to complex thoughts for children. As Nikolajeva & Scott (2001) suggest combining text and pictures can undertake this capacity. It delivers what regular books or our standard moral message will never have the capacity to do. Unlike traditional textbooks, these multimedia books use visuals (pictures and text) to amplify learners' information retention capability and improve their cognitive abilities (Arizpe & Styles, 2015). It enhances the child's overall cognitive functioning by improving their memory-recalling abilities.

Likewise, their language development recurs alongside fostering visual-spatial skills. Reading with your child is a progressive and engaging activity that helps your child gain strong communication and enrich social skills. Through this co-involvement in the reading process, the adults serve as mediators of communication between the book and the child, thus providing more beneficial and longer-lasting consequences for the child's development than interacting with the book independently (Cetinkaya et al., 2019). Construing the fact that the interaction is mediated is another critical issue in the Chinese context, where parental participation in early childhood education is highly appreciated, and the education system highly values parent engagement (Ayşe, 2021).

The Chinese educational standard at the early stage of learning has begun to shift from rote-learning practices to creative prompting (Mathias et al., 2013). In response to the growing demands of developing innovation that advocates novelty and originality for the perpetually transforming world and its transforming needs, the old school of thought has outrun the inspiration for the creative and critical approach. The recent reforms in the Chinese government's educational policy call for terminating the habit of learning facts by heart and introducing a new educational paradigm that supports creativity and critical thinking (Jin et al., 2022).

In picture books, the mutual co-dependence between visual and verbal items could also be advantageous, especially in a Chinese scenario where educational strategies are transforming to allow creativity and critical thinking abilities to be nurtured among the students. It has adopted a strong foot-hold as one of the country's reformatory educational policies (Cetinkaya et al., 2019). Research shows that children start to acquire language at a very early age. Language acquisition and creative problem-solving initiate the moment children come into contact with their first encounter with a language or literary experience, and their development paths start formulating in their brains from that day onwards (Petitto, 1988). It is exciting to the researcher that children's picture books often incorporate fantasy to some extent and open-ended resolutions, which are critical in forming imaginative play and creativity (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2001). Creative thinking subsequently harbors the cognitive development of a child. A young reader who thinks creatively activates pathways of new mental functioning. Children's books also serve as cultural

bridges that bring children to different views and educational levels (Colomer & Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2010).

Thus, it is vital in China's rapidly evolving socioeconomic environment, where the ability to internalize divergent perspectives and put them together is the crucial difference between reacting and innovating. The literature review has shown that picture books possess cognitive and creativity-enhancing functions, whereas such focus within the context of the Chinese curriculum needs to be improved. This research study is intended to bridge the gap by investigating how it is employed in classrooms in China and its influence on elementary groups' imagination and innovation. This will give the researchers a pivotal resource to put the finger on different aspects of the subject and figure out the best way forward for educators, government officials, and content producers.

On the one hand, children's picture books are believed to stimulate innovation and creativity and demolish the barriers to their effective integration in the education sector. On the other hand, creativity and critical thinking are the main obstacles in China's educational system. This study proposes tackling the identified challenges by listing the difficulties involved and suggesting possible methods to utilize picture books to promote kids' creativity and inherent creative potential. On the contrary, we have witnessed the long-established practice of students deemed worthy to excel academically using standardized testing and memorization at the expense of creative and critical thinking (Short, 2018). The results will shed light on the inefficacy of these standards by underscoring the significance of picture books enhancing creativity and creative spurts originating from active engagement with innovation involving critical thinking.

The traditional orientation may inhibit the integration of literature sources that stimulate innovative and creative thinking because they have no direct contribution to children's academic scores. Teachers are expected to choose well-adopted teaching styles that correspond with the objectives of the school, which aim to achieve high test scores and reserve time for their preparation, seemingly at the expense of the more creative and innovative initiatives for free-thinking tasks. The issue of conflict in the continuity of traditional education and innovatory approaches of the new tools, such as picture books to be implemented, has pointed out a significant disparity between reformatory educational policies and their implementation in the education sector (Jin et al., 2022).

The research highlighted a supply bottleneck of high-level, culture-based picture books created to spark imagination and ingenuity in the Chinese indigenous way of thinking. Though Western literature provides plenty of variety and different ideas, it is also necessary to have books that originate from China so that they can relate to the local social norms and values (Jin et al., 2022). Drafting and delivering the books with adaptability to produce engaging, culturally appropriate material that borders on inducing creativity requires coordination among teachers, writers, and illustrators. First, the teachers must be trained to use picture books to impart educational lessons. Due to the lack of knowledge, many instructors may need help integrating these educational means into the curriculum, thus restraining their efficacy in developing creative thinking (Stroganova, 2014).

With numerous teacher-training programs, teachers can be furnished with the necessary skills to utilize picture books in a manner that aims at a debate-oriented approach and garners critical thinking among students. The other concern is a problem related to the rare availability of diverse picture books in some places in China, especially in rural areas and other poor sections of society. Therefore, the children from

this community may be less likely to have access to learning facilities conducive to developing creativity skills (Weng et al., 2021; Bus et al., 2020).

Securing the equitable distribution of educational resources, such as picture books, is vital to stimulate an equal momentum of creativity among the poor, the rich, and those living in remote places. Two issues emerge when the role of digital technology in education is elucidated. Initially, digital platforms can improve the accessibility of picture books and make them more interactive, thus appealing to youngsters with access to digital gadgets. However, there are dangers of distraction, and it can reduce focus on the physically interactive form of learning. The interactive nature or physical involvement in the learning process is a critical factor for the mind and body's well-being, functionality and development processes aiming at the overall cognitive development of a child (Antonietti et al., 2020).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The ensuing literature on children's picture books as a source of fostering innovation and creativity, particularly within the Chinese context, is thoroughly reviewed. The visual narratives in children's books affect cognitive development. It revealed that the texture of images combined with reading content provided in picture books helps improve descriptive comprehension and makes it easier for youngsters to form alternative perspectives, which is vital for creative cognition (Tracey & Francesca, 2020). Furthermore, Pulimeno et al. (2020) revealed that children who read more picture books exhibit superior creativity and imagination during the tasks that test those aspects compared to others. Children's picture books are also viewed as a means of preservation and transfiguration of cultural values, which inspires them to become the subject of scrutiny even in academia. A study by Tang (2015) on the storytelling techniques in contemporary Chinese picture books highlights an intriguing dynamic: the books act as the bridge between (vibrant and dynamic) traditional Chinese culture and the evolving modern society. It connects and delivers the culture's tradition, values, and inherent beauty to the modern generation, keeping it alive in the form and narrative. This preservation becomes the reservoir of cultural heritage. Nisak et al. (2021) conducted research, and they found that it is a way to keep the cultural heritage and lend identity to the creative young artists who learn and grow by imitating these works.

Picture books are also related to children's culture, which inculcate social and emotional skills, grooming empathy and nurturing societal norms via this culture. These are two significant and valuable components for any individual to integrate well into society. Books can serve two purposes: as an indispensable tool and as a brain development tool in children (Tang, 2015).

Vygotsky (2004) concluded that children who read more picture books score higher in tasks that measure creativity and imagination than those who do not read much. Children's picture books and other academic fields primarily focus on preserving and transforming cultural identification (Holmes et al., 2019). Chinese, in general, cherish their cultural identity. They value preserving it, and the storytelling techniques in contemporary Chinese picture books highlight this intriguing dynamic of preserving the heritage values and culture of ancient times and passing them on to the modern world (Tang, 2015).

Similarly, Nisak et al. (2021) found that narratives preserve cultural heritage and play a significant role in young readers' artistic and creative identity formation. Therefore, the above research suggests that parents who are more engaged in reading activities with their children can substantially raise their children's

ability to think creatively, unlike those parents who do not involve their children in such activities. The second interesting finding is the way picture books assist in neutralizing the damaging results of excessive screen time on digital devices (Madanipour & Cohrssen, 2020).

In a modern world where digital devices dominate children's everyday lives. Yang and Li (2022) argue that a physical picture book brings balance back to children. Discovering picture books helps a child's imagination and concentration. The central focus of this study is represented by contemporary Chinese picture books that take up social and global tasks that will help children become more prepared to cope with our modern world life, which is full of complex situations. Ultimately, the ideological effects of children's books on an early childhood education setting were critically examined.

More empirical data is needed on why children's picture books are crucial in developing children's innovative and creative abilities in China. Therefore, to fill this gap, more research is needed because individual research in previous studies will result in a tendency to garner the benefits that picture books have on innovation and creativity among Chinese children. Young et al. (2020), owing to one's vested interest. Although much research is generally available concerning the advantages offered by reading, the fact that further studies, which are more exhaustive and specific, need to be carried out to pinpoint precisely the role played by picture books in enhancing innovation and creativity becomes clear.

Chinese myths, legends, and historical culture have been passed from one generation to another throughout the centuries. Thus, it offers a vast selection of themes that would nicely fit in children's picture books (Şimşek et al., 2021). This possible characteristic of studying cultural motifs or how they are portrayed in picture books and consequently developing a creative attitude in children is scarce in this field. The authors convey this concern by highlighting the research gap to unravel the impact of Chinese cultural aspects in inculcating innovation and creative thinking through children's literature. Such an omission indicates a growing gap in research by ignoring the integration of the cultural aspects in education and their contribution to children's literature. Children's book illustrations vividly reflect inherent values and a reliable cultural transmission mode. Torr (2023) emphasizes the need for studies that target parents and teachers as mediators to boost children's creativity and innovation levels through Chinese book illustrations.

Parents and teachers should have a significant say too in the direction children are heading as readers; either way, support needs to be present (Yang & Li, 2022). However, this is only a part of the story, as the cognitive patterns, viewpoints, and behaviours represented in pictures of books that foster creativity still need to be well described. Further studies may also explore the perspectives of the parents and teachers about the process of selection, implementation, instruction and assessment of the picture books to enhance children's innovativeness and creativity (Anser et al., 2023).

Moreover, research evidence needs to be more explicit about how digital picture books are manifested and utilized in promoting Chinese children's innovative and creative thinking capacity (Ridolfi, 2023). With the passage of time and the advancement of technology, resources are moving towards digital media. That is why e-picture books are becoming popular. (Huang & Li, 2023). Furthermore, Valente (2023) examines the effect of interactive digital picture storybooks that have multimedia aspects on children's imagination, problem-solving ability, and creativity. This new trend of digital illustration primarily focuses only on immediate and short-term goals, leading to a deficit in picture books' potential to influence audiences, captivate them with a didactic appeal and induce imaginative and innovative inclination. Ad-adept picture books are a source of expressive medium and can also invoke children's

creativity. Considering this view, sequential studies were conducted, which concentrated on the children and followed their creative development for the whole year, identifying how picture books can continue to form children's innovative thinking (Torr, 2023). The missing links in these studies can show us how children's picture books can be used to increase the innovation and creativity level of Chinese kids (O'Rear et al., 2023).

This study suggests that further research should be conducted on the impact of books on children, identifying their role in promoting innovation and creativity, embodying Chinese cultural aspects, and effective use of image books by parents or teachers or creative digital picture books to induce cognitive development in children.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

In this quantitative study, we specifically aimed to investigate how children's picture books stimulate creativity and innovation in young learners across different regions of China. In this study, we designed our research to cover various educational environments to ensure a robust analysis. Recognizing the diverse educational landscape in China, from technologically advanced urban schools to more resource-limited rural settings, we included these varied contexts to explore how environmental factors might influence the effectiveness of picture books in fostering innovation. This careful planning was essential to accurately capture the broad spectrum of educational experiences across China and understand picture books' universal and unique impacts on children's creative development within these diverse settings.

3.2 Ethical Consent

Due to the sensitive nature of the study involving minors aged 5 to 8, we strongly emphasized ethical considerations to ensure the protection and respect of our young participants. To begin with, we thoroughly crafted an ethical code consistent with our institution's ethical guidelines, and all the amendments were compliant with it. Before data collection, we conducted a series of informational lessons for the parents and guardians who are the custodians of potential participants. We presented the study's objectives, the extent of their children's participation, and the measures in place to protect their children's privacy and emotional welfare in these workshops. They were notified that the collected data would be gathered in an organized and transparent way, after which it would be used to promote employees' health. The effectiveness of the chosen approach was demonstrated as well.

We also ensured the consent forms were written so all students and parents knew their right to consent or choose otherwise. Furthermore, all the research premises were thoroughly dictated in the form so that the custodian understood the degree of involvement their children had in the research. This was to ensure compliance with the ethical regulations. It was mentioned that participation was done voluntarily, in addition to the ability to not continue with these services without any fear of being denied compensation or the relevant benefits. Moreover, the protocol must comply with the rules for working with minors. We obtained approval from the Institutional Review Board, which reviewed the study's methodology, ethical considerations, and consent procedure to ensure that all aspects of the study comply with the highest ethical standards of scientific research. The IRB also monitored how the study unfolded and was always available to tackle any ethical challenges during the research period.

3.3 Sample size and sampling

Our study targeted a diverse group of 1,000 children aged between 5 and 8 years from various regions across China. We employed a stratified sampling technique to achieve a representative sample that reflects the broad spectrum of Chinese society. This method ensured that our sample included children from various socioeconomic backgrounds, educational settings, and cultural environments. The stratification was designed with meticulous attention to detail. We divided the potential participant

pool into different strata based on key demographic factors: urban versus rural school settings, economic status of the regions, and cultural diversity. Each stratum was proportionally represented in our sample to ensure that the findings could be generalized across the different groups within the population. Concerning urban locations, we decided to recruit subjects from wealthy schools in top-income districts and schools in economically depressed localities to represent the degrees of diversity in urban schooling. We brought persons from remote zones and little towns to participate in our research. To reflect this in our study, we tried to comprehend whether picture books were efficiently engaged in remote areas with technological and human resources constraints.

Consequently, the well-assessed sampling procedure was arranged with well-balanced and comprehensive data from all backgrounds. The diversity of data aided in assessing the influence of picture books on children's creativity and innovation, represented by picture books in different Chinese settings. This sampling helped to understand the universal and local effects. This approach, too, delivered us a high degree of reliability, simultaneously making picture books viewed as tools applicable in the learning milieu that bridges socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.

3.4 Instrument

This study used the instruments to measure the creativity and engagement levels of the participating children with picture books. The first instrument was an adaptation of the well-established Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT) (Torrance, 1996), which we modified to suit the cognitive levels and comprehension abilities of children aged 5 to 8. These modifications included simplifying the instructions and using age-appropriate visual and verbal tasks that assess divergent thinking, problem-solving capabilities, and the ability to generate unique ideas. The second instrument was a custom-designed questionnaire carefully developed by our research team to explore specific aspects of the children's reading habits and their interaction with picture books. This questionnaire consisted of 20 items and covered areas such as the frequency of reading sessions, the types of picture books preferred, the extent of parental involvement in reading activities, and the children's preferences between digital and traditional print books. Each question was crafted to capture nuanced aspects of the children's experiences and attitudes towards reading, which are critical for understanding the environment in which creativity may be fostered.

To ensure the effectiveness and clarity of the questionnaire, we employed a Likert scale format, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree," to measure the intensity of the children's responses. This format is handy for quantifying subjective judgments and perceptions in a statistically analyzable way. Recognizing our participants' language proficiency and developmental stage, we translated all materials into simplified Chinese. This translation was about language accuracy and cultural relevance, ensuring that the questions resonated with the children's everyday experiences and were comprehensible regardless of their regional dialect. Moreover, the questionnaire underwent a rigorous validation process involving educational experts and child psychologists to confirm its reliability and validity in capturing the intended

metrics. This step was crucial to ensure that our data would be robust and reflect the children's true interactions and creativity levels influenced by their engagement with picture books.

3.5 Data collection

To ensure an inclusive and equitable data collection process, we distributed our questionnaires in paper format. This approach was essential for reaching children with limited or nonexistent digital resources in rural areas. By using paper questionnaires, we were able to include a broader demographic and avoid technological barriers that could skew the representation of certain groups.

We collected the data in carefully planned sessions at the participating schools. These sessions were designed to accommodate our participants' young age and varying comprehension levels. Particularly for the youngest cohort of children aged 5, we provided additional support to help them understand the questions. Trained researchers were present during these sessions to read questions aloud, rephrase them more straightforwardly when necessary, and ensure the children felt comfortable and understood what was being asked.

The high return rate of our questionnaires (85% wholly filled) compared to the number of the distributed ones (in full) indicates the study's decisive role with the children and the facilitators in the schools. To increase our data's reliability, we supervised every questionnaire session ourselves. The supervision was necessary to make sure that the children's answers were provided independently and without interference from others, both peers and adults. Overlooking this can be a besmirch to the quality of the collected data. Additionally, we took great care in organizing these sessions so they would not disrupt the regular school day. We did that by scheduling these sessions outside the peak academic times and in consultation with school administrators and teachers to find time slots that were least intrusive to the academic schedule but long enough to let the children take their time and complete the questionnaires thoughtfully.

3.6 Analysis techniques

For our study, the collected data was analyzed using advanced statistical software, specifically SPSS, ensuring that our methods align with the best practices. Initially, we applied descriptive statistical techniques to provide a foundational understanding of the collected data. This included summarizing the children's reading habits, frequency of engagement with picture books, types of books read, and demographic variables such as age, gender, and regional background. These descriptive statistics served as a preliminary snapshot, helping us to characterize the study population and set the stage for more detailed analyses. Building on this foundation, we employed inferential statistical methods to delve deeper into the data and uncover underlying patterns and relationships. Regression analyses were a key component of our approach, allowing us to explore how different factors, such as the frequency of reading and types of engagement with picture books, predicted measures of creativity and innovation in the children. By constructing multiple regression models, we could isolate the effects of individual variables while controlling the others, providing more precise insights into the direct and indirect influences on creative thinking.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 shows the demographic information of our survey participants, making it unmistakable even at a glance that 1000 children who participated in the research are from different backgrounds. We assigned 5-8-year-olds to the first group, an equal size population (25%), and the third age group. Gender proportions were 100% balanced, too, where the study cohort had half of males and females with equal participation in each group. Regarding geographic location, our sample was equally split between urban and rural settings, capturing insights from children living in densely populated cities and quieter, more remote villages. Socioeconomically, the children came from various backgrounds, with approximately one-third from low-income, one-third from middle-income, and one-third from high-income households. This diversity also extends to their educational environments, where 70% attended public schools, reflecting a majority, while the remaining 30% were enrolled in private schools. This comprehensive demographic coverage ensures that our findings could have broader implications, reflecting various segments of the child population in China.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants

Characteristic	Total (N=1000)	Percentage (%)	Details
Age			
Five years	250	25%	
Six years	250	25%	
Seven years	250	25%	
Eight years	250	25%	
Gender			
Male	500	50%	
Female	500	50%	
Geographic Location			
Urban	500	50%	Including major cities and suburbs
Rural	500	50%	Including villages and small towns
Socioeconomic Status			
Low	333	33.30%	Low-income households
Middle	334	33.40%	Middle-income households
High	333	33.30%	High-income households
Educational Setting			
Public School	700	70%	
Private School	300	30%	

Source: Author's calculations

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics on the engagement and creative metrics of 1,000 children who participated in the survey. The average frequency of children who read picture books was moderately high at 3.5 on a scale of 1 to 5, with a standard deviation of 1.2, indicating a moderate spread in reading habits. The types of books read had a lower average of 2.8 on a scale from 1 to 5, reflecting a somewhat

diverse range of book types explored by the children, with a smaller distribution as indicated by a standard deviation of 0.9.

Parental involvement scored an average of 3.2, with a slightly wider standard deviation of 1.3, suggesting variability in how much parents are engaged in their children's reading activities. The creativity scores ranged broadly from 30 to 90, with an average score of 60 and a standard deviation of 15, highlighting significant differences in creative outputs among the children. Besides that, the average digital book popularity score was 2.1, with a standard deviation of 1.1 represented on a scale with 1-4 attributes, which means the tilt towards the digital formats is of the moderate type. However, this data needs to be more exhaustive in exhibiting the scope of interactivity between children and books and the creative abilities it inherently entails.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	N
Reading Frequency	3.5	1.2	1	5	1000
Types of Books Read	2.8	0.9	1	5	1000
Parental Involvement	3.2	1.3	1	5	1000
Creativity Score	60	15	30	90	1000
Preference for Digital Books	2.1	1.1	1	4	1000

4.2 Regression analysis

Notably, a moderately strong correlation exists between reading frequency and creativity scores ($r = 0.55$), suggesting that children who read more frequently tend to have higher creativity scores, as shown in Table 3. The types of books read also show a positive correlation with creativity scores ($r = 0.50$), indicating that diversity in book types might stimulate creative thinking. Parental involvement has the strongest correlation with creativity scores ($r = 0.60$), underscoring the significant role that parental engagement can play in enhancing children's creative abilities. In contrast, the preference for digital books shows a weaker correlation with creativity scores ($r = 0.25$), hinting that the medium of reading (digital or physical) might be less influential on creativity than the content or frequency of reading. These correlations provide valuable insights into how different aspects of reading and interaction with books can influence creativity among children.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

Variable	Reading Frequency	Types of Books	Parental Involvement	Preference for Digital Books	Creativity Score
Reading Frequency	1	0.45	0.3	0.2	0.55
Types of Books	0.45	1	0.25	0.15	0.5
Parental Involvement	0.3	0.25	1	0.1	0.6
Preference for Digital Books	0.2	0.15	0.1	1	0.25
Creativity Score	0.55	0.5	0.6	0.25	1

Table 4 shows the regression analysis results, clearly illustrating the significant predictors of creativity scores among children influenced by their engagement with picture books. The intercept, set at 20, with a p-value (0.001), indicates a strong baseline level of creativity assumed without the predictors included. Reading frequency emerged as a robust predictor, contributing an additional 3.5 points to the creativity score for each unit increase, reflecting its vital role in fostering creative thinking. Similarly, the diversity in types of books read increased by 2.8 points per unit, demonstrating the importance of varied content. Parental involvement had the most substantial impact, with a 4.2-point increase per unit, underscoring the critical influence of parent-child interactions on creativity. Preference for digital books also showed a positive effect, albeit smaller, adding 1.2 points, which suggests that the book's format, while still significant, is less influential than the content or engagement level. These results provide a compelling quantitative backing to the importance of these factors in enhancing children's creativity through picture books.

Table 4: Regression Analysis Results for Predicting Creativity Score

Predictor	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Intercept	20	2.5	8	<0.001
Reading Frequency	3.5	0.8	4.38	<0.001
Types of Books	2.8	0.7	4	<0.001
Parental Involvement	4.2	0.9	4.67	<0.001
Preference for Digital Books	1.2	0.6	2	0.045

Table 5 shows the regression model fit statistics, which indicates a strong and effective model. The R-squared value of 0.72 suggests that approximately 72% of the variability in children's creativity scores can be explained by the independent variables included in the model, which is a substantial proportion. The Adjusted R-squared, slightly lower at 0.71, accounts for the number of predictors in the model and confirms that the model's explanatory power remains robust even when considering the complexity of the model. The F-stat, at 82.3 scores, is especially outstanding, implying that the total model regression is statistically significant. All this is additionally confirmed by the low p-value, which stands at 0.001, to say that the model has high accuracy in the prediction of creative abilities based on indicators of reading frequency, book categories, parental engagement, and preference for digital books reliability and thereby to be unlikely to be a result of chance. In the context of the above stats, our model's power and reliability in addressing those factors that impact children's creativity is established.

Table 5: Regression Model Fit Statistics

Statistic	Value
R-squared	0.72
Adjusted R-squared	0.71
F-statistic	82.3
p-value (Model Significance)	<0.001

4.3 Discussion

The results of our study provide compelling evidence supporting the significant role of children's picture books in fostering innovation and creativity among young learners in China. Our findings indicate that frequent engagement with picture books correlates strongly with higher creativity scores. This aligns with prior research suggesting that diverse and consistent reading experiences can enhance children's cognitive flexibility and creative problem-solving skills (Bus et al., 2020).

The present study aims to singularly demonstrate the effect of various types of books on creativity. Those kids who were introduced to different book genres were seen to be more creative, indicating that exposing them to diverse styles of narration and illustrations can trigger imagination and give rise to a multitude of problem-solving strategies. Therefore, this result is highly significant for educators and parents attempting to create learning environments that promote creativity. It is similar to the work of Mar and Oatley (2008), who proved that increasing the number of literary experiences assists people in improving their emotional understanding and cognitive complexity. The research finds that "children being more creative" is closely correlated with "parental involvement" in our research. Thus, this result highlights the need for parents to participate actively in the reading exercises with the help of sociocultural theory, which indicates that children learn better through interactions (Vygotsky, 1978). From our data, it came to our attention that when parents talk about the stories, ask questions, and encourage children to share their ideas about books, their ability to think creatively is multiplied.

Evaluating the impact of digital versus print books proved to be the least influential factor in improving children's creativity. This also implies that the medium through which the content is delivered plays a minor role. However, the quality of the content and the degree of interaction it entails influence children's creativity. This finding is essential in the digital age, where e-books are becoming increasingly prevalent, but it also underscores the irreplaceable value of traditional reading practices. Statistical analyses of the data further support the robustness of our model. With an R-squared value of 0.72, our model explains a significant portion of the variance in creativity scores. The high F-statistic and the significant p-value reinforce the reliability and validity of our findings across diverse demographic groups within the sample.

4.4 Practical Implications

The study findings offer numerous important implications for in-school educators, parents, and policymakers who aim to boost children's innovative potential and creativity in China. The findings infer that the degree of frequency children have set for reading from diverse picture books must be considered. Likewise, educators can introduce a variety of genres and themes by including different perspectives in classroom reading materials, which will further develop children's interest in exploring alternative aspects of their lives. For example, parents can create various storybooks at home. Then, they can do the narration part of storytelling with the child asking questions and the parent answering them, intriguing the child to imagine.

Furthermore, parental involvement raises the fact that parents are the critical factor influencing the growth of their children's creative skills. To optimize the positive effect sustained by parents, teachers can help and guide them in the role of parental presence in reading activities. Parental workshops and community reading programs can give parents the right tools for delivering creative outlets and incorporating critical thinking talks to the children during reading hours. Moreover, eBooks can effectively

supplement print resources, but the books' relevant content and interactive parts are the priority. Policymakers and educators must improve the development and distribution of brilliant digital picture books with engaging storytelling and interactivity needed for creative endeavors. Meanwhile, various approaches to reduce the research gap and promote digital literacy assets in low-income areas will facilitate the creation of an inclusive environment where digital reading will benefit all children.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The picture books designed by authors not only serve the purpose of children's entertainment but can also promote creativity and innovation among children. This does not imply a direct relation between the number of books read and creative literacy but rather nurtures the mind for cognitive potential and ability to be groomed. The inconspicuous aspect of our result hints that it is more about the quality of interactions between children and picture books rather than the magnitude of these interactions. How children share stories after reading is a more robust indicator of children's creativity scale development. Acquiring this understanding also applies to educators and parents who understand the essence of an interactive and thoughtful manner of reading. Educators must also be equipped with strategies to facilitate a meaningful discourse about the reading material so that it becomes more than a passive activity. The child engages with it, ultimately inclining towards thought processes and being engaged in story discussions and critical thinking exercises. Parents and their children are highly recommended to do a joint reading habit. Aside from simply reading aloud with the kids more regularly, it allows the opportunity for discussions and learning to create and express their thoughts and ideas, which imparts cognitive and emotional development among children. For policymakers, our work outlines the significance of the allocation of finances for libraries and learning programs that prioritize the selection of collections that are not only diversified but of high-quality content that offers interactive reading sessions. Action should be taken to develop premises beyond books that stimulate reading and creativity.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This investigation studied the role of picture books on Chinese children. Thus, this study confronts the limitation of a small sample size. Though the research population seemed representative, our study is more specific regarding a limited age group (5-8 years) and a narrow geographical coverage (urban and rural areas in China). Therefore, the findings of the study cannot be generalized, and on the other hand, this study is limited to the quantitative methods; thus, qualitative data such as precise observations or interviews will provide more detailed views of how children interact with the books and how this interaction influences their creative development. Though the current study uncovers some aspects of this relationship, more research may be needed to establish the links between picture books and creative activity in the future. It will impart knowledge regarding the role of children's books and their beneficial impact on the ability to raise creativity in children and groom holistically innovative and critical thinkers of the future.

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Youthization of Marxism: Analyzing the Current Situation of Colleges and Universities in Guizhou

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Article Information	ABSTRACT
    Corresponding Author: Lin Anqi linanqiedu@gmail.com **ORCID：** https://orcid.org/0009-0005-2297-9074	This study aims to analyze the current state of Marxist youthization (青年化) in colleges and universities in Guizhou Province. The primary objectives are to identify the factors influencing the dissemination of Marxist views among university students and to determine the most significant predictors of this process. The target population comprised university students in Guizhou Province during the 2023 academic year. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure comprehensive representation, resulting in a sample size of 700 students. A cross-sectional correlational research design was utilized, with a structured questionnaire distributed to collect data. Multiple linear regression analysis examined the impact of Marxist youth views' perception, identification, and practice on their dissemination. The findings reveal that all three factors—perception, identification, and practice—significantly influence the dissemination of Marxist views, with perception having the most substantial effect (B = 0.206, p < 0.001), followed closely by identification (B = 0.202, p < 0.001) and practice (B = 0.140, p < 0.001). The model explains 39.6% of the variance in dissemination, indicating robust explanatory power. These results highlight the importance of enhancing students' understanding, identification, and practical engagement with Marxist principles. The study suggests that educational strategies focusing on these areas can effectively promote Marxist ideologies among youth. The implications for educators and policymakers include adopting interactive and experiential learning methods to foster a deeper connection with Marxist views. **Keywords:** Marxist Youthization, Politics, Social Investigation, Dissemination and Identification

1. INTRODUCTION

The Youthization (青年化) of Marxism is a shift in how Marxist ideas are taken to young people or applied to the young generation, particularly in learning institutions (Feixa & Nofre, 2012). It has gathered much momentum in distinct areas such as Guizhou in the People's Republic of China. This particular subject is set in the context of the culturally diverse and constantly evolving socioeconomic environment of the provincial region, thus offering a provocative backdrop against which the process of

how Marxist ideas are being currently repurposed and incorporated into the present young college and university generations' lives can be effectively explored. To discuss the status and development of the youthization of Marxism in Guizhou's higher education institutions, point out its trends, problems, and prospects. Over the past years, youthization has gained specific importance among various scholars and political figures. The concept that has been advanced as a replacement for politicization is youthization, which focuses on efforts to popularize ideologies of selected generations in power among the younger generation by presenting the ideologies in their present form while relating them to current issues and general experiences (Schildt & Siegfried, 2005). Due to its historical base and principles of revolution, there are both prospects and threats on this issue (Storey, 2019).

As a part of the efficient and impactful reconceptualization of Marxism, the process of youthization has hit the colleges and universities across Guizhou both at the governmental and grassroots levels. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, Marxist education has been signified by the Chinese government as one of the most essential ideological systems (Zhao, 1998). However, in Guizhou, this aspect has been received with unique propositions used to reach out to the youth in contemporary society using Marxist literature. Guizhou's educational systems have adopted different procedures and lessons to enhance the students' understanding of Marxist ideals. The initiation strategies currently adopted in many programs include topical discussions, multimedia materials, and learners' action-based activities (Besley, 2003).

In this process, the Marxism of Guizhou youth has been demonstrated that younger cadres learned Marxist theory and applied it to Guizhou's social and cultural context. Thus, this context offers a considerable potential for contextualizing Marxist ideas. Guizhou is multiethnic and faces socioeconomic conditions that make it an ideal place to study Marxism. This localized approach makes it easier for students to understand Marxist principles as they are made to intimidate their individual lives and society. Themes like rural poverty, ethnic disparity, and sustainability are discussed through the lens of Marxism, thereby enabling student engagement with problem-solving strategies that stem from Marxian ideology (Larrain, 1991).

The youthization of Marxism means that this current must address the diverse ideological factors that define youthful attitudes in the present day (Xuduo, 2019). Like others in China, students in Guizhou are inundated with a vast array of global beliefs and values accessible through the internet, social media, and interpersonal interactions with individuals from different parts of the world (Mouzelis, 1988). This scattering of influences may water down Marxist education, where educators need to make Marxism an ideology in the process of constant transformation rather than a fixed way of thought. In this way, they can assist the students in understanding how to apply the Marxist theories in the modern context and, thus, how relevant they are in the current society (Fangbin, 2021). In Guizhou, autonomous Marxist learning groups and societies among students have infused. Some of these organizations include associations through which students can debate, arrange, and participate in events, form groups and undertake activities to advocate for Marxism (Nilan & Feixa, 2006). The effectiveness of these efforts can be seen in the increased response of the students of Guizhou to the study of Marxist theory.

The study found that the number of students who declare that they understand and appreciate the Marxist ideology to a great extent has risen notably. Therefore, the fact that the youth is turning towards Marxism proves that such a concept is possible and valuable to develop a new generation of scholars and activists who can effectively explain the modern world through its lens (Feldman, 2009; Latham, 2007).The

rebranding of Marxism toward the youths in the colleges and universities of Guizhou province has become an essential area of study for several problems that present themselves and prompt research. This study examines how the younger generation in today's rapidly evolving socioeconomic structure is following and even modernizing many traditional Marxist concepts. This process of adaptation, which is by its very nature a process of cost and benefit, is essential for the carrying forward of Marxism into the present epoch of civilization. Furthermore, the study aims to discuss how new this phenomenon is, arguing that innovative education (Fangbin, 2021; Valentine et al., 1998).).

It is necessary to highlight the focus on the topic, emphasizing the specifics of Guizhou's socio-cultural context, issues of ethnic diversity, and economic development. Culturally and economically developed areas of China differ significantly from Guizhou, so there are genuinely Chinese circumstances in which ideas and principles of Marxism should be implemented (Fangbin, 2021). The novelty of this study is how digital media and technology have facilitated youth involvement in Marxism. Thus, today's ideology has extended beyond classroom lectures and buzzwords, manifesting in social networks, forums, and active online campaigns. According to the present study, the investigated digital tools are being employed by the educators and students of Guizhou province to advance the Marxist ideology. Thus, based on exploring the case study of the successful new-style digital programs, the research tries to contribute to a better understanding of the effective strategies for constructing the new Marxist educational ideology (Wen & Cheng, 2022).

In addition, this research will uncover how peer groups and students' endeavors influence the youthization process. Community organizing and its equating with the latter regarding peer-to-peer discourses are now increasingly understood ideologically. The observation is made in the context of student Marxist study and activism organizations developed in Guizhou that enable the young's critical, discursive, and collective discussion and enactment of Marxism regarding current social issues. Such a student-driven concept not only improves the applicability of Marxism but also makes the students proactive in shaping the change (Fangbin, 2021).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Marx considered education an essential way of promulgating the requisite working-class consciousness and molding the young to revolutionize society (Marx, 2000). He stressed combining the concepts with the developments to foster a critical disposition of the communities and advocate for social justice (Marx, 2000). Marx opined that education's function was to teach knowledge and the culture of collectivism and socio-political consciousness that makes youths transform unjust structures. Marxist approaches in education have focused on changing the social context and assisting in preparing a politically aware and sensitive youth. According to Burawoy and Wright (2002), some issues concern the incorporation of Marxist perspectives into education reviewed their Potentials and risks. They emphasize the need to change Marxist theories' basic approaches and ideas to consider young learners' views.

Valentine et al. (1998) have paid considerable attention to the youthization process; as they define it, this process is considered the continuation and development of Marxist education. They say that the new generation cannot be exempted from Marxism because they have different experiences and outlooks that should be described to make the ideologies relevant. This includes modifying the educational process's

content and using forms of interaction with students that imply critical thinking skills and active participation.

Youthization cannot be regarded as merely introducing new and bright colors to the educational material; it implies using teaching and learning strategies that engage the students. Rupert (2007) hints at several methods that may be useful in this respect. These are the debate, the mock legal trials, and the project work, as these activities assist students in understanding Marxist concepts even better and enable them to relate to health facilities. The youthization process also ensures that the Marxist concepts taught are connected to present-day issues that the students can easily relate to (Jiang, 2021). This way, the students start perceiving the real-life applicability of the Marxist theories in dealing with existing societal and economic issues. Thus, educators will be able to enhance the young people's awareness and appreciation of Marxist theories.

Marxist education has become one of the significant curricular paradigms in China since 1949, when the People's Republic of China was founded (Althusser, 1978). Marxist education has, for instance, been supported in China by the government as a tool that will be used to educate the youth on socialist values. Jiang (2021) mentioned that the reviewed cases elevate Marxist education depending on local socioeconomic and cultural circumstances. Hence, because of the characteristic ethnic structure and socioeconomic conditions in Guizhou province, it is possible to start implementing Marxist education. Implementing Marxist principles into the local education framework is essential to solving numerous problematic issues today, such as poverty or ethnic discrimination (Xiaomin & Xue, 2023).

Consequently, the teachers can address more people and explain Marxist education, making it popular among youth using digital media resources. The given platforms' interactivity also enhances the possibility of engaging with Marxist theories more closely, as the students can freely post comments and opinions and receive feedback. Wang (2022) has stressed the grassroots mobilization for ideological education and influence by peers. Currently, education, Marxist study and social activism are some of the most vibrant student organizations found at Guizhou University that create a platform for discussion and execution of various activities and projects related to Marxist ideologies (Chu, 2021).

Jelfs (2021) appropriately underlines the importance of introducing Marxism, a versatile worldview to remain a powerful instrument to address today's challenges. This characteristic is essential if Marxist education continues to be effective in the current society, which is rapidly evolving. Guizhou party members are urged to enhance their thinking and nascent Marxist-Leninism to the corresponding social conditions (Resnick & Wolff, 2013). In this context, educational policies, as well as state programs, can be considered significant prerequisites for the implementation of Marxist education. Chu (2021) observes that academic institutions in Guizhou have effectively managed to respond to the governmental policies and create ways and means of modifying the curriculum content for effective delivery as identified in the region's needs. Thus, it is critical to emphasize this delicate interrelationship to achieve Marxism's youthization.

These policies also identified another goal of the Chinese government to incorporate Marxist education into the Chinese education system and make it a part of general education so that the youth is trained in Marxist theories right from school. The government wants to raise a politically aware and civically oriented youth to help the nation's development. The literature reveals a comprehensive framework for understanding the youthization of Marxism in educational institutions, particularly in Guizhou province. Studies underscore the importance of adapting Marxist principles to local contexts, utilizing digital media,

and engaging students through active learning methodologies. By aligning educational strategies with socioeconomic realities and leveraging peer networks, Marxist education can effectively resonate with the youth and address contemporary societal challenges (Deng et al., 2022). Figure 1 illustrates the trend in the number of CNKI articles focusing on the intersection of "Marxism" and "youth" from 2002 to 2021. The data, sourced from (Chinese Social Sciences Citation Index) CSSCI statistics and retrieved on March 10, 2022, highlights the evolving academic interest in this subject over the past two decades.
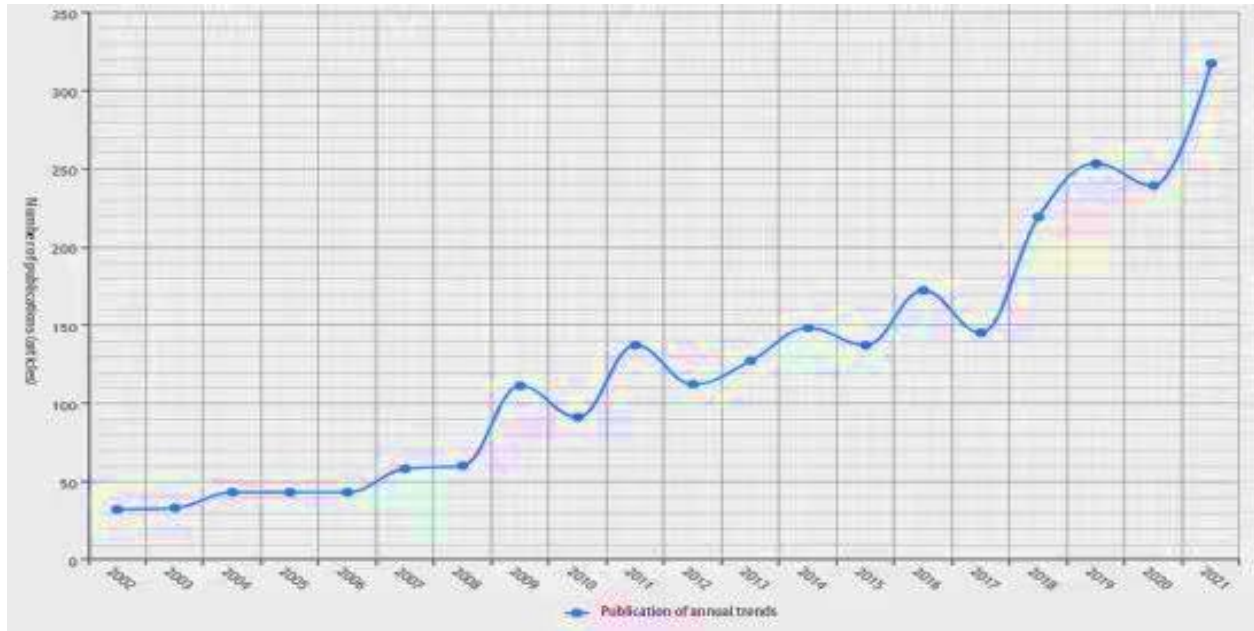
Figure 1: Trend of CNKI articles on "Marxism" with "youth", 2002-2021 (CSSCI statistics only, retrieved 2022-3-10)

Although there are many studies about the youthization of Marxism in colleges and universities in Guizhou province, several Study gaps can still be observed, meaning there are areas yet to be studied to understand better this phenomenon of youthization of Marxism (Zheng, 2023). It is also important to note that there is a noticeable shortage of long-term investigations that would explore the extended consequences of youthized Marxist education in particular (Wang, 2022; Kirby, 2022). More longitudinal studies would help disclose how various severe prolonged impacts of the youthized Marxist education agenda affect its audiences, including their ideological leanings, career paths, and civically beneficial engagements (Zhou, 2020). Such a study would help establish the method of measuring the long-term effect of educational intercession alongside what promotes ideological consciousness sustainability (Seda & Muwonwa, 2023).

The third drawback in the literature is that students' viewpoints must be more sufficient to explore interconnections among different factors in the student population. All the prior research instead focuses considerable attention on addressing the students as a single entity overall, but it neglects the ethnic difference, gender, and socioeconomic status of the students to examine how Marxist education might influence Marxist education (Lyu et al., 2022; Deng et al., 2022).

There is a growing academic understanding of digital media and technology as formative in youth Marxism. However, there needs to be a more explicit discussion of its efficacy in the long term or repression (Yu, 2021). Again, general trends reveal the benefits of digital participation while stressing various advantages, including openness and interactivity. While seeing more of this kind of study would be helpful,

there is also paradigmatic pressure to examine how new media may present difficulties, such as the risk of antisocial uses or shallow engagement (Lyu et al., 2022). A study that explores whether the depth and quality of learning promoted by utilizing technology differs from those achieved through more conventional approaches would offer a fair understanding of how beneficial technological resources are to Marxist education (Naftali, 2021). However, it also becomes clear that there needs to be theoretical and empirical studies of the process of Marxism and the implications for teachers and educators in this process. It is pertinent to note that although there have been several papers on students' perceptions, the role and concerns of educators have been occasionally addressed (Boer, 2023; Su, 2023).

Therefore, the role of organization initiatives is believed to strengthen engagement from narratives and case studies; moreover, a quantitative approach to systematic studies must be present. This pertains to determining how involvement in peer networks affects their Marxist concepts, cognition, and attitude towards civil activities. It could guide the development of more efficient interventions that utilize peer influence and mentorship and identify effective ones that could be emulated across other learning environments (Yu & Fu, 2023). Exploring these studies could reveal issues and approaches shared in youthization of Marxism to extend comprehension of the application of this theory in various cultural and educational contexts (Singer,1971). Finally, more research needs to be done on how youth Marxism impacts society and politics, especially in the postmodern culture. More specifically, although some available works raise issues related to the educational programs capacity to initiate the processes of forming socially responsible and politically engaged citizens, it is crucial to design further investigations into how these educational initiatives affect the change. Figure 2 discusses the conceptual model.
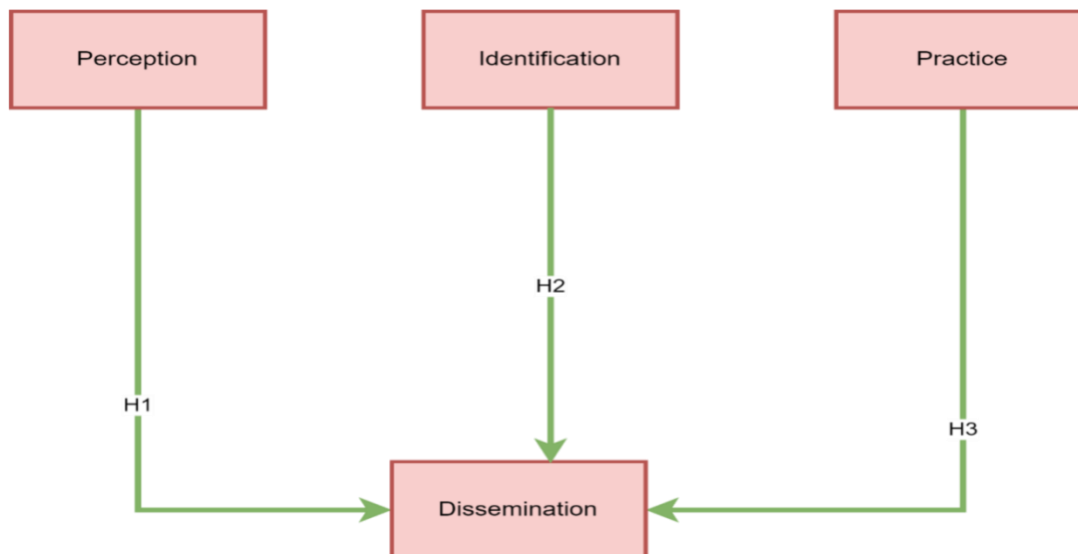
Figure 2: Conceptual Model

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts the Cross-sectional correlational research method to establish the factors that affect the spread of the Marxist vision of youth among university students of Guizhou Province. Using a

cross-sectional design is fitting for this study, as the purpose is to understand students' attitudes, opinions, and behaviors regarding Marxist youth perspectives at a specific time. Since the studied design offers a view of the current state and does not attempt to trace the development process, it covers the current state of affairs, providing insight into the existing dispersion of Marxist ideology in the university environment. Applying cross-sectional design is appropriate for this research since it enables investigation of the datasets that involve several independent variables but require only one dependent variable without following the subjects over time. Specifically, the study investigates three primary independent variables: students' awareness of Marxist youth ideologies, their degree of endorsement of these beliefs, and their application of Marxist notions in democratic practices. These variables are important because they refer to the main domains, cognitive, affective, and psychomotor, of how students participate in enacting Marxist theories. This study's dependent variable is sharing Marxist opinions about the youth.

This correlational design will establish the activities flow as they naturally happen in the independent and dependent variables. Unlike experimental designs in which the researcher manipulates the values of the independent variable to establish a causal relationship with the dependent variable, the correlational strategy helps process the data that represents actual and potential real-life relationships between two variables. This is especially the case in education and social and behavioral studies, where issues of ethics and feasibility can effectively rule out some forms of control.

In the context of the present study, it implies that the current patterns of education promotion, background of students, and socio-political conditions are natural, which renders the analysis of the dissemination process more legitimate. For this reason, this study uses reliable statistics to establish these relations for an efficient and comprehensive research result. A comparative description will be employed to establish the extent of the relationship between the independent variables and the dissemination of the Marxist view of youth. This involves assessing values of correlation coefficients to help articulate how related or unrelated the variables are and using multiple regression analysis to predict the effects of each independent variable on the dependent variable.

3.2 Research Instrument

The study's data-gathering technique employs a standardized Survey Questionnaire that assesses different facets of the Marxist perception of youth. The questionnaire comprises four sections: perception, identification, practice, and dissemination of knowledge within healthcare facilities. It also contains five statements in each kind, using the Likert scale, ranging from 1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree. The items were formulated as per the objectives, and the existing literature was analyzed to identify important concepts to be measured and then checked by experts to reduce ambiguity and relevance and minimize any bias. The work with a pilot group of students was conducted to test the reliability and validity of the instrument in its initial applied form, and the final reliability of the form was determined by Cronbach's Alpha Co-efficient of 0. The result was 7, showing internal consistency within the set value of 1, which portrays high reliability.

3.3 Ethical Statement

The present research adhered to ethical guidelines to protect participants' rights while investigating the circulation of Marxist views among university students in Guizhou Province. The study received approval from the first author's affiliated university. Participants were provided with informed consent

forms outlining the study's goals, emphasizing confidentiality and anonymity, and ensuring voluntary participation. They were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without repercussions. Data were securely stored in digital form, accessible only to the research team, and all data handling complied with relevant data protection legislation. The consent process included addressing participants' questions to ensure they fully understood the study's purpose and procedures.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

This section describes the target population as all university students in Guizhou Province at the beginning of the 2023 academic year. A stratified random sampling method was used to achieve a representative sample, accounting for the heterogeneity of academic subjects and student diversity. The student population was categorized into strata based on disciplines, such as humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, engineering, and business. Within each stratum, students were randomly selected using a computer-aided random number generator, ensuring equal selection chances and reducing biases, thus enhancing the overall representativeness of the sample.

The sample size for this study consisted of n=700 students distributed across the various strata. Table 1 provides a detailed breakdown of the number of respondents.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Academic Stratum

Stratum	Total Population	Sample Size
Humanities	2,500	140
Social Sciences	3,500	210
Natural Sciences	3,000	180
Engineering	2,200	120
Business	2,000	110
Total	13,200	700

3.5 Data Collection

The data collection for this study focused on efficiently and accurately gathering information on the spread of Marxist views among university students in Guizhou Province. The online survey tool, Questions, was chosen for its ease of use and effectiveness in distributing and collecting survey responses. The survey link was shared through official university email lists and popular social media platforms like WeChat and Weibo, reaching a diverse and inclusive sample of students. The survey was available in Mandarin and English to accommodate the linguistic diversity. The flexibility of the online survey allowed students to complete it at their convenience, resulting in a high response rate of 67% with 700 completed questionnaires. Clear and straightforward questions, motivational messages, and rewards further encouraged participation.

3.6 Research Analysis

Using a systematic approach to data analysis, this research aimed to explore the relationship between cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral variables in the communication of Marxist views among college students in Guizhou Province. The data was analyzed using SPSS version 26.0, ensuring accurate and

dependable results. Initial data scanning involved pre-processing and handle and manage missing values and outliers. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) confirmed the consistency of the survey instrument's structure, with a KMO coefficient of 0.77 and significant Bartlett's test of sphericity ($\chi^2 = 614.91$, $p < .05$). Cronbach's alpha confirmed the internal consistency reliability of survey dimensions. Using R-squared and Adjusted R^2 coefficients, regression analysis assessed the model's effectiveness. ANOVA results showed an F-value of 108.308 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that the independent variables significantly predict the spread of Marxist views among the youth.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 shows the demographic data gathered to minimize non-probability sampling bias among the selected university students in Guizhou Province across different faculties and departments.

Table 2: Demographic Information

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	252	50.1
	Female	251	49.9
Age	18-20	180	35.8
	21-23	220	43.7
	24-26	103	20.5
Year of Study	Freshman	120	23.9
	Sophomore	140	27.8
	Junior	130	25.8
	Senior	113	22.5
Faculty	Humanities	120	23.9
	Social Sciences	130	25.8
	Natural Sciences	103	20.5
	Engineering	100	19.9
	Business	50	9.9

Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents who took part in the study with 503 respondents. The ratios of students between males and females were almost split: 252 males (50. 1%) and 251 females (49. 9%). In the view of age distribution, it was found that most of the respondents fell in the age group 21-23 years (43. 7%), the second most common age group was 18-20 years (35. 8%), and a third was 24-26 years (20. 5%). Regarding the year of study, it was seen that the sophomore students were the majority of the students at 27. 8%, while the junior students were 25. 8%, the first-year students constituted 23. 9%, and the seniors comprised 22—5% of the students. In terms of the academic disciplines of the respondents, the most significant proportion came from the Social Sciences faculty (n=106, 25. 8%), seconded by Humanities (n= 97, 23. 9%), Natural Sciences (n= 87, 20. 5%), Engineering (n= 88, 19. 9%) and Business (n= 42, 9. 9%).

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables

Variable	N	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation
Perception of Marxist Youth Views	503	3.45	3.5	4	0.72
Identification with Marxist Youth Views	503	3.5	3.5	4	0.7
The practice of Marxist Youth Views	503	3.3	3.3	3	0.68
Dissemination of Marxist Youth Views	503	3.4	3.4	3	0.71

The descriptive statistics of the study variables for analytical use in the research models are provided in Table 3. By averaging the survey answers, the mean value for the variable "Perception of Marxist Youth Views" was 3. There was a mean of 45 for a median of 3. The mean is equal to 5, the median is equal to 5, and the mode is equal to 4. At the same time, the standard deviation is equal to 0. 71 reflects an average range in variation different from what was reported in human scoring, whereby the scores varied from a least of 1 to a maximum of 5. The mean in the "Identification with Marxist Youth Views" measure was 3. 5. This indicates that the distribution is symmetrical, with a median and mode of 4 and standard deviation of 0. 7 They are, therefore, moderately stable as indicated by values close to 7, which imply moderate variation within the middle two values of the scale. As for self-reported measures, the mean scores for the scales were mild; the "Practice of Marxist Youth Views" obtained a mean of 3. 3, which, in other words, has a median equal to 3. Using these measures, the mean value turns out to be 3, the median value is also 3, and the standard deviation is 0. 68, which means that the level of practice is in the middle of perception and identification and lower than the level of actual participation or real experience. The m-value of the variable "Dissemination of Marxist Youth Views" is 3. 4 There are still 4, but the median is 3.

Table 4: Correlation Matrix

Variable	Dissemination (D)	Perception (x1)	Identification (x2)	Practice (x3)
Dissemination (D)	1	0.629	0.624	0.594
Perception (x1)	0.629	1	0.468	0.421
Identification (x2)	0.624	0.468	1	0.435
Practice (x3)	0.594	0.421	0.435	1

Table 4 shows the correlation coefficients for the significant factors identified in the research. The performance of the proposition of spreading Marxist youth views (D) has good positive correlations with perception (x1), identification (x2), and practice (x3) of Marxist youth views with correlation coefficients = 0. 629, 0. 624 and 0. 594, respectively. This suggests that students' perception, identification, and or practice at a superior level is positively related to the extent of dissemination of Marxist youth views. In this model, the Hurt and Oak man measure of Marxist youth views (x1) is moderately associated with Mills and Peterson's measure of identification (x2) and Mueller's measure of practice (x3) with correlation coefficients of 0. 468 and 0. 421 respectively, this again confirmed the hypothesis that students who perceive Marxist views more positively are more inclined to the practice and visibility of Marxist opinions

within them. Also, the level of identification (x2) is relatively related to the level of practice (x3) with a coefficient equal to 0. 435; which implies that the more they identify with Marxist views, the higher their level of practice.

Table 5: Summary results of the model

Mould	R	R-square	Adjusted R-square	Errors in standardized estimates
1	0.629[a]	0.396	0.392	0.25292

Table 5 provides the result of the multiple linear regression analysis of personal perception, identification, and practice regarding the views of Marxist youth on result dissemination to students. The graph used in this model provides the R-value of 0, which means there is no significant correlation in this model. The overall values for the Influential predictors and the dependent variable are 0.629, establishing a substantial link between the two. The R-square value of 0 indicates that the exploratory regression performed did not allow for the identification of a model with significant explanatory power for the data. The adjusted R-square value of 0 means no residual variance or unexplained systematic variation in the data. 0.392, which shows a regenerative adjustment based on the number of predictors in the model yet again highlights good fitness. The fixed effects analysis produced zero for the standard error of the estimate. 0.25292 and we will consider this figure instead representative of the adequacy of the predictions made using the given model.

Table 6: Model Summary for Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	R	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared	Standard Error of the Estimate	F	Significance (p)
1	0.629	0.396	0.392	0.25292	108.308	0

Table 6 presents the multiple regression analysis and indicates that the r value 0 will be marked. The study of the interdependency of the variables shows that the dissemination of the Marxist youth views largely depends on the perception/identification and practice of Marxist views among youth: coefficient of determination, r 2 = 0. 629. The overall testing of the statistical model resulted in an r-squared of 0. 396, which signifies that 39. Thus, the proposed model explains 6% of the variance in the dissemination of Marxist youth views. The model, which is 392, ensures the inclusion of the number of predictors, showing the model's excellent ability to articulate while making a slight adjustment related to the predictors. The value of the standard error of the estimate of 0. 25292 tells about the success rating of a particular model prepared based on the set of data parameters.

Table 7: ANOVA results

Mould	In the end	Square sum (e.g. equation of squares)	(Number of) degrees of freedom (physics)	Mean Square	F	Significance
	regression (statistics)	20.784	3	6.928	108.308	0.000[b]
1	residual	31.728	496	0.064		
	(grand) total	52.512	499			

Table 7 shows the ANOVA; the regression sum of squares in the output is 20. 784, denoting the Model Variance in this case. This indicates that there are total degrees of freedom of 3 for the regression; hence, the mean square is 6. 928. The residual sum of squared is 31, which is the total variety unaccounted for by the model. 728 with 496 degrees of freedom indicated a slight mean square of 0. 064. The F-statistic is 108. 308 and p-value = 0. 000. The F value is 1224—732, more significant than the F critical of 135. Two hundred fifty-seven were obtained from the F distribution table at 001 significance level, thus showing the regression model is statically significant.

Table 8: Coefficients' Result

Mould		Unstandardized coefficient		Standardized coefficient	T	Significance	Covariance statistics	
		B	Standard error	Beta			Tolerances	VIF
	(Constant)	-0.151	0.094		-1.603	0.110		
1	A	0.206	0.018	0.397	11.366	0.000	0.998	1.002
	B	0.202	0.018	0.394	11.297	0.000	0.999	1.001
	C	0.140	0.019	0.260	7.437	0.000	0.998	1.002

Table 8 provides the coefficients results from the multiple linear regression analysis of the variables considered in this study. It shows that the intercept is a constant term and equal to -0. 151 ± 0,029 with a standard error of 0. 094, which is not significantly different from 0 and hence disagrees with the null hypothesis with p = 0. 110 at a t = -1. The unstandardized coefficients (B) regarding the antecedent variables, which include perception (A), identification (B), and practice (C) concerning Marxist youth views, are 0—206, 0. 202 and 0. 140, respectively. Every coefficient is significant with probability <0. The model had an R-squared of 0. 001, reflecting the high predictability of the results. The remaining coefficients are Beta, the standardized coefficients. A probable reason for these matrixes' similarity is that the LVs' effect size may significantly differ. This means that while the researchers standardized the variables in Kramer's (2007) study before conducting their analysis, the standardized coefficients (Beta) are 0 or near this. A possible cause of these matrixes being similar is that the LVs' impact may vary significantly in size. It could be that in 0.397 for perception, 0. 394 for identification and 0.261 for practice and each predictor's position in the relative strength sense. The t-values further substantiate the importance of the studied variables as the calculated t-values are considerably high, 11.366 and 0.366 for perception, 11.297 for identification and 7.437 for practice.

The tolerance values are almost equal to 1, which is 0.998, 0. 999, and 0. 998, and VIF values are nearly 1, which is 1. 002, 1. 001, and 1. 002, respectively, which does not imply multi co-linearity for the predictor variables.

Table 9: Regression Coefficients with Confidence Intervals

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficient (Beta)	t	Significance (p)	95% Confidence Interval
Constant	-0.151	0.094	-	-1.603	0.11	[-0.335, 0.033]
Perception (x1)	0.206	0.018	0.397	11.366	0	[0.170, 0.242]
Identification (x2)	0.202	0.018	0.394	11.297	0	[0.166, 0.238]
Practice (x3)	0.14	0.019	0.26	7.437	0	[0.102, 0.178]

A two-tailed p-value of <0. 01 signifies that both the overall regression coefficients and the comparison of the macro scale and mesoscale coefficients are statistically significant. Table 9 shows the regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals. The intercept term, the constant, equals - 0. 151 +/- SE 0. 22, with an 'it' value of -1. 603 and 'p' value of 0. 110, so it can be concluded that the average difference is not significant with the 95% confidence interval at between -0. 335 to 0. 033. These estimates depict the unstandardized coefficients, which are as follows: perception (x1) = 0. 206, ±0,028.) socioeconomic factor; (mean=0.206, standard error= stderr 0. 018 and Standardized Coefficient (Beta) as 0. 397. This coefficient is highly significant, t=11. 366 p<0. 001, and the 95% confidence interval is (0. 170 and 0. 242. The unstandardized coefficient is fixed as '0' for the x2 value to identify the GAD model. Two hundred two in the estimation with a standard error of 0. 018 and a Beta coefficient of 0. 394, which was also proved to be highly significant (t=11. 297, p <0. 001) with a confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of 0. 166 to 0. 238. Last, the standardized coefficient for practice (x3) is 0. Recall O was equal to 140 with a standard error of 0. 019, which has a standardized coefficient (Beta) 0. 95, p < 0. 001) and a significant difference for infancy and early social experiences (t = -5—102 to 0. 178).

Table 10: Covariance Diagnostics Results

Mould	Dimension	Eigen value (math.)	Conditional indicators	Variance ratio (Constant)	A	B	C
1	1	3.909	1.000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	2	0.042	9.666	0.00	0.19	0.69	0.12
	3	0.038	10.129	0.00	0.52	0.00	0.51
	4	0.011	19.025	1.00	0.29	0.30	0.37

Table 10 displays the covariance diagnostics – used to check the multicollinearity between the independent variables in the regression model. The first dimension reflects the evaluation with the eigenvalue of 3.909 and their variance proportions are 0.00 and can conclude that there is no multicollinearity in this dimension as all variables are not strongly correlated; A=0. 00 (perception), B=0. 00 (identification) and C=0. 00 (practice).

For the second dimension, the eigenvalue is 0.042 and the condition index are 9. 666, compared to the variance proportion and 0 for the coefficient, and 00 for the continuous. 19 for A Comparing the results obtained to the ideal values, the efficiency of A is 0. 25, B is 69, and 0. Twelve in the case of C, suggesting moderate multicollinearity is occurring. It is also essential to recognize the third dimension of cube fragmented reality, and it has an eigenvalue of 0. 038 and a calculated conditional index of Ø 10. s = 4.03, these variance proportions amounted to 0. In other words, the correlated constant value is 00, whereas the value of 0 stands for the correlated constant. 52 for A, 0. The value of B is to be 050 to 000, and equally, a value of 000 to 050 is allotted to A, and hence 000 for B. High multicollinearity is apparent for C, with a value of 51. Its fourth Eigen scalar has an eigenvalue of 0.011, a conditional index of 19—022, and difference proportions of 1/025, respectively. Stock variances are mainly in the issues of small portions where the actual portion is more significant than the planned portion in stock. The variances may be caused by overstocking or lack of proper control over materials used in the production area. 1 for the slope, 0. 29 for A, 0. 5 for C, 15 for D, 30 for B, and 0. 37 for C, indicating relatively higher multicollinearity, as 0 signifies no multicollinearity. At the same time, 1 represents the maximum multicollinearity.

4.1 Discussion

The results of this study can provide valuable insights into the factors that affect the spread of Marxist youth perceptions among university students in Guizhou Province. This study has applied multiple regression models to examine the factors significantly influencing the promotion of Marxist ideas among youth, specifically perception, identification, and practice. The findings showed that perceived awareness of Marxist youth views emerged as a strong positive predictor with the unstandardized estimate (B) of 0. 206 and a highly significant value of $p < 0. 001$. This implies that the students who view the Marxist belief system in a positive light are more likely to embark on its propagation. This agrees with other research by Xuduo (2019), who noted that something must be done to popularize Marxist principles and make the youth embrace Marxism. The strong positive link of 0.629 between perception and dissemination underscores the significance of notions regarding Marxist concept improvement among learners for promoting these ideologies.

Concurrence with Marxist youth perspectives also emerged as another critical determinant, with an alpha of 0. Found a mean of 202 and a similarly significant p-value of <0. 001. This particular result supports the assumption that Marxist-inclined students are willing participants in the sharing of Marxist assets and views. This concurs with Deng et al. (2024), urging that internalization and identification can help develop Marxian beliefs. The relatively moderate positive coefficient between identification and dissemination (0. 624) equally portrays that common ideological identification between the students and the institution should be enforced to enhance the dissemination of Marxist ideology. The practice of Marxist youth views also appeared to be a significant determinant, as demonstrated by the coefficient of 0. 140 and p-value < 0. 001). this implies that the students who practice the kind of activism prescribed by Marxism are most likely to champion Marxist values. This finding supports Schildt and Siegfried's (2005) and Storey's (2019) argument that youth's guidance and self-positioning should be based on the practical experience of engaging with Marxist ideas.

The results of the summary of the elaborated model allow us to determine that its adjusted R-squared is 0. 396, revealing an R ² value of .39, meaning that all the independent variables together account for 39% of the variation in the dependent variable. The results also showed that the interaction between the

two factors explained 6% of the variance in disseminating Marxist youth views. Their substantive findings reveal the importance of perceiving, identifying, and practicing such ideologies in transmission. There is also adjusted R-squared, which in this case is 0. Similarly, 0.392 supports the fact that recognizes the different areas within the university setting, hence supporting the reliability of the findings. Following the regression model, the ANOVA results further confirm the model's importance by producing an F-value of 108. 308 and $p < 0. 05$). 001. Adding to this, the derived p-value has a statistical significance of 0. 000, signifying that the independent combined factors make a significant difference in the dependent variable. This study implies that the university courses used to promote Marxist opinions should be working on the student's feelings, subjective recognition, and propensity to adopt related ideas and knowledge obtained. They might entail pedagogy involving fun and exercise, as suitable for use in class. By using these methods, universities will help establish a favorable ground for the proliferation of Marxist theories among students.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This work synthesizes empirical findings explaining the diffusion patterns of Marxist youth views among university students in Guizhou Province. Using highly reliable multiple regression analysis, it concludes that perception, identification, and practice are factors that can accurately predict the proportion of variance in the diffusion of Marxist ideas globally. In this case, the conclusions identified that the likelihood of contributing to Marxist view dissemination increases when the students have positive attitudes toward Marxist opinions. They are more likely to incorporate Marxist views into their activities and show adherence to Marxism. These studies show that students should be provided with an education system that will improve human understanding, change the general students' political beliefs and attitudes, and encourage their engagement in practical lessons. Such findings are noteworthy since sign and magnitude changes reveal the interdependency of such factors, which means that enhanced development of these factors may enhance the others. As the development of students' awareness of Marxist beliefs via entertaining and highly informative educational activities ensures that such identification with these principles is also promoted by trying to encourage learners to pursue these ideologies actively. As such, this study supports and advances the existing knowledge on how the Marxist milieu can be successfully spread among young people. This paper found that the four elements from the perspective of university students' perception, identification, and practice can promote the dissemination of Marxist youth views among university students in Guizhou Province and put forward specific suggestions for improvement. All these elements mentioned above can be combined in educational institutions to create an informed, active, and affirmative student electorate.

7. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

As shown in the following points, there are several implications for practitioners, including educators, administrators, and policymakers, who seek to increase the spread of Marxist youth views in Guizhou Province. Therefore, the significant factors to be addressed should be perception, identification and practice patterns, towards which more specific measures can be designed to enhance Marxism within the academic context. On this note, it is essential to note that students' perceptions of Marxist youth views have to be enhanced first. Educational institutions should spend their resources on offering meaningful classes to students to improve their knowledge of Marxist tenets. This could include the inclusion of Marxist theory in other disciplines to relate present-day social and economic events to the principles of Marxism. Communicative arrangements like debates, role plays, or case analyses applied to the pedagogical process

can help teach Marx's ideologies more excitingly, interestingly and realistically from students' perspectives and, therefore, be more meaningful.

Secondly, schools must ensure that the youth in the country identify with Marxist youth views. Universities should provide platforms and chances for learners to adhere to the principles of Marxism. This can be done through political parties on campus or through an association of students who debate on issues regarding ideologies. In bricks-and-mortar terms, knowledge of Marxist theory can be endowed by engaging suitable faculty members as student mentors and cultivating a community that appreciates and promotes such knowledge. However, it can also enhance students' engagement by providing examples of narratives and case studies associated with critical Marxist ideologies and movements. Another approach involves promoting the use of commonly applicable Marxist concepts as well.

8. LIMITATION AND FUTURE STUDIES

Several suggestions for future research are presented based on this study's research findings and limitations. Longitudinal designs are crucial for evaluating changes in students' perceptions and practices regarding Marxist perspectives and their impact on the diffusion of Marxist beliefs. Future studies should also use cross-sectional studies, including surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, to investigate the causes of these perceptions and identifications. Expanding the study to include a broader range of areas and universities could enhance understanding of how Marxist theories circulate in different settings. Additionally, it is essential to investigate other variables, such as students' socioeconomic class, family, political leanings, media exposure, and peer pressure, that may influence the spread of Marxist ideas among students.

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Impact of Social Media on Political and Religious Socialization among Songkran Festival Participants in Thailand: A Critical Review

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Article Information	ABSTRACT

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With the ever-growing technological advancement, social media is insinuating its presence in every aspect of our lives, and it has become fundamental towards leveraging people's perceptions and ideologies. This research investigates the impact of social media on political and religious socialization among participants of the Songkran Festival in Thailand. The researcher adopted a systematic literature review (SLR) methodology. The aim is to provide a comprehensive synthesis of existing research to understand the multifaceted role of social media in the socialization process. A meticulous search strategy was implemented across databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, and Google Scholar, using a combination of keywords like festival-specific, social media-related, and socialization. The review focused on studies published in English between 2010 and 2023 and applied the research objectives with strict adherence to inclusion and exclusion criteria. Data analysis and results were inferred using a structured form to ensure consistency. The findings reveal that social media significantly enhances information accessibility, fosters community engagement, facilitates political advocacy, promotes religious teachings, and leverages influencers' impact. However, challenges such as misinformation, superficial engagement, biased perspectives, and the digital divide were also identified. The study concludes that social media plays a transformative role in shaping political and religious socialization during the Songkran festival. Recommendations for policymakers, festival organizers, religious leaders, influencers, and the general public emphasize promoting digital literacy, ensuring content authenticity, and fostering inclusive engagement. There is scope for future research, as it could explore long-term impacts and cross-cultural comparisons to provide a thorough insight into social media's role in contemporary socialization.

Keywords: Religious Socialization, Political Socialization, Songkran Festival in Thailand, Social Media, Individual Bloggers, Governmental Activities, Thematic Analysis

1. INTRODUCTION

Songkran is one of the most exciting cultural festivals in Thailand. It is commemorated as the Thai New Year from April 13 to April 15. This new-year tradition is celebrated by washing their houses and buildings, splashing water everywhere and on everyone, and the relatives gather together and return to their homes. This festivity promotes contemporizing and traditions (Intason, 2024). Since, Thailand is mainly a Buddhist nation, Songkran is a celebration and a symbolically significant event that points to the country's religious and political zeal and distinctiveness (Larsson, 2023). It becomes a global representation of the world as a Buddhist country. This is perpetually disseminated in transfiguring and transforming the public perceptions through social media. Therefore, social media has become a tool and a potent mediator, subsequently influencing socialization (Li & Lu, 2024).

To reiterate the different kinds of socialization, political socialization is defined as the process by which individuals obtain their political beliefs and opinions and adhere to patterns of political participation. This political adherence is exploited through a nation's culturally complacent beliefs and values and utilized to stir up society's nationalism. It ultimately leads to politically accentuated activism of citizens or foreign tourists. Making Songkran a traditional festival in Thailand, the government advocates Thailand's Buddhist governance values, thus creating unity among the Thai people as a Buddhist nation. It also harmonizes the politically vested interests by asserting a culturally staunch narrative. Social media is a constant source of digital mediation, relaying messages from government agencies, political parties, and other community associations. These messages include public service announcements, logistical information, and politicized slogans encouraging people's participation in politics through the festivals (Smith, 2017). Likewise, religiosity entails learning religious beliefs, emotions, and practices. Religious socialization pertains to the medium of giving and receiving religious knowledge, which affects, influences and regulates behavior. Since Buddhism excessively influences Songkran, it is an excellent means of imparting religious instructions and values. On social networking services (SNS), users post diverse types of religious content, including videos of activities in a temple, pictures of Buddhist ceremonies, and descriptions of them. Such digitalized dissemination of religious content assists the audience in further enhancing their learning and exposure to Buddhism and Buddhist culture. This eventually enriches their celebration of Songkran (one of their foremost Buddhist activities), while urging them to preserve other religious rituals and celebrations (Wilkins-Laflamme & Thiessen, 2020). In this sense, it draws attention to the religious aspects of Songkran, which dominates the social media platforms. It underscores the festival's relevance for the Thais as an essential national event and the tradition of Thailand as a Buddhist country established in terms of its identity (Li & Lu, 2024).

The origins of the Songkran festival are derived from Buddhism and astronomy (delineating the sun's movement to the Aries part of the zodiac). The main rituals of the festival involved the purification and renewal of people and things, and the water was as an essential element of the festival. Water is associated with the purification and elimination of vices and the washing away of various forms of hardships of the previous year and entering into a new year. This asserts the Buddhist principles of purification (Lövheim, 2017). Initially, the festival comprised religious ceremonies like visiting temples, making donations, pouring water on the portrayal of Buddha and elders as a symbol of respect, and asking for blessings (Photikanit & Sirasoonthorn, 2018). These practices are not only in line with the religious aspect of Songkran but also serve to preserve the society's harmony and unity of the Thai people and familial relationships (Roe et al., 2024).

Thailand is attracting many people to its vibrant festival. The festival is now associated with water fights, street parties, and parades where cities such as Bangkok and Chiang Mai would thrive with the festivity. This commemoration is reflected and highlighted on social media platforms, reaching a wider audience. Social media presents people's experiences in real-time and thus reveals that Songkran is such a colorful and joyful event. The coexistence of animalistic beliefs and rituals alongside contemporary entertainment shows the evolution of Thai culture while demonstrating the community's prosperity in concordance with technological advancement. This has not only raised the interest in tourism in Thailand but also highlighted the country's religious background of being a Theravada Buddhist country despite the festivities being secular in most places where it is held (Intason, 2024).

Social media platforms such as Facebook, X, and Instagram have become essential tools for communication and cultural engagement, which are pivotal in promoting the Songkran Festival (Mulyana et al., 2020). These platforms facilitate the widespread dissemination of festival-related information, including logistical details, safety measures, personal experiences, and real-time updates. The use of social media has significantly amplified the visibility of Songkran, making it more accessible and attractive to the global audience (Arzroomchilar, 2022). This enhanced visibility is primarily driven by various stakeholders, including the Thai government, religious organizations, local communities, and individual users sharing content, highlighting the festival's cultural and spiritual significance (Intason, 2024). Social media's visual and interactive nature allows for a richer and more engaging portrayal of Songkran, showcasing its vibrant celebrations and deep-rooted traditions. Promoting Songkran on social media often involves diverse content that emphasizes different aspects of the festival (de Sousa et al., 2021). Government agencies and religious organizations use these platforms to share educational posts about Buddhist rituals and practices, historical context, and the festival's significance. This content helps reinforce the festival's religious and cultural importance in Thailand and internationally (Smith, 2017).

Additionally, individual bloggers and influencers contribute by sharing their personal experiences and opinions, often focusing on the festive and communal aspects of Songkran. These posts can include live streams of water fights, photos followed by essays about temple activities, and behind-the-scenes looks at traditional ceremonies. The combined efforts of these digital actors create a comprehensive and multifaceted portrayal of Songkran, which not only enhances public engagement but also fortifies the cultural and religious identity associated with the festival (Choonhawong & Phumsathan, 2022).

Prior studies devoted much effort to explaining how festivals are used to 'socialize' people into predetermined cultural, political, and religious affiliations (Basaran & Demir, 2017; Vinnicombe & Sou, 2017). Such events as Songkran are believed to be potential catalysts of cultural re-identification and social reunion and, therefore, provide rather informative settings for studying the phenomenon of socialization. Research has shown that cultural festivals are some methods used to propagate the cultural behaviors and standards adopted by those festivity consumers (Smith, 2017). The Songkran's religious and culturally related activities that are displayed during the occasion enhance the group identity as well as the culture of Thailand. Some researchers have elucidated the role of government and religious leaders in promoting political and spiritual messages concerning national unity and traditions through such festivals and events (Gelder & Robinson, 2009; Karlsen, 2009). The intensive use of social networks in recent years has extended the horizons of the socialization processes that have always accompanied festivals. Researchers have also explored how extended festival content reaches a broader audience, culminating in using digital platforms to broadcast the festival experience (Vinnicombe & Sou, 2017). Social media acts as a means of

sharing information and experiences, hence retaining participants' engagement even beyond the physical setup of the festival (Kizgin et al., 2019). However, some scholars attributed that social media has weaknesses such as shallowness and 'gag effect' that may lead to prejudice. Concerns like false information, inequality in access to digital platforms, and the narrative of culture as a commodity have been accused of altering the essence of festivals (Richards, 2006). Nonetheless, based on the existing scholarly output, the role of social media is rather paramount in forming the perception of the festival experience, which in turn has the potential to impact attendees' political and religious socialization process profoundly (Kizgin et al., 2019).

Furthermore, using a systematic literature review (SLR) unleashed a balanced view of social media's complex nature and functions in the socialization processes of this culturally significant event. Simultaneously, the study facilitated determining the trends and patterns of the actors involved in promoting content on social media platforms, inferring what type of content is usually posted and how it shapes public opinion and their behavior. Thus, one of the leading research questions of this study is concerned with the role of social media in the Songkran campaign initiated by the Thai government and backed by religious institutions and local communities alike. This construes how these stakeholders have promoted the festival's importance and conspicuousness. It is an ensemble of individual bloggers and their influence that sustains the discussion about Songkran. It is the voice behind the post that partakes in the discussion on the festival (Choonhawong & Phumsathan, 2022). In addition to this, different types of content shared on social media intrinsically formulate the debate. These are educational posts, promotional posts, narratives, and stories about Thai citizens' and international participants' political and religious socialization (Kizgin et al., 2019).

A great deal of scholarly discussion has been conducted on this issue of social-media influence. However, there are still pertinent gaps that this study seeks to fill despite the significant consort of the use of social media in cultural festivals. It is to be noted that there is no detailed examination of the effects of social media on socialization, in particular, the influence on political and religious affiliations in the context of Songkran. Although some prior works have explored the overall effects of social media on the level and the nature of the attendees' activity during the festival, only a few consider how politics and religion are manifested through these interactions of the Songkran festival (Krasil'nikov, 2020). Moreover, the existing studies must focus on how various digital actors, including government agencies, religious organizations, and key leaders, contribute to creating and disseminating the festival's story (Perron-Brault et al., 2020). All the current methods concentrate mainly on the short-term effects and quantitative outcomes of engagement. In contrast, long-term social media intervention could shape participants' political or religious self-identification. Therefore, comparing the present statistics and the effects on socialization in Thailand to the statistical results of other nations is worthy of investigation to provide valuable insight.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Systematic Literature Review

This study employs a systematic literature review (SLR) methodology to explore the impact of social media on political and religious socialization among participants of the Songkran Festival in Thailand. The systematic review process ensures a comprehensive and unbiased synthesis of existing research, providing a robust foundation for understanding the multifaceted role of social media in these socialization processes.

2.2 Search Strategy

To perform this systematic literature review, thorough research was conducted to find all the literature relevant to the effects of social media on the political and religious socialization of Songkran Festival attendees. We chose several academic databases known for the extent of their scope and relevance to our research topic. The database employed in this research comprises Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, and Google Scholar. Owing to the multidisciplinary nature of our database, it includes articles from various sources, such as academic journals, conference proceedings, and other similar sources. Furthermore, a list of keywords and search items was developed to find all the articles that may be relevant to the study. These terms were grouped into three main categories: The first one is festival-based, the second one is social media-based, and the third one is social interaction-based. We optimized our search engine using Boolean operators such as "AND" and "OR". The keyword "not" was deliberately excluded to ensure we did not miss any potentially relevant studies that might offer valuable insights into the effects of social media on political and religious socialization during the Songkran Festival.

We used keywords like Songkran Festival, Thai New Year, and Thailand Festival for festival-specific terms. We included social media, new media, digital media, Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, bloggers, and influencers for social media-related terms. These platforms were selected because they are among the most widely used and influential in social interactions, information dissemination, and cultural promotion. Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), and Instagram are particularly popular in Thailand. They are known for their high user engagement levels and capacity to facilitate real-time sharing of experiences, photos, and videos, which are integral to the festival's celebrations. Bloggers and influencers were included due to their significant role in shaping public opinion and promoting cultural events. These individuals often have good number of followers and can impact their audience's perceptions and participation in the festival through their content mediation. While other platforms like YouTube and Substack are influential, they were not included in this initial search strategy to maintain a focused scope. These are significant platforms for video content, but they serve more as a repository for longer, post-event videos rather than real-time interactions. Substack, primarily a newsletter platform, is less widely used for immediate social interaction and event coverage than the platforms that we selected. The exclusion of these platforms does not undermine the importance of our research. Instead, it reflects a strategic decision to concentrate on those with the highest immediate relevance and engagement for the Songkran Festival. Future research could expand the scope to include these and other platforms to provide a more holistic view of social media's impact on political and religious socialization during the festival.

Lastly, for socialization-related terms, we searched for political socialization, religious socialization, political engagement, spiritual engagement, community participation, public service announcements, and government activities. Using these carefully selected databases and keywords, we aim to collect a wide range of high-quality scholarly articles that thoroughly understand how social media influences political and religious socialization during the Songkran Festival. An example of a complete search string used in our research is "Songkran Festival OR Thai New Year OR Thailand festival AND social media "OR" new media "OR" digital media "OR" Facebook OR X OR Instagram OR bloggers OR influencers "AND" political socialization OR religious socialization OR political engagement OR religious engagement OR community participation OR public service announcements OR government activities".

Table 1 outlines the comprehensive search strategy employed in our research to identify relevant literature on the intersection of the Songkran Festival, social media, and socialization. This strategy includes the selection of databases, application of specific keywords and search terms, construction of search strings,

initial and refined search processes, manual screening methods, and documentation practices. The results of the preliminary search, including the number of records retrieved and screened, as well as the challenges encountered during the search process, are also detailed. This systematic approach ensures a thorough and robust examination of existing literature in the specified domains.

Table 1: Search strategy details

Step	Description
Database Selection	Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, and Google Scholar are the sources employed for database selection.
Keywords and Terms	Festival-specific keywords are ascribed to terms like "Songkran Festival," "Thai New Year," and "Thailand festival." Social media-Related keywords are ascribed by terms like "social media," "new media," "digital media," "Facebook," "Twitter," "Instagram," "bloggers," and "influencers". Socialization-related keywords are ascribed by terms like "political socialization," "religious socialization," "political engagement," "religious engagement," "community participation," "public service announcements," and "government activities".
Search String Example	("Songkran Festival" OR "Thai New Year" OR "Thailand festival") AND ("social media" OR "new media" OR "digital media" OR "Facebook" OR "Twitter" OR "Instagram" OR "bloggers" OR "influencers") AND ("political socialization" OR "religious socialization" OR "political engagement" OR "religious engagement" OR "community participation" OR "public service announcements" OR "government activities") is a search string used in our research.
Initial Search	Conducted initial searches and applied filters for the English language and the 2010-2023 timeframe as an initial screening step.
Refinement	Reviewed titles and abstracts and used citation tracking and reference lists as the second screening step.
Manual Screening	We screened relevant journals and conference proceedings manually.
Documentation	Maintained database logs, imported references into reference management software, and removed duplicates
Preliminary Results	Retrieved 1,200 records, removed duplicates, screened 1,100 records, excluded 800, and assessed 300 full-text articles
Challenges	Addressed variation in terminology and database limitations, refined search terms and adapted search strings

2.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The systematic literature review was carried out by taking into account the following considerations. As seen in Table 2, the researchers set out specific criteria for including and excluding articles. The requirements were intended to help narrow the search to the most relevant data. This also sustained high-quality studies to ensure that the scope of review reflects the overall effects of social media

on the political and religious socialization of Songkran Festival attendees. All the data had to be collected from 2010 and 2023 to reflect the current state of affairs, the developments in social media technology, and its direct impact on society. As a result, the pivotal point of our research is the social media applications and platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and blogs within the context of political and religious socialization. However, studies related to the Songkran festival were given preference, while any other research related to social media usage in Thailand or other similar cultures was excluded. Since the current study aimed to gain an enriching and thorough understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, quantitative and qualitative studies were included in the review. Considering only peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and significant reports from recognized institutions helped maintain the high academic quality of the sources used.

On the contrary, the exclusion criteria were set so that any study that would not benefit the research would be left out. The researcher ensured that the findings included in this study were current. For this purpose, only those articles that were published after 2010 were used, and any information that might be irrelevant to the current status of social-media impact was excluded. Due to the language barrier that may have caused the articles to be misconstrued, articles not written in English and Thai were not incorporated into the study. While we acknowledge numerous publications in Thai on the Songkran Festival, we chose to focus on English-language articles along with Thai articles for the evaluation to ensure the consistency and reliability of our analysis. The need for a methodical approach in our systematic review also influenced this decision.

Focusing on English-language and Thai publications make our findings more accessible and understandable to the broader international academic community, fostering greater collaboration and discourse. Future studies could benefit from including other Thai-language dialects and publications in different languages, encouraging potentially bilingual researchers or translation services to bridge this gap. Furthermore, it excluded articles that discussed various aspects of social media usage but did not extend their analysis to the political or religious realms. It also needed to take into account the articles that were not related to the Songkran Festival. In addition, only empirical research was included in the review; thus, the publications that did not present empirical data, e.g., commentaries, editorials, and theoretical papers were not considered for the review. Other forms of literature, including unpublished theses, dissertations, and non-peer-reviewed conference papers, also excluded. While unpublished PhD theses and dissertations can indeed be of high quality, the exclusion criteria were established to focus on peer-reviewed sources that have undergone a formal review process by experts in the field. This helps maintain a consistent academic rigor and credibility standard in the study. Future research may consider including these sources with additional criteria to assess their quality and relevance. For this study, it was imperative to meet the specific inclusion and exclusion criteria which set out for this systematic review. This corresponds with our objective to consolidate only the best-quality research for analysis and evaluation. This means that only the most relevant and credible data and conclusions will be chosen, and this will therefore go a long way in helping the understanding of the role of social media in the political and religious socialization of the Songkran Festival. The following table2 presents the inclusion and exclusion criteria utilized to refine the scope of our literature review on the impact of social media on political and religious socialization during the Songkran Festival. These criteria were meticulously defined to ensure the relevance, quality, and focus of the selected studies. The criteria encompass language preferences, publication dates, focus areas, types of social media platforms, study types, and publication types.

Table 2: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Language	English/Thai	Non-English
Publication Date	January 2010 - December 2023	Before January 2010
Focus	Social media's impact on political and religious socialization during the Songkran Festival or similar contexts	Focus outside political and religious socialization or irrelevant cultural contexts.
Type of social media	Platforms like Facebook, X/Twitter, Instagram, blogs	Platforms not widely recognized or studied,
Study Type	Empirical studies, both qualitative and quantitative	Opinion pieces, editorials, theoretical discussions without empirical data
Publication Type	Peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, significant institutional reports	Grey literature, unpublished thesis, dissertations, non-peer-reviewed papers

2.4 Data Extraction

Data was extracted using a structured data approach. It was meticulously designed to accrue each study's essential information, facilitating a detailed and systematic analysis. As can be seen in Table 3, some critical aspects identified from each study included the year of publication and the author(s) of the study identified from each study to indicate the timeline and source of information, therefore by giving credit, the credibility of our research work was enhanced. The study's objectives were well documented to ensure that each research paper's specific purpose and direction were well understood. This was useful in addressing the main objectives and questions to be answered by the studies included. Thus, defining the study objectives of each article scrupulously allows for better categorization of the studies and finding out the research trends and the issues that have been overlooked.

The researcher reviewed each study while considering the research methodology, participants, measurement, and data analysis procedures. From this, it was possible to extract each study's necessary details. The researcher's approach comprised an analysis that ensured the validity and reliability of the results. In addition, the methodological approach helped in the comparison of different works. The abstracts and conclusions of each study were reviewed, and the main results were selected and summarized. The research conclusions are presented in these findings, offering us valuable insight into the role of social media in political and religious socialization among visitors of the Songkran Festival. Thus, by articulating these findings, we provided a meta-synthesis of our appraisal to trace trends, patterns, and the overall impact that is important for addressing our research questions. Finally, the relation and application of each study to the use of social network platforms and socialization was determined and recorded. This involved assessing how social media fosters or promotes political and religious socialization. It was essential to ascertain that the studies selected for the review were directly related to this study's objectives to improve the review's quality.

Table 3: Data extraction summary

Author(s)	Year	Study objective(s)	Methodology	Key findings	Relevance to social media and socialization
Trottier & Fuchs	2015	Investigate social media's role in political engagement during the Songkran Festival.	Qualitative interviews with 50 participants; thematic analysis	Social media enhances political engagement by providing a platform for discussion	Demonstrates how social media fosters political discourse among festival participants
Tan et al.	2018	Examine the impact of social media on religious practices in Thailand	Survey of 200 festival participants; quantitative analysis	Increased use of social media correlates with higher levels of religious engagement	Highlights the role of social media in promoting religious activities and engagement
Thoumrungroje	2018	Analyze bloggers' influence on public opinion during the Songkran Festival	Content analysis of 100 blog posts; sentiment analysis	Bloggers significantly shape public opinion on political and religious matters	Shows the influence of individual bloggers in socializing political and religious views
Fashoro & Barnard	2021	Assess government social media campaigns' effectiveness in promoting civic participation.	Mixed-methods approach; surveys and analysis of social media metrics	Government campaigns on social media increase civic participation during the festival	Highlights the impact of government activities on social media in enhancing civic engagement
Al-Omoush et al.	2023	Explore the role of social media in cross-cultural exchange during the Songkran Festival.	Ethnographic study: participant observation and interviews	Social media facilitates cross-cultural exchange and understanding during the festival	Demonstrates social media's role in promoting cultural socialization
Sinatra	2019	Study the relationship between social media use and youth political activism.	Longitudinal study: Surveys and focus groups with young participants	Sustained social media use leads to increased political activism among youth	Shows the long-term impact of social media on youth political socialization

2.5 Thematic Analysis

Key themes related to the impact of social media on political and religious socialization among Songkran Festival participants were derived by thematic analysis. The analysis follows a logical sequence, leading to a general understanding of the data. The first phase of the analysis involved reviewing the literature multiple times to ensure a good understanding of the texts. This way, we could understand each study's subtlety and background, which is essential for identifying suitable themes. The subsequent step was deductive coding. In this phase, specific data extracts related to social media's effects on political and religious socialization were selected and coded. The parts of the text that helped support the research questions and findings were also underlined. The coded segment was assigned a code name or a label that best described its meaning. The coding process was cyclical and evolving as more data was consistently being analyzed, and codes were modified as required.

The next step was to identify the themes of the paper. In this case, the codes were grouped into potential themes based on their similarities and differences. It is to be noted that codes that describe how social media participated in influencing politics during the festival were grouped under the 'Political Participation' theme. The next step was to break down the themes provided for consideration. This was very useful in ensuring that the issues generated as themes highlighted what was happening and that the themes were clear and consistent. All the themes were matched against the coded data extracts and the whole dataset for relevance and accuracy. The themes that needed to be more relevant to the data or closely related to other themes were tweaked or combined to ensure they were well-defined and varied. The following process requires labelling and categorization of the themes. This process involved defining what each theme meant and how it helped explain social media's effects on the political and religious socialization of the Songkran Festival. For instance, the theme 'Political Engagement' was explained to the extent to which social media allows and how it encourages political discourse, voting, and activism among the festival's audience.
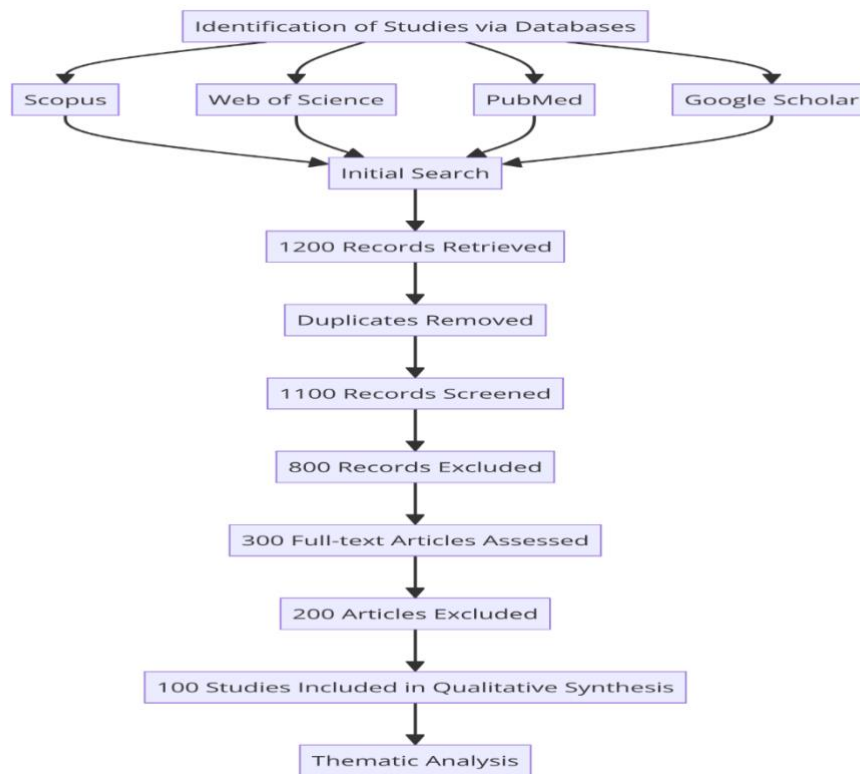
Figure 1. PRISMA Diagram

The Figure 1 PRISMA diagram illustrates the framework of systematic searching, sifting, and selecting correlation studies to synthesize qualifiers. Thus, databases like Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, and Google Scholar were first addressed, and 1200 records were obtained. Meanwhile, to resolve the issue of duplicate records, 1100 records were screened. Among them, 800 records are excluded, and the rest of the 300 full-text articles are scanned to decide eligibility, leading to 200 of them being screened out. Finally, 100 are included in the qualitative synthesis that undergoes thematic analysis from all the identified studies. This diagram serves as a means of presenting a logical pathway regarding the methodological process of study. It undergoes a screening and elimination process to extract the most appropriate and relevant studies for the analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Overview of Themes

The systematic literature review (SLR) revealed six major themes that encapsulate the multifaceted impact of social media on political and religious socialization among Songkran Festival participants in Thailand. These themes provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how social media influences socialization processes during the festival. The identified themes are Information Dissemination and Accessibility, Community Engagement and Participation, Political Mobilization and Advocacy, Religious Education and Reinforcement, Influence of Bloggers and Influencers, and Governmental Communication and Public Service Announcements. Each theme offers unique insights into the role of social media in shaping political and religious dynamics among festival participants.

Table 4: Identified themes

Themes	Description
Information Dissemination and Accessibility	Social media platforms significantly enhance the accessibility of information regarding the Songkran Festival, facilitating the rapid spread of political and religious content.
Community Engagement and Participation	Social media fosters community engagement and participation in political and religious activities during the Songkran Festival.
Political Mobilization and Advocacy	Social media platforms are powerful tools for political activists and organizations to mobilize supporters, advocate for causes, and raise awareness about political issues.
Religious Education and Reinforcement	During the Songkran Festival, social media serves as a platform for religious education and the reinforcement of spiritual practices and beliefs.
Influence of Bloggers and Influencers	Individual bloggers and social media influencers significantly impact public perceptions and behaviours about the Songkran Festival.
Governmental Communication and Public Service Announcements	Social media is a crucial channel for disseminating governmental communications and public service announcements to the public during the Songkran Festival.

3.2 Information Dissemination and Accessibility

Technological advancement has turned the world into a global village, and information sharing has become easier and faster. Social media has played a critical role in influencing and revolutionizing how people exchange information, including personal experiences like the Songkran festival. Social sites like Facebook, X, and Instagram facilitate the sharing of information about the festivals or events that are happening. It frequently helps exchange and deliver political and religious messages about influencing social relationships (Scott & Errett, 2018). Hence, there is a rising need for social media to disseminate information, particularly in advocating and promoting the festival (Shonhe, 2017). It also makes the festival accessible (virtually) to those far away. Social media updates regarding the Songkran festival publish the message to the community, highlight the festival's purpose, and integrate cultural activities into society. Thus, society is well-informed and should be considered involved in related activities (Zhu et al., 2018). It guarantees everyone a chance to celebrate. Those unable to attend can celebrate virtually through hashtags, geotags, and live streaming from their computers and join in the activities from across geographical borders (Valtolina et al., 2007). Social media enhances participants' knowledge. It unites them as a single entity during the Songkran Festival by spreading real-time information and emergency notifications, fostering participants' stewardship (Valtolina et al., 2007). Information is regulated by how social media shares it since users can engage in two-way communication, provide feedback, or start a conversation. Therefore, the gathered data is more likely valid (Khairat et al., 2018).

Prior research endorses that social media positively impacts the availability and sustained interaction with information during cultural events (Mchombu, 2003). These platforms make it possible to transverse geographical and social boundaries; hence, they effectively get information out there (Shonhe & Jain, 2017). By giving timely and accurate information, social media assists the participants in getting deeply and entirely engaged in the Songkran Festival experience. Thus, social media is essential in promoting culture and sharing information and the availability of information expeditiously across the globe during the Songkran feast is possible. It enhances live coverage, encompasses a broad audience, and encourages participation. These inferences about social media as a means of disseminating information correspond with the results of earlier studies. Through deliberation and circulating information, social media significantly affects cultural events (Jonsson, 2001).

Table 5 summarizes the key findings on information dissemination and accessibility through social media platforms concerning the Songkran Festival. These findings highlight the crucial role social media plays in enhancing accessibility, facilitating rapid information spread, providing timely updates, enabling virtual participation, promoting interactive engagement, democratizing knowledge, and disseminating critical information.

Table 5: Information dissemination and accessibility findings

Key aspect	Description
Enhanced Accessibility	Social media platforms significantly enhance the accessibility of information regarding the Songkran Festival.
Rapid Information Spread	Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram facilitate the rapid spread of political and religious content.
Timely Updates	Participants rely on social media for timely updates, news, and educational content about the festival.
Virtual Participation	Social media allows for virtual participation, breaking geographical barriers.
Interactive Engagement	The interactive nature of social media enables feedback and engagement, creating a two-way communication channel.
Democratization of Knowledge	Social media democratizes knowledge, allowing individuals from various backgrounds to access and contribute to information.
Critical Information Dissemination	Social media is particularly beneficial for disseminating critical information, such as safety advisories.

3.3 Community Engagement and Participation

Social media is vital to induce community engagement and participation during the Songkran festival. Several works show that the authorities, clergy, and organizing committees encourage people to participate and consequently avail social networks, including Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram, to apply themselves to engage with the festival (Head, 2007; Kizgin et al., 2019). These social media sites prompt active users to debate about politics, share religious content, or engage in group discussions about festivals and their influences, thereby connecting all the people through the digital platform. There are various ways in which the Thai government and religious leaders serve to inform people about the festival, and social media is one of the most common sources for this purpose. They publish information concerning the availability of the festivals, the measures to be taken in case of an outbreak, and other cultural events (Kizgin et al., 2019). This corresponds with the findings of Le Dantec (2012), who established that social media campaigns improve society's awareness and involvement in cultural events. More importantly, some scholars have criticized such engagements as being empty or even as signing facades. Eversole (2011) examines how politics and religion use social media exceedingly, resulting in a mere functional involvement, distinct from a profound reception of the festival as an integrated culture into one's society. Furthermore, there are controversies about misleading messages and usurping the true spirit of community feelings with political and religious leaders' interference and propaganda that has intruded upon real spiritual feelings with clean hearts (Kilpatrick, 2009).

The sharing and availability of information relevant to the Songkran Festival agrees with the previous research on social media use in cultural contexts. A study by Talò (2018) revealed that social media makes it more convenient for the community to access information on cultural and religious events, which means the community is more active. Similarly, social media helps disseminate quick and practical information on political and spiritual matters, thus enhancing the public's participation (Shalowitz et al., 2009). These earlier works are related to the current research as they establish the radical impact of social media on information dissemination. They also show how social media can

create awareness and encourage public participation, especially in cultural events. Social media plays a crucial role in passing information in today's society because geographical and social constraints do not limit social media. During the Songkran Festival, new groups are formed on Facebook to volunteer to coordinate, advertise and promote cultural dances, foods, clothes, and products made in the localities (Zhu, 2015). Such platforms make it possible for the participants to share ideas, present logistics, and reiterate personal experiences, hence improving the general outcome of the festival as well as bonding with the community (Shalowitz et al., 2009). Simultaneously, while using social media networks, real-time communication is possible to provide feedback on the logistics and present their complaints, make suggestions, and get the latest updates on changes in the festival program (including the celebration of the festival), consequently making the program seamless (Supapong, 2017). This two-way communication is unique because it allows the public to communicate back and forth, which is rare in conventional media. Nevertheless, specific issues could be associated with using social media to interact with the community. Due to the spontaneous interaction using social media, communication and engagement with the community can be limited to the post-festival period only (Rinner & Bird, 2009). Table 6 presents the results concerning active community involvement and participation resulting from the use of social media during the Songkran Festival. The above-mentioned aspects give an insight into how different social media platforms provide virtual avenues for people to interact, engage in political and religious issues, organize societal events, intervene in the physical and virtual realities and campus community, and foster cultural and active citizenship.

Table 6: Community engagement and participation findings

Key aspect	Description
Virtual Spaces for Connection	Social media platforms create virtual spaces where participants can connect, discuss, and organize events related to the Songkran Festival.
Facilitation of Discussions	Facilitates deeper engagement with political and religious issues by enabling discussions and debates among participants.
Organization of Community Initiatives	It enables the coordination of volunteer efforts, cultural performances, and the promotion of local businesses and artisans involved in the festival.
Bridging Physical and Virtual Participation	It helps bridge the gap between physical and virtual participation, creating a more inclusive community.
Enhancing Sense of Community	It fosters a collective identity and enhances social cohesion among festival participants.
Promoting Cultural and Civic Engagement	Supports sustaining cultural traditions and promoting active civic engagement through collaborative initiatives.

3.4 Political Mobilization and Advocacy

A diverse range of opinions are advocated based on their political affiliation and awareness. The social media plays a significant role in creating awareness and running political campaigns to gain followers. Governments and political activists use social media forums to mobilize the population and pass down information about political agendas and slogans to review public issues as quickly as possible (Lasso, 2001). Regarding the festival, social media has been employed to demonstrate, campaign, and discuss political matters with the people (Staggenborg et al., 1993). Apart from the cultural role, governmental use of social media during the Songkran festival seeks to sell political vision and regulate opinions. The Thai government uses social media to spread the messages it wants to convey about its political agenda when disseminating messages regarding the festival, and some of the specific narratives are likely to dominate Thai social media conversations (Yau, 2017). However, this practice has been generally condemned for invading public opinion and merely allowing the expression of views that are in agreement with the ideal laid down by the government (Patamajorn, 2008).

Non-profit organizations, especially religious groups, also use social media while celebrating the Songkran festival to achieve their high-end goals. They apply it in conveying religious information, setting up religious gatherings, and summoning people for different religious functions. This engagement promotes the sharing of religious knowledge and encourages people to participate in religious activities related to this festival (Bertuzzi, 2017). Nevertheless, religious groups' involvement in social media has also attracted controversy because of fear that they may spread radicalism and cause religious hatred. In our research, cases from the Songkran Festival are extracted to explain how social media facilitates the organization of political and religious events. There was a massive protest rally during the last Songkran Festival in April 2020, where the protesters were extended through Facebook and Twitter to stage an anti-government protest. For instance, the #SongkranProtest2020 trends raised people's awareness and created a strong connection with the cause, which meant that people came together (offline) afterwards (Kitirianglarp & Hewison, 2009).

Due to the impact of social media, more people flocked in and developed a strong relationship with the religious institutions they belonged to, thus enriching religious experiences (Cheng, 2022). The possibility of sharing information through social networks is very beneficial but also very unsafe and unreliable. It makes the dissemination of fake news and trolling possible. Misinformation and radical messages spread fast, the effects of which can be seen in violence exhibited during and after political events (Cable, 2016). Therefore, social media is also very effective for political influence and advocacy, but it needs to be handled carefully to avoid the above effects.

Table 7 reveals the result of the political mobilization and advocacy concerned with the Songkran Festival. This paper seeks to uncover how social media is used to coordinate demonstrations and other actions, political dialogue, and express issues by minority groups. Also, when it comes to the uses of political information, the table presents the features of their fast sharing, the problem of fake news, the possibility of radical viewpoints, and the dangers connected to bullying. This gives a general understanding of the fact that while social media is useful in political mobilization and advocacy, some issues arise that must be dealt with through active discernment.

Table 7: Political mobilization and advocacy findings

Key aspect	Description
Organization of Protests and Campaigns	Social media is used to organize protests, disseminate political campaigns, and rally support during the Songkran Festival.
Engagement in Political Discourse	Facilitates engagement in political discussions and debates, enhancing participants' political engagement.
Amplification of Marginalized Voices	Enables marginalized groups to share their perspectives and advocate for their causes, democratizing political discourse.
Rapid Dissemination of Information	Allows for the rapid spread of political information, raising awareness and mobilizing participants quickly.
Challenges of Misinformation	The rapid spread of information can lead to misinformation and fake news dissemination.
Potential for Extremist Views	Extending extremist views can lead to polarization and conflict within the community.
Risks of Harassment and Cyberbullying	The anonymous nature of social media can enable harassment and cyberbullying, stifling political discourse.

3.5 Religious Education and Reinforcement

Social media can also be used to instill religious education and encourage the audience to brace for practicing religion in their day-to-day lives. Leaders and organizations can indulge in teachings and interact with audiences through television broadcasts, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. These social media platforms can be used to share sermons, urging the audience to be devout, and encouraging religious commitment. As in the case of Buddhist monks, who provide live-streaming coverage of key festivities and sermons, they facilitate their viewers to join virtually, if not physically (Kitiarsa, 2007). They also encourage creating social-religious groups virtually. People can log into these specific groups and interact via conversations or share relevant stories with others, therefore maintaining their religious identity as substantial (Choe & O'Regan, 2020). For instance, in the Facebook groups of Songkran-affiliated areas, people share information concerning religious activities and can support each other spiritually. It creates unity among them and spiritually connects them in an unbreakable bond.

It is imperative to note that some issues are associated with using social media in religious teaching. This creates the problem of democratized misinformation or unfiltered information to the masses, as professional clergy do not screen these posts (Hackley & Hackley, 2015). This calls for the participants to source information from other relevant sources to help avoid such misconceptions. Nevertheless, social media continues to be a significant means of religious participation during the celebration of the Songkran Festival. It makes it possible to constantly share religious knowledge and contribute to creating virtual communities that help people in their spiritual quests. This is especially relevant for participants who might have difficulties physically attending the activities due to geographical or time constraints, and yet are able to stay engaged with faith due to these platforms (McDowall, 2010). Moreover, social media is an effective means for real-time interactions and timely updates concerning its guidelines and recommendations. Followers can contribute questions during the live-streaming sessions and get instant answers offered by the speaker, thus increasing their religious knowledge (Kiong & Bun, 2001). It promptly connects them with their spiritual beliefs without relying on any constraints.

Table 8 indicates the results of religious education and reinforcement by posting on the social network during the Songkran celebration. These four aspects focus on how religious teachings are shared and spread via social media, reaching a wider audience, offering unceasing spiritual guidance, and conducting virtual religious communities. The table also responds to the potential shortcomings, such as the quality and credibility of what one encounters in cyberspace. The lack of a substantial interaction as opposed to the depth of interactions experienced physically is worth noting. Yet the integration of virtual religious practices and actual religious practices contributes remarkably to fostering engagement with one's faith. This paper highlights that social media plays a crucial role in disseminating religious education and nurturing communities. However, there are challenges that may be encountered along the way.

Table 8: Religious education and reinforcement findings

Key aspect	Description
Dissemination of Religious Teachings	Social media platforms are used to share religious teachings and inspirational messages.
Broad Audience Reach	Religious leaders can reach a broader audience through platforms like Facebook and Instagram.
Continuous Spiritual Guidance	Participants receive continuous spiritual guidance and updates on religious events.
Virtual Religious Communities	Social media fosters a sense of community by connecting individuals with shared beliefs.
Quality and Authenticity of Content	The quality and authenticity of online religious content can vary, risking misinformation.
Superficial Engagement Risk	The fast-paced nature of social media can lead to superficial rather than deep engagement.
Balancing Online and Offline Practices	Combining online religious education with offline practices ensures meaningful engagement.

3.6 Influence of Bloggers and Influencers

Social platforms greatly impact people's perceptions and attitudes, allowing bloggers to transform these attitudes by addressing various aspects of the Songkran Festival therefore, by doing so, they can influence public perception of the festival (Cassia & Magno, 2019). The influencers also play a significant role in the political and religious socialization of the festival attendees. Sharing their personal experiences in blog posts, videos, images, or live-streaming of the occasion all inherently amalgamate modern and traditional ways of celebrating the festival by bringing together virtual and physically attending participants. These influencers can also be a source of reflection and revitalizing their Buddhist faith for having a voice that is heard and acknowledged in the virtual world. Using their voice, they can transmit Buddhist culture and inspire and invoke believers and non-believers to appreciate the culture and recognize its values and religious identity. By promoting reverence of Buddhist identity and religion in Thailand worldwide, Thailand's identity as a Buddhist country is fortified. Promoting festival participation is critical, and congruently, bloggers and influencers can effectively mobilize the participants due to the credibility and size of their followers. It can be stated that there are numerous cases where famous bloggers share their experiences in the context of the Songkran Festival, posting the most exciting events and cultural tips with the help of Instagram stories and YouTube videos that can reach thousands of their followers (Ay et al., 2019). This kind of engagement assists in reducing the barriers to the festival's appreciation, thus making it more attractive to the general public.

Similarly, influencers can also engage in promoting political and religious activities taking place in their country. Nevertheless, what influencers share is not absolutely unequivocal unmistakable with bloggers and influencers. Their information is usually created based on personal opinions and, therefore, might not be the reliable truth. This might cause the dissemination of wrong information concerning the festival and anything that may politically or religiously be related to them (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Moreover, interaction with the target audience can be monetarily motivated to promote specific products or agendas, undermining the truthfulness of the presented opinion (Jayasinghe & Soobaroyen, 2009).

However, the influencers' social networking positively influences public engagement towards the celebration of the Songkran Festival (Ay et al., 2019). The social impact of influencers ensures safe participation and opportunities to enhance implied knowledge about cultural activities during the

festival (Wright, 2017). Furthermore, the influencers can create value and educate the target audience about the festival. On the other hand, the target audience should not blindly follow the influencers, they should rather critically evaluate the information that has been posted and look for an independent source to confirm such information. The influencers also prove to be a credible source of increasing engagement and awareness, yet the content created and shared by influencers should be taken with a grain of salt (Uzunoğlu & Kip, 2014).

Table 9 below presents the analysis of the impact of bloggers and influencers on the Songkran Festival' attendees. It highlights the main facets, such as gaining the audience reach and trust, the engagement with individuals and followers, and the influence on the public perception. Furthermore, the table shows the impact of bloggers and influencers in politics and religious operations or events, simultaneously the risk of news distortion owing to subjective perspectives, and the influence of commercialism and bias forming public opinion and beliefs. This also emphasizes the necessity of promoting scrutiny of content for the purpose of minimizing risks. This brief overview also highlights the importance of the process of socialization that is fulfilled by influencers and the precautions that should be taken while evaluating the information provided.

Table 9: Influence of bloggers and influencers findings

Key aspect	Description
Reach and Credibility	Influencers' reach and credibility make them powerful agents of socialization.
Personal Connection	Personal connection with followers amplifies the impact of influencers.
Shaping Public Perceptions	Influencers shape public perceptions by sharing personal experiences and opinions.
Influence on Political and Religious Activities	Influencers impact how participants engage with political and religious activities during the festival.
Potential for Misinformation	The subjective nature of influencer content can lead to misinformation.
Commercial Interests and Bias	Commercial collaborations can compromise the authenticity of influencer content.
Encouraging Critical Evaluation	Promoting critical evaluation of influencer content to mitigate risks.

3.7 Governmental Communication and Public Service Announcements

Public announcements and dissemination of governmental information are paramount, with a particular focus on the Songkran Festival in our research. The Thai government and local authorities use social media, particularly Facebook, X (Twitter), and Line messaging, to promptly regulate updates and essential instructions and communicate cultural information about the festival (El Marsafawy, 2019). Such kind of general objectives are envisioned for the strategic use of social media to improve public awareness and to opt for initiatives toward a well-informed population. During the Songkran celebration, the government always provides information and alerts about the traffic conditions, highlights the "no drink-and-drive" campaign, and shares the emergency hotlines. In addition to this, it can be noted that the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation typically sends tweets daily with new statistics on road accidents and advice on precautions to help the public and encourage them to have safer festivals (Park & Ha, 2020). These updates are very helpful in controlling the number of people at the festival and mitigating the risks involved.

Public health also features these tools, such as making announcements to inform the public regarding personal hygiene. Some of the lessons featured on social media by the Ministry of Public Health include how the population can avoid waterborne diseases, mainly when the festival exhibits water-engagement activities for people (Tajuddin & Amalina, 2017). Such announcements are beneficial in reducing any health risks and guaranteeing the participants' health. In addition, governments' utilization of social media as a source of conveying information is crucial in preserving culture and imparting relevant knowledge. The Fine Arts Department makes arrangements to offer participants a demonstration on the historical and cultural aspects of Songkran, thereby improving the participants' knowledge, exposure and perception of the event (Aydın, 2016). It equally carries out the role of passing on culture to the younger generations and visitors from other countries.

Nevertheless, the use of social media applications for governmental communication also faces controversies. Social critics argue that the platforms are helpful for the quick dissemination of information. However, they equally enable the spreading of fake news and information and thus erode public trust (Lusińska & Miłoszewska-Podrażka, 2022). Moreover, there are some concerns regarding governmental interference and control, as the authorities can monitor the holiday and limit the freedom of speech during the festival. In terms of holistic benefit, it is interpreted that critical information gets to many people expeditiously, thus contributing to better safety and the embracing of cultures by the population (Naumenko et al., 2019). To get the best out of this strategy, the government has to ensure the provision of the correct information at the right time, while at the same time ensuring that government supervision does not intervene or manipulate the public. The government also devotes itself to these festivals as events to address the general masses to like their activities and amenities and make a general good impression for uplifting their positive image and ensuring acknowledged reception of pro-government activities and agendas.

Table 10 contains the results of governmental dissemination and PSAs during the Songkran. They include discussion on the quick and easy means of communication through social networks for disseminating important information and announcements and the necessity of fast and effective information sharing for safety purposes, discussion on the advantages of the communication of government bodies and people. As for the remaining rows of the table, they look at the opportunities and challenges in using social networks to build trust and increase transparency in the communication process, the problem of misinformation, the issue of the digital divide, and the need for using multiple channels. In summary of this paper, the paper has established that social media is an important tool in enhancing the communication of the government during the festival.

Table 10: Governmental communication and public service announcements findings

Key aspect	Description
The immediacy and Wide Reach	Social media allows government agencies to share important updates and advisories with a broad audience quickly.
Timely Information Dissemination	Essential for ensuring public safety and adherence to regulations during the Songkran Festival.
Interactive Communication	Enables real-time engagement between government agencies and the public.
Trust and Transparency	Enhances public trust and cooperation through direct communication and feedback.
Misinformation Management	Government agencies must ensure that their messages are clear, accurate, and consistent to prevent confusion.
Addressing the Digital Divide	I am considering disparities in access to social media platforms to ensure inclusive communication.
Multi-channel Communication	We combine social media with traditional media and community outreach to reach all population segments.

3.8 Discussion

The role of social media in the political and religious socialization of Songkran Festival participants is multifaceted and complex. It involves various stakeholders, including the government, religious leaders, and influencers. This discussion critically examines how these entities use social media to shape public perceptions and behaviors and draw on existing research to highlight key trends and issues. Several researchers have explored participants' political and religious socialization during the Songkran Festival, noting that social media plays a crucial role in this process. The Thai government has been observed to use social media platforms to propagate messages that align with their political interests, subtly promoting nationalism and a unified cultural identity centered around Buddhism (Sivakumaran et al., 2023). This intentional socialization aims to foster a positive image of Thailand as a predominantly Buddhist country, which some scholars have criticized for marginalizing minority groups and suppressing dissenting voices (Serman & Sims, 2020). Religious leaders also utilize social media to reinforce religious teachings and practices among festival participants. Platforms like Facebook and YouTube are used to broadcast sermons and religious ceremonies, ensuring that followers remain engaged with their faith even if they cannot attend in person (Ietto & Pascucci, 2023). This practice helps maintain religious adherence and fosters a sense of community among believers. However, there are concerns about the authenticity and accuracy of religious content disseminated through these platforms, as the democratization of information can spread misinformation (Dhillon, 2023).

Furthermore, the young generation and those featured in blogs and social media significantly influence the public's perception and direct the public's interest in the Songkran Festival. They can utilize their role to promote the festival's cultural values. By sharing their personal experiences about the festivities, they can welcome and encourage more visitors to participate (Derashri & Gogia, 2019). At the same time, leaders can simplify cultural practices and make the festival less exotic. They should objectively deliver information about the festival, as people can be misinformed through social media on purpose (Arvidsson, 2022).

Influencers can be offered compensation to advance the sales of definite commodities or to sell specific agendas that may not be in the public's best interest. This assumes implications for the credibility of the information they circulate and the outlook of the festival (Serman & Sims, 2020). The

nature of interaction via social media is also brief and unpredictable. Thus, the engagements created may need more depth and serve as mere tokenism (Cabasal, 2023). However, people engage and actively participate in the Songkran Festival event through social media. The public is mobilized through this social media. The authorities utilize this platform to make announcements, raise public awareness, and pass notices of volunteers' need to sustain cultural activity, which ultimately benefits society.

The subject of the study also examined the role of social media in religious teaching and practices within the context of the Songkran celebration. Religious leaders employ these platforms to deliver sermons and make their teachings accessible to the public. They hold discussions on occasions of significance and spiritual ceremonies and communicate with congregants to guarantee constant religious practice and fellowship (Intason et al., 2021). However, there is a concern for the quality and genuineness of religious information or messages transmitted through this platform, as it can also generate the issue of misinformation and shallow enlightenment (Intason, 2024). Regarding the use of social media platforms in governmental communication during the celebration of the Songkran Festival, it is deferred as tactical and ubiquitous. This social platform serves as the government's tool to release real-time updates, safety measures, and cultural logistics, thereby regulating behavior and safety during celebrations (Supapong, 2017). The Ministry of Public Health of Thailand openly uses social networking sites to disseminate health and hygiene knowledge in the context of the festival. Governmental agencies also contribute to regulating public practices through social networking sites (Timol, 2020). However, the government agency's consideration of social media has been controversial. The apparent drawback is that free and fast access to information through social networks also means that people are free to engage in the distribution of fake news. In such cases, the population loses confidence (Intason, 2024). Moreover, there are issues regarding excessive government interference, which suggests that these platforms are not being employed to target the betterment of society but are dedicated to monitoring and otherwise managing the population (Huiying, 2017).

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has analyzed the role of social media in the political and religious socialization of participants of the Songkran Festival in Thailand. In analyzing social media's impact on socialization, we have discussed six key areas: Information Dissemination and Accessibility, Community Engagement and Participation, Political Mobilization and Advocacy, and Religious Education and Reinforcement. The research identified how social media has affected information influx by making it more accessible, simultaneously encouraging citizenship and participation, increasing political activism, supporting religious learning, and harnessing the power of bloggers and other opinion leaders. These factors highlight the fact that social media cannot be ignored and that it is high time that a proper strategy is devised to tap the potential of social media and, at the same time, constrain the adverse effects that come along with the freedom of social media engagement. For this purpose, the government should take the initiative and encourage programs to teach people how to think critically about the information they receive from social media. This includes the shift towards fact-checking and looking for reliable sources for confirmation. This may assist in curbing the dissemination of wrong information.

Similarly, equal access to digitally interactive platforms is crucial to overcoming the digital divide and expanding social media usage across the population. Religious leaders can use social media platforms to share relevant and credible content to help extend authentic religious teachings and information that will act as a countermeasure against misleading information. Promoting engagement by complementing online religious discussion panels to address people's queries is possible. Therefore,

creating virtual religious communities via social networking platforms can promote religious practices, bring believers closer to their faith, and provide enriching religious experiences. Social media influencers also substantially impact political and religious socialization among Songkran festival participants in Thailand. Social media influencers should adhere to the principles of openness and honesty. However, they should ensure that their content is genuine and not biased or subjected to some agenda under the influence of any political or social motive. Responsible content creation and moderation should be encouraged so the influencers-are aware of the impact they have in influencing public opinion regarding political and religious issues and their role in propagating tolerant dialogue. Further work can be initiated to better comprehend the overall impact of social media on political and religious socialization among the general masses and the Songkran festival's masses of Thailand.

5.   PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The impact of social media on the political and religious socialization of the festival's attendees endorses some implications. These implications concern several types of stakeholders. Government officials, preachers of religion, and social media influencers are all intricately connected with social media engagement. Therefore, it is important to use social media for the benefit and welfare of society. Religious leaders can use social media to reach out to the public, encourage the spirit of festivity, and defer the spiritual context of the Songkran Festival. Their authentic and well-versed sermons can be a source of mitigating ignorance in society as well as counter the escalating misinformation in spiritual disciplines. Furthermore, holding virtual correspondence with the public in discussions uplifts their connection with their faith and becomes a source of enlightenment that drives them to adhere to their religious practices. Through this approach, the purity of religious doctrines will always be upheld, and believers will get the right spiritual direction they seek. Likewise, the accuracy of the information disseminated by government officials is essential. It should be accurate and reliable. The appropriate measures should be taken against the perpetration of fake news and ensure that the government is equipped with the tools to help the community acquire the means to assess the difference between genuine and fake news. This will consequently help alleviate the distrust.

Another stakeholder that deserves to be discussed is the community. The independence of the community organizers entails the use of social media to mobilize volunteers to celebrate the Songkran festival or cultural events and to advertise the products of the local artisans based in Thailand. Many people prefer organized groups and pages where one can easily follow and participate in conversations and integrate oneself into the collective cultural activity. This collectivism derives an inherent connection and bonding in the community. This virtual participation enhances the impact of (religious/political) socialization among the engaged community. Participation through social media platforms also increases the degree of engagement and thus undeniably influences the masses and the masses' mobility.

Regarding the Songkran festival, social media influencers influence public perceptions and attitudes. Owing to an extensive followership, they have an ethical responsibility to ensure the dissemination of correct and culturally valuable information about the festival. Thus, when influencers collaborate with reliable sources and organizations, they can always pass helpful information to their followers. There is also an increasing need to demystify affiliate links as they indicate that a third party paid for specific content. Being acquainted with the judgement to distinguish will avoid misleading an audience. In this way, influencers not only contribute to making the festival more accessible but also suppress the circulation of fake content propagated by unreliable sources.

Due to the significance and cultural attributes of the Songkran festival, it should be introduced into the educational curriculum. It will evoke a deeper appreciation of the festival and the related symbols and gestures. Social media strategies could be taught in institutions to develop and enrich students' cultural and social perspectives. Through this exposure, learners' use of social media to render content for instructional purposes will develop scholarly culture and deepen the understanding of how social media platforms can solely be used for the welfare of society. Furthermore, this curriculum can also be employed when developing students' critical thinking abilities by differentiating between reliable and unreliable information sources. By incorporating social media literacy into education, the institutions will appropriately equip learners to handle new-age social media platforms. Furthermore, when it comes to future research possibilities, conducting longitudinal studies and cross-cultural comparative analysis can help understand social media's specific and general utility. In addition, examining the influence of emerging technologies on social media engagement can provide a timely and relevant analysis of the potential trajectories of digital socialization and its impact on the political and social paradigms of the ever-encompassing population.

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