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jims

Jagannath International Management School
Vasant Kunj, New Delhi

A TRUE VISIONARY

*“You see things and you say **Why?** But I dream of things that never were and say **Why not?**”*

- George Bernard Shaw



Shri Jagannath Gupta
(1950 - 1980)

*Also a true visionary...who dared to dream!
He lives no more but his dreams live on....and on!*

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And more dreams to come!



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Editor's Desk

In the complex landscape of public health and policy-making, understanding and influencing human behavior stands as a paramount challenge. The emergence of game theory, a mathematical framework that explores strategic interactions among rational decision-makers, offers a revolutionary perspective on behavior change communication (BCC). By leveraging the insights from game theory, communicators and policymakers can devise more effective strategies to promote public health, environmental conservation, and social welfare.

At its core, game theory illuminates the strategic considerations individuals undertake in scenarios where their actions affect, and are affected by, the actions of others. This interdependence is a common feature in public health campaigns, environmental initiatives, and social policy interventions, where the collective outcome hinges on individual decisions.

Game theory equips BCC practitioners with a toolkit to anticipate and influence these decisions by understanding the incentives, payoffs, and equilibrium strategies that govern human behavior. In environmental conservation efforts, the tragedy of the commons scenario—where individual exploitation leads to resource depletion—can be addressed by designing policies that align individual incentives with collective well-being, thereby encouraging sustainable practices.

Game theory also offers valuable insights into the design of communication strategies. By understanding the perceived costs and benefits of certain behaviors from the individuals' perspectives, communicators can tailor messages that resonate more effectively with their audience. For instance, highlighting the immediate, tangible benefits of energy-saving practices can motivate individuals more than abstract appeals to long-term environmental goal.

A significant aspect of game theory is its focus on information asymmetry, where different parties possess different information, affecting their decisions. BCC strategies informed by game theory can address this by ensuring transparent, accessible, and credible information dissemination. Moreover, game theory's exploration of trust and reputation in repeated interactions provides a blueprint for building long-term trust between public health authorities and the community, crucial for the success of behavior change initiatives.

While game theory offers powerful tools for influencing behavior, it also necessitates careful ethical consideration. The strategies derived from game theory must respect individual autonomy and ensure equity, avoiding manipulation and ensuring that interventions are in the best interest of the public.

As we advance, the integration of game theory into behavior change communication promises to refine our understanding of human behavior in the context of interdependent decision-making. By adopting a game theory-informed approach, BCC practitioners can craft more nuanced, effective strategies that recognize the complexities of human behavior. The potential of game theory to enhance the impact of behavior change initiatives is vast, heralding a new era of strategic communication that is both insightful and transformative. In the quest to address some of society's most pressing challenges, leveraging the strategic depth of game theory could indeed be a game-changer.

(Ravi K. Dhar)

About the Journal

Mass Communicator: International Journal of Communication Studies has been conceived as an international quarterly peer-reviewed journal with the avowed objectives of stimulating research in communication studies in Indian academia of international level as also to publish research carried out abroad to serve as a window on the multi-dimensional aspects of media and communication research in countries beyond the Indian borders. To this end, the journal is a platform for the publication of outcomes of new and innovative thinking in the subject/profession that follow not only the rigours of academic research methodology but also non-conventional modes of expression such as perspectives and opinion, which often come from media and communication practitioners, be those journalists or development communicators self-interrogating their profession. The scope of research published in the journal is deliberately kept open-ended to facilitate an osmotic interchange of ideas across disciplines with a bearing on media and communication theory.

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A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF 'NENJAM MARAPATHILIYE' - EXPLORING THE HOLY BIBLE'S MORAL VALUES IN FILM ADAPTATION

A.R.Vimal Raj* N.Nazini**

Purpose: A film is not only made to entertain audience but also to trigger the feeling and emotions among audience. Film adaptations are so common nowadays that most of the popular novels, epics and short stories are turned into a film within no time. It can be seen in television, films, musicals, drama and internet or even in theme park and video games as well. (Hutcheon: 2006).

Design/Methodology/Approach: In this Paper, detailed narrative analysis, disputes such as how the meaning is built will be addressed and how the narrative in a movie is constructed can be understood by applying semiotics analysis.

Findings: To find out the different foundations of cinematic narratives of the film and investigate the connection between Selvaragavan ideological beliefs and their visual codes in his films.

Originality/Value: This film is based on the Holy Bible moral values and it has lot of latent meaning buried inside. This analysis is about "Nenjam Marapathiliye" directed by Selva Ragavan and released on March 2021. As a formal system, film is a narrative and uses some or all the principles of narrative construction mentioned in Propp's functions

Keywords : Narrative analysis, selvaragavan film, God, evil, Nenjam Marapathillai, Bible, SJ Surya

Introduction

As the significant technological developments of the 21st century, cinema intrudes such a narrative form to discourse common people. Films consist of shots and include many filmic technical elements that have constructed a narrative style. Basically, films are communicated through visual language. The content and form of a film need to follow a careful constructive expression. Form and content cannot be separated. Film quality is created between the content and technical aspects, which are basic building blocks of the film's story. Whether documentary or fictional, is one of the story telling forms in the contemporary world. Tradition, culture or religion has evolved through story telling in many forms. Expressive visual language is based on images with a narrative including many filmic elements. Syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis studies the surface structure of a text. We can explore elements of character structure in the movie. The motive was to find the relation between Propp's narrative units and the sequence formation of the movie of the 'Nenjam Marapathillai (2021)' movie.

Narrative works as a mechanism for generating meaning in two propositions. Narrative analysis inspects not only the inner meanings of the texts, but also the ways ideas and influences interact through the same structural narratives. A narrative analysis is done with two approaches.

1. Syntagmic method is derived from the formalist work of Vladimir Propp and inspect the sequential progress of narrative plots.

2. The Paradigmatic method is derived from the structuralist work of Claude Lévi-Strauss (1966) and reflects the patterns of oppositions that occur within the narrative and how they added to the development of the story. (Hansen et al. 1998, p. 142).

Analysis of the associate meanings among symbolical elements, technical specifications, codes and nominal, which are visible in the narrative structure, will surely help to give the meaning of the text. Because the plot inseparably intertwines with the sequential progress of the story, these terms need to be explained earlier.

I. Review of Literature

Lothe, J. (2000) identifies that in the film, every narrative act has its own features and characteristics, and features that may

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indicate a narrator's unreliability include:

- The director or narrator has limited knowledge of or insight into what he is narrating.
- The director's thoughts and experience are transformed in the arts they create and disseminate.
- The director or narrator appears to represent something that comes into conflict with the system of values that the discourse as a whole presents.

André Bazin (1997) was a film theorist who suggests that "The cinema has continuously been involved in God," and a history of picture making shows Bazin's assertion accurate. The first decade of cinema saw at least a part of a dozen captured restaging of the life of Jesus Christ, comprising those made by Edison and Louis Lumière, Varieties of "The Passion of Christ", played in many cinematic venues all over Europe from the early stages of cinema until the 1920s, frequently produced from a religious standpoint. Meanwhile, the announced "father of Indian cinema," D.G. Phalke, tells in the following excerpt how he was stimulated to make his own films about Hindu divinities in the 1910s after initially viewing a film about Jesus in an Indian theatre. Movies took religious subject matter from the start, and religious groups used films as persuasive or promotional tools as soon as they could find the means to do so.

Murphy, D. (2009) in his book, phrases that Across North America, sincere Christians watch Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* on DVD in their own living rooms throughout Lent. Japan's popular culture creates anime films packed with references to Shinto and Buddhist spirits and ghosts. In South India, villagers meet in front of an open-air screen to look at the life of Jesus in the Telugu production, *Karunamayudu*, nowadays seen by over 100 million audiences. In the meantime, in the northern part of India, cinema-goers saw sold-out Hindu mythologicals in New Delhi theaters. These are limited examples, with numerous more to follow throughout, of the ways the religiosity of billions of people around the world has been replicated and even shaped by film production.

Adele Reinhartz (2013) gave a comprehensive overview of the techniques in which the Bible has been represented and used in mainstream cinema in her book "Bible and Cinema". Adele Reinhartz considers the ubiquitous practice of the Bible in feature movies, and the medium of film as part of the Bible's receptive history. His works spoke about how films draw on the Old and New Testament and the symbol of Jesus Christ in many direct and indirect ways to create their plots, characters, and themes. As well as movies that set out obviously to repeat biblical stories in their ancient perspective, it discovers the ways in which present-day, fictional feature films create use of biblical narrative.

Birgit Meyer (2003) research focuses on Ghanaian widespread cinema, which began in the late 1980s and has established a major form of entertaining for urban viewers. It expresses that the filmmakers, who creates films in the video format which are very close to daily life experiences and imaginings, offer visions which they and their viewers regard as being similar to those provided by pious prophets and preachers. Seeing these films allows for multifaceted negotiations between the wishes for wrongdoing of the moral order, the desire to feel morally greater, and the striving for acquaintance to understand one's world. Birgit Meyer (2003) also argues that these fantasy spaces should not be observed as injudicious distortions, but as sources for gaining understanding into what Marx named "the religion of everyday life," and thus as exposes of the imaginary dimension of worldwide capitalism.

Jeffrey Burton Russell (1984) says that Satan initially looked in early primitive art, the Devil was visualized as human or humanoid. Satan proceeds the form of a human, at times literally and at times metaphorically. Russell positions that this form of image "dominated the era from the ninth through the eleventh" centuries (Luther Link, 1995) The Stan portrayed as a layman like a servant, fisherman, pauper, shoemaker, student or peasant Russell (1984) Sometimes like humanoid evil spirit with spindly arms and legs, shimmering eyes, Spewing mouth, long, captivated nose and swollen torsos" Russell (1984).

In American movies, the humanoid Devil is regularly represented as man. The depiction of Satan throughout the middle Ages was constantly male "since the popular imaginings made the Devil, like God, manly look." Russell(1972) Excluding in recognizable cases like *Bewildered* where the Devil is clearly a woman, female demons are typically recognized with succubi. This identification of Satan as male is so solid that the female figures are rarely known by modern viewers as the Devil. In *The Ninth Gate*, Satan is portrayed as female; however, most critics confused her with a succubus (a female demon supposed to have sexual intercourse with sleeping men).

Similarly, by signifying that in direction to make the antichrist the Devil necessity to have sex with a woman, the male Satan is often represented in American cinema as a type of incubus (An incubus is a demon in male form who, rendering to mythological traditions, lies upon sleeping females in directive to engage in sexual activity with her). Russell (1972) contends that the idea of demons or the Devil having sex with women was accepted by the Church because "they could draw upon the old tradition of the fallen angels lusting after the daughters of men."It was also thought throughout the medieval period that witches engaged in ritualistic sex with demons and even Satan himself.

If there is a God, then there is devil; if there are angels, then there are also demons; if there is a heaven, then surely there is a hell. We also believed that Satan, god's archenemy, was responsible for all the evil and suffering in the world. How else could we explain that threatened to annihilate our country with atom bombs? Anyway the sufferings are the works of evil. On the other hand the merciful God with all love and power protected us from evil. The weighty, reflective questions concerning this arrangement- including the fairness of god, the power of god, and the meaning of life – would surface occasionally, the world, through seemingly random and chaotic to some, in strange way made perfect sense to us. An essential component of this world view is “the doctrine of terror” that was (and still is, in many places) used by churches to quite literally scare the laity in to obedience. It was a strategy used by parents, parochial school teachers, clergy to regulate our behavior when we were not under their ever so watch full eyes. Even today, the use of ever present threat of eternal damnation –by which even the formerly faithfully may be remanded to the custody of Satan and torments of hell for eternity- perpetuates this doctrine.

'Kadal' the movie released in the year 2013 with the central theme of God or Devil directed by Maniratnam is an inspiration of biblical tale. The film starts with two characters Sam Fernandez devoted good man and Bergman, who explores all his desires. Both are different in their nature with different thoughts and behavior. The wayward young boy Thomas was nurtured by Sam and becomes very close to him. The crux of the story turns when Thomas fell in love with Beatrice an innocent girl (daughter of Bergman). Due to the satanic machination of Bergman, the priest sent to jail. In the climax Bergman kidnaps Sam and Beatrice. The rest of the story is how Thomas and Sam defeats the satanic Bergman.

Background study of the film

In Tamil cinema, post-Kanchana horror movies grabbed a different path, as humor played a important part in the storytelling progression. The movies that were meant to arouse fear made you laugh as an alternative. Nenjam Marapadhillai was primarily due for a 2017 release. Some unknown reasons hindered the movie from being out, and lastly, it made it to the release in theatres and OTT in March 2021. In spite of the trying times, the movie expected positive responses from critics and audiences alike. In Nenjam Marapadhillai, Selvaragavan brings a different unique touch to a horror revenge saga, even though it turns out to be a predictable story. Black comedy genre and hidden metaphors in the film make for an exhilarating watch. Mariyam, the female lead role in the film, attributes Virgin Mother Mary's characteristics and cares the kid (Rishi) character similar to the love of Mother Mary for Jesus Christ. The director also shows you signs of Jesus on the cross when

Mariyam character, were also assaulted by the evil men. The film writer in him gets imaginary towards the end when the fight changes into a battle between good and evil (god vs satan). Its more interesting is the idea of visualizing the god to be a woman and relating her suffering to the story of Jesus in the Bible. As it shows hosted to Ramsay and the devil inside him, it made us to realise that SJ Surya (who acted as Ramsay character) is terrific in conveying out the diverse shades of the role, a born actor. Regina Casandra actor as Mariyam is convincing and plays her part well. In this creation of Selvaragavan, its more control to the devil until the final moment, after the good triumphs over the evil, so there is marginal scope for the performance of the female leads characters, including Nandita Swetha (acted as Ramsay wife).

Cinema basically has certain formulas but the narratives are different. Coexistence of a story does not suffice to construct a narrative; presence of a narrator and an audience is necessary. Filmic narrative has very powerful inner dynamics. Commercial entertainment cinema is a means of fictional narrative. The art of cinema has exhibited an astounding development in company with the technological innovations and rising of consumer culture in the 20th century. The film industry has been molded in harmony with the rules of the capitalist system. Action is crucial in any plot. The action starts with an introduction, rises up with points of tension (difficulties and conflicts) and reaches a peak with the climax. Climax in a film is at the same time the turning point of the plot. Afterwards, the action slows down and the narrative rapidly ends. Thus, while the traditional filmic narrative is formulated within an introduction-development conclusion pattern, it also follows a sequential course. An event, or an action, in the introduction may appear in the conclusion with a new emphasis; such as flashback, flash-forward or linear may possibly be chosen. Ellis (1982) lists the characteristics of filmic narrative as: “Cinema proposes an image that is perfection of the photographic. It provides an image that is large. The theatrical experience is unique and designed in such a way to experience the entire movie in darkness and the mental state of the audience is in a state of hyper-receptivity. The size of image is larger than the spectator; the sounds are loud and usually well-proportioned. The spectator looks up towards the image: image controls the proceedings (Ellis, 1982, p. 40-41)”.

Synopsis of the film

Ramasamy alias Ramsay (Satan) is a henpecked spouse of a wealthy man's daughter. In spite of the rags-to-riches story, he expresses himself - and us - he is a broken man and a psychopath person and plays the Bad. His wife, Swetha, is angry, suffers from certain unknown sickness and either unable or indifferent in sex plays the Ugly. Ramsay servants are, well, both submissive and

dreadful play the role Satan Horses. Mariam (God), an orphan with noble desires enters this domestic to care for their kid, Rishi. The conflict that follows after the brutal rape and its complex determination of God Vs Satan says the rest of the movie.

Theoretical framework

Semiotics perspectives: Ferdinand de Saussure is the theorist behind the idea of Semiotics through his study of Signifiers in language and imagery. Semiotics is “the study of signs and symbols and their use or interpretation”. Semiotics is “the study of signs and symbols and their use of interpretation”. Saussure presents the theory that signs give a denotation, they present a particular meaning or purpose by seeing the sound image., but they also connote subconsciously in our mind's other meanings too. for example, in films when the viewer sees an image of a ring on screen, this literally denotes a ring, however this image also connotes the idea of marriage, love and money.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the different foundations of cinematic narratives of the film.
2. To investigate the connection between Selvaragavan ideological beliefs and their visual codes in his films.
3. To find out the representation of religious ideological concepts in films.

Research questions

1. Does the construction of cinematic narratives conveyed through film?
2. How the representation of Christianity iconographies used to narrate the story?
3. Does characters evolved are interpreted with the prehistoric Christianity fabula?

II. Research Design Methods

To analyze the narrative structure of the film “Nenjam Marapathillai” the researcher applied Syntagmatic Analysis (Diachronic) – a text is examined as a narrative sequence (Chain of events). To study in detail the researcher used Russian Folklorist Vladimir Propp's Proppian Functions. Propp's ideas can be adopted and applied in films to understand the latent meaning in the films.

III. Results and Discussion

Proppian Function

1. Initial Situation- The story begins with the introduction of Ramse(Satan) in his kingdom. Satan as Rockstar in the





auditorium watched by the Swetha his wife and four friends(Satan Horses) Mariam God's Child was introduced in an orphanage.

2. Absentation- Mariam packs her things and leave the orphanage to work as a Nanny for Ramse (Satan) son.
3. Interdiction - An interdiction is addressed by Mariam while entering the house. Mirror break – Since She is God's child, God gives hint to leave the place.
4. Violation - The interdiction is violated and Mariam made her mind to work
5. Reconnaissance - The villain Ramse(satan) gather potential information about Mariam and her background.
6. Trickery- Ramse attempts to deceive Swetha by saying that her father is not well and wants her immediately.
7. Complicity - Mariam submits to deception, unwittingly helps his enemy Ramse
8. Villiany- The Satan Ramse cause harm to Mariam by raping along with his friends (Four horses of satan).
9. Lack - Swetha suddenly see the void when Mariam was missing and wants her to take care of the kid
10. Mediation- Misfortune is made known to mother superior as her(Mariam) mobile phone is switched off.
11. Counteraction- Mother Superior - Seeker agrees to decide on counteraction by filing a missing complaint in police station.
12. Struggle - Mariam after entering into Swetha body join in direct combat with Ramse (Satan). Battle between Swetha (Mariam) and Ramasamy (Good and evil) is portrayed in the climax.
13. Branding- Mariam is branded as God's child
14. Victory- Gruesome death of Ramse.
15. Transfiguration- Mariam is given a new appearance by transforming herself into the body of Swetha.
16. Punishment- The Satan is punished by continuing as soul without body as he roams around the place after his death.

Ferdinand de Saussure: The study of signs.

He divides sign into signifier and signified

- Signifier: Sound image
- Signified: Concept behind the sound image.


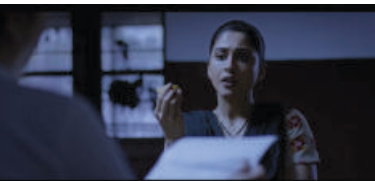

<p>Inferences 1:</p> <p>Signifier: Before the actual movie begins it starts with white, Green, Blue and red Color – the sound image</p> <p>Signified: According to color psychology the following colors denotes as follows: White – Innocence & goodness, Green – Nature and Money, Blue – Harmony and peace, Red – Danger and Action.</p>	
<p>Inferences 2:</p> <p>Signifier: The sound image of the Holy Cross appearing in the title.</p> <p>Signified: The name of the cast Regina Casandra was written on the Holy Cross image to denote she is God</p>	
<p>Inferences 3:</p> <p>Signifier: Purple color thread roll and clothes are dominantly appearing in the introduction shot of Mariam working in export company shot.</p> <p>Signified: Purple color denotes Spirituality</p>	
<p>Inferences 4:</p> <p>Signifier: Ramse introduction shot in pink color tone</p> <p>Signified: it denotes the playfulness.</p>	

Charles Sanders Pierce: the sign stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity

He divided sign into three aspects i.e., Icon, Index and Symbol

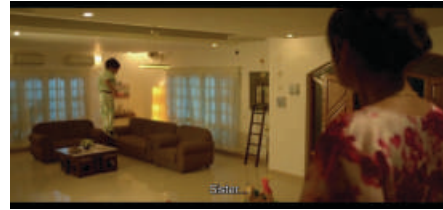
- Icon – Can see and Identify
- Index – Causal Connection
- Symbols – Must learn

Index in the movie:

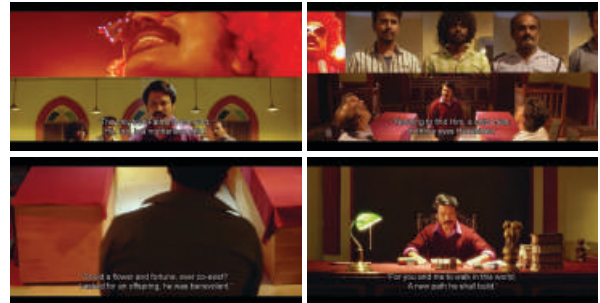
<p>Inferences 1:</p> <p>Harsh lighting is used to denote that he (Ramse) is devil.</p>	
<p>Inferences 2:</p> <p>In the second scene, when she receives an appointment order from Ramse (Satan) she (Mariam) was having an apple while convincing with mother superior. Which denotes that she (Mariam) was lured by the Satan. In the shot we could also find the line “Pray before you eat the food” written on the black board.</p>	
<p>Inferences 3:</p> <p>Father-in-law portrayed in mask which portrays the ugly character and the audience hear only the bee sound and not the dialogue of Father-in-law which also denotes the irritating quality of ugly.</p>	

<p>Inferences 4: In this shot Mariam gets the warning from heaven while entering into the house. She could figure out something unusual.</p>	
<p>Inferences 5: Blind man – he will cry when he here the name Mariam. Sensing that she is going to suffer. He is just a drop of God. There are droplets of God. She could see that God has gone far in the shot.</p>	
<p>Inferences 6: Jesus' fish and loaves miracle is resembled in the movie during the conversation between Mariam and Blind man. First, he offers Fish curry and then he goes to buy the bread. Blind Man: I buy some Bread Mariam: Bread? Blind man: Yes, you like it, don't you? Mariam: How did you know?</p>	
<p>Inferences 7: The focus shift shot between sacred heart picture and Mariam shows that she is God's child.</p>	
<p>Inferences 8: Dog can see devil concept is portrayed symbolically.</p>	
<p>Inferences 9: After exactly at 1 hour 3 minutes the Good Friday shot appears where the director symbolic conveys that Mariam is going to suffer. The Satan (Ramse) dancing and flying in “Pondati ooruku poita” denotes that he is a Satan. At the end of the song a church shot with the dialogue goes like this “லோகத்தின் பாவத்தை நீக்கிட தேவாட்டுக்குட்டி” which means that God cleansed all our sin by sacrificing his beloved son.</p>	
<p>Inferences 10 Mariam after brutally raped by Ramse (Satan) and his four friends (Horses) wander as a spirit and could not be recognized by the lay man. Real one to end he is devil. He is hell. Devil is falling in love. Lust is part of love. He expresses love in cruel way. The Kid (Ramse son) and the Blind Man could recognize the spirit of Mariam. The director metaphorically conveyed that the kid and the Blind man are the droplets of God. They are pure to see the spirit of Mariam.</p>	

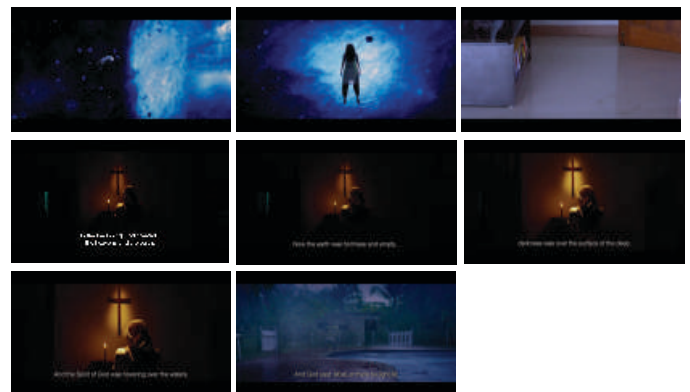
Inferences 11
Swetha (Ugly) could figure out the presence of Mariam playing with her son. According to the director's perspective Swetha the ugly has both good and bad character.



Inferences 12
In the song “Kannungala en Chellangala” Ramse (Satan) his biography and the satan world is portrayed.
Song Lyrics
The only true father is the God; He too is a motherless God.
Yearning to find Him, a child cries; in those eyes He resides.
Could a flower and fortune, ever co-exist? I asked for an offspring. He was benevolent.
For you and me to walk in this world; a new path he shall build.



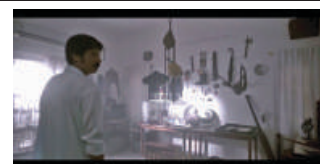
Inferences 13
The kid jumps into the swimming pool scene is a crucial turning point of the narrative. The director actually tries to showcase the connection between water and God. Mariam regain the spiritual power by immersing herself in water. And we could see Mariam footprints on the ground. The consecutive shots with the bible words from Genesis Chapter clearly say the presence of Holy Spirit in water.



Inferences 14
Ramse (Satan) could identify the presence of God and the regained power of Mariam in this shot.



Inferences 15
The House of Devil can be identified with the props arranged in the room.



Inferences 15
Swetha (Ugly) burns Mariam body and we could see the holy cross in burning light.
When she is burnt, she gets the form with the women. Ashes flying on crucified cross denotes the merging of Mariam spirit with God. She becomes very powerful than satan.

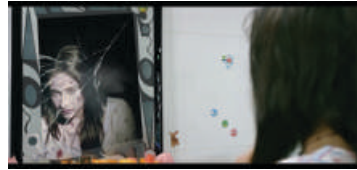

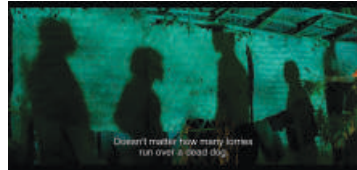
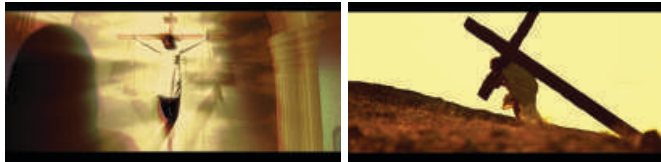
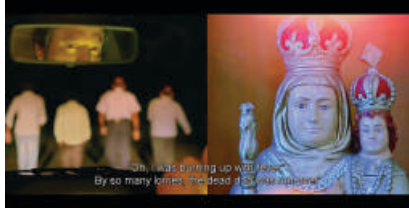



Inferences 16
After burning Mariam body the spirit of Mariam enters into Swetha body. Ramse the Satan now identifies the presence of Mariam soul in Swetha Body.



<p>Inferences 17 Rockstar alone in his kingdom as his entire kingdom is ruined by God.</p>	
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Metaphor – 'Meta' means transfer and 'Phor' means to bear. Relationship between two things is suggested through the use of analogy.

<p>Inferences 1: In the mirror shot, Mariam gets hint from God that she is going to suffer. Like Jesus knows beforehand that how he is going to be crucified. – Metaphor</p>	
<p>Inferences 2: When Ramse (Satan) attempts to rape Mariam, we can see Jesus crucified shot which metaphorically says that Mariam is also crucified. And we could hear the sound of Jesus nailed in the background score.</p>	
<p>Inferences 3: Before Ramse (Satan) horses (four friends) raping shot. The dialogue “Doesn't matter how many lorries run over a dead dog” is a metaphorical sentence to denote Gang rape.</p>	
<p>Inferences 4 Mariam on the cross showed in a metaphorical way. The sufferings of lord compared with the brutal rape of Mariam.</p>	
<p>Inferences 5 In the song “Kannungala en Chellangala we could see Satan horses lined up in the shot. The metaphorical lyrics showcase the brutal rape incident by Ramse and his friends. Oh, I was burning up with fever; by so many Lorries, the dead dog was run-over.</p>	
<p>Inferences 6 Battle between Swetha (Mariam) and Ramasamy (Good and evil) is portrayed in the climax. How swetha kills devil is not in a usual manner? Ramse the Satan killed by Swetha (Mariam) in water. The water here in the shot portrayed as a cleansing agent of all evilness.</p>	




Psychoanalysis:

Id – In-depth Desire, Psychic representatives of the drives


Ego – to do with the individual relation to the environment

Super Ego – comprises the moral percepts of our mind as well as our ideal aspirations.

ID Analysis:

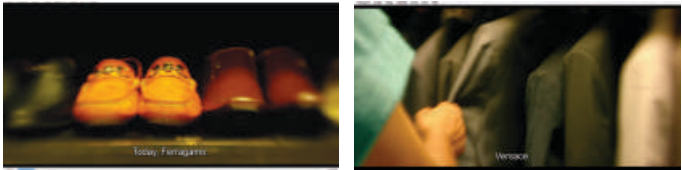
<p>Inferences 1: Mariam accidentally dash Ramse (Satan) while he walks down from the staircase. The consecutive shot shows rockstar dancing in the auditorium watched by Mariam. Where the director shows the strong ID (In-Depth desire of Ramse (Satan)).</p>	
<p>Inferences 2: Ramasamy after taking leave from office he tries to express his love and attempts to make love with Mariam. Where his ID emotes all his inner feelings.</p>	
<p>Inferences 3: Ramse get irritated and he kills the dog. After killing the dog, he returns as Rockstar. The director portrays that Satan's Id is strong and it satisfies all his desires instantly.</p>	

Super Ego Analysis:

<p>Inferences 1: Human point of Swetha gives suddenly rise in salary. She knows that her husband is evil and would like to be with Mariam. She is bad but Bad is a mixture of good and evil. But when she looks at Mariam and Mariam ask what? She says nothing and wish to be with devil.</p>	
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Marxist Analysis:

Materialism: According to Karl Marx materialism more of conception of history and the way society organizes itself.

<p>Inferences 1: Ramse (Satan) lives a luxurious life portrayed in the initial scenes where he utters all the leading brands like Prada, Armani, Loui Vuitton, Versace, Giordano, Boss and Ferragamo. Money is root of all evil. You feel ruthless power when you have money. He becomes the real evil for that you need money.</p>	
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IV. Conclusion

The Director (Selvaragavan) made a “psycho horror story” with his words and visuals. Its main theme is acquainted to the audience, based on a simple “good, bad, and ugly”, concept. The capitalist classification has carried about some fundamental variations and capitalist self-indulgence has extended its domination- analyzed in the Marxist analysis. The narrative construction of the film, plot and its theme are identical with the principles of art of drama derived from bible stories. At the end of the film, death of the hero (evil) leaves under hands of God (heroine). Psychoanalysis helps us to understand the ideology of the inner self of hero. Most importantly the researcher applied

Semiotic analysis and interpreted the story. The concept is relevant in twofold. First they can all be related to events, characters, and characterization. Secondly they can be related to Bible. The story has approximately intertextual references to the bible. They range from direct references or quotations to more indirect echoes that must be brought out by analysis through repeated close reading. Applying the analysis tools and reading the text leads to the understandings of the creator's narrative flow. The classic examples is symbolic interpretation which (in the Christian theological tradition) transforms the old testament from a legal code and history book about people of Israel to an integral part of the story of Jesus salvation of mankind. Hence, the analysis is complete with the visuals

denotation and the connotation.

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TRANSNATIONAL MEDIA, TURKISH TV, AND TURKISH IMMIGRANTS IN THE US

Ugur Baloglu* Lee Artz**

Purpose: This Paper proceeds in two parts. First, we highlight the new political economy of transnational media production and distribution and identify some of the relations between Turkey's transnational media and other transnational media companies (TNMCs). The second part presents the results of a survey supplemented by interviews with Turkish immigrants viewing practices of transnational Turkish TV dramas to determine what effects such viewing has adaptation and integration into American culture.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The survey methodology is adopted to reach the conclusion.

Findings: Through media consumption, immigrants find themselves in a dynamic interplay of cultural influences, crafting a fluid and multifaceted identity that encapsulates their transnational experiences.

Originality/Value: The modern lifestyle is the attraction, then why are Turkish television series rather than Western ones most popular? First, growing anti-Western sentiment in the region, especially after the Iraqi invasion, did not do improve the attraction to Western popular culture.

Keywords : Transnational, Turkish TV, Media, New political economy

Emerging Turkish Transnational Media

Notably, as part of emerging transnational media structures of production and distribution, Turkish TV has been well-received in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. Exported to more than 150 countries, Turkish TV dramas (*dizi* in Turkish) garner over \$500 million each year. “Family stories with big talents and directors, and great music” attracts audiences globally, according to Izzet Pinto, the Istanbul distributor for transnational Global Agency (Navani, 2021). Arab viewers enjoy Turkish modern life depicted in *dizi*, which also feature the poor—set within traditional values and narratives—which is easily understood across the Middle East.

After Saudi Arabia's MBC media conglomerate removed *dizi* during the Gulf Crisis of 2017, Turkish exports fell dramatically. Meanwhile, Turkish TV exports to Latin America and Eastern Europe increased.

In the 21st century, movies and TV series are among the most influential means of cultural interaction among societies from different countries. Today, when we turn on the TV or surf the internet, we find TV series and movies produced in many different countries. While there are many countries that produce and export TV series, Turkey and the US lead production and distribution. In fact, Turkey is the fastest TV series exporter in the world and the second largest TV exporter after the US.

In many countries in the Arab world, Latin America, and the Balkans, Turkish TV series are very popular. More than half of the viewers in Arab countries, including the United Arab

Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar have seen at least one Turkish TV series. Further, as part of a transnational culture of consumption, Turkish TV features luxurious mansions, royal palaces, and other attractive settings. What is more, most of these TV series are produced in Istanbul, a city full of beautiful natural landscapes and well-known historical sites. The actors are attractive and wear the latest fashion. Additionally, since President Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP) regulations on content, Turkish TV expresses the cultural values of family and Islamic traditions, which are prevalent across the Arab world. While “themes of forbidden love, impossible love, and treason attract attention and create excitement for viewers... in Turkish TV dramas, tensions related to traditional social and cultural norms are used to complicate the scenario” (Ottasilver, 2022). Scholar AhuYigit(2013) suggests, “The main appeal of Turkish television series seems to be the ‘modern’ lifestyle they present” (p. 292), which remains packaged in traditional relations. From the Arab perspective, modernity is especially inherent in certain types of gender relations and gender equality. Despite the strong patriarchal tone, until recently in Turkish series, women often enjoyed “a freer standing in society compared to most of their Middle Eastern counterparts, took part in professional life, and had rather liberal relations with men” (Yigit, 292). Arab women have also expressed strong appreciation for the romantic male characters featured. Further contributing to the series' appeal is the fact that all of this is presented in a setting of wealth and luxury enjoyed in mansions

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near the Bosphorus.

The question becomes: if modern lifestyle is the attraction, then why are Turkish television series rather than Western ones most popular? First, growing anti-Western sentiment in the region, especially after the Iraqi invasion, did not do improve the attraction to Western popular culture. Second, certain cultural codes are mutual to contemporary Arab and Turkish societies, in contrast to those of Western societies, from which Arab societies diverge more sharply. For instance, both Turkish and Arab cultures are predominantly patriarchal, accommodate close-knit family ties, and share Islam as their religion. This makes the narratives of Turkish TV series more familiar to Arabic-speaking audiences.

I. Review of Literature

Turkish TV Partnerships in Latin America

With growing imports of Turkish drama to Latin American and the US, another question arises: what is the appeal for viewers of Turkish TV? For Latin America, scholarly research has revealed several explanations.

Sharing standard melodrama tropes, “Latin American telenovelas and Turkish TV dramas tend to portray narratives emphasizing emotions and moral values” (Ferreira, 2022, p. 74). Melodrama also shows “a constant confrontation between “good” and “evil” that culminates in justice in favor of good, reinforcing a set of values that have to be followed by society to maintain its order” (p. 75).

Although audiences may prefer national or local productions, melodrama's classic structure reaches audiences in other cultures and nations. This strategy now seems to be used by Turkish TV dramas to boost transnational media exports (p. 76). To reach international markets and increase profits, Turkish TNMCS adopted a strategy of delocalization that featured melodramatic storylines and universal themes, while de-emphasizing Turkish national identity?” (Yesil, 2015, p.. 52).

In addition to Gabrielle Ferreira's (2017) early research, recent works have explored the phenomenon of Turkish TV dramas in Latin America. Audience attraction and growth have been attributed to the emerging transnational television landscape and audience appreciation of melodramatic structures in Turkish TV dramas that provide familiar narratives portrayed in “exotic” scenarios (Ferreira 2017, 2021; Weber Imaral 2021; Ashley 2019; Aslan 2020; Valverde 2020; CassanoIturri 2021; Antezana Barrios, Andrada, & Mujica, 2021).

One of Ferreira's interviewees explained why Turkish dramas are appealing: “Turkish telenovelas, they are more respectful.

They make you imagine what's going to happen, but they don't show it explicitly, you know? You just imagine it happening” (Luiza, in Ferreira, 2022, p. 79).

Ferreira (2022) found that what interested viewers most in Turkish TNMC Ay Yapim's *Fatmagul* (2015) fit several categories: Fatmagul's overcoming adversity, her fight for justice, the romance between Fatmagul and Kerim, and the opportunity to get to know another culture (p.80). Besides the opportunity to learn about Turkish culture, Fatmagul offered only individualistic narratives—her personal resolve, her individual romance, and her tragic self-interest—themes essential to a transnational culture of consumption.

Ferreira concluded, “Fatmagul' audience [and other Turkish dramas with large audiences] seem to be mainly made up of women who seek productions that reflect their conservative moral values through melodrama's classical structure.” In *Fatmagul*, surveyed participants were mostly interested in the protagonist overcoming obstacles, the fight for justice, and the romance—all elements of melodrama, a genre people relate to whatever their culture (p. 82).

Turkish programs are especially attractive to TV networks in smaller Latin American countries. Following the precipitous decline of audiences in 2013, Chilean TV channels began looking for affordable content from outside Latin America. Mega TV purchased the Turkish series *Las Mil y Una Noches* (2006-2009). Airing additional Turkish dramas which addressed social class and gender, Mega soon jumped from a 4.7 audience rating to 29. Likewise, on Peruvian TV after 2015, only Mexico imports (67) surpassed Turkish premieres (51). Meanwhile, Turkey's private media (Medyapim, BocekYapim, Pana Film, Mind-Made, TIMS Production, and Ay Yapim) struck lucrative coproduction alliances with other TNMCs in the US, Europe, and Latin America (Iturri, 2021, p. 117).

Turkish TV in the US

While not yet dominant in the US, Turkish TV is viewed globally—overtaking Mexico and Brazil, and now second only to US in TV exports. Many transnational media partnerships have recently been formed, which will increase American viewing.

The Turkish drama, *Suskunlar* was remade as *Game of Silence* (2016) on NBC, and also broadcast in Dubai, Georgia, Cyprus and other nations. Transnational Ay Yapim's Turkish drama, *Son* (2018-2019) was sold to 20th Century Fox Television and adapted into *Runner* for ABC. Ay Yapim also partnered with media in Russia, Spain, Netherlands, and France. In 2017, *Kara Sevda* (*Endless Love*) won an Emmy for Best Telenovela of the Year. Turkish actor Haluk Bilginer was selected as “Best Actor”

for TNMC Ay Yapim's series, *Şahsiyet* (2018) at the 47th International Emmy Awards. In 2020, Turkey's BluTV partnered with FX on *Alef*, winning the "best crime drama" award at New York Festivals. As the first Turkish crime drama, *Alef*, was also selected for Variety's "Top 15 International TV Series." MF Yapim coproduced *SenÇalKapımı* (*Love is in the Air*) (2020-21) with Fox in the US. MF Yapim also struck broadcasting partnerships in 32 other countries.

Recently, the Turkish transnational Birtaff and Netflix coproduced *Make Me Believe* (2020), which reached #10 in Netflix US audience. Turkish TNMC Tims & B Productions partnered with Netflix on *Shahmaran* (2023), which ranked #9 on Netflix US Top 10. Another Turkish Netflix drama *Who Were We Running From?* (2023) ranked #4 on the US Top 10.

Many of these Turkish imports to US networks and VOD streaming services are widely viewed and appreciated by Turkish immigrants. The next part of this work addresses the viewing habits of Turkish immigrants in the US.

Understanding transnational media and family media practices in the US

Numerous researchers have investigated the intricate mechanisms by which media usage impacts the cultural acclimatization and assimilation processes of immigrants (Lee & Tse, 1994; Croucher, 2013; Cleveland, et al., 2009; Subervi-Velez, 1986; Zhou & Cai, 2002; Miglietta & Tartaglia, 2009). For instance, Bello (2014) illustrates that media act as a conduit for immigrants to navigate their dual identities, providing spaces where their native and host cultures intersect. Media, in various forms, carry the potential to either facilitate or hinder the cultural integration process. It can serve as a tool for immigrants to maintain ties with their homeland, while simultaneously acting as a gateway to the new culture (Georgiou, 2006). The central question remains: does media consumption facilitate or obstruct the social integration of immigrants? Some argue that the consumption of homeland media might perpetuate separation by allowing immigrants to reside within their cultural comfort zones (Yang et al., 2004). Conversely, others propose that it might cultivate a sense of belonging and ease the adaptation process by reducing feelings of alienation and homesickness (Karagöz, 2020).

Transnationalism has emerged as an important concept for understanding the lives of immigrants, especially including their media practices. Vertovec (2009) outlines transnational practices that encompass a multitude of engagements with the homeland, one of which is the consumption of cultural products. Immigrants often view media from both their home country and the host country, negotiating their identities and

cultural belongings through this dual interaction (Ehrkamp, 2005). Digital technologies and video-on-demand (VOD) streaming sites have contributed to new forms of diasporic belonging, enabling immigrants to navigate cultural landscapes with flexibility and ease. Digital media also enable the infusion of the host country's cultural codes into immigrants' daily lives, potentially smoothing the path toward social integration. (Madianou and Miller, 2012).

US and Turkish media play crucial roles in shaping immigrant family practices, acting as a bridge that connects their lives across national borders (Madianou & Miller, 2012). Families often use transnational media to maintain relationships, share experiences, and negotiate identities in the context of geographical separation. Media use can facilitate a sense of shared family identity and belonging, despite the distances that physically separate family members. Streaming platforms and transnational media productions enable families to engage with their heritage, culture, and language, promoting a continuity of cultural traditions and practices within the family. By doing so, they contribute to the preservation of cultural identity and facilitate a form of "mediated co-presence" that allows family members to remain connected with their home country and its cultural narratives (Madianou & Miller, 2012).

II. Research Design and Methods

The results of a survey supplemented by interviews with Turkish immigrants viewing practices of transnational Turkish TV dramas to determine what effects such viewing.

III. Results and Discussion

1. Navigating Dual Identities

In the intricate journey of migration, media consumption plays a pivotal role in assisting Turkish immigrants in the US to navigate and negotiate their multiple identities. It has been noted that engagement with media becomes a significant practice where immigrants wrestle with, reflect on, and reconcile their evolving identities (Brinkerhoff, 2009).

Findings 1:

- 1) Consuming media from both their homeland and their host country allows immigrants to maintain a resilient connection with their Turkish roots, culture, and language while also facilitating a nuanced understanding and adaptation to the American societal landscape:
- 2) Media acts as a cultural interpreter, offering immigrants a lens through which they can perceive, interpret, and adapt to the diverse cultural cues and narratives presented in

their new environment, aiding them in carving a balanced dual identity that resonates with their lived experiences.

- 3) Media consumption emerges as a transformative tool that subtly influences the identity trajectories of Turkish immigrants, cultivating a symbiotic relationship between preservation of original cultural ties and integration into the broader American society.
- 4) The act of consuming media from both Turkey and the US offers immigrants a reflective space to engage in a continual process of identity negotiation, allowing for the preservation of their Turkish heritage while nurturing an adaptive understanding of American culture.
- 5) Turkish series, films, and other media content provide touchstones of cultural familiarity, anchoring immigrants in the traditions, languages, and narratives of their homeland.
- 6) Conscious exposure to American media aids in decoding the subtleties of the US cultural landscape, enabling immigrants to negotiate a sense of belonging within American society.

In short, through media consumption, immigrants find themselves in a dynamic interplay of cultural influences, crafting a fluid and multifaceted identity that encapsulates their transnational experiences.

Evidence from participant interviews:

P1 I think as a Turk. This changes from month to month, maybe I was a naive person when I first came, but now life changes, your circle of friends changes accordingly. You get used to it, I think just a little bit more. If you asked the question years later, you would define your identity differently, but now I feel like a Turk.

P2 No matter where you put me, I can live there. I think my sense of belonging is not very developed. You go outside and act like an American because you communicate in their language, but you come home, we sit down, you don't order tea, you turn on the TV, you watch Turkish news, you turn it on and read something in Turkish. You design your house like a Turk. You're stuck in between for a bit.

P3 I'm neither American, but like I'm Turkish. There is also the feeling of being in limbo. If I didn't consume any media content, I might integrate more easily, but I would be unhappy. Media contains, in a sense, a hindering factor to my adaptation. It helps me repair my weakened bond to home.

P6 Even though we have lived here for a long time, our feelings

and emotions about Turkey still continue. And actually, those are things that can't be explained very much. But an allegiance - an allegiance that is not here - is inevitably to Turkey.

We are direct immigrants here, so the people we call expatriates are the immigrants themselves and they are stuck in this limbo that you always live and will live until you die. So, no matter how much you feel like you belong to where you are, society makes you feel that you do not belong and asks where are you from. I call an American citizen of Turkish origin American, but I prefix it with Turkish. First Turkish, then American.

P9 I love TV series shot in the city where I live (referring to the USA). I like it when I see something of myself. I identify myself as Turkish. Washington based Turkish.

2. Perceptions and Emotional Connections to Homeland through Media

Media consumption is instrumental in shaping immigrants' emotional landscapes and perceptions towards their homelands, functioning as a significant mediator of transnational ties and identities. Immersed in media landscapes of their countries of origin, immigrants often navigate a rich emotional terrain of nostalgia, belonging, and at times, estrangement. The media, with their potent conveyance of cultural symbols, languages, and narratives, foster a virtual bridge to the homeland, enabling immigrants to maintain, renegotiate, and even critique their cultural connections and identities (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992). Through media, immigrants can vicariously participate in the life of their homelands, experiencing a continuum of emotions from warmth and nostalgia to criticism and detachment. It becomes a reflective space where feelings of homesickness, appreciation, or critique towards their native cultures are continuously nurtured and modulated, influencing their transnational experiences and identities (Appadurai, 1996).

Findings 2:

- 1) Turkish immigrants in the US find in their media consumption a powerful emotional conduit that connects them deeply to their homeland, eliciting complex sentiments such as nostalgia, belonging, and at times, alienation.
- 2) Consuming Turkish media content often nurtures feelings of nostalgia and a sense of continuity with their native culture, reinforcing emotional attachments and a sense of belonging to their roots.
- 3) The media act as mirrors reflecting the socio-cultural nuances of Turkey, allowing immigrants to critically

engage with, appreciate, or even contest various aspects of their native culture from a distance.

- 4) However, this engagement also has the potential to accentuate feelings of homesickness and alienation, highlighting the geographical and cultural distances that separate migrants from their homeland.

Thus, media consumption becomes a dual-edged sword—on one hand, it nurtures emotional connections and a sense of cultural belonging, while on the other, it could exacerbate feelings of displacement and critical perceptions of their homeland.

Evidence from participant interviews:

P1 Especially if there is a series shot in Istanbul like this, for example, seeing the Bosphorus Bridge or seeing the Bosphorus—you know sometimes it feels like you're crossing that bridge. Or when I see a familiar place like Taksim or Beşiktaş, I feel sad seeing such specific places being the subject of Turkish TV series. Once upon a time, I say, I did this here, you know. Of course, it reminds you of many things. So, once you have memories about that area, that place—you know, you feel there, you go to that day. For example, I say, I was doing this at that time, I walked there. It feels good.

P2 When I first came, I did not prefer to watch Turkish TV series. I guess I didn't want to see it. I didn't want to see Türkiye, maybe subconsciously I couldn't watch it because I missed Turkey so much.

P3 Watching a Turkish program takes me away from anxiety. The concern of an immigrant, especially a Turkish immigrant, is different.

Whatever anxiety I have, it's actually like a reward when I watch these kinds of things (Turkish TV series). Maybe I keep my motivation to return strong by keeping such things inside me. Maybe it's because I couldn't adapt here, I don't know.

P5 Watching a Turkish program can make me feel like I'm in Istanbul, coming home from my job in Istanbul and watching something. I got off work, I'm at home, I'm cooking, and because I was doing the same practice in Turkey. It feels like you are in Turkey.

Turkish productions, old movies, or TV series I like watching. It feels like a sweet, lovely wish. Or maybe it feels like a reality in the movie universe, and I like it. So it warms me up like this. I never wanted to open and watch *NeşeliGünler* (Happy Days) when I was in Turkey, but I wanted to open it and watch *NeşeliGünler* here.

P6 When we were living as students, we would drive to Washington DC or New York. There were video cassette tapes at that time. We would go and rent videos and watch the Valley of the Wolves with our Turkish friends, having a Valley of the Wolves night on Tuesdays or Thursdays, making pizza and Coke and watching TV—Turkish men together. We would sit in our living room and watch the Valley of the Wolves. At that time, we were still very new in America and we were still Turks, so while we lived here and lived in America for one, two, three, four years, we always lived as Turks.

3. Media as Bridge or Barrier

Media hold crucial roles in the immigrant experience, acting both as a conduit and an obstacle in the cultural assimilation and integration journey. As a conduit, media allows immigrants to maintain strong connections to their home countries by offering a continuous stream of content that resonates with their native identities, helping alleviate feelings of cultural displacement (Georgiou, 2006). It serves as a vital link, enabling immigrants to stay engaged with the happenings of their countries of origin, making the diasporic experience somewhat more manageable.

On the other side, as an obstacle, media consumption can hinder the full cultural adaptation of immigrants to the receiving society. A pronounced focus on media from one's homeland can reduce exposure to the language and cultural aspects of the new setting, obstructing the acquisition of essential language proficiency and social competencies required for smooth integration (Colic-Peisker, 2010). Such focused media engagement could contribute to the creation of ethnocultural silos, where media act as a mechanisms that inadvertently sustain separation from the broader cultural landscape of the host country, affecting immigrants' capacity to efficiently interact with and immerse themselves in the new culture.

In short, the role of media in the lives of Turkish immigrants in the US can be construed as both a bridge and a barrier, contingent on consumption patterns and integration journeys:

Findings 3:

- 1) As a bridge, media facilitate a poignant connection to one's homeland, enabling immigrants to sustain cultural ties, language proficiency, and a sense of belonging to their native communities.
- 2) Media serve as a tools to alleviate feelings of homesickness and cultural dislocation by providing content that resonates with their ethnic identities and familiar landscapes.

3) However, the media can also manifest as a barrier, potentially impeding the full immersion of immigrants into American society. An overreliance on home country media may limit exposure to American cultural nuances, hampering the acquisition of new social networks and linguistic competencies essential for seamless integration.

Therefore, while media can act as a comforting bridge to the homeland, it can also inadvertently reinforce alienation and barriers to cultural adaptation within the host society.

Evidence from participant interviews:

P1 I use social media very actively. I generally follow news from Turkey on social media. I don't watch US news. The channels I follow are in Turkish. I still consume Turkish content.

Actually, I usually watch it to relax a bit. It's the ease of the language. Maybe because I can understand everything.

P2 I listen to podcasts to improve my English. If I don't listen to reinforce my English, if I really listen to relax, I prefer Turkish. Listening to Turkish makes you feel more comfortable and safe.

When I first came, I did not prefer to watch Turkish TV series. I guess I didn't want to see it. I didn't want to see Türkiye, maybe subconsciously I couldn't watch it because I missed Turkey so much. I feel like my soul, when I hear something Turkish. It feels very good to hear something in Turkish. But when there is an adhan or arabesque music in a Turkish TV series and we were watching it late at night, there were times when my wife turned down the TV volume, because American neighbors might misunderstand it. You get into the habit of doing this after a while. It becomes something like self-censorship. This bothered me a lot, in fact, our freedom is restricted.

P3 I watch a television series. I watch a Turkish series on YouTube-Beautiful Days (GüzelGünler) TV series. Because as there are fewer Turks, the longing for home increases. It's more neighborhood, street culture, more sincere conversations. There is a neighborhood culture. It reminds us of Turkey or the past neighborhood culture.

P6 I also watched it to get closer to Turkish culture. To be able to have that conversation in the same environment. Of course, we have different things, we think differently about how we can overcome them. I think so because when you enter a new environment, they refer to some things, you don't understand. They understand, you don't.

P9 We live here. We need to order donuts from time to time and drink coffee. So we need to belong here. Food is the easiest way for integration. So is TV series. For example, Turks in Germany constantly watch Turkish TV series. It feels like if you belong

here and watch three TV series, two of them should be American and one should be Turkish. It makes integration easier.

4. Sociocultural Adaptation Through Media

Media play significant roles in the sociocultural integration and adaptation of immigrants to their new environment, influencing strategies they employ to navigate the complexities of a new societal landscape. It acts as a lens through which immigrants can observe, learn, and assimilate various facets of the host culture, including language, social norms, values, and everyday practices (Christoph, 2012). Exposure to media content allows immigrants an opportunity to acquaint themselves with the linguistic nuances and cultural ethos of the new society, assisting in the gradual process of adaptation. Immigrants may find elements within the host country's media that resonate with their native cultures, enabling a form of cultural synthesis that fosters a more enriched sociocultural identity.

Conversely, media from their homeland can act as a preservative agent, helping maintain a connection to their native values and traditions amid the prevailing influences of the new societal environment (Karanfil, 2009). Thus, media act as dynamic tools through which immigrants navigate the continuous interplay of assimilation, preservation, and transformation in their adaptation journey.

Findings 4:

- 1) Exposure to American media provides Turkish immigrants with insights into the societal norms, language nuances, and everyday practices of their new environment, potentially easing the adaptation process.
- 2) Media act as gateways to understanding and engaging with the social fabric of American life, promoting a sense of belonging and facilitating smoother integration into American society. Through media, Turkish immigrants can explore the amalgamation of their Turkish identity with new elements, nurturing a bicultural identity that resonates with the experiences and realities of living in the United States.

Evidence from participant interviews:

P4 I wanted to learn some American jokes. On my previous visit, I bought a similar book called American Jokes. Yes, jokes. There are many cultural elements in jokes. Because I wonder what they are laughing at, what they are having fun with. His jokes don't seem funny to me. But at least I don't find anything strange when I hear it. So I'm a little curious about the culture.

P6 While you grow up in Turkey, they grow up here (in the US). When you come here from outside, from a time when you have no common denominator with them, there is a difference between the foundations laid by you and their foundations. You are always trying to catch up. That's why you will continue as an immigrant in this limbo until you die.

P9 When there is a Turk in any program, my sympathy increases. We feel closeness, in fact, while we all move away from Turkey, we want to get closer to Turkey after a certain period of time.

IV. Conclusion

Most participants engage with both American and Turkish media. However, Turkish immigrant media consumption is primarily driven by a sense of nostalgia and cultural connection.

A majority feel a strong connection to their Turkish identity, using media as a bridge to connect with their roots. Some participants, however, are more inclined towards integration into American society.

There's a notable variation in the levels of integration and identification with Turkish or American culture among participants. Some feel caught between two cultures, while others lean more towards one or the other.

Media act as significant tools for participants to maintain a connection with their Turkish roots, traditions, and language and as sources for learning about American culture.

Transnational Media and Turkish Immigrant's Adaptation to US Culture

Although Turkish transnational media are motivated primarily by their search for audiences and profits, coproductions and joint ventures between US, European, and Turkish media now ensure that Turkish immigrants have access to familiar and comforting content. The emergence of Turkish transnational partnerships has inadvertently increased cultural connections for Turkish immigrants in the United States. At the same time, the increase of Turkish series on US television and streaming services increases opportunities for Americans to learn about Turkish culture. Thus, the transnational expansion of Turkish TV series expands intercultural communication and experiences for all viewers.

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REPRESENTATION OF GENDER AND CHILDCARE IN POPULAR INDIAN ADVERTISEMENTS FROM 2011 to 2021

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Purpose: *Childcare duties are mostly considered as the responsibility of mothers in India. Although this notion has changed considerably in recent times, the media seems to be catching up slowly.*

Design/Methodology/Approach: *The study analysed the popular Indian advertisements' portrayal of gender in childcare using content analysis.*

Findings: *The analysis of the advertisements released from 2011 to 2021, the study concludes that mothers (women) are the dominant gender in advertisements related to childcare where the childcare responsibilities rest on women.*

Originality/Value: *The fathers (men) were not prominently shown in domestic settings for childcare, and their roles in childcare were limited to assisting the mothers in childcare.*

Keywords : *Indian advertisements, gender portrayal, childcare, gender and childcare.*

Introduction

Childcare as a responsibility within a household, marriage, or domestic setting is dominantly viewed as a feminine or a woman's obligated familial duty as a mother (Swaddle, 2021). It does not negate the fact that men are also involved in the process of childcare and in many cases take active participation in raising children as a father (Rutherford, L., 2018). In certain contexts, and cultures women as mothers play a dominant role in childcare compared to fathers because historically men have had other duties as a breadwinner performing occupational roles to provide for their families. (Swann, W. B., 2004)

It is not an unknown fact that women carry and bear the child, and there is a need for women to breastfeed the child for a minimum of a year. However, this initial involvement of women in childbearing and breastfeeding may lead to the assumption and the practice that naturally and logically, it is the women's responsibility, or women are essentially meant to care for the infant and the growing child (Ascher, 2020).

Childcare in media, culture, and society

Motherhood is often placed on a pedestal just like any other physically or psychologically demanding position or function. By singing the praises of motherhood and mothers or childcare done by a mother, society at large eases the intensity of the labour involved in motherhood.

These forms of social expectations and glorification of motherhood are also depicted by the media, which shifts focus from fathers and their role in childcare. It also sets a sense of false expectations from fathers where they are only seen and expected to be breadwinners of their families. Media has

increasingly depicted fathers as “bumbling” or “clueless”. (Allen, et. al, 2007). Fathers are often in most regions under represented in media, and when fathers are represented in some situations they are often stereotyped as being uninvolved in childcare.

I. Review of Literature

Studies have been carried out to analyse the depiction of childcare in different forms of Indian media. The study by Munshi.S (1998) examines what role advertisements play in creating discourses that construct the idea of a “new Indian woman”. The author has deconstructed media texts from both print and television commercials. The paper highlights how these advertisements on one hand are representing and portraying women with the same idea of traditional femininity by showing them as different avatars of the “homemaker” and on the other hand using this narrative to make appropriation with ideas of liberation and feminism. The study shows how the consumerist mindset of most marketers in the changing times have prompted them to represent women at a larger context than previously seen, but conforming to the same socially constructed domesticated roles like the wife, daughter, the daughter-in-law with several unpaid and care responsibilities on their shoulders.

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Similar to the previous study, the paper by Wall.G (2013) focuses on changing discourses of women, motherhood, childcare and women's employment in print media texts like magazines. The study critically looks to analyse content of some of the top most magazines of Canada. The author highlights how mother's employment is taken for granted in recent times than before and is seen as more opposed to children's well-being. Good motherhood according to the paper cannot be possibly claimed by women currently because of how women focusing on their careers are portrayed, and due to discourses of intensive and cold centred mothering, where children are portrayed as more needy, vulnerable and dependent.

Shifting focus from childcare representation in printed media text, the study by Chang-Kredl.S (2015) talks about the construction of childcare in American comedic films. According to the author the area of childcare representation in popular media remains unexplored especially in North America which in-turn impacts childcare educators. The paper is based on a case study and analyses of three comedic films, *Daddy Daycare*, *The Longest Daycare*, and *Toy Story 3* to understand how these films may construct, conform to or challenge the society's assumptions regarding childcare. The paper highlights how the comedic nature of films is chosen because of its potential to either promote or disregard the stereotypes and tropes of childcare practices.

A study by Roy.A (1998) looks at advertisements as a major agent of social reinforcement because of its presumed power of moulding opinions, values and attitudes. According to the author advertisements maintain a hegemony by making cultural constructions of the way one perceives the world. The study mainly focuses on how the Indian advertisements project the '*patriarchal ideology and myth that undermine the progress of the Indian woman.*' The study mainly explores the symbols used to portray women as home-makers and mothers in Indian commercials.

In the discussion about gender discourses formed by advertising, the study by Lazar. M (2000) talks about the egalitarian and the conservative gender relation discourse in the context of parenthood and the National advertising campaign of Singapore. The paper has used Halliday's theory to understand and analyse media texts and visuals specifically. The study looks at these representative discourses through three factors: the relative representation of the gender roles, the differences in the mode of representation and power dynamic of the gender with relation to balance of power in case of parenthood.

Another study by Orgad. S (2016) focuses on similar lines as the previous study. The paper mainly seeks to analyse how the

media representations of stay-at-home mothers compares with the actual lived experiences of mothers. The study focuses on the media construction of Women choosing to opt out of the workplace as a personal choice and evaluates it through the actual situations, factors and aspects that influence women's decision to leave their career. The study was conducted by juxtaposing interviews of women who have had lived experiences as stay-at-home mothers with British and American media's representation of stay-at-home mothers. Through this juxtaposition, the study found that there is a huge gap between the representation and experience of actual middle class stay-at-home mothers.

After understanding how representations are different from lived experiences of women in a household context, the study by Siswati. E (2019) explores women's attitudes towards the domesticated media representations of women especially in advertisements. The paper talks about how advertisements use signs and symbols that indicate subordination and domestication of women which is consumed by people at large. The author highlights that children's understanding of gender is influenced by parents, peers, mass media and on the other hand the kind of response of mothers and women to the domestication in advertisements impacts how it is explained or exposed to their children as well.

A study about the portrayal of fathers in prime-time television sitcoms: Ideology, paternity, and social policy by Allen, S. M., & Daly, K. J found that the depiction of fathers in care roles are still comparatively less and are in most cases framed in ways that reinforces the traditional gender roles.

Research Gap

The literature covers constructions of gendered childcare and portrayal of motherhood in films. Although there is literature regarding media representations of childcare, the studies are limited to only a few aspects of media texts and most of these studies have not targeted the representation of childcare and gender in the Indian context. Additionally, most studies look at childcare from the viewpoint that regards childcare as a responsibility of only women by emphasising the need for aspects such as paid leave for care responsibilities. This paper will thus fill the gap by exploring childcare in popular advertisements in India, and look at how the female and the male gender is constructed by the media to fit the gender roles mainly with respect to childcare.

II. Research Design and Methods

The study looks at childcare products and other household products advertisements where children and parents (mothers and fathers) are represented during the period of 2010-2021.

Research Objectives

Following are central objectives of the study:

- To determine the prevalence of a dominant gender performing childcare in popular advertisements.
- To determine the nature of Women's (Mother) media representations as a role in childcare in popular advertisements.
- To determine the nature of Men's (Father) media representations as a role in childcare in popular advertisements.

A mixed method research methodology has been used for the purpose of the study because of the involvement of both qualitative analysis of themes along with quantitative analysis by quantifying the presence of certain concepts and aspects along with statistical analysis. Content analysis of popular advertisements has been used to determine the various themes related to gender in association with childcare responsibility.

Sample and Sampling process

Fifteen Advertisements of different products released from 2011 to 2021 have been selected for the content analysis :Johnson's Baby soap, Amul Milk, Surf excel easy wash, Nestle ceregrow, Vicks Baby rub, Tide detergent, Everest masala, Horlicks, Goodnight Fabric roll on, California Almonds, Dettol, First Cry, Ariel, Aashirvaadatta, Lizol. A purposive sampling method was used in selecting these advertisements based on the representation of each parent (mother and father) and their relation to child care or caring responsibilities. These advertisements mainly are for either baby or children's products or common household products that are generally marketed towards women at large. The above-mentioned advertisements were also chosen because of their popularity and reach among the audience as television broadcasted advertisements during the month or the year they aired and the current number of views on social media platforms such as YouTube.

The sample of advertisements were viewed and the concepts related to gender childcare were noted down. Similar concepts were grouped into categories, and a coding sheet was generated. Content analysis was carried out using the coding sheet. The different categories that were noted down include 'dominant gender in childcare' 'nutrition', 'health', 'nurturing the child', 'education and schooling', and 'father in care roles'.

Coding was carried out by two coders and inter-coder reliability test was carried out in the SPSS software for a statistical analysis of the data to find the extent of agreement between the coders to ensure fair results and findings.

Framing theory was used to understand how the media has constructed a certain idea of childcare that is impacting women's perception of the subject at hand. Framing Theory talks about how media can have a control over the viewer's perception and influences their acceptance of a particular meaning of a message. The theory is relevant and suitable for the study due to the objective of the study to understand the gendered notion of childcare portrayed in the media.

III. Results and Discussion

1. Prevalence of a dominant gender in Advertisements

The first category analysed the dominant gender in childcare advertisements. As shown in table 1, “mothers” are the parents that are present in the majority of the chosen advertisement. 67% of the advertisements have represented only mothers performing childcare. Fathers solely performing childcare are not there in any of the advertisements. However, 33% of the advertisements have both mothers and fathers present and performing childcare. Thus, women (mothers) are the dominant gender performing childcare in the selected sample of advertisements.

2. Nutrition

This category focuses on the aspect of nutrition which is one of the basic parts of any form of caregiving. With respect to childcare, nutrition forms an important part of a child's health and development. The category has incorporated various concepts which are essential in providing adequate nutrition to a child. The concepts are essentially the acts that are performed by the mother specifically in the chosen advertisements that indicate provision of nutrition by the mother alone. The concepts identified are Mother cooking for the child, Mother serving food for the child, Mother feeding the child, Mother making food purchase decisions for the child.

Cooking for the child here, refers to the mother physically cooking a meal for her child. **Serving** food, refers to the act of offering and plating a portion of food for the child. **Feeding** here, refers to the parent physically feeding solid food to the child who is past the infancy stage, thus, breastfeeding is not considered. **Food purchase decision** refers to the choices made by a parent with regard to finding the right nutritional product or food item for the child based on their discretion and understanding.

As shown in table 2, the dominant concepts have been “Mother cooking for the child” and “Mother serving food for the child”, both identified in 53% of the advertisements. On the other hand, “Mother making food purchase decisions for the child” is identified in 46% of the chosen advertisements while “Mother

feeding the child” stands lowest in only 20% of the advertisements.

3. Health

Health as a category here, refers to the aspect of child care that involves parents or guardians of the child making concerted efforts to take care of the child's health. In the chosen advertisements, the concepts identified are acts that suggest healthcare provision for a child which is again specifically performed by mothers alone. The concepts that form a part of this category are Mother taking care of sick child, Mother being protective of child, Mother concerned about child's health.

Taking care of a sick child refers to the act of tending to a child who is unwell by offering and feeding medicines and other required help for the child to recover. **Being protective** refers to the idea of parents cautioning the child against any possible dangers or using precautionary measures to avoid a possible health complication. **Being concerned about the child's health** indicates the phenomenon of parents being worried for the welfare and healthy growth of the child. As shown in table 3, the dominant concepts have been “mother being protective of child and mother concerned about child's health”, both identified in 60% of the advertisements. On the other hand, “Mother taking care of the sick child” is hardly seen in the chosen advertisements as compared to the other two concepts standing lowest in only 13.34% of the advertisements.

4. Nurturing the Child

The category focuses on a few more basic child care necessities that are usually performed by the mother as observed in the advertisements. Nurturing here, refers to any form of actions or efforts made by the parent of a child for the child's healthy development and growth. The concept includes concepts like Mother bathing the child, Mother shopping for the child, Mother washing children's clothes, Mother dressing the child, Mother waking up at night to tend to the crying child, Mother providing transportation for the child.

“**Bathing the child**” refers to the physical act of giving a bath to the child by the parent. “**Shopping for the child**” refers to parents' act of shopping for any kind of children's product that is essential for their healthy growth and development. “**Washing children's clothes**” refers to collecting children's clothes for laundry and physically washing the clothes for the child. “**Dressing the child**”, here refers to physically choosing clothes and dressing the child. “**Waking up at night to tend to the crying child**” refers to quieting the child, putting the child to sleep or to give any other form of care to help the child to stop crying which is common among toddlers and very young

children. “**Transportation**” here, refers to the arrangement of transportation like taking the child to a bus stop and also particularly driving the child to a required location.

As shown in table 4, the dominant concept has been “Mother providing transportation for the child, Mother washing children's clothes, Mother dressing the child”, each been identified in 20% of the chosen advertisements while “Mother bathing the child, Mother waking up at night to tend to the crying child, Mother shopping for the child” stands lowest in only 13.34% of the advertisements.

5. Education and Schooling

This category is focused on covering all aspects of education and schooling that is in regard to a child's mental and physical development. The concepts under this category are Mother teaching the child, Mother disciplining the child, Mother sending the child to school, all falling under the umbrella of childcare because of education being both a necessity and right of the growing child. Here Education and schooling not only refers to academic education but can also include any other educational activity or even advising that aids a child's development.

Teaching refers to the parent assisting their children in assignments, homeworks and also involves explanation and of concepts and ideas to children or even tutoring one's child.

Disciplining a child refers to advising a child on life lessons, pointing out mistakes and can also involve cautionary and disciplining actions taken by the parents such as some form of punishment. **Sending the child to school** here refers to specific tasks or efforts made by the parent or guardian to send their child to school. This can range from waking a child on time, getting them ready for school to packing lunch for the child and providing transport to the child specifically for school.

As shown in table 5, the dominant concept is, “Mother sending the child to school”, present in 53% of the advertisements. The other two concepts, “Mother teaching the child” and “Mother disciplining the child” are comparatively seen fewer times in the chosen advertisements, both identified in 26% of the advertisements.

6. Father in care roles

Father in care roles category covers the concepts that are in regard to the father as a parent being represented as involved in the childcare practices in the chosen advertisements. All other categories and concepts are prefixed with “Mother” because of Mothers being the highlighted parent in almost all the advertisements involving a household setting. In some advertisements, Fathers have also been represented mostly as a

side support to the “primary highlighted parent” that is the mother. The category covers concepts such as Father's presence in the domestic setting, Father contributing to any form of childcare, Father assisting the mother in childcare.

Father's presence in the domestic setting to the father as a parent being in the frame (May or may not be engaged in childcare or any domestic activity) of an advertisement that represents a household or a domestic scenario. **Father contributing to any form of child care** refers to any form of childcare ranging from nutrition, health, basic nurturing, schooling etc. that is physically performed by the father (May or may not be alongside the mother or any other guardian). **Father assisting the mother in childcare** refers to the father specifically helping the mother or providing support to the mother in performing any kind of childcare.

As shown in table 6, the concept, “Father's presence in the domestic setting” is present in the maximum number of advertisements at 26%. The other two concepts, Father contributing to any form of childcare” and “Father assisting the mother in childcare” are hardly seen in the chosen advertisements, both identified in 13% of the advertisements.

To test the level of agreement or the variability in agreement between the coders, an inter-coder reliability test was carried out using Cohen's Kappa measure wherein the Cohen's kappa coefficient (k) value is the static measurement of the inter-coder reliability for each of the qualitative categories. The SPSS software or the statistical package for social sciences was used to find the reliability using Cohen's kappa coefficient. SPSS allows for statistical analysis by providing a graphic user interface for accessing statistical analysis.

Interceder reliability test

To determine the level of agreement between the first coder and second coder for each category, the interceder reliability test were carried out using Cohen's Kappa. As shown in table 7, three out of five categories had very good agreement, while two categories had fair and moderate agreement, respectively.

IV. Conclusion

- **To determine the prevalence of a dominant gender performing childcare in popular advertisements.**

From the analysis it is evident that women are dominant gender in childcare advertisements. It reflects how women are generally represented as being the only gender or mothers as the only parent associated with children, childcare and caregiving. Women are solely shown in the advertisements, essentially pointing out that most of these products that are being

advertised as being related to childcare or even domestic products are purposely targeted to be sold particularly to women.

For instance in advertisements such as Lizol and Horlicks, there is a third person (Celebrity or a voice over in the background) who is present to question the mother regarding their choice of certain products over others and essentially trying to sell the products to the mothers. Fathers on the other hand have rather minor representations in the advertisements which is limited to merely assisting mothers. For instance, in the first cry advertisement the father is shown to assist the mother with giving a bath to the child where the father is holding the child while the mother prepares the bath for the child. In the Ariel advertisement the father is shown assisting the mother with laundry.

- **To determine the nature of Women's (Mother) media representations as a role in childcare in popular advertisements.**

Women have been the dominant highlighted face of the majority of these advertisements. Representations of women with regard to child's nutrition and the responsibility of cooking, serving, and making food purchase decisions have been fairly significant in number in the chosen advertisements with mother cooking for the child and serving food identified in 53% of the chosen advertisements. Women have also been very prominently shown as being a concerned parent in the household which is identified in 60% of the advertisements. Thus 60% of the advertisements show mother's being protective of their children and being concerned for their children's health, which has been by far the most dominant theme identified in the majority of the advertisements.

Women are also highlighted with regard to very general roles related to childcare such as dressing the child, washing children's clothes and providing transportation for the child. Each of these three themes are present in 20% of the advertisements. Another dominant theme that has been identified is mothers specifically making efforts to send the child to school on time found in 53% of the advertisements. Additionally mothers are also represented to be teaching the child identified in 33% of the advertisements and disciplining and cautioning their child which has been identified in 20% of the advertisements.

The representations of mothers are putting forward an idea that childcare duties are the responsibility of mothers or women specifically irrespective of the volume of work or even the fact whether they are working mothers having to balance both work and home. In most advertisements, women are shown to be

solely performing childcare duties and being limited to a domestic setting. In some advertisements, where women are represented as having duties beyond the household, the domestic duties along with childcare is still being regarded as an obligation that mothers are having to “manage” before furthering their own interests, jobs and careers (for example, the representation of a working mother in the Ariel advertisements and even First cry advertisement). In some sense these advertisements glorify the role of mothers in childcare and the sheer amount of work that goes into raising a child, yet also represent women “magically finishing” domestic duties including childcare giving a false impression about the actual amount of time and efforts that are spent in fulfilling such duties (For example advertisements such as Tide, surf excel easy wash and Horlicks).

- **To determine the nature of Men's (Father) media representations as a role in childcare in popular advertisements.**

Fathers are barely represented as even being present in the domestic setting in the chosen advertisements. Among the advertisements that have shown fathers, the majority of these advertisements carry a representation of the father as just being present in the household which is present in 40% of the advertisements with no relation to performing any kind of childcare. In 20% of the chosen advertisements where the fathers are actually shown to perform some kind of childcare, fathers are barely assisting the mothers in childcare which has been again identified only in 20% of the advertisements. The nature of these minimal childcare are also limited to only holding or carrying the child. The popular advertisements are clearly furthering an image of fathers being absent or barely present in a domestic setting and even in their children's lives where they are represented as merely a helping hand for the mothers who are represented as the primary care-giver.

Interpretation of findings using theory

The theory that has been chosen is Framing theory which suggests that the manner in which certain media texts are presented can influence the way people perceive and interpret these texts. Here, according to the framing theory, the representations of mothers and fathers are framed in such a way that reinforces the traditional gender roles and expectations. This has the ability to shape viewers' attitudes and beliefs about childcare. Mothers being represented as primary care-givers, responsible for childcare irrespective of having interests beyond the household can result in viewers believing that women are solely responsible for the emotional and physical labour that goes in raising children which essentially perpetuates gender inequalities.

The representations of the fathers on the other hand as being barely present with respect to childcare can create perception in the minds of viewers where fathers' primary role is to provide financial support. These forms of framings that are perpetuated by the media can lead to the creation of social spaces where fathers are discouraged from being actively involved in childcare practices which will again reinforce gender inequalities.

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Table 1: Prevalence of a dominant gender performing childcare in popular advertisements

Sl No.	Advertisements	Only Mother	Only Father	Both the Parents
1	Johnson's Baby soap	1	0	0
2	Amul Milk	0	0	1
3	Surf excel easy wash	1	0	0
4	Nestle ceregrow	1	0	0
5	Vicks Baby rub	0	0	1
6	Tide detergent	1	0	0
7	Everest masala	1	0	0
8	Horlicks	1	0	0
9	Goodnight Fabric roll on	1	0	0
10	California Almonds	0	0	1
11	Dettol	1	0	0
12	First Cry	0	0	1
13	Ariel	0	0	1
14	Aashirvaadatta	1	0	0
15	Lizol	1	0	0
Total		10	0	5
Total percentage		67%	0%	33%

Table 2: Nutrition concepts as identified in Advertisements

Sl No.	Nutrition concepts	Coder 1	Coder 2	Coder 1%	Coder 2%
1	Mother cooking for the child	8	8	53.34%	53.34%
2	Mother serving food for the child	8	8	53.34%	53.34%
3	Mother feeding the child	3	3	20%	20%
4	Mother making food purchase decision for the child	7	7	46.67%	46.67%
Total		26	26	43.34%	43.34%

Table 3: Health concepts as identified in Advertisements

Sl No.	II. Health concepts	Coder 1	Coder 2	Coder 1%	Coder 2%
1	Mother caring for sick child	2	2	13.34%	13.34%
2	Mother being protective of child	9	10	60%	66.67%
3	Mother concerned about child's health	9	10	60%	66.67%
Total		20	22	44.45%	44.45%

Table 4: Nurturing the child concepts as identified in Advertisements

Sl No.	III. Nurturing the child concepts	Coder 1	Coder 2	Coder 1%	Coder 2%
1	Mother bathing the child	2	2	13.34%	13.34%
2	Mother shopping for the child	2	2	13.34%	13.34%
3	Mother washing children's clothes	3	3	20%	20%
4	Mother dressing the child	3	3	20%	20%
5	Mother waking up at night to tend to the crying child	2	2	13.34%	13.34%
6	Mother providing transportation for the child	3	3	20%	20%
Total		15	15	16.67%	16.67%

Table 5: Education and Schooling concepts as identified in Advertisements

Sl No.	IV. Education and Schooling concepts	Coder 1	Coder 2	Coder 1%	Coder 2%
1	Mother teaching the child	5	4	33.34%	26.67%
2	Mother disciplining the child	4	4	20%	20%
3	Mother sending the child to school	8	8	53.34%	53.34%
Total		16	15	35.5%	33.34%

Table 6: Father in care roles concepts as identified in Advertisements

Sl No.	V. Father in care roles concepts	Coder 1	Coder 2	Coder 1%	Coder 2%
1	Father's presence in the domestic setting	6	6	40%	40%
2	Father contributing to any form of childcare	4	4	20%	20%
3	Father assisting the mother in childcare	8	8	20%	20%
Total		12	12	26.67%	26.67%

Table 7: Intercoder reliability test values

Categories	Cohen Kappa Scores
Nutrition	Very good agreement (1.00)
Health	Fair agreement (0.25)
Nurturing	Very good agreement (1.00)
Education and schooling	Moderate agreement (0.50)
Father in care role	Very good agreement (1.00)

EMERGING TRENDS IN PRINT MEDIA BUSINESS MODELS AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES: A PRISMA PROTOCOL BASED SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF SCOPUS, TAYLOR & FRANCIS, AND SHODHGANGA DATABASES

Chitralkha Agrawal* Sayan Dey**

Purpose: The systematic review study seeks to develop an insight of the global research pertaining to the emerging trends in newspaper management practices after the proliferation of convergence technology. Three databases- Scopus, Taylor & Francis online journals, and Shodhganga- a repository of Indian research theses, have been electronically searched with pre-determined keywords to locate relevant studies published between the years 2000 and 2022 for the purpose

Design/Methodology/Approach: The analysis follows PRISMA methodology and reviews 20 studies in total that were found relevant as per the inclusion criteria. Results reveal that the research in this area is predominantly limited to the European countries and largely focuses on the shift from print to digital and online business models.

Findings: Whole of Asia region which is a major global market for print media is majorly under-studied. Indian research in the field of media management is likewise lacking and does not offer a comprehensive understanding of the business dynamics of the country's newspaper sector.

Originality/Value: The analysis fills an important research gap existed in the media management research area in India by revealing a severe research deficit in print media business research in India, and synthesizing the results of the global studies.

Keywords : Indian Press, Print media, Business models, Media Management, PRISMA, Systematic review

Introduction

The necessity to build new business models has arisen as a result of the media convergence-driven market for the global press, which has historically earned its revenue mostly through advertising. Rapid digitization of media that began two decades before has changed the idea of one-way communication by giving rise to a variety of new forms of media creation, changed market dynamics and increased audience participation. Newspapers now have a challenge to maintain their competitive edge as old business models have been questioned and demand for current products has diminished (Fuller 2010, Picard 2011, Nielsen 2012, Kung 2013, Evens et al 2017). A Shift from printed products to a service-based value proposition has already taken place in the media industry (Mezger, 2014). The press has undergone a structural transformation through changes to its value chains, organisational structure, distribution methods, and management techniques. All the global print media firms have begun operating in the digital arena concurrently with print markets (Evens, Raats, and Bjorn von Rimscha 2017, Kung 2017, Nuboko 2020). As business model innovation appears as a promising option for value creation and to maintain competitive advantage when a market experiences a shift change (Wirtz&Daiser, 2017), legacy print media has also resorted to business models innovation to retain profits. Numerous academics have researched the press industry's

shifting economic patterns and provided insightful contributions (Kung, 2008, 2013, 2017, Picard, 2011, 2018, Zulunga& Long 2021). Worldwide many media scholars have been studying the change and have given important insight about how industry players are pursuing actions such as cost reduction, diversification, foreign investment, expansion, product realignment, etc., to stay up with market needs in addition to developing new products and services (Picard, 2011, Hayes & Graybeal 2015, Kung, 2017).

I. Review of Literature

Indian Scenario:

India, one of the most rapidly expanding media markets, has experienced the effects of media convergence as well. Incorporating new business models and revenue streams began in the first decade of the twenty-first century with the development of numerous online websites and electronic newspapers (Khandekar 2016). Advertising spending in India's print medium has increased slowly since 2016, with barely 1%

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average growth over the last five years, even though it still makes up 70–75 percent of the press's revenue, with circulation making up the remaining portion (RNI, 2021, KPMG, 2021). While the advertising revenues have stayed constant or even declined the price of labour, upkeep, and newsprint has increased manifold (KPMG, 2021). Pay-wall offerings, numerous distribution channels, diversification, value-adding methods, and production, operational, and execution developments have all been observed in the Indian print media business environment (Rao 2019, Tripathi 2019, Khandekar 2021). Contrary to the large number of global researchers in the field studying the change, only a small number of media scholars have conducted research on the business of the Indian media. It is an important topic of study to comprehend the economic reality of the Indian newspaper industry and recognise the influence it is casting on news content. Extensive studies are needed to address the gap.

The current study is a systematic review of the research grounded on the analysis of the evolving business models and management trends of the press worldwide after the new media led market transformation. Published literature from 2000 to 2022 was gathered from three databases. While Shodhganga was used to discover studies relevant to India, Scopus and Taylor & Francis databases were used to mine data of the global studies. PRISMA technique has been applied to review the papers (see table #1). The objective of the evaluation is to assess the current business patterns of the global print media industry in order to develop an understanding of the print media management research worldwide and identify the gap areas in Indian research context and to make recommendations for future studies. This analysis will aid scholars in learning about the emerging business methods used by print media both globally and in relation to the Indian press. From the viewpoint of educators, this examination will help them gain a better grasp of how the shifting media market environment has affected the economic reality of the print media over time. Policy makers, academics, and researchers will also gain from this work because it sheds light on the revenue realities of the strategic management of the print media that hasn't been thoroughly investigated by previous researchers. It seeks the answers of the following research questions (RQ):

RQ 1: How many studies have been conducted globally on emerging print media business models and management trends, and how is the distribution by year, country, and the methodology?

RQ2: Which are the major conclusions of Scopus & T&FO studies?

RQ-3: What kinds of studies were carried out in India, and

which were the key conclusions?

The systematic study is divided in 3 sections; 1- Introduction section discusses the study's concept and explains why a systematic review is needed, 2- Second section describes the PRISMA approach and how the studies have been identified, chosen, evaluated and included for the review, 3- The third section reports, discusses and synthesizes the findings of the study.

II. Research design and Methods

Scopus Database Resource

Scopus is Elsevier's abstract and citation database including scientific journals, books, and conference proceedings. It offers a thorough analysis of the results of research conducted around the world in the areas of science, technology, medicine, social sciences, and the arts and humanities (Scopus.com). It was established in 2004 and indexes approximately 14000 articles across many disciplines, including the social sciences (Burnham, 2006). Wikipedia states that Scopus comprises almost 36,377 titles from roughly 11,678 publishers, of which 34,346 are peer-reviewed journals in subject areas (22,794 active titles and 13,583 dormant titles).

Taylor & Francis Online (T&FO)

It is the journal content platform for the UK-based Taylor & Francis Group. More than 2,700 top-notch, multidisciplinary publications in the humanities and social sciences, science and technology, engineering, medicine, and healthcare are accessible through T&FO (taylorandfrancis.com).

Shodhganga

Shodhganga is an Indian research database where Indian researchers have amassed more than 4 lakh theses and 9632 synopses (shodhganga.com, 2022). It is administered by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of India's INFLIBNET Centre, an independent inter-university centre. The academic community globally has open access to read and download the entire text of every document submitted to Shodhganga. The repository was established following UGC norms (June 2009) requiring all universities to submit electronic versions of PhD theses and MPhil dissertations to it.

PRISMA

PRISMA (The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses) statement was published in 2009 in order to help systematic reviewers transparently report the exact methodology and findings of a review study (prisma-statement.org). Continuous advances in PRISMA guidelines

were also introduced time to time. PRISMA 2020 statement consists a checklist of 27 items that includes identification, screening, eligibility and inclusion criteria (Page et al., 2020). Identification is the process to enrich main keywords using several steps so that articles from the database could be retrieved as wider as possible. The process of screening articles for inclusion or exclusion based on author-determined eligibility standards is the second stage. Every article is checked to see if it meets the requirements for inclusion and is consistent with the goals of the ongoing research by reading the title, abstract, method, outcome, and conclusion. The publications that meet the criteria are examined in the inclusion phase, and the findings are then reported (Moher et al., 2009; Page et al., 2020).

III. Results and Discussion

2.2.1 PRISMA Protocol: Identification of the studies:

The relevant studies for systematic review were identified through the following 'keyword pairs' in all three databases: print media, press, newspapers, business models, revenue streams, media management, business management, strategic management, business strategies, media economics.

They were used in following manner for advanced research in Scopus and Taylor & Francis Databases: ("Print media" OR "Press" OR "newspapers") AND ("Business Models" OR "Income models" OR "revenue streams") AND ("Media management" OR "Business management" OR "Strategic management" OR "business strategies" OR "media economics").

The filters used for identification of relevant Scopus studies include: 1- Language: English, 2- Document type: Article, 3- Subject Area: Social Science, 4- Source type: Journal.

For Taylor & Francis online researchers chose the subject area 'Journalism and Professional Media' listed under 'Humanities'. 'social sciences' subject area filter was not used as it was producing results from four different areas including- Sociology and Social Policy, Anthropology, Education and Criminology and criminal justice.

As search interface is different in Shodhganga, researchers used a phrasal combination of the most common three words to yield maximum results. A second filter "Communication" was also used under "Social Science" stream filter.

As Media convergence started in recent two decades, articles published between the years 2000 to 2022 were taken into account. The identification process was conducted in mid October 2022 and all the results that appear before 15th October 2022, were included. The search produced a total of 381 results: 10 from Scopus, 322 from Taylor & Francis and 49 from

Shodhganga.

2.2.2: Screening and Eligibility

The titles and abstracts of all the identified studies were examined to remove all the irrelevant papers under the screening step. A total of 292 records- 6 from Scopus, 244 from T&F and 42 from Shodhganga, were omitted as they were either duplicate articles, or fell in the category of essays, dissertations, book chapters or opinion pieces. A total of 89 studies- 4 from Scopus, 78 from T&F and 7 from Shodhganga were selected for second phase screening and eligibility process.

2.2.3: Inclusion of the Studies

Every article that meets the eligibility requirements underwent a final screening process, during which publications were either included or rejected depending on the inclusion criteria developed by the researchers (see figure:4). The entire texts of the articles were accessed and downloaded before the final screening. The majority of the papers were obtained from the journals via institutional login. Some papers, full texts of which were not available, were collected directly from the authors via a personal request through Researchgate portal. Three articles were excluded as their full text could not be retrieved. Full texts of remaining 86 papers were read to ensure they satisfy the inclusion requirements and were consistent with ongoing research goals. The included article needs to describe how news paper firms adopted new management practices or business models in order to retain competitive edge.

The researchers excluded 66 articles for three reasons: 1- they did not involve research on print media business management; 2- the studies was solely concerned with print media's online business models and how to increase their profitability in the current online news market; and 3- the articles did not pertain to research questions of this study. 20 studies in total—1 from Scopus, 13 from Taylor & Francis, and 6 from Shdhganga—were deemed pertinent for final analysis, while 66 were disregarded.

2. Synthesis of findings:

The findings of the Scopus and Taylor and Francis studies were analysed together to find the answers of RQ-1 & RQ-2 while Shodhganga studies were analysed separately to seek the answers of RQ-3.

RQ 1: What is the distribution of studies as per year, country and methodology?

The findings indicate that print media business model and strategy research is limited to only a few countries (see table 7). Researchers started to study the phenomena in the beginning years of 21st century and the first study was conducted in USA

(2003). Spanish press market has been researched widely using a number of research methodologies from qualitative to quantitative to newspaper market's financial analysis. Major research was carried out in developed nations, showing a complete lack of research in developing countries that have been turning out big media hubs. If we look at the studies' distribution by year, we can observe that USA scholars started to study the trend very early followed by Flanders researchers (Lawson-Borders, 2003, Audenhove, 2008). Interview with newspaper reporters, managers, employees and senior management, is the most popular for conducting the business studies. The next popular method is case study. Virtual ethnography was also adopted as a methodology (Tshabangu&Salawu, 2021). There were 4 case studies one longitudinal study (Burg&Bulck, 2018), and one was grounded on financial data analysis of 98 Spanish print newspaper publishers over the period 2009–2018. Quantitative data collection technique is the least favoured technique by the international researchers as only one study used it (Goyanes & Durrenberg, 2014).

RQ 2: What are the major conclusions of Scopus & T&FO studies?

'Business innovation', 'digital presence', and 'audience engagement' are the key phrases for legacy media to survive in digitalized and globalised world. They were unearthed in all the studies. The researchers identified 4 broad themes in the studies: 1-Business strategies and innovation, 2- Revenue streams, 3-Distribution platforms 4- Product development and audience engagement.

Theme#1- Business Strategies&Innovation: *Conception of new and innovative* business strategies in order to retain the competitive edge in digitalized era was observed to be a key business trend from earlier to later studies. Profit strategies include technological advancement to achieve digitalization, expansion and diversification to achieve scale, foreign capital investment to achieve cost efficiency, and cost cutting, product realignment and reconversion to achieve maximum profitability and economy of scope (see Lawsen-Borders, 2003; Zhang 2010; Doyle, 2015; MVD & HVD 2017; Rios-Rodrigues et. al. 2022). Direct collaboration between editorial and advertising staff members emerged as a popular trend to achieve procedural reconversion. Newspaper groups in Finland, Germany, the UK, and the USA have adopted it (see Jenkins and Nielsen 2020, Lehtisaari et al, 2018). Scholars note that multiplatform delivery requires coordination between IT, commercial, and editorial operations and large-scale innovations in print media are primarily dependent on digital media (Audenhove et al, 2008, Lawson-Borders, 2009, Doyle,

2015). Indigenous and regional players who failed to succeed likewise did not succeed in generating profits (Tshabangu&Salawu, 2022). Along with diversification, other profitable business innovations include the creation of verticals and foreign investments to provide financial backing to the organisation (Zhang, 2010). Businesses go from a print-only to a print-and-digital model and from online advertising to a combined advertising and reader payment strategy. Paywalls, tailored content, multimodal content distribution, and diversification become innovative business concepts (Jenkins and Nielsen, 2020, Rios-Rodrigues et. al., 2022).

Theme#2 Revenue streams: Innovation in revenue models was seen in the form of digital revenue models, online subscriptions, paid content on multiplatform, verticals to attract readers, native advertising, branded content, in-house marketing services, e-commerce, event sponsorships, digital subscriptions, B2B content marketing, helping clients build ads for Google and Facebook, building websites, and placing advertisements on online marketplaces (Jenkins & Nielsen, 2020; Goyanes&Durrenberg, 2014). Newspaper organizations offer services like display digital, retargeting, email marketing, social media search engine marketing, and optimisation and reputation monitoring (Olsen et al, 2021, Lehtisaari et al.. 2018; García-Avilés, 2016). Revenue structures have changed from advertising based to audiences based, with a greater variety of revenue streams but lower overall total revenues (Olsen et al., 2021). Organizations are concentrating on product licensing, marketing automation and high-end search solutions (García-Avilés, 2016). Newspapers in the US and Scandinavia have expanded to digital revenue streams. Some organizations have established their own businesses with a focus on digital and content marketing to help them preserve access to the advertising budgets of regional businesses that may otherwise be enticed to spend their money on Facebook and Google (Lehtisaari et al. 2018). 'Business diversification in numerous new streams' is a popular measure amongst the press organizations worldwide. For instance the Scandinavian media company- NTM Group, that previously had two revenue streams, now has 42 sources of income, including serving as a local sales agent for Google advertisements (Lehtisaari et al. 2018).

Theme#3 Distribution channels: Innovation in distribution channels has become a key business strategy globally. Audenhove (2008) highlighted the need for new distribution methods for print media business innovation. Newspaper industry is creating multiplatform digital distribution platforms including paywalls, podcasts, mobile applications, websites, and social media feeds. These channels are crucial to corporate strategy and aid in reaching scope by fostering greater reader-

press interaction (Doyle, 2015; MVD & HVD, 2017; Lehtisaari et al 2018; Jenkins & Nielsen, 2020 Olsen et al, 2021). Spanish press groups Prisa, Unidad and Vocento have been putting efforts in innovating distribution channels through developing proprietary digital kiosks and newsstands for Spanish newspapers (Goyanes, M & Durrenberg, 2014; Casero-Ripollés & Izquierdo-Castillo, 2015).

Theme #4: Product development and audience engagement:

All business strategies have been centered on audience engagement that is a crucial business variable (Lawson-Borders, 2003; Olsen et al 2021). Product realignment has become crucial. It includes creating local news, regional stories, personalised content, and specialised reports to target niche audiences and to locate new customer bases. Value addition is being done at the product level (Jenkins and Nielsen, 2020). Strong social media presence is an important audience engagement strategy (Garcia-Aviles et al., 2016).

RQ-3: What has been researched about the business management of Indian press so far?

Neither the Scopus nor the T&FO databases have any studies about the business environment of Indian print media. Also, there are not many Indian PhD theses on the subject. Only six studies were discovered that also, don't deal with the issue directly (See Table#4). The earliest study in the Indian context was discovered in 2016 and the most recent in 2021 (Manjappa, 2016; Gupta, 2021). Four of the six studies, which all used a mixed method approach for observation, are concentrated on regional newspapers. The field has a sizable research deficit.

Research conducted on the Indian press makes it evident that the country's print media places a strong emphasis on tech innovation, distribution and brand-building methods (L. Hemlata, 2020). Social media is becoming a crucial platform for distribution as well as a tool for attracting and retaining customers (Gupta, 2021). As digital reading is more appealing to younger readers, the digital format (like e-paper) is becoming a 'new customer' acquisition method. Indian press is quickly becoming hybrid owing to the growth of digital offerings, mobile journalism, and app advancements by newspaper organizations (Mathews, 2018, Tambat, 2018, Gupta 2021). The creation of multimedia content is on the rise, and newspaper companies are now experimenting with the creation of micro-revenue streams. The local material, particularly the rural content, has the potential to transform the game in this area (Behera, 2019; L. Hemlata, 2020; Tambat, 2018). A key finding of the review of the Indian studies is that the *content* of newspaper holds an important place in the business success in India. A responsible and quality journalism helps stay relevant

(Mathews, 2018). As found by a scholar that an Odia (regional language) newspaper retained its success through quality and responsible journalism (Behera, 2019). It is also to be noted as newspaper professionals are not very forthcoming about the information of their companies, it's a barrier (or a limitation), hindering the research on the Indian press business (Manjappa, 2016; Tambat, 2018; Behera, 2019; L. Hemlata, 2020).

IV. Conclusion

The review provides an understanding of emerging business models and strategies for press income worldwide and in India after the convergence technology was introduced. Tech advancements, digital services, revenue diversification, and the creation of new distribution channels have become driving shifts in print media management pan world. Market growth strategies through the discovery of new micro markets and the creation of package agreements with direct to consumer aggregators like digital media platforms and mobile apps, is a step for distribution innovation that has become highly important nowadays as traditional newspaper readers are shifting to digital forays for their news needs, especially youth (see Picard & Wildman, 2015; Kung 2017). Modern business plans stress *quality* and *audience Centric* journalism as the main thrust while embracing continual technological adoption, innovation, and ambidexterity, brand creation, growth into new markets, product differentiation, and successful IT, commercial, and editorial function integration. Print newspaper is an important strategic tool for future business expansion. The traditional advertising industry does not generate substantial profits and is heavily challenged by social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, etc., which provide targeted advertising at lower prices. Print sector, despite creating multiple revenue streams and innovative strategies, has still could not found *a single fit to all* sustainable business models as advertising has always been. It is still a part of major revenue generation techniques of press. Newspaper companies are trying to make online subscription an important revenue tool (see Lowe & Charles, 2016).

While the real value of direct reader payment for the newspaper industry is declining over time, the burden of paying essential news and information services in society is moving from commercial players to individual readers. Keeping the print newspaper alive' and figuring out how to move income from the print product to the digital are the biggest challenges newspaper organizations are facing. Future development in print media will be fueled by product innovation, technology advancements, and keeping current clients.

In terms of distribution tactics, client acquisition, and

technological advancements, it is possible to draw precise comparisons between international and Indian trends. However, the print media market in India is still not in a declining state (FICCI-EY Report, 2021). Contrary to the global market, which is focusing more on digital offerings, the Indian context is still focused on newspaper brand; it is the entity that brings good profits to the digital offerings. There is also a growing usage of social media for reader interaction, as well as diversification in a number of industrial verticals and diverse sectors. In India, where the chain of distribution for physical goods is quite robust and newspapers are distributed directly to homes by circulation agents, digital kiosks and newsstands are still a long way off. Khandekar (2021) & Tripathi (2019) explored a variety of new developments in Indian journalism, such as growing the market in rural regions by releasing vernacular editions, transitioning to a hybrid model by launching websites and e-papers, and creating novel products to appeal to niche market segments. The same can be observed in the review findings.

The results demonstrate a scarcity of a multi-country analysis of the print media business scenario in the current literature. There is almost no representation of developing or third-world nations. Only China and Zimbabwe could be found on the chart. Additionally, there is a sizable research gap in the context of the Indian print market. It is to be noted that the studies conducted in India also, do not yield enough empirical data to comprehend the economic realities of the Indian legacy media which is a concerning aspect and has been noted by many Indian media scholars as a huge gap in literature that needs to be addressed (Kumar 2015, Dahiya, 2021). The reason for the scarcity of the research in Indian context can also be dedicated to the respondents' (which were mainly consists of press professionals) hesitation towards answering to questions of researchers in interviews. This was also found to be main limitation in the research in Indian press context. The studies conducted so far offer insightful perspectives into the ways in which print media handles its business in light of new technological and sociological advances as well as economic necessities. Despite the fact that business management strategies are undoubtedly shifting in favour of digital media, no particular business model has been developed in contrast to the conventional dual model, which was simple and profitable.

Limitations of Study

This study is restricted to the keywords enabled search results in three databases which were accessible through the University of Delhi in India. The analysis of the articles is restricted to the themes listed in RQ1 through RQ4, with themes in RQ3 only being analyzed within specific categories. Furthermore, using

only three databases has obvious drawbacks because it does not include all languages, all topics, and all journals published worldwide.

Recommendations

The systematic review offers insightful information regarding the state of business management research on print media globally, despite all of its limitations. It makes clear that just a small number of countries have been the subject of the research on a global scale and advises academics to concentrate more on the state of print media in other nations who are also dealing with the effects of media convergence. Additionally, it advises conducting research from an Indian viewpoint because India is one of the most significant print media markets, with a local print environment distinct from that of many other nations but one that is steadily and firmly establishing itself in international markets.

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COMMUNICATING INDIA'S SOFT POWER: RAMAYANA AND ITS SPIRITUAL LINKAGE WITH SOUTH-EASTASIA

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Purpose: The term "soft power" was first coined by American political scientist Joseph S Nye Jr. in the international relations discourse in the 1980s. It was termed as "the ability to attract preferred outcomes through attraction rather than coercion." Its primary characteristics are culture, values, and policies, replacing the use of military might. Countries worldwide have embraced this idea of cultural engagement with both state and non-state actors to amplify their global positioning and influence. A new model of 21st-century democracy brands itself as an advanced economy mixed with an ancient civilization based on a vibrant culture. In this context, India, the world's largest democracy with its multicultural heritage, is globally acclaimed for its cultural assets and values that date back centuries. It remains a subject of aspiration and admiration by the global community. India's international engagement is primarily guided by the values of inclusivity, plurality, and welfare for all. Upanishads delivered the notion of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' to the world.

Findings: This paper aims to deliberate on the spiritual linkage between India and SEA countries based on Ramayana, which works as a catalyst in India's Act East Policy to strengthen further its historical engagement with Asia Pacific's immediate and extended geographies.

Originality/Value: Yoga may be considered India's most successful and popular soft-power tool; however, initially, the Indian epic Ramayana is the basis of spiritual linkages between India and its neighboring countries, especially South-East Asia (SEA). Ramakein, the national literature of Thailand, and Kakawin in Indonesia are local versions of Ramayana. In Cambodia, Rama is known as Phreah Ream, and Sita is known as NeangSeda. The city of Yogyakarta in Indonesia is a transliteration of Ayodhya. In Laos, Phra Ram is considered a previous incarnation of Gautama Buddha. The stories of Ramayana are modified according to local culture and settings only to be adopted for theatre, dance forms, and other crafts, contributing immensely to their cultural and creative economy. With the inauguration of Ram Temple in Ayodhya, the already established spiritual connection between India and South-East Asian countries is set to strengthen further.

Keywords : Ramayana, Soft Power, South-East Asia, Act East, Culture, Heritage

Introduction

South-East Asia: Geography and History

South-East Asia (SEA) comprises Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Brunei. Together, they form a geopolitical association called The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) (MEA, GOI, 2018). These countries are primarily divided into 'mainland' and 'island' zones. (Ref. Figure 1: India and South-East Asia)

The mainland countries are a geographical extension of the Asian continent, located in the East of India and South of China. The five mainland countries include Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Lao PDR. The Island countries, also known as maritime South-East Asia, include Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Brunei. Certain distinct geographical traits of these two zones facilitated civilization's flourishing over the centuries. The mainland nations have fertile lowland planes, suitable for rice cultivation due to the seasonal wind system, Monsoon, and three major

river systems, the Chao Phraya River, the Red River, and the Mekong River, originating in highlands separating South-East Asia from Northeast India and China.

The long coastline of this region linked the trade between South Asia and China, two major trading hubs in Asia. The island nations have shallow and warm ocean tracts suitable for traditional ocean enterprises like fishing, corals, seaweeds, etc., and tourism (Marwah, 2020). Cultural and linguistic diversity is a distinctive feature of SEA. Out of 6000 estimated spoken languages worldwide, 1000 are found in this region, which has been inhabited for millions of years, as per archaeological evidence. (Andaya, n.d.).

Agriculture in the world started in 8000-6000 BC. Excavations at Spirit Cave in Thailand, one of the centers of early agriculture in South-East Asia, have yielded remains of 10 different plant

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species, including almonds, peppers, cucumbers, betel nuts, beans, and peas. (Singh & Dhar, 2014)

I. Review of Literature

Indianization of South-East Asia

One of the prominent pieces of literature on the history of SEA was written by French historian George Cœdès, '*Les états hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie*' or, *The Indianized States of South South-east* (English translation by Susan Brown Cowing), that covers the period from approximately A.D. 1 to A.D. 1500 and published during the Second World War in Hanoi in 1944. Cœdès named this vast geographic area consisting of an Indonesian island, the Indochinese Peninsula, including the Malay Peninsula, as 'Farther India.' The term 'Indianization' is explained by Cœdès in terms of the extension of organized Indian culture, deeply rooted in the Hinduism or Buddhism cults, the mythology of Puranas, the observance of the Dharma sastras, the Raj dharma; Indian ways of laws and governance, and the presence of ancient art and artifacts with inscriptions in the Sanskrit language (Cœdès, 1975).

Ancient Indian Sanskrit sources indicate that SEA was referred to as Suvarnabhumi (the Land of Gold) or Suvarnadvipa (the Golden Island). It is mentioned in Prayag Prashasti that apart from Sinhala, other islanders also presented valuable gifts to Samudragupta. Here, there is a reference to South East Asian Hindu countries. According to Raghuvansh, King Kartavirya had established his yagya pillars in 18 islands. (Raghuvansh, Chapter 6, Verse 38) In Vayu Purana, the number of islands has also been specified as 18. According to Raghuvansh, written by Kalidas, clove flowers came from the island to Kalinga country (Chapter 6 Verse 57).

In South-East Asian countries, the combination of Indian cultural patterns and local traditions became the carrier of new culture in the region. In fact, it was not a one-way ascension of one culture over another, i.e., Sanskritization, but a cultural assimilation that led to a culture's emergence with new patterns. Assimilation of Indian cultural heritage in South-East Asian countries was selective rather than a direct process. The components were trade through Indian merchants, knowledge of Sanskrit and religious practices by Brahmins, limited to the elite class, and the ruling class's concept of governance and administration adopted by the ruling class (Marwah, 2020). Cœdès further attributes the rise of many kingdoms in this region, like the kingdom of Champa, the small states of the Malay Peninsula; the kingdoms of Sumatra, Java, and Bali; the Burmese and Thai kingdoms, to the process of Indianization, which received Indian culture from the Mons and Khmers (Cœdès, 1975).

Due to its geographical position and predictable wind pattern, SEA was always an essential sea trade route, thus open to external influences. The trade of SEA was from the Middle East to Far East Asia, including China and India. However, it was the Indian influences in the realm of religion, philosophy, and aesthetics that had a dominant impact on the region, as noted by Malaysian scholar Farish A. Noor, "[the] development of South-East Asian civilization went hand in hand with that of the Indian sub-continent" (Marwah, 2020). India's relationship with SEA doesn't evoke the memories of an imperialist past; instead, it is based on mutual respect and cultural engagement in ancient times and, later on, the shared commitment to anti-colonialism (Suryanarayan, 1978).

The geography and history contributed to the 'Indianization' process in SEA. The influence of Hinduism through mythology, literature, and epics, the Ramayana and Mahabharata, was implanted in the cultural fabric of societies and continues to influence their contemporary art, architecture, literature, and sculpture to the present day.

The Spiritual Philosophy of Ramayana

The greatest epic of India, Ramayana, is a timeless story of King Rama, who is believed to be the 7th incarnation of Lord Vishnu. In Hinduism, *Brahma* is the creator, *Vishnu* is the protector, and *Shiva* is the transformer. It is believed that whenever the immoral powers overpowered the righteous path of humanity, and the darkness prevailed, the lord incarnated himself in different forms throughout history to restore the purity of consciousness of humanity.

In Sanskrit, 'Ra' stands for some form of light, and 'Ma' means something originating within. Therefore, the word 'Rama' literally represents someone who is 'self-radiant' because of purity of consciousness. Ramayana is the journey of Rama in the human form in this mortal world. Being a human, he is subjected to all those conflicts that arise due to the weakness and distractions that mortal beings experience in their lifetime. However, due to his supreme character, he remained on the path of righteousness without surrendering to the immoral temptations to conquer the evil forces. In this sense, the symbolic journey of Rama within is equally important as his outside journey to restore the dharma.

In Ramayana, each prominent character has a philosophical and spiritual significance to suggest a journey that every human being is bound to go through. In this journey, 'Rama' represents the 'soul,' 'Sita' means the 'mind,' 'Hanuman' represents the 'breath, i.e., prana, the life force,' Lakshmana represents the 'aware consciousness' and 'Ravana' with his ten heads, describes the different form of impurities of mind like ego, ignorance,

desires, and delusions, etc. The practical implications of this philosophical thought can be found in the practice of meditation, which is suggested as the means to engage in contemplation or reflection to attain a heightened level of spiritual awareness or, in other words, to restore pure consciousness. When the mind (Sita) has succumbed to impurities (Ravana), despite the presence of aware consciousness (Lakshmana), the soul (Rama) cannot remain in peace. However, the soul cannot reach the mind by itself, so it takes the help of prana (Hanuman) to regain control of the mind and, in the process, destroy all the impurities (Ravana).

The Ramayanas of South-East Asia

Sage Valmiki initially wrote the Ramayana. Since then, this timeless epic has been retold and interpreted in different languages in multiple versions to fit contemporary times and customs and travel to other countries.

In Indonesia, the epic is known as Ramayana Kakavain or Ramayana Kavya; in Myanmar, it is called Rama Thingyan or Rama Vatthu; in Thailand, it is the Ramakien; in Laos, it is called PhraLakPhra Lam, in Cambodia, it is the Ramaker; in Malaysia, it is Hikayat Seri Rama; in the Philippines, it is Maharadia Lawana (Marwah, 2020). There is a Buddhist institute in Phnom Penh, the capital of Kampuchea, where manuscripts written on two thousand rhythm cards in Khmer script are compiled. This collection also contains a copy of Ramayana from Kampuchea. The available sixteen cantos of Ramakerti (1-10 and 76-80) were published in separate booklets by Karpeles. On each of its booklets, there is a picture of one or the other story from the Ramayana. The people of Kampuchea know the Ramayana by the name of 'Riaamker,' but in the literary world, it is famous by the name of 'Ramkerti.'

Ramkerti is the best work of Khmer literature. The story of its first section starts with Vishwamitra Yagya and stops after the killing of Indrajit. The second section tells the story of Sita's sacrifice until she enters the earth. The author of 'Ramkerti' is known to be a Buddhist monk because he considers Ram to be the incarnation of Narayan and gives him the title of 'Bodhisattva.' Despite this, there are a lot of similarities between 'Ramkerti' and Valmiki Ramayana. (Raghavan, 1975).

There is a deep imprint of Indianness on the culture of Laos. Four compositions based on Ramkatha are available here – Fralak Phralam (Ramjatak), KhwayThorfi, Brahmachakra, and Lanka Noi. Many scholars have studied the Ramkatha of Laos.

Thailand's rich history reflects a deep cultural connection with the Hindu epic Ramayana. His version, known as Ramkien or 'Glory of Rama,' holds an important place in Thai culture and literature. Thai kings of the Chakri dynasty have considered

themselves descendants of Lord Rama by including the name Rama in their titles. Thailand's Ramkatha literature is vibrant. The following significant works based on Ramkatha are available there - (1) Taskin Ramayana, (2) Ramayana of Emperor Rama I, (3) Ramayana of Emperor Rama II, (4) Ramayana of Emperor Rama IV (verse), (5) Samrat Ramayana of Ram Chaturtha (interactive), (6) Ramayana of Emperor Rama VI (song-interactive). According to modern discoveries, 16 works of Ramkatha literature have been discovered in Burma, of which Ramvatthu is the oldest work.

Ramkien is embedded in Thai art and culture. The Temple of the Emerald Buddha in Bangkok depicts various scenes from the Ramakyaean on its walls, including sculptures of characters from the epic, including a statue of Ganesha. The emblems of many ministries in Thailand resemble Hindu symbols, with Garuda (the vehicle of Lord Vishnu) being the emblem of many departments. Ramakien is not just a story but a cultural performance in Thailand, embedded in Thai art, drama, and literature and performed in the form of shadow-puppet staging or dance-drama on public stages, which mesmerizes the audience not only in Thailand but also in other South East Asian countries. This cultural exchange highlights the shared heritage and respect for the epic Ramayana.

Four works related to Ramkatha are available in Malaysia - (1) Hikayat Seri Ram, (2) Seri Ram, (3) Patani Ramkatha, and (4) Hikayat Maharaj Ravana. The form of Mahaladiya Lavan, written in the Philippines, is very similar to Ramkatha, but its content is entirely distorted. In this, Sita is said to be the daughter of Ravana and Mandodari. (Sarkar, 1983).

The essence of Ramayana is so universal that its amalgamation with local culture was effortless. The Ramayana consists of references to Java and Sumatra. To search for Sita, the monkey king Sugriwa sent his army to the islands of 'Yawadipa' and 'Suvarnadvipa.' In another instance of Ramayana, Jatayu gives Rama Sita's ring as proof that he has found her. The use of gold rings as a means of personal identification was prominent in Java, where many gold rings have been found with the name 'Sri,' the goddess of wealth, inscribed on them. VayuPurana also mentions 'Yamadvipa' and 'Malayadvipa' and their mines of precious stones, gold, silver, and sandalwood. Ramayana was also used as a source of inspiration in the Angkor Wat and the Bayon temple in Cambodia. The reliefs of the Prambanan Temple Complex in central Java, Indonesia, illustrate the epic of the *Ramayana*. (Miksic & Goh, 2017).

India's Act East Policy

The India-ASEAN formal engagement began in 1992, with the advent of the Look East Policy as a 'Sectoral Dialogue Partner,'

which elevated to 'Dialogue Partner' in 1996 and further upgraded to the Summit level in 2002. Through the Act East Policy, India is intensifying its economic, strategic, and cultural cooperation with the ASEAN and other East Asian nations. In October 2021, the Prime Minister co-chaired the 18th India-ASEAN Summit, and among the major decisions was to establish the "ASEAN Cultural Heritage List" with India's support. Two thousand twenty-two marks 30 years of ASEAN-India relations and has been designated the ASEAN-India Friendship Year (MEA, GOI, 2022).

The Act East policy of India shares a mutual geopolitical concern with ASEAN nations about China's assertive behavior in the wake of its increasing economic and military strength and its implications for maritime trade and security in both the South China Sea and Indo-Pacific. However, the regional cooperation between India and ASEAN largely depends on the renewed convergences between states and peoples through soft power approaches, revisiting historical interactions, exploring new markets, mutual economic interests, and addressing common strategic concerns (Kesavan, 202).

India's Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy

Soft Power is a vital instrument in foreign policy, constituting the critical economic, socio-cultural, and civilizational components. The socio-cultural elements include cinema, music, cuisine, education, business innovation, yoga, etc. The civilizational elements primarily include shared heritage in art, architecture, and democratic values. Strategic communication aiming for broader targeted public outreach using diverse media platforms is essential to cultural diplomacy. These elements are packaged together to create a 'unique selling point' or a 'brand' of the country.

An autonomous body of the Government of India, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) facilitates cultural exchange with other nations through 38 cultural centers overseas. However, they do not match their counterparts like the British Council, Alliance Française, or Confucius Institutes (CIs). Besides Trade, loans, and investment under the transcontinental Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the CIs are a critical strategic tool of the Chinese government. China's Ministry of Education is spending billions of dollars to foster China's cultural engagement by teaching Mandarin, Chinese history, and civilization and developing ties with local communities through academic institutions. CIs began their operation in 2004 and are estimated to have over 500 centers world wide (MacDonald, 2022). This aggressive outreach has positively influenced nations and people alike, as shown in the global soft power index 2022 of 120 nations prepared by (Brand

Finance, 2022). (Ref. Table 1: Global Soft Power Index 2022).

Another critical aspect that India needs to take control of is the flow of information about national interests. As an aspiring global power, India needs its own BBC or Al Jazeera, which has worked as a global advocate on various issues in different geographies for Britain and Qatar, respectively. Leadership also plays a crucial role in engaging global communities through appropriate platforms. The present government is leaving no stone unturned in creating a positive international image of India. Consider the PM's recent address at a community reception in Berlin, Germany, where he talked about the aspirations of Indian youth, projected India as a land of innovation and unicorn, spoke about development schemes, and focussed predominantly on the resilient democracy of India, thus setting the tone for a country which is poised to grow and lead (PIB Delhi, 2022).

IV. Conclusion

Shri Ram Temple, inaugurated on January 22, 2024, at Ram Janmabhoomi in Ayodhya, is expected to be a new attraction for tourists from South-East Asia. To strengthen cultural ties further, an invitation was extended to Hindu and Buddhist organizations based in Thailand at the inauguration of the Ram temple. Devotees have sent soil from Ayutthaya - named after Ayodhya and water from Thailand's three rivers, including Chao Phraya, Lop Buri, and Pa Sak, for the Ram temple. (PTI, 2024) Apart from this, a replica of the Shri Ram Temple in Bangkok was created for the *darshan* of local devotees. (Deshpande, 2023).

The cultural connection between Thailand and the Ram Temple in Ayodhya is a testament to the enduring ties between the two countries. This unique gesture of sending soil and river water symbolizes unity in diversity and underlines the shared cultural heritage inherent in the epic Ramayana. This exchange represents the richness and depth of our cultural ties, a shared cultural heritage transcending the boundaries of one country and among the peace-loving people of other countries.

The ancient cultural ties between India and South-East Asian nations, coupled with its religious significance, will prove to be a wonderful symbol of making this temple an attractive destination for devotees of Lord Shri Ram and has the potential to become a sort of 'Vatican City,' the holiest site for Hindus across the world.

However, it is essential to acknowledge that despite cultural richness, the narration of 'powerful' soft power can only be achieved when the cultural assets of a nation become a subject of aspiration and admiration by the global community. This could

only be achieved by becoming a dynamic, progressive, democratic, equitable society that is a responsible stakeholder in world politics and a contributor to the global public good. In South-East Asia's context, Ramayana's cultural linkage provides a civilizational foundation and a significant advantage to advance India's soft power.

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Table 1 : Global Soft Power Index 2022

	India	China
Global Soft Power Index	29	4
Familiarity	13	4
Influence	16	2
Reputation	47	24
Business & Trade	28	1
Governance	73	24
International Relations	35	8
Culture & Heritage	18	8
Media & Communication	28	12
Education & Science	20	3
People & Values	49	38
COVID-19 Response	119	19
Net Influence	92	73

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