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EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue presents a rich collection of studies reflecting the diverse and evolving media landscape. Articles examine the IFFK's role in nurturing film culture among Kerala's youth, the emergence of "new normal" narratives in Moothon, and media's critical function in agricultural communication. A comparative analysis of online media in Vietnam and India during the Covid-19 pandemic offers insights into governance, censorship, and freedom. Another study explores social media's influence during the 2019 Indian general elections, revealing patterns of political engagement. The professional experiences of women journalists in Malayalam news channels are also addressed, focusing on job satisfaction amid systemic challenges. Concluding the issue is a timely case study on the framing of digital media narratives during the 2020 Vietnam flood crisis, demonstrating the power of online storytelling in disaster communication. Collectively, these works underscore media's cultural, political, and social influence across regional and global contexts.

Dr. M. S. Harikumar
Editor

Role of IFFK in Promoting Film Culture Among Youth in Kerala

■ **ASIF ABDUL KALAM**[*]
  MAGGIE J.[#]

Abstract

This study is an attempt to look into the factors that contributed to the popularity and acceptance of IFFK in promoting a film culture among youth in Kerala.The festival was instrumental in bringing participation of young filmmakers and involve in healthy discussions and exploring the possibilities that can be applied in Malayalam films. The youth consider IFFK as an opportunity to showcase their talents and provide a stage to interact with film lovers all over the world.

Keywords: *IFFK, Film society movement, Publicness, Film culture*

Introduction

Cinema is said to be a mirror that reflects the realities of the society in which it is created. Each film is a representative of the period in which it is released and they are composed of pieces of culture it reflects. It is a combination of many other art forms such as music, dance, theatre, science, technology etc. It has grown into a popular medium throughout the world in a very short time after its inception and is dominated all other art forms it adapted into it. The very roots of cinema lie deeply set into theatre arts and literature more than any other art form.

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No other art forms in human history have crossed global border lines thoroughly as much as cinema did. Even when cinema was silent, it interacted with people from all walks of life. There was no place for any sort of discrimination in cinema. It always had a Universal language and appeal that anyone can understand and comprehend. This omnipresent language through which cinema communicates with the masses is its biggest strength.

Cinema is the most democratic art form that exists. In this context, film festivals are an important link which connects different cultures around the world in a democratic way. Film festivals have the power to strengthen and maintain democracy. Every film festival is a venue of cultural exchanges. They can act as a preventive force against polarization. People attending film festivals speak different languages and by doing so, they enable us to listen to the diverse voices from around the world. It stimulates us to approach cinema in a different way and promotes discussions. Beyond being mere spectators, it gives the audience an opportunity to go deep into the cinema, immerse and respond accordingly. Festival venues turn out to be a great place to create comradeship among delegates and renew friendships.

Publicness is the characteristic of cinema which gives a collective experience. It gives each audience a sense of togetherness when one watches a movie in a theatre, as part of a group. Film festivals have the ability to bring changes in the entire film industry and into the cultural arena.

Film buffs and filmmakers share a precious relationship between them. It embraces all film lovers and can bring to limelight the films and filmmakers who suffer to find a producer, distributors or an audience.

Today film festivals do not merely embody the function of screening movies but cultivate interest towards movies among the general public. A conservative society will only watch and promote movies that are made comfortably according to their traditional pattern and anything that disturbs their values will be left out. Film festivals force to go beyond this comfort zone.

Purpose of International film festivals

The purpose of every International film festival is as follows,
1. To bring films produced in different countries and screen it in front of the local audience.
2. To create cultural rapport between directors, film workers and film buffs from around the world.
3. To showcase indigineously made movies in front of directors, critics and festival directors from other countries and let them eval-

uate our own creations. And by doing so create opportunities for indigenous filmmakers to get selected to screen their movies in other festivals.

4. To attract film buyers, distributors and television companies to indigenous films and achieve better commercial value for them.

5. To encourage and give chance to filmmakers to create good quality movies indigineously.

6. To find talented filmmakers and provide the support they require.

7. To provide a platform for foreign production companies and festival directors to engage in dialogue between young filmmakers and create opportunities.

Film Society Movements in Malayalam

There are many factors which helped Malayalam Cinema gain a unique position in the Indian film industry. One of them is the rich folk and classical arts as well as theatre. The contributions of literary writers and their influence was an important factor to the growth of Malayalam Cinema. Many of the classical masterpieces in Malayalam Cinema was penned by the legendary writers. These movies had gained attention in the International level and brought glory to the industry. As far as social indicators like literacy and life expectancy, Kerala is at par with many developed countries and we have also been a model of development for other Indian states. Cinema was not an exception. Most of the times the filmmakers explore socially relevant issues and are brave enough to experiment different techniques and storytelling methods.

The film society movements in Kerala also played a crucial role in sustaining and promoting cinema in the state. Several Film Society movements were started in Kerala during the 1960s and they received momentum during the 1970s. They organized screenings of classic movies around the world and conducted group discussions and studies on various topics related to Cinema. They acted as a bridge between foreign films and Malayalam films. Their active role in rural and urban areas raided film literacy among Keralites and brought a new consciousness about cinema as an art form. Many filmmakers, critics and film enthusiasts and intellectuals in Malayalam Film Industry were contributed by these movements that took place in different parts of the state.

Before the film society movements became active in our state, art lovers had to travel to other states or even across the globe to satisfy their thirst for good movies. The IFFK was a dream come true for the film buffs in Kerala where a platform for world film was opened before them.

International Film Festival of Kerala (IFFK)

The International Film Festival of Kerala(IFFK) is hosted annually in Thiruvananthapuram by Chalachithra Academy on behalf of the Department of Cultural Affairs. The Academy is responsible for conducting IFFK every year. The core objectives of the Academy include conducting Film Festivals all over the state, the preservation and propagation of Malayalam Cinema, to intervene in Film Education, to document the History of Malayalam Cinema, honour the persons and films that contribute to the complete development of the human being as an individual and as a social being. The Chalachitra Academy also organizes Documentary festivals, Short film festivals and other regional festivals throughout the year.

IFFK is one of the festivals attended by the largest number of delegates in the world. It is a Film festival entirely organized by the Kerala State Government. The quality of films chosen every year is critically examined by the delegates and the media. The increased participation of women delegates have proved that IFFK is a women friendly festival. It also opened its door wide for Transgenders by including a session of films on gender issues and taking initiatives for providing basic facilities.

IFFK is a platform where the elite and the common man come together and enjoy and experience the film together. Every year there is an increase in the number of people participating in the festival.

Review of Literature

A study on "Cinema & Culture" by Dudley Andrew discusses in detail how cinema and culture influences each other. Laura Fairman in her article 'Influence and Appreciation of Film in Today's Society, discusses in detail on how films act as a force of change in the society.

A special souvenir published during the 20th edition of IFFK in December 2015, published by Kerala Chalachitra Academy and edited by S. Rajendran Nair gives a detailed account of the festival missions and its evolution over the years. It contains articles and essays written by critics, scholars, professionals and former festival directors. A study by P.K. Krishna Kumar on the Influence of Films on College students in Trivandrum city-A Questionnaire survey, Department of Communication and Journalism, before the origin of IFFK says that film as a medium shapes attitudes of individual depending upon his or her age.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of the study was to figure out the contributions of IFFK in creating a better film culture in the state and identify the general trends and people's behaviour in IFFK.

The specific objectives were,
1. To identify the importance of IFFK in Kerala's art, social and cultural spheres.
2 .To analyse if the controversies are affecting the delegates of in the coordination of the festival.
3. To trace the history and find out the popular factors which makes IFFK stand out from other festivals.
4. To explore the general perspectives people have about IFFK.

Methodology

The methodology adopted for this study is a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire was personally handed over to 100 subjects randomly. Of this 45 were males, 45 females and 10 transgenders.

IFFK's Influence on Viewers

The survey conducted proved that a significant number of people believes that IFFK provides a platform to develop a better film culture through interactions with other delegates, discussions with filmmakers, watch Foreign films and view film with a academic outlook. Many believe that there is more to Films than entertainment. They also agreed to the opinion that IFFK has its effect on mainstream Malayalam film industry. The advantage of watching Internationally acclaimed movies through the festival gives the idea of how the themes are focussed and technological innovations introduced. Young aspiring filmmakers get the opportunity to meet renowned filmmakers from different parts of the world.

Perspective about Cinema Among its Delegates

The survey indicates that IFFK helps its delegates in building a better perspective about cinema. IFFK creates opportunities for delegates to have a better understanding and critical view of films. IFFK brings together people from all parts of society despite their differences. The transgenders who participated in the survey too agreed to this. Some delegates are of the opinion that IFFK reduced the gender divide in Cinema-inside and outside the theatre. Some respondents were of the view that due to the increase in the number of delegates the coordination of the festival faces certain

challenges

Conclusion

The International Film Festival of Kerala(IFFK) has acquired an identity and character of its own over the years. What was started as a small gathering of serious film lovers and critics have now reached new heights and widened its possibilities. It is making all efforts to explore the world through Cinema, as well as to discover the indigenous culture. Film festivals have started welcoming people from different strata of society. The increasing public participation and interactions make the festival unique.

The youth exhibits enthusiasm in watching movies and involves in serious discussions with delegates from other parts of the country. Exposure to world class films compels our indigenous directors to make movies in better quality. It encourages them to experiment new ideas. It has introduced new trends in fashion, culture and film viewing. IFFK provided a model by democratizing delegate registration. The very purpose of film festivals is to create awareness among filmbuffs and inform about the advancements made in the world cinema today. The primary aim of the Festival should be the growth of the Malayalam Film Industry and indigenous filmmakers.

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Job Satisfaction Among Women Journalists Working In Malayalam News Channels

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Abstract

This study examines job satisfaction among women journalists working in Malayalam news channels. It explores the specific areas to which women are more frequently assigned, as well as the sectors where their presence remains limited. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their professional experiences is also a key focus, highlighting how it influenced their roles and responsibilities. The findings reveal that journalism is a multifaceted profession influenced by various factors that shape career decisions—whether to continue or exit the field. The research also identifies patterns of typecasting in newsroom assignments. Additionally, it investigates women journalists' engagement in cyberspace, noting that while many are active online, cyber-attacks in response to their expressed opinions generally do not diminish their job satisfaction. Overall, the study concludes that, despite challenges and systemic issues, most women journalists in Malayalam news channels report a high level of job satisfaction.

Keywords*: Job satisfaction, Institutional barriers, Career progression*

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Introduction

The terms journal, journalist, and journalism stem from the French journal, which traces back to the Latin diurnalis meaning "daily." Journalism, as a profession and a cultural industry, is over three centuries old, shaped by technological innovations like the printing press, telegraph, and railways, alongside socio-political changes such as capitalism, democracy, and the public sphere (Hasan, 2013; Kumar, 2021).

Journalism, as a craft, demands specialization in editorial work, design, photojournalism, and marketing. Reporters and editors work under tight deadlines, follow structured newsroom routines, and collaborate across the production process (Hasan, 2013). In today's digital era, computing skills, internet literacy, desktop publishing, multimedia proficiency, and multitasking are essential. Traditional distinctions between roles have blurred with the rise of electronic, online, and mobile journalism (Mahi, 2013). Radio, television, and online journalists must adapt to diverse formats, while mobile journalists create concise news content suitable for mobile platforms.

Unlike traditional fields like law or medicine, journalism remains an "open" profession without strict educational prerequisites (Kumar, 2021). Similar to advertising and public relations, journalism embraces individuals from varied academic backgrounds. As a business, journalism centers around profit-driven publication, positioning news as a commodity to attract advertisers and audiences. However, this commercial pressure often leads to the depoliticization of news, infotainment replacing serious journalism, and a weakened public sphere (Kumar, 2021).

Despite these challenges, journalism remains dynamic and fulfilling. Journalists have the opportunity to engage with influential figures, pursue truth, and advocate for justice, while nurturing a passion for storytelling (Hasan, 2013). Journalism lacks a standardized body of knowledge or a universal code of ethics, though various organizations have proposed guidelines. Views differ on whether journalism is a calling, public service, business, or entertainment medium (Hasan, 2013). At its core, it involves reporting events and interpreting their significance.
Journalism spans newspapers, radio, television, magazines, and digital platforms, covering topics from politics and business to lifestyle and culture. Specialization through beat reporting requires investigative skills and cultivated sources. The profession upholds ideals of truth-seeking, adaptability, societal contribution, and independence (Hasan, 2013).

In India, journalism plays a vital democratic role, demanding fair-

ness, accuracy, and skepticism (Hasan, 2013). Television journalism began nationally in 1965 and in Malayalam with Doordarshan's bulletin in 1985, expanding with Asianet in 1993 and 24-hour news channels like Indiavision in 2003 (Mahi, 2013).

This study examines job satisfaction among women journalists in Malayalam news channels and their online platforms, highlighting professional challenges and broader societal changes. Despite limitations like a small sample size and potential bias, the inquiry offers insights into the evolving media landscape in Kerala.

Review of Literature

Job satisfaction among women journalists has been an area of research interest as more women have entered the profession. A global study by IWMF revealed a significant gender disparity in Asian newsrooms, with women largely absent from decision-making roles. Although women dominate junior and senior-level reporting roles in some countries like China and New Zealand, overall, they remain underrepresented, underpaid, and face restricted career advancement. Suzanne Franks (2013) highlights persistent barriers such as on-screen sexism, dangers in field reporting, and the mixed impact of digital media on women's journalism careers. UN studies emphasize that improving women's media representation improves overall coverage quality, advocating for regular gender-sensitive training.

In India, studies show that though more women have entered journalism, challenges persist, including harassment, poor job security, and gender bias. The Delhi Union of Journalists (DUJ) made efforts to ensure women's representation in leadership. Works by Ammu Joseph, N.K. Verma, and Dr. Geeta Tiwary, among others, document the evolution and struggles of women in Indian media. The Sabarimala protests further exposed societal biases against women journalists.

Research by E.K. (2018) and Rajeev & C (2019) reports that women face hostile work environments, harassment, and discrimination, with limited facilities like transportation and maternity support. Kottaram & S (2019) highlight factors like overwork and lack of recognition affecting job satisfaction. Studies show that while women now report across domains, systemic barriers remain. Thomas (2017) discusses the broader challenges of professional freedom and satisfaction among journalists in India, exacerbated by cultural biases. Additionally, studies on occupational stress reveal that balancing work and family, particularly for women with young children, remains a critical source of stress, affecting both job satisfaction and mental well-being.

Research Questions

1. What is the level of job satisfaction among women journalists working in Malayalam news channels?
2. In which reporting or production areas are women journalists more frequently assigned?
3. Which areas see less participation from women journalists?
4. How do these assignment patterns impact their career progression and job satisfaction?
5. How does the professional use of social media platforms influence the job satisfaction of women journalists?
6. How did the changes in work pattern during the COVID-19 pandemic affect the job satisfaction of women journalists?

Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques to gather comprehensive data on job satisfaction among women journalists working in Malayalam news channels, including their online platforms.

Data Collection Methods:
1. **Questionnaire**: A structured questionnaire was designed and administered to women journalists to collect quantitative data related to the general objective of the study—namely, the level and factors of job satisfaction. The questionnaire covered various dimensions such as work environment, professional growth opportunities, work-life balance, remuneration, and overall job contentment.

2. **Unstructured Interview**: In-depth, unstructured interviews were conducted with a selected group of women journalists to gain qualitative insights. The interviews primarily focused on:

Impact of Work Pattern Changes during the Pandemic: Special attention was given to understanding how alterations in work routines, such as remote reporting, digital production, and health-related challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, affected their professional and personal lives.

Assignment Patterns across Work Areas: Questions were asked to explore whether there are specific reporting or production areas where women are more or less frequently entrusted. This aspect was aimed at helping aspiring women journalists identify fields with greater opportunities or underrepresentation.

Sample Selection: Participants were selected from various Malayalam news channels and their affiliated online platforms to ensure diversity in organizational structure and reporting styles.

Purpose

The dual-method approach ensured a deeper understanding of both the measurable aspects of job satisfaction and the nuanced experiences of women journalists regarding workplace assignments and pandemic-related changes.

Along with surveys and interviews, content analysis was conducted to deepen the insights of this study. Experiences shared by women journalists through interviews on online platforms, YouTube channels, and sessions at media seminars mentioning job satisfaction were systematically analysed. Reports published by news channels about employee experiences during the pandemic, including a Women's Day special programme featuring female reporters, also formed part of the analysis.

Content analysis, as defined by Cole (1988), is "a method of analysing written, verbal or visual communication messages." This method facilitates the systematic examination of recorded communications, enabling the identification of underlying meanings, contexts, and patterns. Adopting the framework suggested by Hsieh and Shannon (2005), the study involved a process of coding and categorising content to interpret subjective experiences related to job satisfaction, gender-based work allocation, and the impact of pandemic-driven work changes.

Through this method, the study aims to uncover thematic trends and deeper contextual factors influencing the professional lives of women journalists in Malayalam television media. Content analysis thus complements the survey and interview findings, providing a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

This study examines job satisfaction among women journalists employed in Malayalam news channels and their associated online portals. It presents significant findings, particularly related to their professional experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic—a period marked by unprecedented challenges. The study also provides critical insights into the gender-based typecasting prevalent in newsroom practices, revealing patterns in the assignments women journalists are more commonly allocated and those from which they are frequently excluded.

This study began by questioning the lack of substantial change in the challenges faced by women journalists, despite extensive existing research on the subject. It explores patterns of social media use among women journalists and examines how these platforms influence their ability to express opinions, particularly in politically charged contexts. Findings indicate that cyberattacks are often triggered by women expressing views on topics such as politics, ref-

lecting a broader societal resistance to women occupying authoritative or opinionated roles in public discourse.

The responses to questions on social media usage indicate that a significant proportion of women journalists actively engage with these platforms, with over 80% identifying as regular users and 54% reporting that they express their opinions on various issues through social media. While most respondents reported no experience of cyberattacks, those who did indicated that such incidents had minimal impact on their overall job satisfaction. Notably, the majority emphasized the importance of a supportive work environment—highlighting encouragement from colleagues and management—as a key contributor to job satisfaction, alongside strong familial support, which over 90% of participants acknowledged as essential to their continued participation in the profession. Regarding typecasting, 45.5% of respondents perceived its presence in their work assignments, while 36.4% disagreed and 9.1% indicated it occurred occasionally. However, when asked whether typecasting affects job satisfaction, 45.5% affirmed a negative impact, while 27.3% disagreed and an equal proportion reported mixed experiences.

Personal interviews with women journalists reveal persistent gender-based typecasting, with many respondents attributing this to longstanding stereotypes rooted in print media traditions that confine women to beats like health, culture, and entertainment, while excluding them from political reporting. Although some women opt for desk-based roles due to practical or personal reasons, many also face institutional barriers and cultural conditioning that restrict their professional mobility. The lack of effective talent management within organizations and the underrepresentation of women in decision-making roles further compound these challenges, particularly in Malayalam news channels, where national media counterparts appear more inclusive in assigning women to hard news coverage.

Job satisfaction, according to respondents, is largely influenced by supportive colleagues, management, and family, alongside fair pay, recognition, and a conducive work environment. While the spontaneity of the profession and opportunities for interaction and learning were seen as fulfilling, stress emerged as a recurring theme, driven by competitive pressures, job insecurity, family responsibilities, and the politicization of news content. The pandemic intensified these issues, introducing both challenges and opportunities—such as remote work, which some found enabling while others struggled to balance with caregiving duties—highlighting disparities in adaptability and institutional support mechanisms.

Despite the difficulties, most women journalists expressed a strong commitment to their profession, with many viewing it as a passion rather than merely employment. However, concerns over workplace harassment, lack of safety, and insufficient grievance redressal mechanisms were cited as potential deterrents. The pandemic period especially underscored the physical and emotional risks of the job, but also revealed a strong sense of resilience, solidarity, and adaptability among women journalists navigating both professional and personal adversities.

The study reveals that women have greater visibility in television media compared to print, largely due to the visual and performative demands of broadcast journalism. However, their roles remain concentrated in areas such as anchoring and scripting, with limited representation in political or hard news reporting—an outcome shaped by cultural norms that perceive women as less suited for field-based, high-stakes journalism. This typecasting often confines women to soft news beats like health, culture, and entertainment.

Institutional barriers also hinder women's advancement to managerial positions, with male-dominated leadership often reluctant to promote women, citing perceived limitations in their capacity to meet professional demands. The absence of structured talent development and persistent societal expectations around women's domestic responsibilities further challenge their career progression, particularly during early career stages and in roles with demanding shifts and leave constraints.

Despite these challenges, passion for journalism, supportive colleagues and families, and a positive work environment are key motivators for women to remain in the profession. While cyberattacks—especially targeting women expressing political views—are a common threat in the digital space, most respondents reported that these do not significantly affect their job satisfaction, and many resort to legal recourse when necessary. The COVID-19 pandemic brought both disruptions and opportunities, altering newsroom operations, reducing peer interactions, and introducing remote work, which required journalists to adapt to new forms of professional engagement and personal resilience.

Conclusion

This study concludes that although research on job satisfaction among women journalists in Malayalam news channels is ongoing, substantial changes in their professional experiences remain limited. Women are often confined to roles such as anchoring and scripting, largely due to media conventions and long-standing gender norms inherited from print journalism, which typically associated women with soft news domains. Ground political reporting, which deman-

ds deep expertise, round-the-clock engagement, and extensive fieldwork, continues to be male-dominated, in part due to structural barriers and a lack of institutional support for women's advancement into such roles.

The presence of a persistent glass ceiling, underrepresentation in managerial positions, and unstructured talent utilisation hinder women's professional growth. Additional challenges include workplace safety concerns, fear of retaliation after reporting harassment, and societal expectations—particularly in Kerala—that women prioritise family responsibilities. While passion, family support, and a conducive work environment help many women sustain their careers, others struggle with the mismatch between public perception of the profession and the actual demands, leading to disillusionment and attrition.

The pandemic intensified existing challenges by altering work routines and increasing field risks, though it also introduced flexible modes like remote reporting. Despite these pressures, most respondents expressed overall satisfaction with their profession, indicating resilience and commitment. This study offers insights into the realities behind the screen, encouraging informed conversations and inspiring future generations of women journalists.

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Moothon: An Inquiry into the New Normal Narratives in Malayalam Cinema

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Abstract

This study explores the emergence of a "new normal" narrative within Malayalam cinema, focusing on Moothon (2019), a film by Geethu Mohandas. Moothon follows Mulla, a 14-year-old from Lakshadweep, who journeys to Mumbai in search of their estranged brother Akbar. Told through a dual narrative in Jeseri Malayalam and Hindi, the film confronts themes often marginalized in mainstream cinema —homosexuality, sex work, transgender identity, and queer love—thus redefining the traditional portrayal of romance in Malayalam cinema. The term "new normal" here signifies the film's break from conventional heteronormative narratives, embracing stories rooted in social stigma and emotional truth.

Using qualitative content analysis, particularly scene analysis, the study examines fourteen selected scenes based on thematic units: acceptance, anger, fear, standardization, homo-romantic love, hope for survival, and hidden empathy. These units represent key facets of the "new normal." The analysis argues that Moothon subverts the typical "redemption arc" by centering the authentic suffering, resilience, and emotional complexity of LGBTQIA+ individuals, free from stereotypical tropes. This study highlights how Moothon not only redefines narrative frameworks in Malayalam cinema but also amplifies voices and experiences long silenced or misrepresented on screen.

***Keywords**: Malayalam cinema, Moothon, Queer narratives, LGBTQIA+, New normal, Content analysis*

Introduction

Films encapsulate ideas in ways that are easy to comprehend, and, at the same time, memorable. However, whenever cinematic representations in Malayalam films featuring queer narratives are approached it is always through an uninspiring lens. Such attempts at representation within this community fail to resonate with the lived experiences of individuals. Moothon is the first Indian film to thoughtfully showcase the experiences and difficulties of queer individuals and give the audience a glimpse into their unsensitized reality.

This story captures the journey of Mulla, a Lakshadweep Islander who travels to Mumbai with hopes of finding her brother, Akbar. During her quest, the audience is exposed to complex themes of love a person can have along with pain, and hope concerning identity, gender, social class and sexuality. My objective in capturing Moothon is to showcase this nuanced approach, which I define as the "new normal" narrative driven by the acceptance of diverse sexual orientations as opposing the outdated ones that look down on queer lives. The central focus here is: In what ways does Moothon differently represent queer identities and relationships in contrast to the existing portrayals in Malayalam cinema.

Review of Literature

Navaneetha Mokkil in her study, 'Shifting Spaces, Frozen Frames: Trajectores of queer politics in contemporary India' published in Inter-Asia Cultural Studies, (2009), focuses on comparatative reading of the Malayalam movies Sancharam and Deshadanakkili karayarilla. Both of these films posit the desire for cultural production that captures a different language of queeer politics in Kerala. While Deshadanakkili Karayarilla gives a brief idea of queerness within the indistinct terrain of sexuality in Kerala, Sancharam shows the image of Kerala that is destroyed by homosexuality. The study analyses the different historical context which the two films portray and the different time period in which they were released to analyses the contemporary queer politics.

Navaneetha, in another study Re-viewing Her Nights: Modes of excess in Indian Cinema, published in South Asian Popular Culture, (2011), analyses the debate about the world in the Malayalam movie Avalude Ravukal (1978) directed by IV Sasi. The

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study tracks the moving circuits of Avalude Ravukal and its cracked tasteful codes to breakdown the job of social creation in arranging the provincial social arena. Pulling out these inconsistencies from the vantage point of the present, makes conceivable formation of a provincial history in which stands around sexuality and the open arena are not unbending and abandoned.

Jenny Rovera, in her study The Dirt in the Dirty Picture: Caste, Gender and Silk Smitha – Part 2, published in Savari, (2012), discuss about the caste, gender and the dirt in the movie 'The Dirty Picture'. It covers the vamp hood of Silk Smitha and also the casting of Vidhya Balan in this movie. The author states that 'The Dirty Picture' neglects to draw the issues that are critical in grasping Silk Smitha's star persona and life. The paper helps to understand the representation/reflection of caste, gender, and vamp hood in the movie. The article analyses that Dalit women according to Dalit feminists have more space to express their sexuality as their caste offer more freedom to them. While according to savarna feminists the burden of patriarchy and 'pathivratha' ideology on the shoulder of Brahmin women gives them less opportunity to express their sexuality, savarna feminist view devadasi tradition, lower caste dance forms, bar dance etc. as a powerful tool that allow women to share a functional equality with men.

Dr Sony Jalarajan Raj, Dr Rohini Sreekumar, Dr Swapna Gopinath in their work, 'On the Margins of Heterosexuality', (2018), evaluates how Malayalam cinema normalizes heterosexuality through cinematic elements for a long period of time. Earlier there was only wee bit of attempt to portray LGBTQIA+ community that exist silently within the literate Kerala society. Malayalam cinema has always placed queer theme in the margins of heterosexuality. Malayalam cinema has, majority of times condemned LGBTQIA+ community as perverse and violent. The community still remains in the shadows of mainstream heterosexuality due to lack of representation & misrepresentation.

Reshma Mariam Jacob in her study, 'Transcending Gender Boundaries: An Introspection of Transvestism in Select Malayalam Movies published in The Criterion-An international journal in English (2019), focuses on the cross-dressing characters in some selected Malayalam movies. The study mainly focuses on the movies Daya, Thillana Thillana, Rasathandram and Mayamohini. When a man cross- dresses up like a woman the movie portray them as a comic character or make joke on them. At the same time when a woman cross-dresses like a man, she gets acceptance and respect from the society. The study helps to understand that gender roles are assigned by the society, and it has nothing to do with the biological sex of individuals.

Reshma Merlin Joseph in her study, 'I Know What I Am But You Stereotype Me': Truth And Constructed Truth About The Third Sex' published in Singularities- a peer reviewed international biannual research journal (2019), offers an investigation about what is the real identity of a transgender and what is being portrayed in Malayalam cinema. The study mainly focuses on two Malayalam cinemas 'Njan Marykutty' & 'Ardhanaari'. Besides that it discusses about all the LGBTQIA+ represented in Malayalam movies generally. The study helps to understand the changing portrayal of transgender in Malayalam cinema and also there was not enough real representation of their life in Malayalam movies till 'Njan Marykutty' (2018).

Jovan Jose and Linet John, in the chapter 'The Unconvent Terrain of Gendered Bodies in 'Moothon' of the book 'The Politics of the Spectacle: Representation of Body, Gender and Discourse in films', (2021), focuses on an in-depth study of the Malayalam movie 'Moothon'. It deals with the gender and sexuality of its characters. The study helps to understand about the hidden meanings of the movie 'moothon' and to identify the uniqueness of the movie from other queer movies.

Manjusha Babu Pallivathukkal in her study,' Queering Film: Intersectional Performativity of Art and the performing Bodies in 'Moothon' published in Quest Journals, (2021), it analyses the performative narratives of the film 'Moothon'. The paper helps to understand how far off we are from a 'homosocial' culture that is comprehensive of the LGBTQIA+ people group, notwithstanding their whole battle against social molding. The study also discusses about Judith Butler's gender Performativity.

Navaneetha Mokkil, in the chapter Living Together, Dying Together: The Politics of Lesbian Haunting' of her book, 'Unruly Figures: Queerness, Sex work, And the Politics of Sexuality in Kerala' (2021), looks at the public talks on lesbian sexuality that have at their middle the occasion of self-destruction and the apparition of women whose lives might have been saved. The study goes on through the interviews & basic comprehension of the activist organization Sahayatrika. The study helps to understand what leads lesbians to commit suicide. These interviews also gives the ideas about complex alchemy of struggle, anger, refusal, desperation, passionate questioning and melodramatic love, all of which blurs the monolithic positions of revolutionary lesbian lovers on the one hand, and passive, all suffering victims on the others.

Roshni Prabhakaran in her study, 'Lesbian in/visibility Analyzing female same-sex desire in Malayalam cinema' published in Teresian journal of English(2022), studies discuss about the history as well as the changing representation of lesbian or female friendship in

Malayalam cinema through nine different movies. The study helps to understand how the Malayalam cinema portrays same-sex desire especially female friendship. Homosexuality, transvestites, cross dressing are some of the terms discussing here.

Methodology

The research is focused on fourteen important scenes from Moothon movie that clearly shows how the film approaches queer issues. Rather than analysing the whole movie in equal detail and picked moments where the emotions and social themes strongly appear. Scene analysis and content analysis are the crux of the research methods.

For each scene, looked at the dialogue, the actor's expressions, and the way the scenes were shot to understand what the film was trying to say about gender, identity, and society. The main ideas, paid attention to included acceptance and rejection, anger, fear, social pressure to conform, love between same-sex partners, hope, and moments of hidden kindness or empathy.

This approach helped to see how Moothon tells a story that's both personal and social- showing the difficulties queer people face, but also their will to survive.

General Objective

- **To identify the new normal narratives in Malayalam cinema 'Moothon'**

In this study the general objective is to identify the new normal narratives in Malayalam cinema, some of the elements of the scenes from the movie is studied. The study is done through the analysis of 14 significant scenes from the movie. The elements include properties, denoted and connoted meaning of the dialogues.

Specific Objectives

- **To identify the new normal narratives system within the lens of LGBTQIA+**

The first specific objective is to identify the new normal narratives system within the lens of LGBTQIA+. The film gives a new normal narrative style for the queer people and also the queer relationships with their soulful representations.

- **To identify the grim shades of the life of sex workers portrayed**

The second specific objective is to identify how the life of sex workers is portrayed in the movie 'Moothon'. The film throws light into sex trafficking and how women are force to live their life as sex

workers.

- **To locate the status of society on concerned homosexuality**

The third specific objective is to locate the status of society on concerned homosexuality. The society is always homophobic, and they never support homosexual relationships in society. In this movie the society do not tries to understand or accept their queer relationship. It is the actual representation of the society we live in. So, it is very important to locate the society's status on concerned homosexuality.

Units Of Analysis

Units of analysis in this study are acceptance, anger, fear, humiliation, isolation, vengeance, love and hope based on the thematic relevance of the cinema in tune with the sociogram variables though not strictly confined to the specific definition.

Acceptance: Acceptance is one of the harder tasks in the recovery process. In this movie, the characters were facing lack of acceptance from the society, family even from their partner.

Anger: Anger is one of the strong human emotions. The intensity of anger feeling and styles of expressing anger in their relationship are examined to measure the chronic pain experience. In the movie, the anger is shown/ reflected in many situations for portraying the intensity of the character's mood or emotion. The anger shown in the movie is not only the anger to the society but also to oneself.

Fear: Fear is a distressing emotion aroused by impending danger, pain, etc. In this movie, various characters are afraid of the society and sometimes afraid of their identity and to express their love.

Appeal for standardization: It's any concept that has both been created and widely accepted by the people who live around a person. Here the appeal for standardization means people who follows the socially constructed rules forces others to follow it.

Homoromantic Love: Love is an intense feeling and deep affection; every kind of love is normal in this world. In this movie, the portrayal of love is in various manners. It portrays the feel of love more beautifully, deviating from the traditional narrative method like immoral love.

Hope for survival: Hope is someone's feeling to want something to happen or to become true and think that it could happen or become true. In the movie, the whole story sticks on to some hopes and wishes for survival.

Hidden empathy: It describes that the action of understanding, bei-

ng aware of the feeling, thoughts and experiences fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner.

Analysis and Discussion

The following analysis and discussion are based on the main fourteen scenes from the film Moothon and focus on the key units of analysis: acceptance, anger, fear, societal norms, homo-romantic love, hope, and empathy. Using these scenes, the discussion explores how the film portrays complex emotions and social issues, revealing deeper insights into identity, relationships, and societal challenges.

Acceptance
The unit of analysis 'acceptance' could be characterized as the way that a great many people, to find a place with others, look and carry on like them. Or then again in some cases a term mentions to the capacity to accept, or to tolerate differences and diversity in other or gatherings. Here the study not only focuses on acceptance but also focuses on the 'lack of acceptance'.

Scene analysis
Here, the acceptance is discussed in five scenes.
Scene 1: In the first scene, when Mulla comes to school looking for her friends, the teacher makes fun of Mulla for her dressing and tells her that she is a bad influence on the other children. And he warned Mulla to never come back there. And then Mulla walked down from there. Here we can find out the lack of acceptance from the society towards the people who are not maintaining or following the society constructed rules.

Scene 2: Mulla, walking down a corridor, she is grabbed by a group of boys, and they forced to wear lipstick and hijab. Mulla tries to escape from them. From that we can also see their difficulty to accept the Mulla's appearance like a boy.

Scene 4: Raju comes to Mulla, who is lying scared and unable to sleep in a dormitory room of the orphanage and talks about his mother and about some plans to escape from there. Raju tells her that his mother is a bad women and at the same time he describes her love for him. Here we can see Raju accepting his mother as a mother rather than a sex worker.

Scene 7: In this scene, Akbar is bathing in the sea and comes ashore when he sees Amir. Later in the conversation between them, Amir says that no one can understands what he is saying, in that time Akbar replies that "I'm understanding it all". Here we can see the acceptance from the side of partner.

Scene 9: In this scene, Akbar touches his body, and feels it and smiles at his own reflection in the mirror. What we can see here is

Akbar recognizing and accepting his own sexuality.

Scene 11: Akbar's mother come to the seashore and beating Akbar is the scene. Here also we can see the lack of acceptance from the side of family towards the homo relationships.

Scene 12: Akbar sitting in the seashore, Amir approaches Akbar and hugging each other. Amir tries to convince Akbar to go with him somewhere else. But Akbar says 'NO' to Amir. Here we can find out the lack of acceptance from the side of partner.

Discussion

All the above scenes are discussing about the acceptance. In this study, the acceptance appears in two forms, one is acceptance and another one lacks acceptance. Scenes 1, 2, 11, 12 are talking about the lack of acceptance. Here lack of acceptance comes from the side of family, partner and society. The difficulty of accepting people who are cross dressed and are in homo-romantic relationships is all very relevant in these scenes. Lack of acceptance in this study, is focuses on how people approach or rejects homo-romantic relationships and cross dressing in a homophobic society. Scene 1 and 2 shows how society looks at the people who wear cross dress or wear comfortable clothes according to their own choice. Scene11, in this scene Akbar's mother comes to beat Akbar after she finds out about the relationship between Akbar and Amir. The 12th scene discusses also about the lack of acceptance from the partner's side. Here, at least for a while, Akbar is thinking about those who are around him and his family. And how others will react to his homo- romantic relationship if it comes out, how it will affect himself and his family.

The other scenes 4, 7, 9 are showing the acceptance of partner, son, and a person himself also. Scene 4, showing the mother and son love and acceptance. His mother is a sex worker, but he never hates her, and he never wish to leave from her. He knows everything about his mother but still he loves and accept her as his mother not as a sex worker. Scene 7, Amir is a mute, nobody can understand his sign language so that he cannot communicate with others. When he tells his situation, Akbar consoled Amir and replying that he can understood Amir's language. Here we can see the acceptance from the partner's side. Scene9, realizing his sexuality, Akbar touches his own body in front of a mirror, feels it and smiles at his reflection in the mirror. Here we can see a person who is self-aware of his sexuality, or his gender identity and he is happy with that realization.

Anger

The second unit of analysis is anger'. Anger is one of the strong human emotions. The intensity of anger feeling and styles of expressing anger in their relationship are examined to measure the

chronic pain experience. In this movie, the anger is shown/ reflected in many situations for portraying the intensity of the character's mood or emotion. The anger shown in the movie is not only the anger to the society but also to oneself.

Scene analysis

Here the anger shown in 3 different scenes. They are,

Scene 6: Akbar enters to the room seeing Mulla trying to escape with his money and trying to call someone with his phone. In this scene, Akbar getting angry with Mulla, and he beats her because Mulla broke the trust that Akbar had with her. Here we can see the anger that arises when one person's trust towards another is broken.

Scene 10: When Akbar tells his friend Moosa that his mind is not under his control, and he cannot control it himself. Moosa realizing the relationship between Akbar and Amir, opposes the relationship and tells Akbar that whatever distracts you is not for your good. Here Moosa is angry not at with his friend Akbar but rather at the homo romantic relationship between Akbar and Amir.

Scene 11: Akbar's mother come to the seashore and beating Akbar is the scene. Here again, Akbar's mother has an anger that comes from her difficulty in accepting Akbar's and Amir's love and her fear of how society will take it and how they responds is another reason for the anger.

Discussion

In these three scenes from the movie are shows two situations for getting angry. One is from the anger that arises when one person's trust towards another is broken. And another one is anger due to difficulty for accepting a homo romantic relationship and fear of how society will approach it and how it will reflect badly on their life and family. Scene 10 and 11 were shows how two people who are in a homo romantic relationship in a homophobic society may face negative experiences and humiliations from the society as well as from their family.

Fear

The units of analysis 'fear' tries to describe about the fear that occurs due to the identity crisis. That means, if the identity is revealed, how the society will respond? And the fear towards oneself, of revealing the self and to express their love.

Scene Analysis

Scene 6: Akbar enters to the room seeing Mulla trying to escape with his money and trying to call someone with his phone. In this scene, Akbar getting angry with Mulla, and he beats her because Mulla broke the trust that Akbar had with her. Here not only the anger is happened but also the fear is there. Mulla is very much afr-

aid of Akbar. Because she didn't know that is her elder brother Akbar'. In her knowledge he is a human trafficker and smuggler. And another reason for her fear is that the language, place and the people are not familiar for her.

Scene 10: When Akbar tells his friend Moosa that his mind is not under his control, and he cannot control it himself. Moosa realizing the relationship between Akbar and Amir, opposes the relationship and tells Akbar that whatever distracts you is not for your good. Here Akbar is afraid about himself because the things happen to him are new to him. He never experiences these things before and here he is also afraid about realizing his identity.

Scene 11: Akbar's mother come to the seashore and beating Akbar is the scene. Here the fear happens Akbar's mother and Akbar and Amir. Amir and Akbar never face this kind of bad experience from their family and now they are afraid about their future, love and family. But in the case of Akbar's mother, she is afraid of the society and in her point of view it is not a good thing it will destroy her son and, she is afraid of her small girl child. May it affect the child's life? Is the basic concern of her. Homophobia is the main reason for this fear.

Scene 13: The scene is, Latheef enters his room with Mulla and force her to change herself to become like how generally girls are according to the society. Here Mulla was afraid of Latheef's behavior. At first, he had treated her as good but at the last moment, when Latheef started telling her that girls should be like this, wear make-up, etc just like the people on the Island told her, Mulla started feel uncomfortable with him and she tries to escape from there.

Discussion
Fear can be seen in many ways in this movie. One is the fear of individuals towards the society. Another fear is the fear of realizing one's own identity, and how others will perceive it if they realize about it. From the side of a family, they were afraid that if this happens to one of her children, it will affect her other child very badly. Fear of how the entire society will look at their family. And also, the movie shows the fear of a girl who is alone in a place without knowing the language, people and also the fear of being able to escape from there.

Appeal for Standardization
Appeal for standardization is another unit of analysis taken here. There are some standardizations remains in our society, those are socially constructed. ie, is any concept that has both been created and widely accepted by the people who live around a person. Here the appeal for standardization means people who follows the socially constructed rules forces others to follow it.

Scene Analysis

Scene 2: The scene shows that, Mulla is walking through a corridor, then a group of boys comes to her and forcefully wears her lipstick and hijab. Mulla tries to oppose them. In this movie, Mulla is a character who follows the cross-dressing format for her comfort. But a group of boys who are the student of that school forcefully wears her lipsticks and hijab. They symbolically say that girl should be like this (wearing make-up, dressed up like other girls).

Scene 13: In this scene also, Latheef enters his room with Mulla and force her to change herself to become like how generally girls are according to the society. Here also the appeal for standardization takes place.

Discussion

Some of the rules that has both been created and widely accepted by the people who lived in a society. Most of those are socially constructed. for example, the society tells some constructed rules like generally/ normally girls are looks like this. So, all the girls should be like this... this is applicable for men too. Men are like this, so men should be like this. In this movie, the character of Mulla is a girl who is dress up like a boy. The people around her are not accepting her like the way how she is, they forcefully compel her to dress like how generally girls look like. Here the society exerts a power over an individual against her freedom because of some socially constructed reasons.

Homo romantic love

Love is an intense feeling and deep affection. Every kind of love is normal in this world. This units of analysis 'homo romantic love' tries to understand the portrayal of homo romantic relationship in the movie Moothon'. In the movie, the portrayal of love is in various manners. It portrays the feel of love more beautifully, deviating from the traditional narrative method like Immoral love. Here the movie gives more importance to homo romantic love. It's very normal thing but the society consider it as a bad thing or unusual one.

Scene Analysis

Scene 7: In this scene, Akbar is bathing in the sea and comes ashore when he sees Amir. Later in the conversation between them, Amir says that no one can understands what he is saying, in that time Akbar replies that "I'm understanding it all". One of the basic of every relation is understanding. Here Akbar tries to understand the uncomfortability and the communication method between them. Akbar and Amir getting comfort with each other, and we can see their love in their eyes without a language.

Scene 8: In this scene, Amir and Akbar sitting at the shore facing the sea and Amir lends a cigarette to Akbar asking him to try it.

Akbar is a gentle man without any bad habit in the island and everyone likes Akbar very much. When Amir offers a cigarette, he commits to try it. Here we can finds that Akbar is comfort with Amir and he not at all afraid of his image among the people. We can see a curious face of Akbar most of the time he was with Amir. They both can understand them each other very quickly. They share their dreams and worries.

Scene 12: In this scene, Akbar sitting in the seashore, Amir approaches Akbar and hugging each other. Amir tries to convince Akbar to go with him somewhere else. But Akbar says 'NO' to Amir. Here, at least for a while, Akbar is thinking about those who are around him and his family. And how others will react to his homo- romantic relationship if it comes out, how it will affect himself and his family. Here we can also find the lack of acceptance from the partner as we already discussed but still there is a love between them.

Discussion

In this unit we were discussing about the homo romantic love. The characters of the movie Akbar and Amir who are in a homo romantic relationship. The movie covers their love as divine and beautifully. The love between Akbar and Amir follows the method 'hidden to the people, open to the nature. That means their love scenes are happens in the sea and the seashore always. They never express their love in front of the people. They are afraid of the society not to the nature. So that their entire love sequences were take place at the sea and seashore. There the nature accepts them as what they are.

Hope for survival

The Hope is someone's feeling to want something to happen or to become true and think that it could happen or become true. In the movie, the whole story stick on to some hopes and wishes. Here the hope acts as hope for survival.

Scene Analysis

Scene 3: When Mulla leaves the Island in a boat to find out her elder brother 'Akbar', her boat was fall into the sea and she swims along the bottom of the sea. At the time she sees a mermaid looks like Amina. In this movie, Amina, sister of Amir is the only person Mulla knows in Bombai. And Mulla already got the number of Amina for contact when she reached Bombai. In this scene she felt the mermaid like Amina. It shows her hope for survival.

Scene 4: In this scene, Raju comes to Mulla, who is lying scared and unable to sleep in a dormitory room of the orphanage and talks about his mother and about some plans to escape from there. Mulla didn't understand Raju's language, but she tries to findout some of the words like 'Rosy', 'Kamathipura' for escaping from th-

ere. The conversation between Raju gives Mulla a hope to escape from there.

Discussion
In the above scenes are discussed about the hope for survival. Mulla knows that Amina is the only person who can help her to find out her elder brother. Because of that she sees the mermaid as Amina. Here the scene tries to tell that the face of Amina gives Mulla a hope that she can find out her elder brother Akbar. And the next scene also giving the meaning like this. Mulla trapped in an orphanage and the warden were misbehave to her. At the time, Raju's words were give her a hope to escape from there. Both of the scene talks about the hope for survival.

Hidden Empathy
The units of analysis 'Hidden empathy' describes that the action of understanding, being aware of the feeling, thoughts and experiences fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner. Here two scenes are taking to analyze the unit Hidden empathy.

Scene 5: When Mulla approaches Rosy in Kamathipura, Rosy tries to communicate with Mulla. And she understood that Mulla couldn't understood her language. And Rosy noticed that Mulla wearing the uniform of the orphanage. Rosy gives her a shirt of her son Raju. We can see an empathy towards Mulla. Roy is a sex worker; she normally has an angry nature but when she sees Mulla and understood her situation and helplessness. Because of that the empathy turn as hidden empathy.

Scene 14: The scene is the final scene of the movie. In this scene, Pikku enters to Kamathipura and knocks a door. Hears a girl's sound from inside and then a girl come out and Pikku realize it is Mulla, at the first sight both getting shocked but at the next second, both of them look each other and smile with eyes full of tears. And the scene shows the hidden empathy.

Discussion
Each scene was discussing about the hidden empathy towards the characters in the movie. Normally a bad image is created when a sex worker is portrayed in movies but here the sex worker Rosy s portrayed as a good mother and good minded person. In the last scene too Mulla becomes as a sex worker. Piku does not come there looking for Mulla but even when he unexpectedly sees Mulla, he felt the same love that he had earlier to Mulla and have a hidden empathy towards her. From the first expression of Mulla, it is clear that she is not doing the job willingly, and when he sees Piku, a smile spread on Mulla's face. May Mulla feels the same as Piku.

Debating the idea of New Normal

Usually, the Malayalam cinema portray the LGBTQIA+ community people as weak, struggled, negative and as comic elements for the movies. But in this movie, the characters were portrayed as strong, confident, willing and fighting towards the homophobic society. The character in the movie has their own identity and they were ready to accept themselves. And the love between two people who are in a homo romantic relationship, can be seen in the movie Moothon very naturally, beautifully and in a way that doesn't lose its soul unlike other movies those were portrayed homo romance.

The movie Moothon, shows the normal life of sex workers whether they like it or not they were committed to continue this job for their survival. The sex worker Rosy in the movie, even can't keep her son with her because of her job. She portrayed as helpless mother, good hearted person and one who shows compassion to others. Here her son Raju, loves his mother, even as he realized that she is doing a bad job. Usually seen in Malayalam cinema that the sex workers are estranged from their families and treated as a bad woman. Here we can see the child's love for his mother and also his desire to stay with her, even knowing that her mother is doing a bad job. Because here they are treated sex workers as a human rather than a sexual object. They give importance to her inner mind not for her physical body.

In this movie, the relationship between two homosexuals is done in a beautiful way, but still the society facing a difficulty to accept their love. Here we can also see the opposition from their family and people around them. The reason for the objection or lack of acceptance is that the fear towards the society. We all are lives in a society there were some socially constructed rules, the people should follow it otherwise the other people will portray them as bad persons or they sidelined them. In a family, a person who is identifies them self as a homosexual, the family never accept their gender identity and, they force them to follow the constructed rules. The reasons for the fear of the family members are that how will the society approaches this if it gets out? Will society make changes in their attitude towards their families? Will his family be ostracized from the society? In this movie also shows that the anger and opposition of the relationship from their family because they were afraid of the society. If the society finds out about her son's (Akbar's) gender identity, it will affect his younger daughter and her family very badly. So that the family oppose the relationship between Akbar and Amir.

Conclusion

From this study, the researcher has made four major findings. These findings were drawn by a content analysis. Here the content analysis specifically, scene analysis was taken for this study. For the selection of scenes, a criteria was formulated. The criteria were formulated based on units which can be said to define 'new normal'. The units of analysis are acceptance, anger, fear, appeal for standardization, homoromantic love, hope for survival and hidden empathy.

Besides these major findings, some subsidiary observations are also made during the study. Those observations are:
- No matter how the new normalities are brought in the films, the end of the stories of people who are from the LGBTQIA+ community is still tragic in the end
- During the release of the movie in theatres across Kerala, similar to the existing pattern, people were found to reject the movie by misunderstanding and including it in the category of 'gay films', as how they call it
- Besides the only romantic love we see in films Moothon is a fusion of many other forms of love that can define human relationships

Questions Persisting in the Research

1. Do these queer films encourage societal transformation
Both the society and the individuals that comprise it are influenced by the film, and the reverse is equally true. We haven't highlighted queer people and the LGBTQIA+ community in earlier. The portrayal among these characters as well as the issues they faced have both largely been facilitated by the cinema, people from the LGBTQIA+ community started to become more widely accepted as queer movies started to emerge. It might be claimed that there has been a little shift in society's perception of LGBTQIA+ individuals since the advent of queer films. The most crucial factor is that, after the portrayal of LGBTQIA+ people in films, films began to address them and discuss their issues, way of life, etc. This sparked discussions and increased awareness among people of the society.

2. How accurately do these portrayals match the character
In some regions of India, as well as Kerala, homosexuality is still considered mythical. Although we can argue that the younger generation is accepting of it, there are still many prejudices and misunderstandings regarding the LGBTQIA+ community that exist. Numerous groups continue to make fun of and assault members of the queer community. Our culture has accepted and is

fundamentally rooted in heteronormativity. Considering that the LGBTQIA+ community is very much alive and well, it is time to mainstream debates about homosexuality and queerness. Through this study, we can consider that Moothon is the movie which started portraying the queer relationship and marginalized people in a new normal way. Here the characters were portrayed as strong, confident, willing, and fighting towards the homophobic society.

3. Is homosexuality considered as 'normal'

As certain directors in the Malayalam film industry like Geethu Mohandas, gained the bravery and audacity to disclose the true things taking place in our society, in our globe. There are several reasons for the Malayalam industry's constant afraid or embarrassment when it comes to telling these sorts of special stories in front of our community or area, may be one of the reason is because of our longstanding norms and traditions around sexual interactions. Second, these folks worry about how society will react to these kinds of movies. Whether the audience ageeed with this or not these are the actual events taking place in our society! The truth is that, unlike what some believe, sexuality is neither a choice nor a disease. It's not that difficult to be gay or lesbian! But for Indian society or Kerala traditions, it has always been an issue of Indian heritage, trouble for the ancient traditions and customs on which people consider our culture is built. Even in all periods of the centuries, the same sex love and desire occurs. but in our present society, a few people were accepting the people who are from the queer community and raise their voice for them. They treat them not only as normal but also as human. They give space and opportunities for them.

Moothon offers a fresh voice in Malayalam cinema, one that dares to show queer lives and sex work in ways that feel honest, human, and hopeful. By focusing on the themes of acceptance alongside anger, fear, love, and empathy, it tackles stereotypes head-on while also putting forth the vision of a positive 'new normal' - one where difference is not merely tolerated, but accepted and warmly welcomed.

Even though this study focused only on one movie, we could examine the reception these narratives receive from the audience. Perhaps comparing 'Moothon' to other queer films within the same genre in different languages and regions, to shed light on the shifting role of cinema in society can open the wide dimensions cinema creates.

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Patterns of Social Media Use and Public Engagement with Political Content during the 2019 Indian General Elections

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Abstract

This exploratory quantitative study investigates the usage patterns and engagement with political content on social media platforms during the 2019 Indian general elections. Focusing on the perceptions of respondents from Kerala, a southern state of India, the research examines the time spent daily on social media to access political information and the nature of user engagement with political content. A total of 600 respondents were selected through a structured sampling method. Data were collected via a survey questionnaire and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. The findings reveal that social media played a significant role in election communication and political campaigning, particularly in constructing political narratives that shaped public discourse. These narratives, disseminated through various platforms, fostered active user engagement and contributed to the formation of public opinion among politically interested social media users.

Keywords*: Social Media, Political Communication, Political Content, Political Campaigning, Content Usage Pattern*

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Introduction

Social media has transformed the day-to-day activities of politics as well as the nature of political communication in India. The new media platforms have developed as a vital tool and a new mode to mobilize the feelings and thoughts of the public and inspire them to take part in public and political engagements. The role of social media in political communication has been widely realized by politicians and the public and has been practiced successfully globally for over a decade. Though, the traditional structure of mass communication in the political context has changed (Chadwick, 2006) due to the prompt development of the internet and social media platforms. The Lok Sabha elections of 2014 were known as the first social media elections in India and the trend followed in many state assembly elections and in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

New media activities have a significant role in engaging the general public with politics and governments. Many research studies revealed the effects of social media on the electorates and their active political participation. Some research studies pointed out that social media had helped particularly the young generation to encourage their political attitude. (Baumgartner and Morris, 2010) noted that the youth who are normally not engaged in political activities are nowadays involving in the politically related subjects with their online networks on which they are generally active. The publics are growingly depending on various social media platforms for political information (Shearer and Gottfried, 2017).

Review of Past Studies

Universally the research scholars reviewing social media have been promptly rising throughout the last decade. Mainly the studies have concentrated on usage of social media during election campaigns and how the party candidates use certain new media platforms to disseminate their election messages. Studies have also been published on the credibility of online political information, commercialisation of social media, online political campaigning, and citizens' political activism and participation (Tedesco, 2004).

Some pragmatic studies have represented different validation and paved the way for an intense academic debate. Some claimed for positive impact of social media on political participation, while some other reduced its impact especially on political mobilisation and the third group highlighted the negative influence (Casteltrione, 2015).

When the exposure to social media is higher the electoral commitm-

ent and turn out will also be higher (Williams and Gulati, 2010; Johnson and Kaye, 2002). Voters use social media to emphasize their voting decisions (Mutz and Martin, 2001). The gratification study of the new media campaign reveals the voters are using it for guidance, information seeking and social utility (Kaye and Johnson, 2002). Few studies have measured how the circumstantial elements such as a candidate's performance in the campaign period might influence social media activity (Druckman, Kifer, and Parkin, 2009; Rossini 2018).

Some studies had focussed on Facebook but the main focus of researchers for reviewing online campaigns were Twitter (Neilson, 2013; Bode and Epstein, 2012). Facebook studies emphasises were on how the platform could probably encourage the political participation of the users (Vaccari and Nielsen, 2013). Jungherr (2016) in his study on political campaigning on Twitter suggests that the platform remains for posting information related to election campaign with some messages directed at engaging with the electorates.

Rossini, Hemsley, Tanupabrungsun, Zhang andStromer (2018) on their article 'social media, opinion polls, and the use of persuasive messages during the 2016 US election primaries' examined the relationship between voting intention polls and the ways political campaigns shape their communication strategies on social media. The outcome suggested that the communicative practices adopted by campaigns in different elections are strikingly unlike and confirm the need for future studies to comprehend the nuances of digital campaigns in different elections.The study underlined that social media platform matters for campaign plans. It also compared the type of messages shared in Facebook and twitter by the candidates and the study fetches out the campaign's communicative strategies employed by the two different platforms.

Varied topics on research based on social media had already been studied, included the credibility of online political information, commercialisation of social media, online political campaigning, and citizens' political activism and participation (Tedesco, 2004). Some pragmatic studies have presented different validations and led off an intense academic debate. Some argued for positive impact of social media on political participation, while the other group minimised its impact especially on political mobilisation and the third group highlighted the negative influence (Casteltrione, 2015).

Numerous studies were conducted in India on the use of social media in political communication particularly during the election time. A study conducted by Internet and Mobile Association of India discloses that the Indian general elections 2014 would be the first social media election for the country and it was influenced by

the discourse on social media platforms. Yolmo (2014) studied the role of social media in election campaign, and also examine the impact and penetration in the 2014 general elections. The study validates the importance of social media campaign in building up the political awareness and creating political knowledge. It underlines that the new media platform have set new standards in campaigning and in engaging political participation of the public especially during the general elections in 2014.The study might also in a manner proved that it has been the most effective tool for campaigning in elections and the game changer of 2014 general elections.

Arulchelvan (2014) assessed the methods and effectiveness of social media by using a triangulation method. Rajput (2014) surveyed the usage of twitter by the national political parties and politicians and how they connect to the electorates particularly the young voters. Lakshmikantha (2014) studied the problems on social media and the change brought by the media in Indian politics. Vasundara and Ravi (2014) considered social media, digital democracy and Indian politics to study online campaigning.

Noted research papers grounded on social media and political communication are by Baruha (2014), Wani and Alone (2014), Malik (2014), Kumar (2014), Ganapathy (2015), Pande (2015), Rekha (2015), Anderson (2015), Nayana (2016), Rodrigues and Niemann (2017), Adhana (2019). The empirically conducted social media research studies on India largely focus on election campaigns and communication. The methods espoused for these studies consists of conceptual, case studies, quantitative and qualitative.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective
The primary objective of the present study was to examine the association between respondents' social media usage patterns and their engagement with political content on various social media platforms.

Specific Objectives
1. To determine the amount of time respondents spent daily on social media platforms.
2. To assess whether respondents used social media as a source of political information.
3. To analyze the extent and nature of respondents' engagement with political content on social media platforms.

Methodology

The study was envisaged and conducted through a field survey in the state of Kerala south of India during a general election campaign during 2019. Four regions of Kerala – Northern (Kozhikode), Central (Ernakulam), Southern (Thiruvananthapuram) and High range (Idukki) were purposively chosen for the study. The questionnaire survey was conducted to gather data based on the study objectives.The selected respondents epitomized the different socio - economic and demographic structures of the Kerala state population. Efforts were made by the investigators to include respondents from diverse socio - economic backgrounds and demographic profiles. A total of 640 respondents were selected from the four constituencies as the sample size. Disregarding the inadequate questionnaires, a sample of 600 respondents were finally chosen for the study.

The collected data were coded and analysed with the SPSS version 22 data sheet. The coded values were given the choices as 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, etc and were analysed by means of the statistical approaches such as Chi Square tests, Mean and Anova.

Analysis and Findings

In the meantime, social media had a complex effect on the society and it had developed as a vital part of communication means. Therefore, it was pertinent to know whether the respondents had the routine of using the social media.

Table 1. Social media usage pattern

Socio-economic variables and categories	No (%)	Yes (%)	Total (%)
Age			
• 18- 30 years	0.6	99.4	100
• 31-40 years	2.6	97.4	100
• 41-50 years	5.6	94.4	100
• Above 51 years	60.5	39.5	100
Total	**21.3**	**78.7**	**100**
Gender			
• Male	17.7	88.3	100
• Female	25.3	74.7	100
Total	**21.3**	**78.7**	**100**

Age			
• 18- 30 years	0.6	99.4	100
• 31-40 years	2.6	97.4	100
• 41-50 years	5.6	94.4	100
• Above 51 years	60.5	39.5	100
Total	**21.3**	**78.7**	**100**
Gender			
• Male	17.7	88.3	100
• Female	25.3	74.7	100
Total	**21.3**	**78.7**	**100**
Education			
• Up to SSLC	58.2	41.8	100
• +2/ Pre degree	20.1	79.9	100
• Graduation	5.8	94.2	100
• PG and above	0	100	100
Total	**21.3**	**78.7**	**100**
Employment			
• Employed	17.6	82.4	100
• Unemployed	35.0	65.0	100
• Student	7.7	92.3	100
Total	**21.3**	**78.7**	**100**
Income			
• Less than 10000	38.7	61.3	100
• 10001-20000	13.4	86.6	100
• 20001-30000	5.6	94.4	100
• 30001-40000	16.7	83.3	100
• Above 40001	4.0	96.0	100
• **No income**	41.2	58.8	100
Total	**21.3**	**78.7**	**100**

The data in the Table 1 clearly stated the respondent's habit of using social media. Apart the higher age category, 'Above 50 years' (39.5%) all the other age groups had higher access in the social media platforms. The '18- 30 years' age group (99.4%) had higher access followed by '31 to 40' age group (97.4%). While coming to the gender category, the male dominated with 82.3% while the female had a representation of 74.7%.

As reported in the table, the variable 'Education' showed when the level of education surges the habit of depending social media also increases similarly. Entire respondents of 'PG and above' (100%) category had the habit of using social media whereas the 'graduation' category followed with 94.2%.

Employment option revealed, the student (92.3%) group used the social media more than the employed (82.4%), and unemployed (65%). The income category showed 'Above 40001' (96%) had the highest distribution and the '20001-30000' income group (94.4%) had the second highest position in using the social media. 'No income' category had the lowest share in using the social media. From the above table, it can be drawn out that a total sample population of 78.7 % respondents had been using the social media platforms.

Time spent daily on social media
Time spent on social media platforms of the respondents evaluated in terms of the average time spent daily as reported in the Table 2. The average time spent daily were classified into five groups as 'Not using', 'less than half hour', 'between half hour and one hour',' greater than one hour', and 'greater than two hours'.

Table 2. Time spent on social media

Socio -economic variables and categories	Not using (%)	<1/2 hour (%)	½ -1hour (%)	> 1 hour (%)	>2 hours (%)	Total (%)	Chi square results
Age							
• 18- 30 years	1.7	2.2	17.2	43.3	35.6	100	X2 = 312.954
• 31-40 years	4.3	7.7	29.9	33.3	24.8	100	df= 12
• 41-50 years	8.3	8.3	34.3	27.8	21.3	100	**Sig= .000**
• Above 51years	62.6	11.3	11.3	11.3	3.6	100	
Total	**23.2**	**7.3**	**20.8**	**28.2**	**20.5**	**100**	
Gender							
• Male	19.3	5.8	20.6	28.0	26.4	100	X2 = 17.155
• Female	27.3	9.0	21.1	28.4	14.2	100	df= 4
Total	**23.2**	**7.3**	**20.8**	**28.2**	**20.5**	**100**	**Sig= .002**
Education							
• Up to SSLC	58.9	6.8	11.6	13.0	9.6	100	X2 = 162.705
• +2 / Pre degree	21.5	8.1	20.8	31.5	18.1	100	df= 12
• Graduation	9. 0	5.8	22.9	35.9	26.5	100	**Sig= .000**
• PG and above	1.2	11.0	31.7	28.0	28.0	100	
Total	**23.2**	**7.3**	**20.8**	**28.2**	**20.5**	**100**	
Employment							
• Employed	19.4	7.4	22.8	28.9	21.5	100	X2 = 30.817
• Unemployed	37.6	7.0	13.4	25.5	16.6	100	df= 8
• Student	7.7	7.7	28.8	30.8	25.0	100	**Sig= .000**
Total	**23.2**	**7.3**	**20.8**	**28.2**	**20.5**	**100**	

Income							
• Less than10000	38.7	7.2	12.6	18.0	23.4	100	
• 10001-20000	15.7	3.7	25.4	36.6	18.7	100	$X2 = 90.528$
• 20001-30000	8.8	6.4	23.2	36.8	24.8	100	df= 20
• 30001-40000	22.7	10.6	33.3	21.2	12.1	100	**Sig= .000**
• Above 40001	6.0	14.0	30.0	24.0	26.0	100	
• No income	40.4	7.9	9.6	24.6	17.5	100	
Total	**23.2**	**7.3**	**20.8**	**28.2**	**20.5**	**100**	

The Analysis of the data showed that the age group 'up to 30 years' (35.6%) had spent more than two hours on social media while the age group '31 to 40 years' (24.8%) too spent more than two hours on social media. The results indicated that the lower age group considerably spent more time on social media platforms whereas the upper age groups had lesser preference on social media. The statistical analysis showed a significant association existed between the age variable and the time spent on social media.

Respondent's gender category was studied and found that the male category (26.4%) dominated in spending 'more than two hours' on social media than the female (14.2%) respondents. But the female category (28.4%) had a slight upper hand than the male category (28%) in spending 'more than one hour 'on social media. The analysis clearly showed male category had the habit of spending more time on social media than the female respondents. Gender category had a significant bearing on the time spent on social media as it was tested with the confidence level 0.5.

Based on the information provided on the variable Education, the respondents with the higher education spent more time on social media. The time spent daily on social media was more than two hours for 28% of the 'PG and above' category and 26.5% for the 'graduation' category. The point evident from the table was that 58.9% of the category 'Up to SSLC' was not using social media. So, it was clearly a dependent variable and the statistical test confirmed the significance of the variable.

With reference to employment as a variable, the 'student' (25%) group had spent more time on social media on a daily basis. The employed (21.5%) group came next and the unemployed (16.6%) a far distant third position in spending more than two hours daily on social media. These differences in the data were statistically significant as the P value obtained for the variable was lesser than the significant level.

As the data pointed out in the 'Income' category, those having a monthly income in the range of Rs 'Above 40001' (26%) had spent more time on social media. The second highest was the income gro-

up '20001 to 30000' (24.8%). The data however were statistically significant when tested by the confidence level 0.05.

Social media platforms for gaining political information
This part dealt with the respondent's access of social media platforms for gaining political information. Three options were given to the respondents. 34% of the total respondents admitted that they had used social media for attaining political information and the other 34% revealed they rarely used social media to gain political information. The data of the respondents were analysed by each socio - economic variable and the significance tests were carried out to identify the association between the variables.

Table 3. Access social media platforms for political information

Socio-economic variables and categories	No (%)	Rarely (%)	Yes (%)	Total (%)	Chi square results
Age					
• 18- 30 years	8.3	33.9	57.8	100	$X2=216.938$
• 31-40 years	12.8	44.4	42.7	100	df=6
• 41-50 years	25	47.2	27.8	100	**Sig=.000**
• Above 51 years	69.2	20.5	10.3	100	
Total	**32**	**34**	**34**	**100**	
Gender					
• Male	26.7	32.8	40.5	100	$X2=14.027$
• Female	37.7	35.3	27.0	100	df=2
Total	**32**	**34**	**34**	**100**	**Sig=.001**
Education					
• Up to SSLC	63.7	21.9	14.4	100	$X2=111.739$
• +2/Pre-degree	31.5	33.6	34.9	100	df=6
• Graduation	17.5	35.0	47.5	100	**Sig=.000**
• PG and above	15.9	53.7	30.5	100	
Total	**32**	**34**	**34**	**100**	
Employment					
• Employed	28.9	35.5	35.5	100	$X2=18.326$
• Unemployed	43.3	31.8	24.8	100	df=4
• Student	21.2	28.8	50.0	100	**Sig=.001**
Total	**32**	**34**	**34**	**100**	

Income					
• Less than10000	48.6	22.5	27.8	100	
• 10001 - 20000	23.1	37.3	39.6	100	
• 20001 - 30000	18.4	36.8	44.8	100	X2=47.803
• 30001 - 40000	28.8	43.9	27.3	100	df=10
• Above 40001	24.0	42.0	34.0	100	**Sig=.000**
• No income	46.5	28.9	24.6	100	
Total	**32**	**34**	**34**	**100**	

From the above table, it is obvious that low age group, '18 to 30' (57.8%) years had the highest share in accessing social media platforms for political information, followed by the 31 - 40 (42.7%) year age group. The data confirms once the age increased the access of respondents to the social media decreased simultaneously. The high age group,' Above 51' (10.3%) had the lowest distribution share when compared to the other age groups. The statistical test proved a significant association existed as the P value (.000) was statistically significant when tested by the confidence level 0 .05.

Gender category data revealed, the male respondents (40.5%) had the highest distribution while the female had a far off 27% share. The data signified that the female category depend less on social media for gaining political knowledge. The significance test also showed that there was relationship between the variable gender as the P value (.001) obtained for the variable was lesser than the significant level.

The data based on education disclosed that those who have qualified' Graduation' had the highest share with 47.5%. The second highest share went to the 'plus two/pre degree category' (34.9 %) followed by 'PG and Above' (30.5 %). The lowest education group had the lowest share with 14.4%. The variable education is dependent when tested with chi square and therefore it had significance.

A look at the respondents' data based on employment category an exact half of the 'student' (50%) respondents had access to various social media platforms for gaining political information while the 'employed' group attained second position with 35.5%. The data were statistically significant when tested statistically and had positive association with the variable.

The category 'income' was analysed and revealed that the group with '20001-30000'income level (44.8%) had the highest share followed by '10001 -20000 (39.6 %). Out of the respondents the low-income group had the lowest share with 27.8 %. The result of the analysis reported in the table showed the variable income was statistically significant at the .05 confidence level.

Engagement with the political content
The respondents' dealing with the political content on various social media platforms are discussed in the below table 4. Based on the popularity five social media platforms were selected. The encompassed platforms were Facebook (Meta), Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram and You tube. The term 'engagement' with the social media was basically meant to know how they used the political content in these varied platforms.

Table 4. Engagement with the political content

Engagement with the political content on social media platforms	Responses		Percentage of Cases
	N	**(%)**	
• Post in Facebook (Meta)	319	32.3	74
• Post in Twitter	350	26.2	81.2
• Post in WhatsApp	341	25.8	79.1
• Post in Instagram	275	20.6	63.8
• Post in YouTube	49	3.7	11.4
Total	**1334**	**100**	**309.5**
• Reactions in Facebook	20	32.3	52.6
• Reactions in Twitter	17	27.4	44.7
• Reactions in WhatsApp	2	3.2	5.3
• Reactions in Instagram	11	17.7	28.9
• Reactions in you tube	12	19.4	31.6
Total	**62**	**100**	**163.2**
• Share in Facebook	95	29.9	60.1
• Share in Twitter	27	8.5	17.1
• Share in WhatsApp	115	36.2	72.8
• Share in Instagram	45	14.2	28.5
• Share in you tube	36	11.3	22.8
Total	**318**	**100**	**201.3**
• Comment in Facebook (Meta)	116	37.8	78.9
• Comment in Twitter	78	25.4	53.1
• Comment in WhatsApp	15	4.9	10.2
• Comment in Instagram	29	9.4	19.7
• Comment in You tube	69	22.5	46.9
Total	**307**	**100**	**208.8**

The above table clearly represented the survey respondent's treatment with the political content on social media. To unfold the details of the usage of the political content a multi-dimensional feedback system was used. The systematized response system encompassed in the form of 'posts' (publish /circulate) 'reactions' (likes, dislikes etc) 'share' (hand out the content) and 'comment' (remarks made by the user).

While analysing the 'posts' on social media, Facebook (FB/Meta) had the uppermost share with 32.3% followed by Twitter (26.2%) and WhatsApp (25.8%) respectively. The figures showed a reasonable number of users were active on different platforms by engaging their share of content for circulating their views and thoughts to different users.

The 'Reaction' category in the different social media platforms offered the users' feedback for the content in different emotions such as likes, dislikes, sad, angry etc in different platforms. Here also Facebook (32.3%) had the highest share followed by Twitter (27.4%). WhatsApp the instant messaging app was used by 36.2% of the respondents in the 'share' category while Facebook content was shared by 29.9% of the respondents in the survey. The political content in the Facebook was commented by 37.8 % of the respondents and the content in the twitter was commented by 25.4%.

Therefore, from the above data it can be concluded that for gaining political information, FB was the most used platform followed by Twitter and WhatsApp. The other platforms under study like Instagram and You tube were also used for this purpose at a moderate level.

Social media usage by variables
The table below specified the mean of the usage of social media for gaining political information by all the socio- economic variables taken for the study. To understand whether the differences in the mean value were statistically significant the data were subjected to ANOVA. The significance of the result was calculated at the .05 confidence level.

Table 5. Index of social media use for political news

Socio-economic variables and categories	Index	Groups	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age • 18- 30 years • 31-40 years • 41-50 years • Above 51 years **Total**	.3020 .2373 2130 .0706 **.1981**	Between Groups	5.316	3	1.772	83.958	**.000**
		Within Groups	12.579	596	0.021		
		Total	17.895	599			
Gender • Male • Female **Total**	.2274 .1667 **.1981**	Between Groups	.551	1	.551	18.998	**.000**
		Within Groups	17.344	598	.029		
		Total	17.895	598			
Education • Up to SSLC • +2/Pre-degree • Graduation • PG and above **Total**	.0898 .1891 .2503 .2654 **.1981**	Between Groups	2.703	3	.901	35.347	**.000**
		Within Groups	15.192	596	.025		
		Total	17.895	599			
Employment • Employed • Unemployed • Student **Total**	.2049 .1660 .2443 **.1981**	Between Groups	.291	2	.146	4.939	**.007**
		Within Groups	17.604	597	.029		
		Total	17.895	599			

Income		Between Groups	.635	5	.127	4.372	**.001**
• Less than10000	.1600						
• 10001 - 20000	.2103	Within Groups	17.260	596	.029		
• 20001 - 30000	.2344						
• 30001 - 40000	.1720						
• Above 40001	.2553						
• No income	.1713	Total	17.895	599			
Total	**.1981**						

The data shows when the mean of the habit of using social media for gaining political information was calculated by age groups, the low age group showed the high index level (.3020) followed by the second lowest age group 31 – 40 (.2373). To determine whether the mean values were statistically significant the data were subjected to ANOVA and the significance test proved there existed a positive association with the variable age.

While analysing the gender category, the results showed high mean value to male (.2274) followed by female (.1667) with a major difference in the value. To know whether the mean of the usage of social media for gaining political information differed by the gender category significantly, the statistical test was applied and the association was also proved to be significant.

Education wise variable pointed out that the group with the highest education (.2654) recorded the highest mean value. To know whether the differences in the mean value were statistically significant the data were subjected to one-way analysis of variance. The result indicated highly significant differences existed among the various educational groups with respect to social media usage for gaining political information.

A look at the employment category showed mean values of social media usage for gaining political information showed that 'students' (.2443) had attributed a higher rating when compared to the other two groups. For ascertaining the significance of the differences in the groups Anova was conducted. The result came up with a probability level of .007 which indicated significant differences existed among the variable employment.

Scrutiny of the mean values of the 'income' category provided the highest mean to the high-income group, 'Above 40001' (.2553). The next highest mean was that of the '20001-30000' (.2344) group. ANOVA was carried out to ascertain the differences in the group, the data were significant and found that it was statistically significant.

The analysis of data disclosed that all the variables like age, gender,

education, employment and income had a bearing on the usage of social media platforms for gaining political information.

Conclusion

The findings of the study clearly indicate that a significant portion of respondents (34%) reported using social media as a primary source for accessing political information. Notably, the age group of 18–30 years constituted the highest proportion of users engaging with political content online, while the age group above 51 years showed the lowest level of participation in this regard. This highlights the generational digital divide in political information consumption through social media platforms.

In addition to age, other demographic variables such as gender, educational qualification, employment status, and income levels were found to have a statistically significant influence on the extent and frequency of social media usage for political purposes. For instance, respondents with higher education levels and those in salaried employment were more likely to access and engage with political content on social media platforms, suggesting that digital literacy and access play a critical role in shaping political engagement online.

Moreover, social media has become an increasingly indispensable tool for both political actors and the public during election campaigns. Politicians leverage these platforms to disseminate targeted messages, mobilize supporters, and construct compelling political narratives. At the same time, the public uses social media not only to consume information but also to participate in discussions, express opinions, and engage in digital activism. As such, social media platforms serve as dynamic arenas for political communication, significantly influencing the formation of public opinion and shaping the democratic process.

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Bridging the Knowledge Gap: The Role of Mass Media in Disseminating Agricultural Information to Farmers in Kerala

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Abstract

This study explores the role of mass media as a key source of agricultural information for farmers in Kerala, India. In the context of Kerala's unique agro-climatic conditions, landholding patterns, and literacy levels, timely and accurate information dissemination is critical to sustaining agricultural productivity. The paper examines how traditional media—radio, television, newspapers—and digital media, such as mobile phones and the internet, influence agricultural decision-making among farmers. Drawing from secondary data and authoritative sources, the study highlights the evolving media consumption patterns, the comparative effectiveness of different communication channels, and the challenges posed by digital divides and media credibility. It was found that while conventional media still plays an essential role, the adoption of digital platforms is increasing, driven by smartphone penetration and government initiatives. However, gaps remain in accessibility, media literacy, and relevance of content. Recommendations are made for improving farmer-centric communication strategies through an integrated approach that blends traditional and digital media while ensuring contextual relevance, accessibility, and accuracy. This paper provides insights for policymakers, agricultural extension agencies, and media professionals aiming to optimize information dissemination to support informed farming practices and rural development in Kerala.

Keywords*: Agricultural communication, Digital literacy gaps, Market linkages, Green revolution*

Introduction

Agricultural communication plays a critical role in rural development, enabling farmers to access vital information that enhances productivity, market opportunities, and sustainability. Traditional and modern mass media platforms have facilitated the dissemination of scientific and technical agricultural knowledge, particularly during transformative phases like the Green Revolution (Kameswari et al., 2012). The evolution of information and communication technology (ICT) has further expanded the reach of agricultural knowledge, shifting from one-way dissemination to interactive, participatory models that engage farmers more effectively.

In Kerala, where agriculture remains a key economic sector, access to timely and accurate information can significantly impact productivity and farmer welfare. The integration of mass media in agricultural communication has allowed farmers to adopt innovative techniques, respond to climate changes, and access financial and governmental resources more effectively. However, while mass media serves as a powerful tool, challenges such as digital literacy gaps, misinformation, and infrastructure limitations still pose barriers to effective knowledge transfer. The need for multilingual content, contextualized information, and continuous updates is also becoming increasingly important as farmers rely on multiple sources for decision-making.

The present study aims to examine the various mass media platforms utilized for agricultural communication in Kerala, assessing their effectiveness in reaching the farming community and addressing their specific needs. The article also explores policy initiatives, technological advancements, and future prospects for enhancing media-based agricultural communication.

The Role of Print Media in Agricultural Communication

Print media has been an essential conduit for farm journalism, offering farmers credible and detailed information on agricultural advancements. Newspapers, magazines, and printed materials such as pamphlets and leaflets remain valuable sources of agricultural knowledge in Kerala.

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Newspapers and Farm Journalism

Newspapers serve as a vital source of agricultural news, providing farmers with updates on market prices, weather forecasts, government policies, and innovative farming techniques. Regional newspapers in Kerala dedicate sections to agricultural issues, reflecting their significance in rural livelihoods (Choudhury & Payel, 2011). Studies suggest that printed media plays an indispensable role in bridging knowledge gaps among farmers, particularly in remote areas with limited access to digital resources (Bauman, 2006). Many major Malayalam newspapers such as Malayala Manorama, Mathrubhumi, and Deepika have dedicated sections for agricultural updates. These newspapers provide information on farming best practices, innovative techniques, and government schemes aimed at supporting farmers. Two of Kerala's leading newspapers, Mathrubhumi and Malayala Manorama, have played a significant role in promoting agricultural awareness and knowledge through their dedicated agriculture columns. Recognizing the importance of farming in Kerala's economy, both newspapers have been publishing specialized sections focused on agriculture, offering farmers valuable insights on modern farming techniques, government schemes, market trends, and success stories. Mathrubhumi launched its dedicated agricultural section, which features expert articles, farmer interviews, and updates on organic and sustainable farming. It also covers crucial topics such as climate change, water conservation, and pest management. Similarly, Malayala Manorama has been at the forefront of agricultural journalism with its widely-read Karshakasree supplement, which provides in-depth coverage of farming innovations, crop advisory services, and the latest developments in agribusiness. Through these initiatives, both newspapers have successfully bridged the knowledge gap between scientific research and grassroots farming, empowering the agricultural community with accurate and timely information.

With increasing concerns about environmental sustainability and climate change, newspapers have also begun to feature investigative reports on soil degradation, pesticide overuse, and organic farming movements. These reports provide a critical perspective on policy changes and their impact on agricultural communities. Furthermore, farmer interviews and interactive segments allow for the sharing of grassroots experiences and best practices, enabling knowledge-sharing across farming communities.

Farm Magazines and Extension Literature

Specialized farm magazines cater specifically to agricultural audie-

nces, offering in-depth content on cultivation techniques, best practices, and success stories of innovative farmers. Some of the widely circulated farm magazines in Kerala include Karshakasree (Malayala Manorama), Kerala Karshakan (Farm Information Bureau), Kalpadenu (Kerala Agricultural University), and Karshakan (Deepika). Agricultural extension agencies also regularly publish pamphlets and leaflets containing focused information on crops, pest control, irrigation methods, and subsidy schemes, making them an easily accessible knowledge source for farmers.

Pamphlets and leaflets are distributed through Krishi Bhavans, agricultural fairs, and cooperative societies, offering information on specific crops, farming techniques, government subsidies, insurance schemes, and market trends. These concise, easy-to-read materials ensure that farmers can quickly grasp the key details needed for informed decision-making. Some of these pamphlets also contain visual illustrations to help semi-literate farmers better understand recommended practices. Another advantage of farm magazines and print materials is their archiving capability, allowing farmers to revisit important information when needed, unlike ephemeral broadcast media.

The Role of Broadcasting and Digital Media in Agricultural Communication

Broadcast media, particularly radio and television, have played a transformative role in agricultural extension services by making information accessible to a large audience, including those with low literacy levels.

Radio Programs for Agricultural Extension

Radio remains a cost-effective and powerful medium for reaching rural farmers. In Kerala, VayalumVeedum, a long-running radio program initiated in 1966 by Akashvani (All India Radio), provides farmers with timely information on farming techniques, market trends, and government initiatives. Kisanvani, launched in 2004 by All India Radio in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, has also been instrumental in delivering localized agricultural advisories, market price trends, and weather forecasts.

Radio programs serve as an interactive tool where farmers can call in with their queries, receive expert guidance, and share their experiences. The affordability and reach of radio make it a crucial tool for agricultural extension, particularly in rural and remote areas where internet penetration is still limited. Local radio stations also broadcast real-time market prices and emergency weather updates to help farmers make informed decisions.

Agricultural Television Programs

Television has significantly enhanced the visual representation of agricultural practices, making complex farming techniques more comprehensible. Krishi Darshan, launched in Kerala in 2005, provides farmers with weekly updates on research inputs, expert advice, and success stories. Kissan Krishi Deepam, an initiative by the Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management-Kerala (IIIM-K), employs interactive elements such as viewer call-ins and toll-free consultation services to foster farmer engagement.

Other notable programs include Krishidarshan, Agricultural Live Shows, and Market Price Update Segments, which are aired on Malayalam news and infotainment channels. These programs provide valuable insights into organic farming, precision agriculture, weather forecasts, and innovative agricultural machinery. By leveraging visuals and expert panels, television plays a crucial role in promoting sustainable farming practices and scientific methods.

The Decline in Agricultural Land and Rising Costs

The agricultural sector in Kerala has faced a steady decline in cultivable land due to urbanization, industrialization, and the shift to non-agricultural economic activities. Reports indicate that agricultural land in Kerala has declined by nearly 30% over the past three decades, with many farmers abandoning farming due to unprofitability and land conversion for residential or commercial purposes. The fragmentation of land holdings and the loss of traditional farmlands have made large-scale farming increasingly difficult.

Another significant issue is the rising cost of agriculture. The expenses related to seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, labor, and irrigation have seen exponential growth, making farming a less viable livelihood option. The increasing price of agricultural inputs has forced small and marginal farmers into debt, as they struggle to maintain productivity and compete in the market. Government intervention through subsidies, credit facilities, and technological support is crucial to address this crisis.

Challenges before Farmers in Kerala

Farmers in Kerala face multiple challenges that impact their ability to sustain agricultural activities and maximize productivity. Some of the most pressing issues include:

1. Climate Change and Erratic Weather Patterns

Kerala has experienced unpredictable weather conditions, including unseasonal rainfall, droughts, and floods, which have severely affected agricultural output. Climate change has led to shifts in crop cycles, pest infestations, and soil degradation, further threatening food security.

2. Lack of Adequate Market Linkages

One of the critical problems farmers face is the lack of direct access to markets, forcing them to rely on intermediaries who often take a large portion of the profits. The absence of robust supply chain management results in post-harvest losses and unfair pricing for farm produce.

3. Shortage of Agricultural Labor

With the migration of rural youth to urban areas in search of better employment opportunities, Kerala's agricultural sector faces a severe shortage of skilled labor. Mechanization of farming practices has helped bridge this gap to some extent, but it is still not widespread enough to make a significant impact.

4. Inadequate Access to Credit and Financial Support

Small and marginal farmers often struggle to obtain formal credit, forcing them to rely on informal money lenders who charge exorbitant interest rates. While government schemes offer subsidies and loan waivers, many farmers remain unaware of these benefits due to ineffective communication strategies.

5. Declining Interest in Farming among Younger Generations

Traditional farming practices are increasingly being abandoned by younger generations, who view agriculture as less lucrative compared to alternative career paths. This demographic shift poses a long-term threat to the agricultural sector in Kerala.

Future Prospects and Recommendations

To further strengthen agricultural communication in Kerala, it is essential to integrate advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and data analytics into farm journalism. The implementation of localized mobile advisory services, expansion of community radio networks, and the promotion of digital literacy among farmers can help create a more inclusive and effective agricultural communication ecosystem. Additionally, policymakers must collaborate with media organizations to ensure accurate, timely, and region-specific agricultural information reaches farmers effectively.

Conclusion

The role of mass media in agricultural communication has undergone a profound transformation, evolving from conventional print media and broadcast channels to a diverse array of modern digital platforms. In the context of Kerala, this shift has played a pivotal role in enhancing agricultural development and farmer empowerment. The state's agricultural landscape has reaped significant benefits from a synergistic approach that combines traditional farm journalism, government-led extension services, and the integration of ICT-driven innovations such as mobile apps, online portals, social media, and real-time advisory systems.

These modern tools have improved the speed, reach, and interactivity of agricultural communication, enabling timely dissemination of weather forecasts, pest alerts, crop advisories, and market information to farming communities. Digital platforms have also opened new avenues for knowledge exchange, farmer-to-farmer interaction, and participatory decision-making processes.

However, despite these advancements, several challenges persist. Issues such as uneven access to digital infrastructure in rural areas, limited digital literacy among older and marginalized farmers, and the spread of misinformation on social media platforms pose significant hurdles to the equitable and effective use of media in agricultural communication. Bridging the digital divide and enhancing media literacy through targeted training programs and inclusive policies remains essential to fully harness the potential of mass media for sustainable and inclusive agricultural development in Kerala.

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Government Control of the Media in Communist Country and Democratic Country: A Comparative Analysis of India and Vietnam During COVID 19 Pandemic Crisis

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Abstract

This is an attempt to identify and analyse online media activities in Communist country of Vietnam and Democracy of India in the context of Covid–19 pandemic. The study employs a methodology of content analysis for tracing the potential of appropriate journals, books, media contents. The findings of the study had explored government control of the media, which focus on online platforms having an impact on people and society following the similarities and differences towards Communist and Democratic countries in period of Covid–19 pandemic. Sample of above issue is from 2019 to 2021 regarding to online media representation in Vietnam and India is taken for this research.

***Keywords**: Government control, Crisis Communication, Data Visualization*

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Introduction

Online media, also referred to as digital media, encompasses all content created, distributed, and consumed through digital technologies. It includes platforms such as websites, social media, digital audio and video, e-books, and computer-based applications. According to Dalia Goldberg (2019), digital media refers to any form of media encoded in a machine-readable format, which can be created, accessed, modified, and shared through electronic devices. As Richard Smith from the Centre for Digital Media notes, placing traditional media formats like radio or newspapers on digital platforms transforms them into digital media.

In today's globalized world, digital media has become a central tool for communication, information dissemination, and public engagement. Its role has been particularly critical during crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, where access to timely and accurate information became essential. However, the way digital media is controlled and utilized varies significantly across political systems. This study offers a comparative analysis of government control over online media in two distinct political contexts—Vietnam, a communist state, and India, a democratic nation—during the COVID-19 pandemic. It aims to explore how differing governance structures influenced the flow of information, media freedom, censorship, and public discourse in each country during a global health emergency.

Mao Zedong once declared, "Power grows out of the barrel of a gun," but in modern China, power is also maintained through tight media control. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has opened its economy without loosening political restrictions, especially online. With more

than two million internet monitors, the government filters digital content using keyword tracking and censorship. Western platforms like Facebook and YouTube are banned, while domestic services like Weibo and WeChat operate under strict regulations. Editors regularly receive censorship directives, and sensitive topics—like natural disasters or public dissent—are often off-limits.

This control became more pronounced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Public outrage over the death of whistleblower Dr. Li Wenliang briefly escaped censorship, but critical posts and investigative reports were quickly removed. The state followed up with a propaganda campaign, including books and TV programs, to reshape the pandemic narrative in its favor.

North Korea represents an even stricter example. Governed by Juche ideology, its media serves solely as a state mouthpiece. All ne-

wspapers, radio, and TV are government-controlled, foreign media is banned, and electronic devices are modified to prevent outside access. During COVID-19, despite unofficial reports of deaths and quarantines, state media claimed flawless success under Kim Jong-un's leadership.

In contrast, the United States upholds a constitutionally protected, diverse media landscape. With over 1,000 newspapers and dominant digital platforms, the U.S. fosters active public discourse. Outlets like NPR provide non-commercial news, while major newspapers such as The New York Times investigated federal missteps during the pandemic. Though media polarization intensified, the press played a critical role in holding leaders accountable, especially regarding misinformation from the Trump administration.

Globally, however, COVID-19 prompted many governments to suppress dissent. According to Human Rights Watch, at least 83 countries used the crisis to restrict free speech, detain critics, and stifle protests. In nations like China, Egypt, and Vietnam, citizens were arrested for online criticism. In 18 countries, security forces assaulted journalists or protesters, while over 50 invoked emergency laws to prosecute dissent.

Online media shaped public awareness during the pandemic, but its role depended heavily on political context. In authoritarian states like China and North Korea, digital tools facilitated surveillance and propaganda. In democracies such as the U.S., they enabled accountability and debate—though not without issues like misinformation.

Vietnam and India present hybrid cases. Vietnam's single-party government tightly managed media while efficiently responding to the virus. India, despite facing challenges like misinformation and communal tensions, maintained a comparatively open media environment, where criticism was possible, albeit pressured.
Ultimately, the pandemic showed that online media is both a reflection and extension of political power, shaped by how governments choose to inform—or control—their citizens.

Review of Literature

Schroeder (2018), in Social Theory After the Internet, explores how social media has reshaped global sociability, especially among youth. He examines online sociability and information-seeking behaviors through case studies in China, Sweden, India, and the U.S., highlighting concerns over social fragmentation and search engine gatekeeping. Lloyd (2017), in The Power and the Story, discusses how technology, politics, and authoritarian control have

transformed journalism. He cites global examples—from Trump's rhetoric to media suppression in Russia and China—to show how regimes redefine "truth" to suppress dissent. Williams and Rich (2013), in Losing Control, analyze press freedom across 17 Asian countries, noting how varying political cultures affect censorship and the role of technology in enabling change.

Khattri (2014), in Civic Challenges, Democracy and Media, discusses the media's democratic role in India, addressing issues like corruption, freedom of expression, and marginalized communities. Mishra (n.d.) highlights legal and political constraints on media in Asian countries, especially under authoritarian regimes. Lesmana (n.d.) finds that while economic liberalization in Vietnam and Laos has encouraged limited press freedom, state control persists. Rowbottom (n.d.) explores media freedom in the digital age, warning that online platforms replicate traditional power imbalances. Transparency International (n.d.) reviews Asia-Pacific right-to-information laws, noting persistent barriers to public access.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach, employing content analysis as the primary methodological tool. Content analysis is suitable for systematically examining patterns, themes, and meanings embedded within textual and media-based content. It allows for a critical exploration of how media operates under different political systems, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The research relies on secondary data to address the research objectives. A wide range of credible and relevant sources will be consulted to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the topic. These sources include: Peer-reviewed academic journals, books by subject experts, reputable newspaper articles, reports published by international organizations, official government publications and legal documents, online media content, including news websites and public statements.

The general objective of this study is to analyse the relationship between media and governments operating under different political systems, with a particular focus on the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. It seeks to explore how media expression, response, and limitations are shaped by government influence during crises. The study examines the dynamic interactions between state authorities and media institutions, emphasizing how political structures inform the regulation and functioning of media during a public health emergency.

Specifically, the research investigates the behaviour of online media under governmental control and censorship in Vietnam and India, which represent communist and democratic systems, respectively. It assumes that these differing political frameworks lead to distinct patterns of media representation and crisis communication. The study further explores the role of digital media platforms—including online newspapers, television, and internet-based sources—in responding to the pandemic. By comparing the two countries, it seeks to identify similarities and differences in governmental approaches to media regulation and censorship. Additionally, the research assesses whether online media supported governmental pandemic responses, whether censorship compromised public welfare, and how state decisions impacted the flow of COVID-19-related information to the public.

Analysis

The collected data is analysed using qualitative content analysis techniques. Key themes such as media freedom, government control, online expression, misinformation, and public discourse is identified and interpreted. The analysis compared the media behaviour in a communist system (Vietnam) and a democratic system (India), focusing on how state structures influenced digital communication during the pandemic.

The goal is to draw meaningful conclusions about the relationship between political systems and online media behaviour, and to understand how these dynamics shaped public awareness and freedom of expression during a global health crisis.

The coordination of online media and government efforts in managing the COVID-19 crisis has been critical in countries like Vietnam and India. This study focuses on the role of digital media, including newspapers, television, social networks, and applications, in mitigating the pandemic's impact in these nations. By examining the behaviors of online media in both countries, the analysis explores how government policies have shaped media strategies during the crisis. The study reveals similarities and differences between the Communist government of Vietnam and the democratic government of India in their use of online media to manage the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had far-reaching effects on global health, the economy, and society. Governments worldwide have relied heavily on digital media to provide real-time information, disseminate public health messages, and coordinate responses. In Vietnam, for example, visual data were used extensively, with graphs illustrating disease transmission patterns. These data visual-

izations helped the public understand the pandemic's progression and its implications. Additionally, social media platforms such as Facebook and Zalo were leveraged to keep the public informed about government measures, health guidelines, and updates on the epidemic's spread. The government also implemented mobile applications for contact tracing and to assist with public health management.

Vietnam's response to COVID-19 included a comprehensive strategy that prioritized public communication, the mobilization of social resources, and the use of information technology for disease management. Notably, online newspapers, including the government-run Bao Chinh Phu and others, published detailed updates on COVID-19 cases and government directives. Television channels like VTV also played a significant role, broadcasting information several times a day, ensuring widespread dissemination of essential updates. The country's proactive use of digital tools helped maintain public awareness and encouraged adherence to safety measures.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on India, severely affecting the healthcare system, economy, and society as a whole. With India ranking second in the world for the highest number of COVID-19 cases, urgent action was required from the government to mitigate the crisis. Digital media played a crucial role in this response, serving as a primary tool for information dissemination, public health advocacy, and mobilization. A survey indicated that social media usage increased by 87% during the lockdown, with a 50-fold surge in activity across platforms. Media became vital in providing emotional support, fostering community connections, and sharing vital information.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) launched official digital platforms to update citizens on COVID-19 data, guidelines, and health advisories. These platforms were integrated across social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, ensuring that crucial information reached a wide audience. MyGov, a government platform, further expanded its reach through messaging services like WhatsApp, offering updates on COVID-19 and resources for citizens. The initiative also utilized unconventional platforms such as Telegram and Helo, targeting diverse demographics and linguistic groups.

In rural areas, the government launched campaigns through the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, utilizing local transport, audio announcements, and social media to reach citizens with critical health messages. Furthermore, Common Service Centres (CSCs) played a significant role in bridging the digital divide, assisting citizens in accessing government services and info-

rmation.

Traditional media, including radio and television, also proved to be essential in reaching broader populations, especially those with limited internet access. Research indicated that radio listenership grew by 23% during the lockdown, with FM channels emerging as a trusted source of information. Through these efforts, digital and traditional media collectively contributed to managing the pandemic's crisis and fostering public awareness across India.

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed stark differences in how governments handle online media, particularly in relation to censorship. This analysis compares the behavior of online media in Vietnam and India during the pandemic, focusing on the government's censorship efforts and the impact of these actions. It examines whether government censorship violates community rights and the extent to which it benefits or harms society.

In Vietnam, the government implemented strict measures to control misinformation related to the virus. These measures were in response to concerns over public health but raised questions about legality and proportionality. Under the Law on Cybersecurity, effective since January 2019, the government imposed fines on individuals spreading "fake news" on social media platforms, such as Facebook. The penalties for such actions ranged from VND 10 million to VND 20 million (approximately $430-$850), which are substantial sums for many Vietnamese citizens. The government's definition of fake news extended beyond incorrect information to include content that damaged the reputation of individuals or organizations, caused confusion, or incited violence. By April 2020, hundreds of individuals had been summoned by authorities for sharing false information, and fines were imposed on those deemed responsible (Human Rights Watch, 2020). For instance, three artists were fined for posting inaccurate information about the virus, highlighting the severity of the censorship efforts. However, these actions were criticized for not respecting the rights to free expression and for being disproportionate to the harm caused by the misinformation (UN Special Rapporteur, 2020).

In contrast, India also faced challenges in controlling misinformation during the pandemic, though the government's approach was less stringent than Vietnam's. While the Indian government implemented various regulations to curb the spread of false information, it has not resorted to the same level of harsh penalties as Vietnam. Both governments, however, faced criticism for restricting free expression under the guise of protecting public health.

The censorship actions in both countries illustrate a tension between public health and freedom of expression, raising important

questions about the balance of these interests during a global crisis.

In India, the corporate control over media outlets has significantly impacted their ability to function independently, often turning them into instruments that align with the ideological agendas of the state. This is especially evident during the Covid-19 pandemic when the government reportedly urged media owners and editors to refrain from negative reporting, pushing for a portrayal of the pandemic as a "war-like" situation under Prime Minister Modi's leadership. Journalists, instead of resisting, complied with the government's directive, focusing on patriotic and optimistic narratives about the pandemic (Sagar, 2020). This manipulation of discourse was particularly noticeable when media personnel were advised to present "positive news" regarding Covid-19, ensuring that the government's official narrative was adhered to (Sagar, 2020).

This influence over the media raises important questions about the ethical responsibilities of journalism in a democracy. When media outlets, influenced by corporate interests, fail to investigate the true state of affairs, they undermine their role as independent checks on power. For instance, when the first Covid-19 case emerged in India in January 2020, the lack of adequate government planning was not critically examined by the mainstream media, and gatherings at religious sites during the pandemic were not scrutinized in the same way. Journalists who raised concerns about the government's handling of the crisis faced legal threats (Scroll, 2020), highlighting the chilling effect on free press.

Although corporate media dominates, alternative voices have emerged through smaller media organizations and international outlets. These voices have played a crucial role in spreading more accurate and nuanced information during the pandemic, but their reach is limited compared to that of large corporate media (Sagar, 2020). The government's attempt to control the flow of information became evident when it petitioned the Supreme Court to restrict media from publishing information that was not first verified by the government. Though the court refused to impose such a restriction, it ordered media outlets to publish official versions of Covid-19 updates (Livelaw News Network, 2020).

The suppression of independent journalism continued with cases of journalists being arrested or charged for reporting on the pandemic. For example, Dhaval Patel, editor of a Gujarati news portal, was charged with sedition for writing an article on potential political changes in Gujarat due to rising Covid-19 cases (Livelaw News Network, 2020). Similarly, reports critical of local authorities were met with legal action, showing how the government used the pandemic as a pretext to stifle dissent.

In contrast to the situation in India, Vietnam has implemented stringent censorship during the pandemic. The government not only blocked negative information but also imposed severe penalties for those spreading "fake news" or criticizing authorities. The lack of journalistic independence in Vietnam has led to a media landscape where state narratives go unchallenged. Online newspapers and social media platforms in Vietnam typically support the government's stance, reinforcing a portrayal of a controlled and minimal-impact pandemic (Sagar, 2020).

In both countries, the response to Covid-19 has highlighted how governments, whether democratic or authoritarian, use media control to maintain power and suppress dissent. While India's democracy has seen significant erosion of press freedoms during the pandemic, Vietnam's stricter censorship measures reflect a more overt and authoritarian approach to controlling public discourse. Both cases underscore the crucial role of journalism in times of crisis and the dangers posed by government overreach in the media sphere.

Conclusion

This study has explored how the governments of Vietnam and India controlled online media during the Covid-19 pandemic. In both countries, digital media played a pivotal role in alerting, informing, motivating, and bridging communication between governments and citizens. However, the media also became a tool for misinformation, confusion, and state control. In Vietnam, state-directed media operations emphasized unity and positivity, often under strict censorship, limiting dissent and promoting a singular narrative that aligned with the Communist Party's messaging. In contrast, India, while a democratic state, witnessed increasing government interference in media operations, use of sedition laws against journalists, and the suppression of dissenting voices, reflecting a troubling trend in press freedom erosion.

Despite contextual differences, both nations used online media as a double-edged sword—leveraging its reach for public health messaging while simultaneously restricting freedom of expression. The Vietnamese government's centralized control resulted in coordinated messaging and suppression of misinformation but also highlighted exclusivity in information access. Meanwhile, India's decentralized media landscape permitted a wider range of opinions, yet the government still employed sophisticated censorship tactics and legal intimidation to silence critics.

The Covid-19 pandemic has underscored the need for responsible journalism and transparent governance. While digital media has b-

een instrumental in raising awareness, promoting health measures, and combating fear, the challenges of fake news and the politicization of media have intensified. In both countries, media professionals played a frontline role in crisis communication, yet were also exposed to political pressure and threats.

Ultimately, the study highlights the importance of media freedom, balanced regulation, and ethical reporting during public health emergencies. Governments should act as facilitators—not suppressors—of accurate information. Future research may build on these findings to examine the evolving relationship between media, governance, and public health in post-pandemic contexts, offering critical insights into media behavior, censorship practices, and their impacts on democracy, mental health, and societal trust.

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Framing of Digital media Narratives: A Case study of Vietnam Flood Crisis in 2020

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Abstract

This study investigates media framing in disaster journalism in Vietnamese online media. The study used the 2020 Central Vietnam floods as a case study. Through a qualitative content analysis of 64 English-language news articles from VnExpress International and Tuoi Tre News, the research examines how frames such as human interest, responsibility, economic consequences, conflict, and morality are deployed. The study used Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) framing typology to categories the news frames. The researchers observed that unlike Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) hierarchy of dominant frames in Western media—where responsibility and conflict often prevail—the Vietnamese coverage prioritized human interest narratives, followed by responsibility attributions, with minimal attention to economic consequences and a notable absence of conflict and morality frames. These findings highlight how disaster reporting in Vietnam, an authoritarian context, emphasizes social cohesion, national unity, and government responsiveness, rather than critique or controversy. The study underscores the influence of political structure and cultural values on news framing practices and suggests that existing frame typologies may require cultural recalibration to be analytically effective in non-Western contexts.

***Keywords**: Media Framing, Media Narratives, Disaster Reporting, Flood Crisis.*

Introduction

The year 2020 was marked by a series of unprecedented global events that disrupted societies worldwide. While the COVID-19 pandemic dominated headlines, the year was also defined by a range of natural disasters and socio-political upheavals. As United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres (2020) stated in his State of the Planet address, "Covid and climate have brought us to a threshold." Amid this backdrop, climate change continued to manifest in increasingly severe and frequent disasters. The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNSDR, 2009) defines a natural disaster as a hazardous natural event that leads to significant destruction, displacement, and loss of life. Globally, there has been a marked rise in such disasters, particularly floods, due to human-induced climate change. Between 1980 and 1999, there were 3,656 climate-related disasters; this number nearly doubled to 6,681 between 2000 and 2019 (Hubbard, 2020). Floods alone affected over two billion people between 1998 and 2017, and their increasing intensity underscores the growing urgency of climate resilience.

Vietnam in 2020: Navigating Dual Crises
Vietnam faced a particularly difficult year in 2020. Alongside pandemic control efforts, the country grappled with catastrophic flooding in the central region from October to November. These floods—triggered by seasonal monsoons and intensified by multiple cyclones—were classified as Level IV, one of the most severe disaster levels under Vietnam's system. Provinces such as Thua Thien Hue, Quang Tri, Quang Binh, Ha Tinh, and Quang Ngai were among the hardest hit. According to the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Vietnam, the disaster affected 7.7 million people across nine provinces, with around 1.5 million people directly impacted and nearly 380,000 homes damaged or destroyed (UNCT, 2020).

Central Vietnam, known for its cultural heritage and scenic landscapes, is one of the country's most disaster-prone regions. The 2020 floods revealed both the vulnerability of the region and the resilience of its people. The Vietnamese government launched a swift and coordinated response, demonstrating its commitment to ensuring that "no one will be left behind." Civil society, along with state institutions and the media, played an essential role in supporting affected communities.

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Vietnam and Climate Change

Vietnam's geographic and demographic features make it one of the country's most at risk from climate change. With over 70% of the population vulnerable to natural disasters such as typhoons, floods, landslides, and droughts, the nation faces mounting environmental challenges. In 2020 alone, the country experienced extreme weather events, including record-high temperatures in Hanoi, unseasonal cold spells, droughts, and storms—trends that are expected to worsen in the future. The Vietnamese government has taken proactive steps in response. These include the implementation of early warning systems, sustainable development initiatives, and climate adaptation strategies. Nonetheless, the impact of these measures continues to be tested by the growing frequency and severity of climate-related disasters.

The Role of Media in Times of Crisis

In times of disaster, the media serves as a lifeline, providing timely information and fostering public solidarity. Research indicates that individuals rely heavily on media for updates, reassurance, and direction during emergencies (Elliott, 1989; Rozario, 2007; Wilkins, 1985). In such contexts, effective communication can save lives by helping people make informed decisions.

With the rise of digital technologies, online media platforms have become vital in delivering real-time news. The accessibility, speed, and interactive features of these platforms make them crucial tools in disaster communication. In Vietnam, the role of online newspapers became particularly prominent during the 2020 flood crisis, enabling the public to stay informed and respond collectively.

Media Landscape in Vietnam

Vietnam, located in Southeast Asia, operates under a one-party socialist government, where all media is state-owned or affiliated. The press is regarded as a tool for state communication and ideological reinforcement. The Ministry of Information and Communications regulates media operations, including licensing and content oversight (MIC, 2015a). Despite state control, Vietnam's media has expanded and evolved—especially with the advent of digital journalism. While press freedom remains limited, state-run outlets like Nhân Dân (The People) and Quân Đội Nhân Dân (The People's Army) serve as the official voices of the Communist Party. Other newspapers are affiliated with ministries or unions and often serve strategic state interests. High-profile outlets such as Công An Nhân Dân (People's Public Security) are particularly authoritative due to their links to powerful institutions like the Ministry of Public Security.

Vietnam's Cybersecurity Law, enacted in 2019, further reinforces state control over digital content, classifying content deemed misle-

ading or harmful to the regime as a cybersecurity threat. However, even within these constraints, Vietnamese media has continued to fulfill public information needs—especially during crises.

Digital Media in Vietnam

Vietnam officially connected to the global Internet on November 19, 1997. Since then, Internet usage has grown exponentially. As of 2017, more than 50 million Vietnamese (around 53% of the population) accessed the Internet regularly, with 78% using it daily (Pham, 2017). Social media use is also widespread, with platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and Zalo playing key roles in public communication. The Internet has become a critical infrastructure in Vietnam's disaster response, enabling real-time updates, emergency alerts, and access to maps and resources via both state platforms and social media. Despite government monitoring and censorship, digital communication remains a cornerstone of disaster preparedness and response.

Online Newspapers in Vietnam

Digital transformation has reshaped Vietnam's media landscape. The rise of online newspapers has redefined journalism, offering speed, interactivity, and broader reach. The first Vietnamese online publication, Que Huong, launched in 1997, followed by VietnamNet and VnExpress, marking the beginning of a new era. By 2015, there were over 100 online newspapers in Vietnam, including 22 digital-only outlets (Mai, 2016). Online newspapers serve as dynamic platforms for both journalism and public engagement. Their ability to update stories rapidly and reach large audiences has made them central to information dissemination, especially during emergencies.

Prominent online news outlets include:

1.V*nExpress* – Vietnam's most widely read online platform, with a robust English-language edition.
2. *Tuổi Trẻ* (Youth) – Known for its national reach and dynamic reporting.
3. *Thanh Niên* (Young People) – Focuses on youth and social issues.
4. *Vietnam News* – The official English-language daily.
5. *Công An Nhân Dân* – A leading security-related publication.
6. *Nhân Dân* – The official mouthpiece of the Communist Party.
Vietnamnet, *VietnamPlus*, *Lao Động*, *Zing News*, and *Dân Trí* are other key players in the digital news space.

Purpose of the Study

In the context of Vietnam, the electronic press has become a significant medium in the digital era, increasingly regarded as vital for communication and national development. During the crisis, online newspapers in Vietnam played a dual role: It provides timely and diverse information on various topics and keeps the public inf-

ormed about current events, both locally and globally. This study aims to examine the key features of online newspapers in Vietnam, with particular emphasis on how these platforms respond to and report on disasters. Coverage often emphasized resilience, government coordination, and public contributions to relief efforts. This framing not only informed but also inspired collective action, underscoring the critical intersection of media, governance, and civic response during disaster. This study investigates media framing of flood in Vietnam during Oct-Nov 2020. Based on this, the study specifically investigates how online newspapers in Vietnam framed the 2020 Central Vietnam floods. It explores the narratives constructed by digital platforms and their role in shaping public understanding, mobilizing resources, and reinforcing national unity.

Scope and Limitations of the Study
Like any research, this study has specific limitations. It focuses on a narrow timeframe and analyses only two selected English-language online newspapers, even though Vietnamese-language editions often have broader readership and coverage. Furthermore, the study is confined to the online newspaper format, excluding other forms of digital media such as social networks, blogs, and multimedia platforms.

There is considerable scope for further research. Future studies could explore the broader role of online newspapers in disaster communication, particularly their operations during natural calamities. More extensive research might involve in-depth interviews with journalists or surveys to evaluate audience perceptions regarding the influence and effectiveness of online news. Expanding the study to encompass a wider range of media platforms and a larger number of online publications—including both Vietnamese and English editions—could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the digital media landscape in Vietnam and beyond.

Review of Literature

The role of the media in disaster risk reduction has been extensively studied in various global contexts. Krings (2020) studied how Vietnamese journalists use social media, particularly Facebook, as a professional tool in a state-controlled media environment. Surveying 425 journalists, the study found that social media fosters transparency and improves interaction with audiences, despite the country's authoritarian constraints. Journalists often used Facebook to post stories and engage with public feedback. The findings challenge common assumptions about journalism in state-run contexts, showing how digital tools can offer subtle resistance

and foster professional autonomy.

Thistlethwaite and Henstra (2019) examined Canadian newspaper coverage of two major flood events—the 2013 floods in southern Alberta and the Greater Toronto Area. Their content analysis of 1,108 articles from Calgary Herald, Toronto Star, and The Globe and Mail found that media predominantly focused on short-term impacts rather than long-term policy discussions on flood risk reduction. They argue that while disasters consistently receive significant media attention, this attention is often underutilized in influencing public policy. The authors suggest strategies to better leverage media narratives to frame disasters as policy problems, thereby supporting disaster management reforms.

Avraham (2017) analyzed how developing countries respond to international media coverage during crises such as disasters and conflicts. Using a qualitative content analysis of interviews, news articles, and official media strategies from 2005–2015, the study identified seven key tactics: buying media space, issuing complaints, economic and physical threats, limiting media access, and utilizing alternative narratives through social media. These strategies, framed under a "multistep model," show how developing nations attempt to manage their global image amid disaster-induced scrutiny.

Kuppuswamy (2017) explored how print media covered the 2016 Cyclone Vardah in Chennai, India. Her content analysis of four newspapers—The Hindu, The Times of India, Daily Thanthi, and Dhinakaran—revealed the dominance of frames such as responsibility, human interest, economic consequences, and recovery. She observed that national newspapers maintained consistent coverage throughout all disaster phases, while regional outlets focused more on the pre- and mid-disaster stages. The study underscores the enduring importance of print media in disaster communication, even amid the rise of digital platforms.

Matthews (2017) conducted an intrinsic case study of local newspapers in Ishinomaki, Japan, following the 2011 tsunami. Through interviews with journalists from Ishinomaki Hibi Shimbun and Ishinomaki Kahoku, the study highlighted the newspapers' role in meeting the urgent information needs of disaster-affected communities. Despite operational challenges, journalists expressed a deep sense of responsibility to continue reporting. The findings demonstrate how local media can act as both an emergency information conduit and a support system for affected populations.

Duong (2016) provided a comprehensive overview of Vietnam's news media in the digital age. As a former journalist with nearly a decade of experience, Duong analyzed the evolution of Vietnamese

press amid internet proliferation. Her eight-chapter thesis detailed the structural, political, and technological transformations in Vietnam's electronic media. She found that while government censorship remains rigid, the Internet has created spaces for new narratives and challenged state propaganda. Her findings are crucial for understanding how digital transformation impacts journalism in socialist regimes.

Resnyansky (2015) focused on the role of social media data in disaster contexts. The research outlines a "disaster data-in-context" framework, integrating humanities and social sciences with crisis informatics. It highlights how evolving digital infrastructures shape what counts as reliable disaster data and influence disaster communication and policymaking. The study underscores the importance of interdisciplinary approaches to understanding the implications of social media in disaster risk management.

Stomberg (2012) examined American and Japanese media coverage of the 2011 Japan Earthquake, Tsunami, and Nuclear Crisis. Using content analysis, she compared articles from The New York Times and The Yomiuri Shimbun to assess how culture influenced framing. Her research focused on disaster myths, media hype, and gatekeeping practices, finding notable differences in narrative styles and the portrayal of panic flight. The study supports the notion that cultural context plays a significant role in how disasters are reported and understood.

Brunken (2006) investigated media framing and tone during Hurricane Katrina through a quantitative content analysis of four U.S. newspapers over five weeks. Her study found that human interest was the dominant frame, while federal response received slightly more positive coverage compared to local or state response. The use of attribute agenda setting was prominent, with media emphasizing themes like rescue operations, economic effects, and rebuilding. The study supports the idea that media frames significantly influence public understanding of disaster response and government accountability.

General Objectives of the Study

This research explores how Vietnamese online newspapers covered the 2020 Central Vietnam floods, emphasizing their structure and framing strategies.

Specific Objectives

- Identify characteristics of online newspaper platforms in Vietnam.

- Analyze English-language online disaster reporting in Vietnam.
- Examine online newspaper content's response to natural disasters.
- Determine frames used in flood coverage through textual analysis.

Research Questions

- RQ1: What are the frames used for coverage of a natural disaster by the online newspaper in this study?
- RQ2: Which frame is most/least used in the disaster reporting of this study?
- RQ3: What is the nature of the frames used in these online newspapers?
- RQ4: Do online newspapers in Vietnam favour the role of government in disaster —relief?

Research Methodology

Research methodology involves systematic procedures to collect, analyze, and interpret data (Jansen & Warren, 2020; Kassu, 2019). This study uses a qualitative approach and content analysis to examine how natural disasters are framed in online newspapers. This method interprets and categorizes themes in news texts. It systematically identifies patterns and meanings, making it effective for media studies. It has been used extensively in studying disaster media coverage (Tierney et al., 2006). This approach decodes frames within articles, assesses their implications, frequency, and relevance, providing a rich interpretation of English news articles. The articles were selected from the archives of the two online newspapers. The sample was selected through purposive sampling. Although several Vietnamese newspapers reported on the 2020 floods, VnExpress and Tuoi Tre News were chosen due to their wide readership and influence in Vietnam's online news ecosystem. Both outlets provide English- language editions, allowing access to non-Vietnamese-speaking audiences and researchers. The dataset comprises 64 news articles sourced from the English-language editions of two of Vietnam's most prominent online newspapers: VnExpress and Tuoi Tre News. These platforms were chosen due to their popularity, readership scale, and credibility. VnExpress, Vietnam's first and most-read online-only news platform, managed by FPT Online, has an English version ranked among the top 15 English-language news sites in Southeast Asia. Tuoi Tre News, the English edition of Tuoi Tre Daily, is another leading digital platform known for its comprehensive coverage and reputable journalism.

A total of 64 articles were selected for analysis—37 from VnExpress and 27 from Tuoi Tre News. Articles over two months during the peak of the 2020 Central Vietnam floods were retrieved from the respective newspapers' digital archives. These articles were accessed via the official website archives of both newspapers. The selected time frame, covering two months during and after the flooding events, aligns with research indicating that media narratives are most dynamic and influential in the immediate aftermath of a disaster (Martin & Boynton, 2005). The study uses framing analysis, particularly Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) five-frame typology:

Human Interest Frame
The human interest frame offers a personalized perspective on an issue by presenting its impact on individuals through emotional and human-focused angles. It aims to sustain audience engagement (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). This frame includes elements such as grieving citizens, fatalities, injured persons, missing individuals, human suffering, emotions, and novelty. Human interest frames provide a deeper reflection on the effects of disasters on groups and individuals.

Responsibility Frame
The responsibility frame outlines an issue or problem while attributing the cause or solution to either governmental entities or specific groups (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). This frame encompasses warnings, preventive actions, interventions by government authorities, involvement of non-governmental organizations, and the dissemination of information.

Conflict Frame
The conflict frame is employed when the media highlights conflicts between individuals or groups to captivate audience interest (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). This frame elucidates disagreements among individuals, societies, groups, or organizations.

Economic Consequences Frame
The economic consequences frame presents news stories with a focus on the economic impacts of an issue on individuals, groups, institutions, regions, or countries (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). In the context of disaster reporting, this is referred to as the physical damage frame, depicting the destruction caused by disasters. This frame illustrates damaged houses, buildings, essential infrastructure, boats, and uprooted trees.

Morality Frame
The morality frame situates the issue or problem within the context of religious tenets or moral prescriptions (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 96).

A deductive approach to content analysis was employed, applying these predefined frames as categories for analysis to systematically assess their presence and function in disaster reporting. Articles were coded based on the five-frame typology. Codes were generated to categorize the articles and interpret their narrative framing in response to the floods. Each article was analysed and coded according to the predefined categories. Frequency of frame usage and differences between the two newspapers were identified, interpreted, and discussed. This research methodology allows for a nuanced understanding of how natural disasters are framed in Vietnamese online media and provides insights into the broader role of digital journalism in disaster response and public communication.

Profile of Two Vietnamese Online newspapers

VnExpress
VnExpress is Vietnam's first online-only newspaper, marking a milestone in the country's digital media evolution. It established the viability of digital-only news platforms in Vietnam and contributed to the nation's broader digital transformation (FPT Online, 2020). VnExpress launched in 2001 by FPT Corporation, has become Vietnam's most widely read digital publication, shaping the nation's online information landscape. It operates under FPT Online, within the regulatory framework of Vietnam's Ministry of Science and Technology, and received official licensing from the Ministry of Culture and Information.

VnExpress maintains dual-language operations through its Vietnamese portal (vnexpress.net) and English-language edition (e.vnexpress.net), known as VnExpress International. VnExpress International was established to address the growing need for accessible, reliable English-language news coverage of Vietnam. VnExpress International was developed to fulfil this strategic communication role by realising a globally recognised transformation of Vietnam. The English edition provides comprehensive coverage including "daily news, analyses and reviews on politics, society, economy, travel, life and many other aspects," positioning it as a significant source of Vietnamese perspectives for international audiences (FPT Online, 2020, para. 8). Hence this platform serves multiple stakeholder groups, including international investors, tourists, expatriate communities, diplomatic personnel, and global audiences interested in Southeast Asian affairs. VnExpress International has garnered recognition within the Southeast Asian digital media landscape, ranking among the top 15 English-language websites in the region for information quality and presentation standards (FPT Online, 2020). According to Alexa website rankings, VnExpress achieved a

position among the top five most visited websites in Vietnam as of 2019, demonstrating its substantial digital reach and reader engagement (FPT Online, 2020). The Deputy Prime Minister stated that "VnExpress is the top newspaper in Vietnam. I hope it will develop across ASEAN, Asia and the rest of the world" (VnExpress International, 2016.). This endorsement reflects the Vietnamese government's recognition of digital media's role in international communication and soft power projection. VnExpress maintains indicate not only substantial readership but also active community participation in the platform's content ecosystem. The publication's social media presence reflects significant audience engagement, with its Facebook page attracting nearly 4 million followers and generating approximately 5 million reader comments (FPT Online, 2020). The foundation actively coordinates humanitarian relief efforts, notably "initiating campaigns to bring relief aids to communities hit by floods and landslides in central Vietnam" and inviting "all VnExpress readers and well-wishers to contribute to this effort" (FPT Online, 2020, para. 13). This initiative illustrates the publication's role in mobilizing civic engagement and community support during national emergencies.

Tuoi Tre News
Tuoi Tre News (https://tuoitrenews.vn/) represents the English-language digital extension of Tuoi Tre newspaper, one of Vietnam's most influential daily publications. The parent publication, Tuoi Tre, was established on September 2, 1975, as the official media organ of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union (Đoàn Thanh niên Cộng sản Hồ Chí Minh). The publication's name, translating to "Youth" in English, reflects its foundational mission to engage Vietnam's younger demographic and serve as the Union's primary communication platform.

Since its inception, Tuoi Tre has undergone significant organizational expansion, evolving from a single publication into a comprehensive multimedia press organization. The current media portfolio encompasses multiple platforms including Tuoi Tre Daily, Tuoi Tre Weekend, Tuoi Tre Online (Vietnamese-language), and Tuoi Tre News (English-language), demonstrating the organization's adaptation to diverse readership needs and technological developments in the media landscape. The evolution of Tuoi Tre from a youth union publication to a multimedia organization with international reach illustrates the broader transformation of Vietnam's media sector and the country's increasing engagement with global information networks. As Vietnam continues its economic development and regional integration, publications like Tuoi Tre News serve as critical interfaces between domestic developments and international understanding.

Tuoi Tre News operates under the regulatory oversight of Vietnam's Ministry of Information and Communications of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. This licensing framework ensures compliance with national media regulations and establishes the publication's legitimacy within Vietnam's controlled media environment. The publication's editorial direction is overseen by Editor-in-Chief Le The Chu, who maintains responsibility for content standards and editorial policy implementation.

The English-language platform provides comprehensive coverage spanning Vietnamese current affairs, politics, economy, society, culture, tourism, and international relations. The publication's readership encompasses multiple demographic segments, including Vietnamese nationals utilizing English as a second language, expatriate residents, international business professionals, diplomatic personnel, and global observers seeking Vietnamese perspectives on regional and international developments. As part of Vietnam's broader media ecosystem, Tuoi Tre News contributes to the country's soft power projection and international communication strategy. This content strategy positions Tuoi Tre News as a bridge between Vietnam's domestic news landscape and international information needs. Tuoi Tre News operates as a dedicated English-language digital platform, distinguishing it from translation-based approaches used by some international news services. This dedicated approach allows for content specifically tailored to international audiences while maintaining editorial consistency with the organization's Vietnamese-language publications. The transition to digital-first publishing reflects broader trends in Vietnam's media consumption patterns and the organization's strategic adaptation to technological change.

Within Vietnam's structured media environment, Tuoi Tre News occupies a unique position as an English-language platform affiliated with a major youth organization. The publication's role extends beyond traditional news dissemination to include cultural interpretation and contextualization of Vietnamese developments for international audiences. The publication maintains credibility and access to official sources while serving the government's objectives of international communication and cultural diplomacy.

Analysis and Findings

A total of 64 news articles were analysed using qualitative content analysis to examine the media framing of the Central Vietnam floods in 2020. The dataset comprised articles from two major English-language online newspapers in Vietnam.

VnExpress International	37 articles
Date range:	October 8 – November 28, 2020
Tuoi Tre News	27 articles
Date range:	October 8 – November 17, 2020

These articles were selected based on relevance to the 2020 Central Vietnam floods and landslides, ensuring consistent coverage across the peak of the disaster period.

Chronological news articles
This table compiled and categorized 37 articles from VnExpress and 27 articles from Tuoi Tre News related to the Central Vietnam floods and landslides from October to November 2020. It includes metadata like dates, titles, authors (if provided), timestamps, and URLs.

Consistency of Coverage: Both outlets provided sustained and intensive coverage over nearly two months, with VnExpress publishing more frequently. VnExpress covered not only the floods and landslides but also foreign aid, military rescue efforts, celebrity fundraising, and policy responses.

Timeliness and Depth: The timestamps and detailed reports suggest a real-time or near- real-time reporting style, crucial for disaster coverage. Multiple articles on key dates (e.g., October 13, 16, 17) indicate heightened journalistic attention during peak disaster events.

Development of Narratives: Initial articles focus on reporting the onset of flood followed by casualty reports, rescue operations, recovery stories, and economic aftermath. This reflects a typical disaster reporting pattern moving from immediate news to human interest and longer-term recovery.

Date	No		Title	Link
08/10/2020	1	V1	***Prolonged rains cause flooding across central Vietnam*** By Hoang Tao, Dac Thanh, Nguyen Quy October 8, 2020 | 11:35 am GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/prolonged-rains-cause-flooding-across-central-vietnam-4173467.html*

09/10/2020	2	V2	***Over 11,000 evacuated as floods ravage central Vietnam*** By Nguyen Quy, Dac Thanh October 9, 2020 | 09:55 am GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/prolonged-rains-cause-flooding-across-central-vietnam-4173467.html*
12/10/2020	3	V3	***20 dead, 14 missing in central Vietnam floods*** By Tat Dinh, Vo Thanh October 12, 2020 | 09:53 am GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/20-dead-14-missing-in-central-vietnam-floods-4175089.html*
13/10/2020	4	V4	***Flooding death toll swells to 29 in central Vietnam*** By Nguyen Quy October 13, 2020 | 01:37 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/flooding-death-toll-swells-to-29-in-central-vietnam-4175853.html*
	5	V5	***Milk of human kindness overflows in flood-ravaged Hue*** By Diep Phan October 13, 2020 | 04:08 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/life/trend/milk-of-human-kindness-overflows-in-flood-ravaged-hue-4175683.html*
	6	V6	***Tragedy compounded: landslide buries 13 rescue team members*** By Vo Thanh, Dac Thanh, Duc Hung, Hoang Thuy October 13, 2020 | 11:04 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/tragedy-compounded-landslide-buries-13-rescue-team-members-4176129.html*
15/10/2020	7	V7	***No rescue attempt spared at Vietnam hydropower plant landslide*** By Vo Thanh, Viet Tuan October 15, 2020 | 02:14 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/photo/news/no-rescue-attempt-spared-at-vietnam-hydropower-plant-landslide-4176940.html*
16/10/2020	8	V8	***Another worker confirmed dead from hydropower plant landslide, 15 still missing*** By Hoang Tao October 16, 2020 | 02:23 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/another-worker-confirmed-dead-from-hydropower-plant-landslide-15-still-missing-4177630.html*

16/10/2020	9	V9	***Zero respite for flood-hit central Vietnam as new tropical depression nears*** By Phan Anh, Tat Dinh, Gia Chinh October 16, 2020 | 02:30 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/prolonged-rains-cause-flooding-across-central-vietnam-4173467.html*
17/10/2020	10	V10	***Compound landslide losses remind us to prepare better for disasters*** By Nguyen Dong October 17, 2020 | 07:03 am GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/perspectives/compound-landslide-losses-remind-us-to-prepare-better-for-disasters-4177681.html*
	11	V11	***Thermal camera deployed for search as 15 remain missing in dam landslide*** By Vo Thanh October 17, 2020 | 02:24 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/thermal-camera-deployed-for-search-as-15-remain-missing-in-dam-landslide-4178048.html*
	12	V12	***US aids central Vietnam $100,000 to cope with floods*** By Minh Nga October 17, 2020 | 05:45 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/us-aids-central-vietnam-100-000-to-cope-with-floods-4178058.html*
	13	V13	***Major General Man: Shocked peers, people mourn sterling soldier*** By Duc Hung, Hoang Phuong, Vo Thanh October 17, 2020 | 05:57 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/major-general-man-shocked-peers-people-mourn-sterling-soldier-4177622.html*
18/10/2020	14	V14	***Vietnam steps up rescue, evacuation after third deadly landslide*** By Nguyen Dong October 18, 2020 | 08:32 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/vietnam-steps-up-rescue-evacuation-after-third-deadly-landslide-4178433.html*
	15	V15	***Vietnam mourns 13 rescue team martyrs*** By Staff reporters October 18, 2020 | 11:45 am GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/vietnam-mourns-13-rescue-team-martyrs-4178327.html*

19/10/2020	16	V16	***Feeling of impotence: Soldiers recall losing 22 comrades to landslide*** By Duc Hung, Nguyen Hai, Hoang Tao October 19, 2020 | 01:41 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/prolonged-rains-cause-flooding-across-central-vietnam-4173467.html*
	17	V17	***Floods, landslides take 102 lives in central Vietnam*** By Tat Dinh October 19, 2020 | 09:43 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/floods-landslides-take-102-lives-in-central-vietnam-4179102.html*
	18	V18	***Central Vietnam flooding death toll rises to 88*** By Tat Dinh October 19, 2020 | 10:46 am GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/central-vietnam-flooding-death-toll-rises-to-88-4178651.html*
20/10/2010	19	V19	***Vietnam endures world's 'worst weather impacts': experts*** By Viet Anh October 20, 2020 | 02:42 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/vietnam-endures-world-s-worst-weather-impacts-experts-4179349.html*
	20	V20	***International organizations pledge aid for central Vietnam flood victims*** By Nguyen Quy October 20, 2020 | 09:25 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/international-organizations-pledge-aid-for-central-vietnam-flood-victims-4179517.html*
21/10/2020	21	V21	***Vietnam flooding deaths soar to 111, loss termed 'worst in five years'*** By Tat Dinh, Gia Chinh October 21, 2020 | 05:45 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/vietnam-flooding-deaths-soar-to-111-loss-termed-worst-in-five-years-4180110.html*
22/10/2020	22	V22	***Vietnam grants $21 mln disaster aid to support five flood-hit provinces*** By Nguyen Dong, Hoang Tao October 22, 2020 | 06:49 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/vietnam-grants-21-mln-disaster-aid-to-support-five-flood-hit-provinces-4180744.html*

23/10/202	23	V23	**South Korea provides $300,000 for central Vietnam disaster relief** By Phan Anh October 23, 2020 | 01:45 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/south-korea-provides-300-000-for-central-vietnam-disaster-relief-4181006.html*
25/10/2020	24	V24	**Digging deep: Rescuers work non-stop in search for landslide victims** By Vo Thanh October 25, 2020 | 12:30 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/digging-deep-rescuers-work-non-stop-in-search-for-landslide-victims-4181764.html*
29/10/2020	25	V25	**EU provides $1.5 mln to assist flood victims in central Vietnam** By Nguyen Quy October 29, 2020 | 08:03 am GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/eu-provides-1-5-mln-to-assist-flood-victims-in-central-vietnam-4183559.html*
30/10/2020	26	V26	**159 succumb to floods, landslides in central Vietnam** By Huu Cong, Tat Dinh October 30, 2020 | 05:55 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/159-succumb-to-floods-landslides-in-central-vietnam-4184565.html*
03/11/2020	27	V27	**Central Vietnam: a month in tragedies** By Staff reporters November 3, 2020 | 10:28 am GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/central-vietnam-a-month-in-tragedies-4185767.html*
	28	V28	**500 residents of storm-hit Quang Nam cross jungle to access relief aid** By Dac Thanh November 3, 2020 | 09:27 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/500-residents-of-storm-hit-quang-nam-cross-jungle-to-access-relief-aid-4186357.html*
04/11/2020	29	V29	**UK pledges $649,000 in central Vietnam flood relief** By Phan Anh November 4, 2020 | 02:00 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/uk-pledges-649-000-in-central-vietnam-flood-relief-4186788.html*
	30	V30	**Vietnam reckons October disaster damage at $734 mln** By Nguyen Quy November 4, 2020 | 01:00 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/vietnam-reckons-october-disaster-damage-at-734-mln-4186451.html*

5/11/2020	31	V31	***Overseas Vietnamese aid motherland $510,000 to recover from flooding, landslides*** By Minh Nga November 5, 2020 | 05:30 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/south-korea-provides-300-000-for-central-vietnam-disaster-relief-4181006.html*
14/11/2020	32	V32	***Central Vietnam residents rush to prepare for giant storm Vamco*** By Staff reporters November 14, 2020 | 07:42 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/central-vietnam-residents-rush-to-prepare-for-giant-storm-vamco-4191841.html*
17/11/2020	33	V33	***Central Vietnam floods cause bacterial infection outbreak*** By Minh Nga November 17, 2020 | 01:42 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/central-vietnam-floods-cause-bacterial-infection-outbreak-4192847.html*
19/11/2020	34	V34	***Families displaced by central Vietnam flooding, landslides steeped in chaos*** By Dac Thanh November 19, 2020 | 02:10 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/families-displaced-by-central-vietnam-flooding-landslides-steeped-in-chaos-4194042.html*
25/11/2020	35	V35	***Vietnam, ADB sign agreement for $2.5 mln natural disaster relief aid*** By Phan Anh November 25, 2020 | 02:09 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/vietnam-adb-sign-agreement-for-2-5-mln-natural-disaster-relief-aid-4196819.html*
26/11/2020	36	V36	***Government adds $29 mln to aid for flood-hit central region*** By Viet Tuan November 26, 2020 | 03:00 pm GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/government-adds-29-mln-to-aid-for-flood-hit-central-region-4197428.html*
28/11/2020	37	V37	***Central provinces report $1.3 bln flood damage, seek more government aid*** By Hoang Tao November 28, 2020 | 11:38 am GMT+7	*https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/central-provinces-report-1-3-bln-flood-damage-seek-more-government-aid-4198417.html*

			Tuoi Tre News	
08/10/2020	1	T1	***Lightning strikes seven cows to death in Vietnam*** Thursday, October 08, 2020, 18:02 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201008/lightning-strikes-seven-cows-to-death-in-vietnam/57174.html*
09/10/2020	2	T2	***Nearly 11,000 people evacuated, 4 dead, 7 missing in central Vietnam due to serious flooding*** Friday, October 09, 2020, 17:00 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201009/nearly-11000-people-evacuated-4-dead-7-missing-in-central-vietnam-due-to-serious-flooding/57186.html*
11/10/2020	3	T3	***Historic flooding submerges villages in central Vietnamese province*** Sunday, October 11, 2020, 12:00 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201011/historic-flooding-submerges-villages-in-central-vietnamese-province/57211.html*
12/10/2020	4	T4	***Hoi An evacuates residents as flooding worsens*** Monday, October 12, 2020, 14:46 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201012/hoi-an-evacuates-residents-as-flooding-worsens/57229.html*
	5	T5	***Floods kill 17 people in central Vietnam, next storm due soon*** Monday, October 12, 2020, 09:00 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201012/floods-kill-17-people-in-central-vietnam- next-storm-due-soon/57219.html*
13/10/2020	6	T6	***Body of pregnant woman swept away by floodwater found in central Vietnam*** Tuesday, October 13, 2020, 20:51 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201013/body-of-pregnant-woman-swept-away-by-floodwater-found-in-central-vietnam/57252.html*

14/10/2020	7	T7	***Drone photos show Vietnam's Quang Tri Province under floodwater*** Wednesday, October 14, 2020, 13:26 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201014/drone-photos-show-vietnam-s-quang-tri-province-under-floodwater/57265.html*
	8	T8	***30 missing following landslide at hydropower plant in central Vietnam*** Wednesday, October 14, 2020, 13:44 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201014/30-missing-following-landslide-at-hydropower-plant-in-central-vietnam/57264.html*
16/10/2020	9	T9	***Vietnam rescuers find all 13 bodies from two deadly landslides*** Friday, October 16, 2020, 09:43 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201016/vietnam-rescuers-find-all-13-bodies-from-two-deadly-landslides/57287.html*
17/10/2020	10	T10	***Bad weather hampers Vietnam's search for victims of landslide*** Saturday, October 17, 2020, 07:35 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201017/bad-weather-hampers-vietnam-s-search-for-victims-of-landslide/57302.html*
	11	T11	***Residents of central Vietnamese province brave 4th flood in 8 days*** Saturday, October 17, 2020, 10:50 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201017/residents-of-central-vietnamese-province-brave-4th-flood-in-8-days/57306.html*
19/10/2020	12	T12	***Vietnamese air carriers provide free transport of flood aid supplies to central Vietnam*** Monday, October 19, 2020, 12:06 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201019/vietnamese-air-carriers-provide-free-transport-of-flood-aid-supplies-to-central-vietnam/57336.html*
	13	T13	***Rain, flood death toll reaches 84 in central Vietnam*** Monday, October 19, 2020, 14:06 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201019/rain-flood-death-toll-reaches-84-in-central-vietnam/57337.html*

19/10/2020	14	T14	***Residents evacuate as reservoirs discharge water in Vietnamese province*** Monday, October 19, 2020, 17:26 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201019/residents-evacuate-as-reservoirs-discharge-water-in-vietnamese-province/57341.html*
21/10/2020	15	T15	***Border guard officers safe following massive landslides in central Vietnam*** Wednesday, October 21, 2020, 13:51 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201021/border-guard-officers-safe-following-massive-landslides-in-central-vietnam/57374.html*
22/10/2020	16	T16	***Flooding strands hundreds of patients in central Vietnam hospital*** Thursday, October 22, 2020, 14:23 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201022/flooding-strands-hundreds-of-patients-in-central-vietnam-hospital/57379.html*
	17	T17	***Unprecedented landslides triggered by downpours in Vietnamese province*** Thursday, October 22, 2020, 17:09 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201022/unprecedented-landslides-triggered-by-downpours-in-vietnamese-province/57394.html*
23/10/2020	18	T18	***US provides immediate humanitarian aid to support flood response in central Vietnam*** Friday, October 23, 2020, 14:22 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201023/us-provides-immediate-humanitarian-aid-to-support-flood-response-in-central-vietnam/57400.html*
	19	T19	***Residents rebuild lives as flood recedes from central Vietnam*** Friday, October 23, 2020, 17:16 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201023/residents-rebuild-lives-as-flood-recedes-from-central-vietnam/57406.html*

24/10/2020	20	T20	***Vietnam floods put over 1.5mn children at risk of disease, delayed development: UNICEF*** Saturday, October 24, 2020, 11:27 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201024/vietnam-floods-put-over-15mn-children-at-risk-of-disease-delayed-development-unicef/57415.html*
	21	T21	***Schools in central Vietnam pick up the pieces after detrimental flooding*** Saturday, October 24, 2020, 14:41 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201024/schools-in-central-vietnam-pick-up-the-pieces-after-detrimental-flooding/57419.html*
29/10/2020	22	T22	***Landslides kill 8, bury 45 in central Vietnam*** Thursday, October 29, 2020, 13:19 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201029/landslides-kill-8-bury-45-in-central-vietnam/57502.html*
04/11/2020	23	T23	***Downpours brought by Storm Goni to pose risks of floods, landslides in central Vietnam*** Wednesday, November 04, 2020, 16:19 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201104/downpours-brought-by-storm-goni-to-pose-risks-of-floods-landslides-in-central-vietnam/57600.html*
06/11/2020	24	T24	***Midnight landslide strikes central Vietnam village*** Friday, November 06, 2020, 14:38 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201106/midnight-landslide-strikes-central-vietnam-village/57629.html*
08/11/2020	25	T25	***Netherlands grants $2.4mn to help victims of flood, rain in central Vietnam*** Sunday, November 08, 2020, 10:54 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201108/netherlands-grants-24mn-to-help-victims-of-flood-rain-in-central-vietnam/57656.html*
09/11/2020	26	T26	***ADB approves $2.5mn grant to assist Vietnam in dealing with flood damage*** Monday, November 09, 2020, 18:34 GMT+7	*https://tuoitrenews.vn/news/society/20201109/adb-approves-25mn-grant-to-assist-vietnam-in-dealing-with-flood-damage/57685.html*

| 17/11/2020 | 27 | T27 | ***Floods kill 31 in central VN; Hoi An under deep water***
 Sunday, November 17, 2013, 13:31 GMT+7 | *https://tuoitrenews.vn/soc iety/15174/floods-kill-24-in-central-vn-hoi-an-under-deep-water* |

Framing Analysis of VnExpress and Tuoi Tre News Articles

Frame	VnExpress Articles	Tuoi Tre News Articles
Human Interest	17 articles (V2, V3, V4, V5, V6, V8, V13, V15, V16, V17, V18, V21, V26, V27, V28, V32, V33)	12 articles (T2, T5, T6, T8, T9, T11, T13, T16, T19, T20, T22, T27)
Attribution of Responsibility	14 articles (V7, V10, V11, V12, V14, V20, V22, V23, V24, V25, V29, V31, V35, V36)	7 articles (T4, T10, T12, T14, T18, T25, T26)
Economic Consequences	6 articles (V1, V9, V19, V30, V34, V37)	8 articles (T1, T3, T7, T15, T17, T21, T23, T24)
Conflict	0	0
Morality	0	0

Table 2.1: Articles Categorised Under Five Key News Frames

Frame Distribution Results

Total Frame Distribution	
Human Interest Frame	29 articles (45.3%)
Responsibility Frame	21 articles (32.8%)
Economic Consequences Frame	14 articles (21.9%)
Conflict Frame	0 articles (0%)

Morality Frame	0 articles (0%)

Table 2.2: Frame Distribution Results of News frames

VnExpress	**(37 articles total)**
Human Interest	17 articles (45.9%)
Attribution of Responsibility	14 articles (37.8%)
Economic Consequences	6 articles (16.2%)
Conflict	0 articles
Morality	0 articles
Tuoi Tre News	**(27 articles total)**
Human Interest	12 articles (44.4%)
Attribution of Responsibility	7 articles (25.9%)
Economic Consequences	8 articles (29.6%)
Conflict	0 articles
Morality	0 articles

Table 2.3: Frame distribution results in newspapers

This aligns with Vietnamese media's preference for emotionally engaging content. The coverage emphasized personal stories, human tragedy, and heroic sacrifices. The table 2.1 shows the etails of distribution of News articles based on the Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) five crisis frames: human interest – 29, conflict – 0, responsibility – 21, economic consequences – 14, morality – 0.

The dominance of human interest frame focuses on emotional stories of victims, survivors, rescuers, and communities higlights the human cost of the disaster and builds empathy among readers. Attribution of Responsibility Frame demonstrates efforts by auth-

orities (such as Prime Minister-led relief funds, military rescues, international aid). VnExpress may be more aligned with official narratives, highlighting government and institutional roles to instil public confidence and show accountability. Economic consequences frame represented in both Discusses the financial and infrastructural impact of the disaster. These stories emphasizes damages to livelihoods, agriculture, public infrastructure, and costs of rebuilding. Through this frame both outlets addressed the broader economic implications, connecting the event to national recovery and planning efforts. Both Conflict and Morality Frames are entirely absent. Likely due to Vietnam's media environment, which often avoids politicized or critical framing, especially in times of national crisis. It Indicates an emphasis on unity and non-confrontation, possibly reflecting state guidelines on disaster reporting or editorial restraint.

It shows that human interest frame is the the most frequently used frame, while conflict and morality were seldom utilized. The human-interest frame dominated coverage, making up nearly half of all stories: individuals were required to evacuate; numerous fatalities and missing persons were reported. Particularly, the sacrifices of 13 soldiers and officers during a rescue mission garnered significant public attention. The following articles from VnExpress illustrate these events: Tragedy compounded: landslide buries 13 rescue team members (Vo Thanh et al., 2020); No rescue attempt spared at Vietnam hydropower plant landslide (Vo Thanh & Viet Tuan, 2020); Major General Man: Shocked peers, people mourn sterling soldier (Duc Hung et al., 2020). Additionally, articles from Tuoi Tre News include: 30 missing following landslide at hydropower plant in central Vietnam (2020); Vietnam rescuers find all 13 bodies from two deadly landslides (2020); Landslides kill 8, bury 45 in central Vietnam (2020). Another story that drew the attention of the people throughout the country during the disaster was the community spirit, which is one of the key factors that helped Vietnam won many wars to protect the country throughout its history of building and defending the country. During time of crisis, "Tinh thần dân tộc" (Community spirit) has become the buzzword and the base of public's behaviour. It is true that negative news which is trivia, shocking has a tendency to spread rapidly and easily. However, the stories that are deeply heart-warming can gain the same effects. On 13 October 2020, VnExpress issued an article with title "Milk of human kindness overflows in flood-ravaged Hue". Its preamble was so lovely: "Hue, which has been hit by raging floods, is finding out that when the going gets tough, the kind get going" (Diep Phan, 2020). The middle of Vietnam is the most vulnerable areas where usually suffer with various natural disasters. In fact, these issues should be brought to the attention of the public in order to make a call to ac-

tion. These articles under human interest frame cover such events profusely and in the crisis setting, it can create a strong bond of trust and unity. The ties between the northern, the southern and the central region remain very strong, particularly when facing dark and difficult times.

The responsibility frame is frequently used in reporting disasters, emphasising the role of governments, organisations, and groups. In Vietnam, the single-party system leads the nation, with media serving more as a representative than a supervisor. When floods hit central Vietnam, the government swiftly deployed officers and soldiers for rescue missions, showcasing their commitment to ensuring no one is left behind.Media coverage during disasters often focuses on humanitarian aid, evacuation plans, and relief supplies, essential for saving lives. Vietnamese airlines offered free transport for aid, while the government allocated additional funds for recovery efforts. Overseas Vietnamese and international organisations also contributed significantly to relief efforts. Case studies show that media coverage influences the amount of aid received; areas heavily reported receive more assistance. This prompts aggressive relief responses from various entities. Unlike other contexts where government actions are criticised, Vietnamese news tends to praise the government's role, reflecting the country's historical solidarity under Communist Party leadership.

The relationship between the military and the people is deeply ingrained in Vietnamese society, influenced by the country's wartime history. Positive portrayals of police and soldiers in the media reinforce their close ties with the government. During disasters, the Vietnamese press highlights their determination and sacrifice, creating an admirable image of the government's rescue efforts despite challenging conditions. The findings reveal that conflict and morality frames are rarely seen in online newspapers during the Central floods. Regarding the conflict frame, both online newspapers had no articles covering conflicts. Conflict frame typically deals with disagreements during disasters, like disputes between individuals and the government. In Vietnam, a communist country with government-controlled media (Mai Duong, 2016), such conflict coverage is rare. Citizens generally follow government directives and seldom protest peacefully. Although there have been demonstrations against actions like Beijing's aggressive infringement of Vietnam's sovereignty, protests against the Vietnamese government are uncommon. Social norms and education foster behavioural homogeneity, reinforced by strong government policies affecting all sectors, including journalism. Articles that covers problems like power cuts, ineffective management, and evacuation limitations etc were barely mentioned in Vietnam due to its specific political context.

The morality frame explains news related to morals during disasters, often putting events in a religious context (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). During natural disasters, people look to faith for answers (Brunken, 2006). However, most newspapers do not focus on the morality frame during floods. Vietnam, a socialist republic under the Communist Party, is largely considered atheist, though many Vietnamese practice Buddhism and spirit worship. Hence, it is found that the morality frame is absent in news articles.

Vietnam's state press used to be called "the revolutionary press", and its main responsibilities were to be the propaganda tool of the authorities (Hang 2003). After Đổi Mới (Economic and Institutional renovation), the function of the press in Vietnam no longer accepted that description. However so far, as reported by the Reporters without border, Vietnam still has a very humble position in the list of the world press freedom index 2020, ranking 175 out of 180 countries. In Vietnam, political, social and economic news stories are placed under the stricter supervision of the Vietnamese media authorities (Mai Duong 2016). Furthermore, news stories about political events and top leaders are considered as sensitive topics. To write these conventional news stories, Hang (2003) states that journalists are required to follow the instructions from higher authorities, must write stories that contain no analysis or criticism. That explains the absence of conflict frame in crisis news coverage.

These articles under human interest frame, responsibility frame, economic consequences frame from the two online newspapers are quite typical and representative for disaster coverage of the Vietnamese press. Besides, Tuoi Tre News is exemplary of the press that belong to the State. It is the mouthpiece of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union (Đoàn Thanh niên Cộng sản Hồ Chí Minh) – one of the most important and influential organisations in the apparatus of the Vietnamese Communist Party. The Union was founded on March 26, 1931 by President Ho Chi Minh. It is organised and led by the Party. Accordingly, the content of news stories were restrained by the censorship of the governmental authorities. Whereas, VnExpress can be considered as the first independent online newspaper which founded by a private corporation (FPT) rather than by a state or governmental organisation in Vietnam. It also had a larger number of articles covered during the Central floods than Tuoi Tre News newspaper. But they both bear the characteristics of the press system of Vietnam all the same, which is controlled by the Communist Party.

Conclusion

This study provides insight into how political systems shape disast-

er journalism, demonstrating that media framing in authoritarian contexts prioritizes social cohesion and government support over critical analysis or conflict reporting. Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) research identified the most common media frames in order of predominance as responsibility, conflict, economic consequences, human interest, and morality (Brunken, 2006). However, in this study a different pattern is emerged. Unlike Semetko and Valkenberg's original hierarchy (responsibility, conflict, economic consequences, human interest, morality), Vietnamese disaster coverage prioritized human interest stories, followed by responsibility attribution, with economic consequences ranking third. The complete absence of conflict and morality frames distinguishes Vietnamese disaster journalism from Western media patterns, reflecting cultural and political differences in news production and consumption. This analysis demonstrates how local cultural, political, and social contexts significantly influence media framing choices during crisis situations, suggesting that universal framing theories may require cultural adaptation for accurate cross-national analysis.

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